

Frequently Asked Questions 3rd Edition!

April 2008

Inn from the Cold's Emergency Family Shelter FAQs, #3

As we draw closer to our deal deadline for the Inn's new Emergency Family Shelter, many details are coming together. We now know that most of our churches will continue to operate as they have in the past with new focus on homeless singles. Many of our volunteers are also interested in helping out at the Family Shelter and need a few more details before they make a commitment. If you ever have more questions, please let us know. We want to ensure that all of our valued volunteers and partners understand our vision, as well as the operational details, for the Shelter.

What will happen on a 'normal' day?

Our families will get up and get ready for the day. We have plenty of bathroom and shower facilities. They will make themselves breakfast with food supplied by the Inn. Depending on their age, some people will proceed to work, or to specific programs. Children will be taken to school or day care. At the present time there will not be an on-site day care. We will continue to resource other agencies to provide this service to our families. We might be able to look into the possibility of an on-site day care in the future. If family members wish to remain at the Shelter during the day, they will be required to participate in programming and will not be allowed to just sleep or watch TV.

At noon, family members will enjoy a bag lunch prepared for them the night before by Inn volunteers – just like in the churches and communities.

About 4:00 p.m. volunteers will arrive to begin preparing for dinner. They will set the table, prepare, cook and serve the food, and sit down with the families over dinner. Our volunteers will clean up the kitchen, make lunches for the following day and be invited to stay and visit with the families, read to the children or play games with the adults. Volunteers can expect to leave the Family Shelter between 8- 8:30 p.m. and guests will begin to prepare for the next day. Paid security will be on-site overnight.

How many people will live at the Emergency Family Shelter?

We expect that number will fluctuate in the first few months, but at full capacity we will be able to provide shelter for between 80 to 100 individuals.

Will the Shelter operate year round?

Yes. It will be important that we have plenty of volunteers available 12 months a year too. We expect that the Emergency Family Shelter may open as early as June 16 and in full operation by fall 2008.

Who will be at the Family Shelter in the evening?

Until everyone is comfortable in their new tasks, at least one staff member will be there to answer questions and make sure everyone feels at home. As well, there will always be 2 security people on shift during that period who will also handle overnight duties.

Who will pay for the food?

Although we are working with the Food Bank for food donations, we cannot always rely on variety and quantity. It is our hope that groups of volunteers will purchase food for the dinner and bag lunches. If they are not able to do so, the Inn will reimburse the food costs but the volunteers will have to adhere to a budget.

Do volunteers still need to have security checks?

Yes. For the safety of our guests, all volunteers must have an up-to-date security check.



What about parking costs?

Parking is available across the street from Centre 110 and costs can be reimbursed with an appropriate receipt. If anyone is arriving after 6:00 p.m., free street parking is available.

What is available in the kitchen?

Once remodeling of the kitchen is complete, volunteers will be encouraged to come see the entire premises for themselves. However, cooking teams will find the kitchen well stocked with staples and necessary cooking equipment e.g. microwave, sanitizer dishwasher, milk, sugar, flour, utensils, knives and baby food – to name a few things.

How will the meal planning be handled?

Michelle Castillo, our Volunteer Manager, will be in charge of scheduling all volunteer groups as well as letting each group know how we would like our volunteer teams to operate. For example, we are working with a Dietician who will outline a month's menu in advance. We want to ensure a proper balance of nutritious food, so volunteers can expect to see that "Tuesday is pasta night" or "Wednesday is ground beef night". Just how the cooks decide to prepare these dishes will be up to them but we will provide some guidelines. We are currently preparing a manual of food guidelines that will address what quantities to cook and other useful tips and will provide copies to each volunteer team. Food will be available buffet style.

The Calgary Health Region requires that food must be prepared on the premises. There can be no exceptions. We don't want the Health Department shutting us down.

What time is dinner?

6:30 p.m.

How many volunteers do you need each evening?

This will be up to the team of course, but we suggest between 5 and 8 people to prepare and serve the meal, clean up, prepare lunches and socialize with the families.

Can we order take out?

Yes, but it must be from a licensed restaurant.

Will your guest screening continue?

Yes. Families will need to adhere to the same rules that have been in place at the churches. They will need to take their meds if physician prescribed and they cannot be active in their addiction. Anyone under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted to stay at the Inn. Our high screening and security standards will continue to ensure the safety of all guests, especially the children.

What happens if we have to change our Inn date?

If volunteers are unable to make the date they agreed to, we ask that they notify Michelle Castillo one week in advance.

How is the fundraising going? What will happen if you don't raise the money?

We currently have an extensive Capital Campaign underway and the response has been tremendous. We have raised \$3.5M to date with more donations coming in each and every day. Our Board has stated that we will raise the funds and the deal will close at the end of May.

Are guests allowed to go outside after supper?

Yes, but the guests will be expected back in by a certain time.

Where will the kids play in the warmer months?

The kids will play on the roof top playground and patio area once it is constructed.

