COVID-19 Homeless Response and Coordinated Entry System Guidance for San Antonio/Bexar County

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Purpose of Guide

This guide is to be used by homeless service providers and those who operate SAHomelink Hubs to assist with lessening the spread of COVID-19 in San Antonio/Bexar County. You will find information regarding COVID-19 medical screening, temporary SAHomelink policies, and general guidance.

Definitions

Prevention – A program for those at imminent risk of becoming homeless. This funding is utilized to assist clients with remaining in their current living situation to prevent them from becoming homeless.

Diversion – A process for literally homeless clients to prevent them from entering shelter or the street. Diversion includes housing problem solving conversations to assess the client’s situation and determine if there are any possibilities for them to find housing. This may or may not include financial assistance.

Access and Intake Recommendations

Access Points

Access points include shelters, SAHomelink hubs, the Homeless Hotline, outreach, etc. Please see SARAH’s website or www.SACRD.org for a list of the most up-to-date information regarding access points.

Intake/Assessment

Prior to any interaction with a client, ensure you are following social distancing and safety guidelines. First, we recommend determining client’s homelessness status: at-risk or literally homeless. (See Attachment 1 for workflow.) If at-risk, you can refer the client to the Neighborhood and Housing Services Department (NHSD) hotline at 210-207-5910 to receive prevention assistance.

If the client is literally homeless, the next step we recommend is conducting the Metro Health Self-Screening Tool (online or Attachment II) to determine if the client should be tested for COVID-19. If so, we recommend the client not follow intake until they are tested by calling 210-233-5970.

If the client is asymptomatic and does not need to be tested, we recommend having a housing problem-solving/diversion conversation to help the client resolve their homelessness. If diversion is unsuccessful and the client meets one of the COVID-19 risk and vulnerability factors in Attachment 1, the client can be referred to a SAHomelink Hub.

SAHomelink Hubs

Most SAHomelink Hubs are currently closed or performing telephonic assessments. SARAH will be conducting telephonic SAHomelink assessments through April 30, 2020 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9am – 1pm. For more information on current hub operation hours, visit the SARAH website.

SAHomelink Interim Procedures

SARAH has created a temporary COVID-19 prioritization policy that will be in effect until April 30, 2020. See Attachment II for the COVID-19 SAHomelink Prioritization Policy. SAHomelink referrals will be conducted via email through April 30, 2020.
Attachment I: COVID-19 Homeless Response Plan Workflow

**Imminent Risk of Homelessness**

- Prevention/NHSD - 210-207-5910

**In Shelter/Seeking Shelter**

- COVID-19 Medical Self-Screening
  - Yes/Symptoms
    - Schedule Test with Metro Health 210-233-5970
  - No
    - Attempt Diversion
      - Successfully Diverted – Record Outcome
      - Not Successful
        - Does the client meet ANY of the following
          - COVID-19 test pending
          - Exiting medical unit
          - > 55 years old
          - Head of household < 25 years old
          - Heart/lung disease or diabetes
          - Chronically homeless (one continuous year of homelessness with a disabling condition)
          - Actively feeling domestic violence
        - Yes
          - Refer to SAHomelink Hub
        - No
          - Give information for resources: SACRD.org/211
Attachment II: COVID-19 Medical Self-Screening

The City of San Antonio Metropolitan Health District’s screening can be found online here.

COVID-19 Self-Screening

Disclaimer: “This self-screening does not provide a medical diagnosis and is for informational purposes only. The information contained in the self-screening is for your personal use only and is not intended to diagnose, cure, mitigate, treat, or prevent disease or other conditions and is not intended to provide a determination or assessment of your state of health. If you have concerns regarding your health, or the health of someone else, you should consult a physician. If you are experiencing a serious health emergency, you should call 911.”

1. Do you have a temperature of 99.6 or higher?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Do you have a cough?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Do you have difficulty breathing?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Do you have a body ache?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Have you traveled in the last 2 weeks?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Do you have a chronic health condition such as diabetes, blood pressure, lung or heart disease?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Are you age 65 or older?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Have you had close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, or come in contact with fluids from the nose or mouth of an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

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1 Close contact is defined as either “Prolonged period of time” spent “within approximately 6 feet (2 meters) or within the room or care area” of an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 or “Direct contact with fluids from the nose or mouth of an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19.” Examples include sharing eating or drinking utensils, close conversation, or kissing, hugging, and other direct physical contact. “Close contact” does not include activities such as walking by a person or briefly sitting across a waiting room or office.
COVID-19 Self-Screening Answer Key

If YES to ANY of questions 1-4:

“It is advised that you call the San Antonio COVID-19 Testing Center to get registered for a FREE COVID-19 test. Please call (210)-233-5970 between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM to complete the registration process for a COVID-19 test. The San Antonio COVID-19 Testing Center is open between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM every day. If you call outside of those hours you will not be able to register for the test.”

If NO to ALL of questions 1-4: “Your current symptoms do not indicate that you need to be tested.”
Attachment III: COVID-19 SAHomelink Prioritization Policy

Until further notice, clients in SAHomelink who meet any of the following conditions will be prioritized for housing through the SAHomelink Coordinated Entry system:

- Age 55 and older*
- Chronic health condition such as diabetes, blood pressure, lung or heart disease*
- COVID-19 Symptomatic/Diagnosis
- COVID symptomatic with test pending
- Exiting medical unit
- Chronically homeless
- Families with children under 18
- Families fleeing DV
- Head of Household age 24 and younger

*If a client meets these 2 conditions, they may be placed directly into a housing program with prior approval from the CoC Lead. If it is an emergency placement during the weekend or after 5PM on weekdays, the agency may obtain approval post-placement. Please email ce@sarahomeless.org with all relevant details regarding client to request approval.
Appendices

Client Quarantine & Isolation Options for People Experiencing Homelessness

Quarantine – Governments use quarantines to stop the spread of contagious diseases. They are for people who do not have symptoms but were exposed to the sickness.

Isolation – Serves the same purpose of quarantine but is reserved for those who are already sick. It keeps infected people away from healthy people to prevent the sickness from spreading.


Isolation Care Facility Room Rules – COSA Office of Emergency Management

Non-Congregate Approaches to Sheltering for COVID-19 Homeless Response

How are CoCs Expanding their Social Distancing, Quarantine, and Isolation Capacity during the COVID-19 Outbreak?

General Guidance for Shelters

Interim Guidance for Homeless Service Providers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Shelter Management During an Infectious Disease Outbreak

General Guidance for Unsheltered/Encampments

Responding to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) among People Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness

Protecting Health & Well-being of People in Encampments During an Infectious Disease Outbreak

Unsheltered Food/Hygiene Resources

Special Considerations for Youth

Mental Health Support during Coronavirus for Young People

Digital Safety during Coronavirus

Free Spectrum Internet Resources

Special Considerations for Veterans

Referral Form for SSVF Emergency Housing Assistance (At Risk COVID-19)
Tracking Form for SSVF Emergency Housing Assistance (At Risk COVID-19)

HUD-VASH SSVF Referral Packet COVID-19

Special Considerations for Families

National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV): Resources on the Response to COVID-19

Local Funding Resources for Homeless Service Providers

San Antonio Area Foundation COVID-19 Response Fund

HEB My Community Investment

Guidance for Federal Grantees

CoC

- Using Continuum of Care Program Funds for Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response
- FAQ – Can CoC project administrative funds be used to train recipient staff to safely deliver assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic?

ESG

- Using a Disaster Policy to Fund Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response with ESG
- Eligible ESG Costs for Infectious Disease Preparedness
- FAQ – Can ESG funds be used to train staff on how to deliver services during the COVID-19 pandemic, including how to recognize symptoms, how to protect recipient staff from infection, and how to protect against spreading the virus while providing assistance?

SSVF

- VA Memo on Available Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Resources to Place Homeless Veterans at High-Risk of COVID-19
- Referral and Tracking Forms, FAQs

Tracking Data in HMIS

COVID-19 HMIS Data Tracking for Service Providers