



Winter Shelter Season FAQs

The following document outlines frequently asked questions about Project Homekey, and provides general responses for staff and Board members to communicate with key stakeholders. Please refer all additional questions to info@tahoehomeless.org

Will there be a Warm Room this year?

The short answer is: Yes and No. We have a strategy to provide shelter and services.

The longer answer: For the past five (5) winters, Tahoe Coalition has leased properties to provide congregate (mass) emergency shelter to about 30 individuals each night, for about four (4) months. Individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness were provided with a thin mat and blanket, and slept on the floor a few feet apart from each other. Our staff provided warm beverages and light snacks, and other basic items such as dry socks and hygiene products.

The Warm Room program was highly effective in saving lives, reducing injury and illness, preventing emergency room visits, and helping unsheltered individuals connect with supportive services. About 40% of our shelter guests are employed, and about 60% are people with permanent disabilities or seniors over 62 years old. The South Shore community of caring neighbors contributed countless volunteer hours, in-kind and financial donations, and other gestures of support for the Warm Room.

This year, things will look different. Due to COVID-19 restrictions and safety precautions, TCH is following CDC and HUD guidance to prevent spread among vulnerable clients and the staff members who serve them. Instead of mass sheltering, TCH launched an intensive campaign to secure much-needed affordable housing and applied for Project Homekey funding. We applied for and received funding to purchase three (3) SRO properties which will be used for affordable housing with on-site services. Program participants will be connected to critical resources and stabilizing health connections, and then supported to secure permanent housing.

How were the Homekey properties paid for?

The properties were purchased as part of Project Homekey, a statewide program funded by the Federal CARES emergency package for COVID-19 response efforts. The funds go directly to the acquisition of the properties, and TCH has secured philanthropic funding to subsidize the initial operating expenses in addition to tenant rents.



What kind of properties were purchased?

Each of the three (3) SRO properties is approximately 24 units, with an additional on-site manager’s unit at each location. All of the properties are located in non-residential areas along the main transit corridors of Emerald Bay Rd. and Lake Tahoe Blvd. We will share more information as we assume ownership and move into full operations.

What will happen to current property residents?

Some of the current residents will qualify for the Homekey program and will be supported to ensure they have the right resources to remain stably housed. Some residents may already be stably housed but paying too much in rent or living in too small a unit for their household size. Every resident household will be provided with supportive services to identify appropriate housing options that reduce their rent burden and accommodate their household size and needs.

The Homekey funding requires that persons living at the property have income no greater than 30% AMI (Annual Median Income), for a household of one (1), this is no more than \$18,150 annually. The intent of this restriction is to provide these small spaces to the most vulnerable members of our community, who are most at risk of suffering complications from COVID-19. Current residents that do not meet this income requirement, will be given proper notice to vacate, under the law. The TCH Housing team will provide a list of housing locations in and around the South Lake Tahoe Community. Additionally, should residents request additional help in locating alternative housing, TCH’s Housing and Services teams will work with residents to identify and help remove barriers that may impact their ability to locate alternative housing.

How will new residents be selected?

Our incoming neighbors will be screened according to standard eligibility criteria, including vulnerability, medical fragility, homeless status, and other factors. All clients must be referred from the Coordinated Entry System’s existing By-Name-List of households.

What rules will residents be required to follow?

All residents will sign agreements that outline clear program guidelines and behavioral expectations. Staff will oversee adherence to these agreements on a daily basis and make decisions about denial of service for any serious concerns.

What services will be provided to clients?



Our skilled Services team provides a comprehensive suite of supportive services at each location, and will be available 24/7 to respond to client emergencies, as needed. Our team provides medical referrals, case management, housing placement, employment and income connections, and other supports

How will the properties be managed?

Our Housing team has several full-time staff who collectively have decades of experience managing similar properties. Our Housing team will be available for all property-related concerns, such as maintenance, landscaping, parking, security, etc. Our Services team will be on site throughout the day to offer support to clients around scheduling medical appointments, and coordinated other support services. Our team is available on a 24/7 basis to respond to emergencies and other concerns.

How can I refer someone for housing?

If you're concerned about yourself or an unsheltered neighbor, please contact our team at (530) 600-2822. Anyone who calls our team can ask questions about our services, complete an initial intake appointment, and receive referrals for immediate support. All of our housing placements are selected from the Coordinated Entry System's By Name List, which prioritizes our most vulnerable clients through a standard process.

How can I get involved in supporting these programs?

We love volunteers and donors! We offer many opportunities to contribute your skills, time, and support, including meal prep and delivery for medically fragile clients, winter dog walking for homebound clients, holiday decorating and gift baskets, transportation to medical appointments, phone calls to prevent loneliness among isolated seniors, and many other helpful activities. We promise you'll come away with a full heart and tons of gratitude.

Who can I ask if I have more questions?

If you have questions about Tahoe Coalition, our supportive services, or our affordable housing programs, please email info@tahoehomeless.org or call (530) 600-2822.