

Homeless Resource Center

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated July 26, 2019

Men's Resource Center Updates

What is the schedule for opening the men's resource center located on 1000 West in South Salt Lake?

Construction of the men's resource center is scheduled to be complete in mid-September. The Road Home will then start shifting staff and completing training. Homeless men will start moving into the facility in October. Thirty days after construction of the facility is complete, the existing downtown shelter will permanently close.

Is the state taking over the men's resource center?

No. On July 25, 2019 a resolution was circulated to the Shelter the Homeless board to transfer ownership of the 1000 West and 3380 South property, where the men's resource center is located, over to the state of Utah. The state would then execute a mutually satisfactory lease with Shelter the Homeless and then the occupancy permit once construction is complete, allowing the opening of that resource center to avoid further delays.

Why is it necessary for the state to own the men's resource center property?

Shelter the Homeless and the City of South Salt Lake have been negotiating terms in a good faith effort to secure a Conditional Use Permit (CUP), wherein the city lays out the conditions for an organization to operate, but the city has set forth "non-negotiable" terms that essentially eliminate the ability to operate a homeless resource center in a manner that will reasonably serve the needs of its clients.

Resource Center Operations

What is a Resource Center, and how is it different from a shelter?

The resource centers are not simply shelters; they provide a new seamless system for delivering services to individuals experiencing homelessness. Food, medical care, employment assistance and case management and other partners will be accessible on site.

How will people be transported and connected between services in different parts of the county?

One of the major benefits of the resource center model is that essential services are provided within the resource centers. Food will be provided on site and a mobile health clinic will travel to each resource center. All three resource centers are located near public transit routes and will have vehicles available to assist individuals requiring extra assistance.

Will the resource centers operate year-round?

Yes.

Which organizations will operate the three resource centers?

Three experienced homeless service providers will each operate one resource center. The Road Home will operate the men's resource center in South Salt Lake. Volunteers of America will operate the women's resource center in Salt Lake City. Catholic Community Services will operate the combined men's and women's shelter in Salt Lake City. All three facilities are owned by the nonprofit organization Shelter the Homeless.

Closing the Downtown Shelter

What is the new deadline for closing the downtown shelter?

Since the fall of 2018, it was understood there would be delays with the construction of the men's resource center located in South Salt Lake. It was announced that the downtown shelter will close 30 days after construction is completed on the final resource center. This has not changed. Once construction is complete, the state will close the downtown shelter within 30 days.

Is The Road Home going to close?

While the downtown shelter facility will be closing, The Road Home will not be closing. [The Road Home](#) is a private non-profit agency that assists individuals and families experiencing homelessness, and will continue to provide services at several locations, including the Midvale family shelter and the new resource center on 10th West.

Will The Road Home continue to operate the Midvale Center for families with children?

Yes

System Capacity

Are we losing beds with the new model? What happens in the winter time? How is overflow handled?

No, there will not be a loss of beds with the new model. The current downtown community shelter has 697 beds. There will be 700 beds in the three new resource centers. The difference between the current downtown shelter and the new resource center model is what is done when bed capacity is full. Currently, the downtown shelter utilizes the winter overflow at St. Vincent de Paul and is able to put mats on the ground in open spaces inside the shelter. The new resource centers will not allow capacity to exceed the number of beds. Instead, greater emphasis is being placed on diversion and housing to reduce the number of individuals needing shelter. St. Vincent de Paul will still be used as a winter overflow. In addition, a contingency plan is being established for emergency situations (e.g. extreme cold or heat).

Is additional housing being added? When?

Hundreds of units of additional permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless people will be opening over the next two years in Salt Lake City.

- Denver Street - 22 units - 2019
- First Step House - 79 units - 2020
- Magnolia - 65 units - 2020
- Pamela's Place - 100 units - 2020
- 5th East Apartments - 75 units - 2020

- 426 Apartments - 40 units - 2020
- Additional vouchers for market rate units with supportive services will also be available

Won't this cause of influx of homeless people from other states?

There is no evidence to suggest that people come to Utah from out of state to take advantage of homelessness resources. Virtually every city in the country is experiencing an affordable housing crisis and has people experiencing homelessness and is working to provide adequate services.

What happens with unsheltered people and those who do not want to engage in services?

There have always been homeless individuals who do not engage with the shelter system for a variety of reasons. Some people don't feel safe in a shelter or don't feel they are able to follow the rules. Some aren't comfortable interacting with service providers. Couples don't want to be split up into different shelters and people don't want to be separated from their pets. PTSD or other mental health conditions could make staying in a shelter impossible.

State partners recently developed a toolkit to assist cities in developing their own community response to unsheltered homelessness, which may include street outreach, close coordination across law enforcement agencies, periodic clean-ups of encampments and community involvement.

Service providers will continue to do their best to serve unsheltered homeless populations with street outreach and connecting them to services, as possible.

Coordinated Entry

How will coordinated entry work? How will people be connected with the right resource center or other provider?

Coordinated entry is a process designed to quickly identify, assess, refer and connect people in crisis to housing and assistance, no matter where they show up to ask for help. It can pave the way for more efficient homeless assistance systems by:

- Helping people move through the system faster to housing
- Reducing new entries into homelessness by consistently offering prevention and diversion resources upfront
- Improving data collection and quality and providing accurate information on what kind of assistance consumers need

An effective coordinated entry system functions as a single system from entry to exit and all providers are performing their roles in moving people from entry to exit. All service providers within the system are responsible for implementing coordinated entry within their purview, while a single agency provides oversight of the process.

For the Salt Lake area coordinated entry system, Salt Lake County will serve as the oversight agency, while Utah Community Action will provide coordinated intake services at all three resource centers. Utah Community Action staff will conduct the initial assessment for each person who comes to a resource center, determining the best place for the person to stay that night and facilitating placement at a resource center or another appropriate place.

Individuals can call 801-990-9999 to start the intake process 24 hours a day.

Law Enforcement

Will law enforcement continue to have a presence in the area after the downtown community shelter closes?

The Department of Public Safety is funded to provide law enforcement support in the Rio Grande area through June 2020.

Other

How will you measure success?

Utah's goals for homelessness are to reduce the average length of stay in emergency shelter, increase successful transitions into housing and reduce the number of people who return to homelessness at some point in the future (recidivism).

What will happen to the service providers that are located downtown?

Service providers will continue to operate and serve their clients in the ways that they believe are the most effective. Adjustments to specific services may be made as the resource centers become operational to better meet the needs of clients.

How will homeless people be notified of the changes?

Ongoing informational sessions are being held at the Weigand Center and at the library to inform people experiencing homelessness about the transition. A [virtual video tour](#) allows people to see inside the centers and learn about them before they open. The hotline is also available to answer questions at 801-990-9999. Case Managers at the Downtown Community Shelter are actively assessing and engaging with clients on an individual basis as the homeless resource centers open to help them transition to housing or to a new homeless resource center.