



Office of the City Manager

November 30, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: *DWR* Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager  
Re: 2023-24 Winter and Inclement Weather Shelter Locations and Hours

This memo provides an update on the City's 2023-2024 Winter Shelter and Inclement Weather shelters.

Winter Shelter 2023-2024 Information

This Winter, the City of Berkeley will once again activate two winter shelter programs.

Details are as follows:

**Inclement Weather-Only Shelter**

This shelter opens on a night-by-night basis when weather criteria are met (specifically, 45 degrees or below and/or 50% or higher chance of rain).

- LOCATION: Veterans Memorial Building Auditorium, 1931 Center Street.
- OPEN DATES: 11/27/23 – 4/15/24 when weather criteria are met.
- HOURS OF OPERATION: Monday-Saturday, 6 p.m. – 8 a.m.; Sunday, 3:30 p.m. - 8 a.m.
- BED CAPACITY: 40 beds
- MEALS: Dinner served
- ACCESS: first come, first served

The inclement weather only shelter had previously operated at North Berkeley Senior Center. This facility is used daily for Aging Services programming and frequently for City Commission meetings, and the daily transition to a night-time shelter proved too burdensome on staff and the facility alike. Staff were able to identify and perform minor but necessary Fire and Building Code fixes to the Veterans' Building Auditorium at 1947 Center Street as an alternative location this year. This new location has the benefit of co-locating services at the same location as Dorothy Day House's daytime Berkeley Community Resource Center programming, so shelter guests can easily move right downstairs in the morning for food, access to showers/laundry/bathrooms etc., the clothes closet, drop-in case management and services, and a warm place to be out of

the elements. One of the City's locker programs sits in the Veterans' Building courtyard as well.

### **Seasonal Winter Shelter**

This shelter is open 24/7 during the cold weather season.

- LOCATION: Old City Hall
- OPEN DATES: 12/4/23 – 4/15/24
- HOURS OF OPERATION: 24/7 during open dates
- BED CAPACITY: 25 beds
- MEALS: 3 meals daily
- ACCESS: beds are filled through 211/Coordinated Entry assignment and/or direct outreach referrals from the street, including the City's Homeless Response Team.

In order to be used again for 24/7 seasonal sheltering this year, Fire Code standards required the installation of fire sprinklers at Old City Hall. After Council approved budget for them in the FY24 budget adjustment, staff worked to design, permit, contract with a vendor, and install these sprinklers. In addition to shifting funding sources (namely, the loss of CARES Act funding), this requirement explains the slight delay in opening the winter shelter.

To maximize chances that Berkeleyans get first access to our shelters, our community agency partners and outreach teams connect with people who are unhoused living in Berkeley. For more information, people should contact Dorothy Day House at 510-606-2026 or 510-705-1325.

Our ultimate goal is to help people onto the path for long-term housing. Thus, we also encourage those seeking short-term or immediate shelter to also call 211 or 510-495-0131, which connects them to our coordinated entry system and onto the path for long-term housing.

### Recent History of Winter Shelter

Prior to the pandemic, Dorothy Day House (DDH) operated Old City Hall as an intermittent inclement weather shelter between late November and April 15 when conditions were cold or rainy. DDH also activated a daytime shelter during poor air quality events in 2019, 2020 and 2021. During the pandemic, Berkeley shifted from the storm-activated inclement weather shelter model to an ongoing winter shelter model, which was open every day, 24/7 from late November to mid-April in 2020-2021 and again in 2021-2022. For the past two years, the City has funded Dorothy Day House to operate the ongoing winter shelter instead of 45 nights for an inclement weather shelter; last winter season, with extra CARES Act funds, the winter shelter opened in early October 2022 as a nightly 24/7 shelter.

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Last year, in addition to the 24/7 winter seasonal shelter, the City also activated an inclement weather shelter at North Berkeley Senior Center, open on cold and/or rainy nights. Due to high levels of precipitation and low temperatures last winter, the inclement weather shelter was activated for an unprecedented 127 nights and served 440 unduplicated individuals.

cc: LaTanya Bellow, Deputy City Manager  
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