



## **Nevada Cares Campus Emergency Shelter and Cares Campus Safe Camp Fall and Winter 2021 Plan**

### **Nevada Cares Campus Emergency Shelter**

As we move into these cold seasons, we have activated a warming center at the Nevada Cares Campus when the temperature dips below 35°F. This local warming center will be opened during inclement weather to protect individuals from freezing weather, rain, and snow. As the emergency shelter admits men and couples, single women who arrive at the Nevada Cares Campus shelter are referred to Our Place, the local women and family shelter. In the event Our Place is full, women are welcomed at the Nevada Cares Campus.

There have been suggestions proposed for additional capacity, such as the Community Assistance Center (CAC) on Record St., or the use of motel vouchers. Should there be a need for overflow at the Nevada Cares Campus, the County has determined the most effective approach would be to provide overflow capacity on or near the Campus, due to staffing and logistical efficiencies.

Capacity at the Nevada Cares Campus fluctuates daily. While occasionally there may be a wait time, beds are available every day and so far, no one has had to wait more than 4 hours for a bed. We welcome anyone needing a bed or a place to come in from the elements.

### **Nevada Cares Campus Safe Camp**

The Safe Camp pilot program provides a safe location for those who opt to live in tents rather than in a group shelter. The Housing and Homeless team has been continually assessing this pilot program and the decision to order individual shelters will allow the replacement of tents moving forward to provide individual shelter and address weather and air quality issues. The ModPod shelters are anticipated to arrive in late November.

In the interim, staff monitors every tent multiple times a day to check on the safety of residents. In the event temperatures dip below 50° F, staff assists with optional transportation to the Nevada Cares Campus sprung structure for willing participants.

The Safe Camp Participant Advisory Board has been engaged and has provided feedback regarding cold weather and other needs. This board meets on a weekly basis and advises the Contracted Operator and the Washoe County Homeless Services Program Specialist on how they can improve services. From the requests made by participants, new blankets, gloves, beanies, thermal socks, tarps, clips, sleeping bags and tents have been distributed at the Safe Camp. Additionally, hot coffee and water are also available to participants. Portable propane heaters are not allowed in tents at the Safe Camp due to fire safety risk and close proximity of the tents. Personal propane heaters pose a danger for small personal camping tents and have previously been implicated in a tent fatality locally.

### **Local Warming Centers/ Community Partnerships**

Demand for shelter may exceed current capacity during inclement weather. Staff continue to explore community partnerships and buildings that could be used as warming centers in addition to the Nevada Cares Campus. We welcome community partnerships to meet the demands this season.