



Shelter Stay Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Housing-Focused Program is to provide our guests experiencing homelessness with temporary shelter and support. This program is designed to be a short-term resource that helps guests take steps toward finding and keeping permanent housing.

Guests are expected to actively participate in housing-focused activities while staying at the shelter. The length of stay is based on progress toward housing goals and should not last longer than necessary to secure permanent housing or enter a program that supports long-term stability.

Shelter Entry Eligibility

- Guests must be physically self-sufficient to stay in shelter. This includes being able to get on and off bunks unassisted and independently manage personal hygiene, eating, bathing, dressing, and using the restroom.
- Guests must be 18 years of age or older upon entry.
- Guests must agree to engage in housing-focused activities as outlined in their individualized Housing Stability Plan.
- Guests must be experiencing literal homelessness according to the HUD definition upon entry.

Shelter Application & Waitlist

- Applicants are admitted based on availability.
- Prospective guests will complete a Shelter Application in-person at Our Daily Bread.
- Admission to shelter and case management services is based on bed availability. Guests may be placed on a waitlist if beds are unavailable.
- Day shelter services are available to all guests regardless of program admission. All guests may enroll in day shelter services regardless of program availability.
- When space becomes available, a guest has three business days to claim their bed before it is offered to the next person on the list. Guests who are passed over retain their position on the waitlist until they have gone 30 days without verified service engagement.
- Individuals will be admitted on a first-come, first-served basis as beds are available, as long as they are still willing to engage in taking steps towards housing.

To remain on the shelter waitlist, individuals must:

1. Remain engaged in services with an authorized service provider at least once every 30 days. Authorized service providers include nonprofit organizations within Denton County that participate in the Texas Homeless Network's Balance of State Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Examples include but are not limited to Salvation Army Denton, Interfaith Ministries and Giving Grace Street Outreach. Engagement must be verifiable through HMIS.
2. Be reachable by phone, email or in person to receive notifications of bed availability.

Stay Period

- Guests are eligible for an initial stay of up to 14 days upon entry. Within seven days, they must complete a Diversion assessment and collaborate with case management to develop an individualized Housing Stability Plan.
- Throughout the stay, guests must demonstrate progress on their Housing Stability Plan and actively pursue permanent housing solutions.
- Case management supports may include referrals to partner agencies, employment resources, and housing opportunities.
- Case managers will track progress weekly and provide tailored support to help guests overcome barriers.
- Continued stays are permitted if guests demonstrate measurable progress on their Housing Stability Plan.
- Guests are expected to complete 20 hours per week of volunteer service at the shelter. Adjustments may be made based on employment or participation in work programs.
- Guests who do not complete Housing Stability Plan action items due to inaction for two weeks in a row, or three or more weeks total during their stay, may be subject to involuntary exit.

Guest Orientation – Leave Policy:

- A guest who is away from shelter for one day may be considered as no longer needing shelter services.
- Any leave from the shelter must be requested in advance and approved by your Case Manager.
- Absences of more than two nights without prior approval will result in forfeiture of your assigned room.
- Leave requests must be submitted at least two days in advance, and approval is not guaranteed.

Involuntary Shelter Exit

- Guests meet weekly with Case Managers to review progress. Documentation is recorded in writing and in HMIS. A copy of Housing Stability Plan progress will be shared with guests.
- Guests failing to meet Housing Stability Plan progress requirements two consecutive weeks, or three weeks total, may be referred for involuntary exit.
- The Guest Exit Committee will review each case. This Committee includes Our Daily Bread's Chief Operating Officer, the City of Denton Stability Caseworker, a City of Denton Crisis Intervention Clinician, and the guest's Case Manager. Other individuals may be designated by the Our Daily Bread Executive Director or the City of Denton's Homeless Programs Manager, respectively.
- The Committee reviews documentation and determines whether continued stay is appropriate using the Shelter Exit Assessment Tool (S.E.A.T.).
- If exit is required, the guest will receive written notice and the opportunity to appeal to Our Daily Bread's Administrative Review Committee, which includes the Executive Director and designated Our Daily Bread Board of Directors. members. Guests will have three days to make alternative arrangements before exiting.
- If continued stay is approved, the guest will receive written notice with updated expectations and a remediation plan.
- All decisions will be documented in HMIS, and the Case Manager will provide a written summary to the guest.
- The Shelter Advisory Board will meet quarterly to review aggregate data, including waitlist management, progression of stays, housing outcomes, involuntary exits, appeals, disparities, and feedback from guests and staff.

Inclement Weather Exceptions

- Length of Stay Policy requirements may be suspended during activation of Inclement Weather operations. During these periods, the shelter's focus is immediate safety and protection from extreme conditions.
- Guests seeking shelter during inclement weather will be accommodated based on Inclement Weather policy, subject to available space and safety protocols.
- Once Inclement Weather operations end, shelter admission will return to standard eligibility and capacity guidelines.