



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

TO: City Council

DATE: April 14, 2025

DEPARTMENT: Police Department

PREPARED BY: Neil Cervenka, Police Chief

PRESENTER: Neil Cervenka, Police Chief

AGENDA TITLE: Extreme Weather Shelter 24/25 Season Report

RECOMMENDATION

Receive report.

BACKGROUND

The Fort Bragg Police Department operates the City's Extreme Weather Shelter (EWS), which is an overflow shelter of the Hospitality House for unhoused individuals during extreme weather events.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

This is the third winter the Fort Bragg Police Department Care Response Unit has operated the Extreme Weather Shelter (EWS). This was the second year we have received funding through Mendocino County and the State of California Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) grant.

The EWS was in operated from November 15, 2024 through March 31, 2025. The rules of EWS are the same as those of the Hospitality House – no fighting, no drugs, no alcohol, and must be in their room by a certain time. Parameters to open the EWS are: more than 0.1 inch of precipitation is expected from 10:00 PM through 6:00 AM, or temperature is predicted to be below 40 degrees during those same hours. Every day at noon of the EWS season, a Care Response Unit team member checks the National Weather Service (Eureka) forecast for the next 18 hours. If predicted conditions are expected to meet the aforementioned thresholds, Hospitality House is notified EWS will be open. A CRU teammember responds to Hospitality House during the daily check in, and enrolls those not able to get a bedspace in the Hospitality House. This provides an opportunity for CRU teammembers to work with the unhoused population and begin to work on more permanent solutions. Also, random checks were conducted throughout the season to ensure clients were following the rules they agreed to.

During 24/25 operational window of EWS, Fort Bragg experienced a particularly cold and wet winter with 31 days experiencing a low temperature of below 40 degrees and total rainfall of over 42 inches.

Average precipitation for Fort Bragg from November through March is 34 inches of rain and there were only 18 days below 40 degrees in the 23/24 EWS operational time period.

This resulted in the EWS being open 83 of the 136 operational period nights. In total, 644 bed nights were provided to 107 people. This was a 40% increase in nights open and a 50% increase bed nights used as compared to the 23/24 season. However, there was a 15% drop in unique individuals using the EWS this season.

Despite the increased usage, only eight (8) calls for police service were generated at the hotels as a result of EWS.

EWS had a crisis mid-season, when the hotel contracted to provide rooms was suddenly unavailable. We were notified of this the morning of a predicted atmospheric river. The owner of Surf Motel quickly stepped in and assumed the contract at the same room rate and terms as the previous hotel.

Success stories from the 2024/2025 season include:

- The severe storms in November brought in multiple new clients who had previously been reluctant to engage with CRU services.
- Coordinated with the local churches and the Fort Bragg Food Bank during the November storms to provide 80 emergency meals to EWS clients.
- EWS offered the opportunity to assist the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office by providing emergency shelter to a victim of domestic violence living outside of Fort Bragg.
- CRU was able to build rapport with a difficult client over three seasons of EWS resulting in the client accepting transitional housing for the first time.

FISCAL IMPACT/FUNDING SOURCE

All expenses are paid for by the HHAP grant administered by Mendocino County.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

Not applicable.

STRATEGIC PLAN CONSISTENCY

Goal 7A: Promote the City and highlight key accomplishments.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Not applicable.

COUNCIL REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Receive report.

ALTERNATIVES:

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS:

None.

NOTIFICATION:

None applicable.