

Purpose

This job tool provides guidance for procuring non-congregate hotel lodging for disaster clients displaced by disaster events during the COVID-19 pandemic. It provides:

- Considerations for readiness activities and planning prior to an event;
- Procedures for securing and paying for hotel rooms for Level 4 and below events;
- Talking points to guide discussions with hotel vendors;
- Expectations when [working with Corporate Lodging Consultants](#) (CLC).

Hotel Acquisition and Payment Matrix

Planning Considerations

Planning for non-congregate sheltering before a disaster occurs is the most important mass care readiness activity during the COVID 19 pandemic. Effective planning includes:

- Regional Disaster Cycle Services (DCS) leadership:
 - Identifies authorized P-Card holders in advance who will reserve rooms when an urgent need arises.
 - Arranges to increase P-Card limits and lift the standard hotel restriction in advance by emailing DROFinance@redcross.org between 8:00 am – 5:00 pm ET, Monday-Friday. For Disaster Action Team (DAT) considerations, refer to the [COVID-19 DAT Response Tactics Job Tool](#).
 - Contacts local hotel vendors to identify capacity and expectations using the [Discussion Points for Hotel Conversations](#) available in this document.
 - Plans for four members per household per room.
 - Considers accommodations for pet needs in planning. Allowance of pets will be in accordance with hotel policy and hotel pet fees are covered by the Red Cross.
 - Considers accommodations for access and functional needs. Additional guidance may be found in [Non-Congregate Shelter Assessability Checklist](#).
 - Does **not** use *Facility Use Agreements* for hotels/motels; however, regions may choose to develop a log to track the details of identified potential hotels.
- The HQ Sheltering Manager identifies a Non-Congregate Shelter Client Lodging Coordinator responsible for maintaining client rooming lists by working with the clients, hotels, and their assigned Virtual Lodging Team (VLT) Specialist when using Corporate Lodging Consultants (CLC).

Further guidance on planning considerations can be found in the [Non-Congregate Sheltering Framework](#).

RESPONSE TYPE	PROCEDURES
DAT RESPONSE	Reference procedures in the COVID-19 DAT Response Tactics Job Tool regarding payment of client lodging, including when to provide assistance on Client Assistance Cards and when to use a P-Card.
NO NOTICE LEVEL 2-4 DRO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorized P-Card holders may temporarily provide P-Cards to secure rooms for displaced clients. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If using a P-Card to pay for hotel rooms prior to a CLC contract, list charges on the Disaster Operations Control Form (5266). ○ Once making the determination that a P-Card will be used for non-congregate sheltering, identify a Non-Congregate Shelter Client Lodging Coordinator to track and report all rooms reserved, occupied, cancelled, and nightly rates. This person may be the P-Card holder or designee. ○ The Non-Congregate Shelter Client Lodging Coordinator may request a <i>Cumulative Report</i> from their VLT Specialist, which includes the number of rooms reserved at the hotel, room cost, and cancellations. • Communicate to both the hotel and the client that the Red Cross does not cover incidentals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If a client is unable to provide a deposit/credit card for incidental coverage, then the Non-Congregate Shelter Client Lodging Coordinator may make an exception for P-Cards to cover hotel damages only. ○ Inform client that additional charges may impact future assistance. • Hotels with five or more rooms booked with P-Cards must transition the billing to Corporate Lodging Consultants (CLC), via the VLT, within 72 hours of receiving a DRO designation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The VLT is the designated point of contact with CLC. ○ The Non-Congregate Shelter Client Lodging Coordinator is to contact the VLT at virtuallodgingteam@redcross.org and include the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advise that this is a request to back into a room payment and billing ○ Hotel name and address ○ Point of contact ○ Number of rooms reserved ○ Dates of reservations ○ DR name and # ○ Cardholder name ○ Last 4 digits of the P-Card ○ The VLT will determine if a hotel is unable to transition to CLC.

RESPONSE TYPE	PROCEDURES
NOTICE EVENT/ EXPECTED LEVEL 2-4 DRO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In coordination with emergency management, the region establishes planning assumptions regarding location, duration, and number of households that may be affected by the disaster. • Begin securing CLC-contracted rooms by emailing the VLT at virtuallodgingteam@redcross.org or a specific lodging specialist if assigned to the DRO. Provide the following information: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advise this is a new client hotel request 2. DRO name and DRO # 3. Name and contact information of Red Cross Shelter Site Manager 4. A geographical area to secure hotel(s) 5. Number of hotel rooms needed 6. Number of double or single rooms 7. Reservation start and release dates 8. Special requests such as Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations or adjoining rooms for families 9. Additional requirements for consideration
ANY LEVEL 5+ DRO	<p>If the DRO is anticipated to be a Level 5 or above, then the DDE must contact Vice President, Disaster Operations & Logistics for pre-approval of hotels for non-congregate client lodging</p>

Discussion Points for Hotel Conversations

When identifying local hotel vendors for potential non-congregate client sheltering, it is important for both the vendors and Red Cross to understand how the Red Cross may use that facility in a disaster relief operation during the COVID-19 pandemic. These discussion points help guide the conversation to level set expectations between both parties:

- Identify yourself by name and ask to speak with the manager or owner.
- Explain that you are with the American Red Cross and are calling to inquire which local hotels may be available to work with the Red Cross in the event community residents lose their homes and need a safe environment during and after a disaster.
- Explain that the Red Cross would pay for the client's room and provide clients with all the services performed in our normal disaster shelters (meals, casework, etc.). Instead of sleeping in a dormitory/congregate shelter, clients would be lodged at a hotel.
- Discuss the process for securing rooms:
 - Depending on the type of incident, rooms may be secured by credit card (P-Card) or by CLC. Inquire if either payment option would be problematic.
 - Explain that we often do not know how many clients need rooms until the event happens. Ask if this would be an issue or if they have a limit on how many rooms they will provide.
- Discuss the details of room availability and services:
 - What is the hotel's availability within the immediate timeframe of known disaster threats?
 - Ask about the anticipated rate and reservation process. This is for information and planning purposes only. The region should not enter into contracts.
 - We understand that staffing in the COVID-19 environment is challenging. What is the staffing footprint of your hotel?
 - How many people can the front desk handle arriving at their property late at night?

- Can we reach the hotel directly 24/7 or are there certain hours that hotel phones are rolled to the central reservation site?
- Does the hotel have a restaurant and meal preparation capability? If so, would they be willing to enter into a feeding contract to feed Red Cross clients staying there? (Forward information to the Feeding function on the DRO or in the region.)
- Are there concerns with bringing in food from outside vendors?
- Is your hotel pet-friendly? If so, is there a security deposit required for pets? How much per night/per stay?
- Confirm that accessible rooms are available for individuals who request them. This may include users of mobility equipment and individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. (See the [Non-Congregate Shelter Accessibility Checklist](#).)
- What, if any, house keeping services does the hotel provide?
- Explain that the Red Cross does not normally cover client incidentals. Does the hotel have the ability to limit charges?
- Do you have any sister properties in the area that might be able to help as well?
- Express that, while we hope we won't need their services, we are thankful for their willingness to help.

Working with Corporate Lodging Consultants

Corporate Lodging Consultants (CLC) is a trusted third-party partner vendor that works with the Red Cross during disasters to secure hotel lodging needs for our workforce. Traditionally, this is facilitated by Staff Services/Lodging workers on the DRO work with CLC. During this the COVID-19 pandemic unique response environment, Corporate Lodging Consultants (CLC) has agreed to support the Red Cross with client lodging as we leverage hotels as a non-congregate alternative to congregate shelters during the COVID-19 outbreak. When working with Corporate Lodging Consultants (CLC), it is important to understand mutual expectations.

- All requests to CLC are facilitated by an assigned Virtual Lodging Specialist from the Red Cross Virtual Lodging Team (VLT). Regions should not contact CLC directly. Specific guidance on how to request CLC through the VLT and necessary information is provided in the [Hotel Acquisition and Payment Matrix](#) in this document.
- Turn-around time to secure newly requested rooms will depend on hotel availability in that area.
- Some hotels may only be able to negotiate CLC room blocks when certain management staff is available. If there is an urgent need to place clients in a hotel with known availability, a P-Card may be used for initial payment while working with the VLT to transition billing to CLC within 72 hours.
- Every hotel's cancellation policy is different; however, the best chance of a hotel releasing Red Cross' obligation is to CANCEL any unused rooms no later than 24 hours after it is discovered the rooms are not being used. Cancellations should be facilitated through the VLT and not directly with the hotel site.
- CLC provides the AD of Finance and the VLT with a *Cumulative Report* five times a day on weekdays. Weekend lodging activity is reflected on reports Monday afternoon.
 - This report includes the number of rooms reserved for the Red Cross and the nightly rate.
 - The DRO Director, Non-Congregate Shelter Client Lodging Coordinator, or other designee may request this report from their assigned Virtual Lodging Specialist from the VLT.
- Client tracking is the responsibility of our Mass Care workforce therefore, means of contacting clients must be established during initial intake/screening.
 - CLC does not track room assignments
 - Hotels may have policies in place that prevent them from disclosing the names of individuals assigned to specific rooms.