



Preparing to Register and Stay in a Red Cross Shelter

<p><i>We're Here For You</i></p>	<p>We understand this is a difficult and unfamiliar situation for you. Sudden changes from a disaster create worry, confusion, and sadness – feelings that may be compounded by concerns about COVID-19.</p>
<p><i>Everyone is Welcome</i></p>	<p>Everyone is welcome at a Red Cross shelter. The Red Cross does not discriminate based on nationality, race, religious beliefs, class, disability, political opinions, sexual orientation, or gender identity.</p> <p>Please alert a shelter worker if you need additional support due to a disability, a chronic health or medical condition, or if you are more comfortable communicating in a language other than English, including Sign Language.</p>
<p><i>Safety and Health Screening</i></p>	<p>The Red Cross is committed to the health and safety of everyone in the shelter. We have put procedures and protocols in place to support this, which includes screening everyone before they enter the shelter.</p> <p>If you leave the shelter, we may require you to go through a health and temperature screening again before coming back. In addition, everyone must sign in and out when coming and going from the shelter.</p>
<p><i>Small Shelter Staff – Opportunities to Help!</i></p>	<p>Because of COVID-19, our shelter staff may be smaller than usual. This is a hand-picked team of experienced volunteers who are committed to serving your needs.</p> <p>The shelter staff needs your help to support everyone's recovery. We encourage you to seek opportunities to help the shelter run smoothly -- see a Red Cross worker to learn more. Examples include setting up cots, distributing supplies, helping during meals, and keeping the shelter clean and safe.</p>

Basic Information and Rules for Staying in the Shelter

<i>Treat everyone with respect</i>	Please treat everyone in the shelter with respect, and we will do the same. Negative behavior, including foul language, abusive behavior, stealing, destruction of property, or other behavior that is disruptive to others, will not be tolerated.
<i>Social Distancing</i>	<p>Social distancing means creating physical space between people to avoid spreading illness. This safety measure means we all stay at least 6 feet (1.8 meters or about the height of a standard refrigerator) away from other people to lessen the chance of catching or sharing COVID-19. This space helps limit exposure to droplets from coughing, sneezing, or talking.</p> <p>Keeping this distance may feel difficult and unnatural – it helps to remember that this is a way to care for one another. For safety, please spend most of your time in your individual space in the dormitory area. Depending upon the layout of the shelter, there may be a common area that follows social distancing guidelines.</p>
<i>Registration</i>	<p>We appreciate your patience during the registration process. After screening, go directly to Registration to become a shelter client.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please form a line with 6 feet between each person / family unit while waiting. • If you need help in line, please alert a shelter worker. • You will receive one (1) registration form per family. Please fill it out while in line, if possible. If you do not know how to fill out parts of the form, leave them blank. • You will meet with a worker who will go through your registration form with you and ask about your needs while you are in the shelter. You will be welcomed into the shelter and assigned a specific cot location. • Any belongings that you bring into the shelter need to fit under your cot. • If you need accommodations while staying in the shelter, please let a worker know. • After registering, everyone must sign in and out when coming and going from the shelter. If you leave the shelter, we may require you to go through a health and temperature screening before re-entering. This helps us maintain a safe and secure shelter environment.
<i>Dormitory Layout</i>	<p>Adjusting to a temporary dormitory situation can be difficult. For everyone’s safety and comfort, we ask that everyone follow social distancing guidelines in the dormitory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 6 feet of space between cots. • Sleep head-to-toe opposite your neighbors. • Store all of your belongings under your cot. • Do not move any cot. • Do not touch anyone else’s cot or belongings. • Families should seek approval before moving cots closer together. While this is allowed, we must conform with health and safety guidelines for the community. <p>Signs with more details are posted in the shelter dormitory.</p>
<i>Personal Belongings</i>	You may keep belongings with you in the shelter if they fit completely under your cot. We recommend that you lock personal belongings in your car and out of sight. If that is not possible, keep valuable items with you. We cannot assume responsibility for your personal belongings. Please wipe down boxes, bags, and suitcases with disinfectant wipes when you enter the shelter.

<p>Daily Health Checks</p>	<p>We will be conducting regular health checks to monitor everyone in the shelter for symptoms of COVID-19. Regular health checks are one of the best-known ways to ensure we keep our shelter environment healthy and safe.</p> <p>If you exit the shelter doors, we may require you to go through a health screening before re-entering.</p>
<p>Communication</p>	<p>Clear, honest, and helpful two-way communication creates a positive and smoothly running shelter. We know social distancing can create challenges in communication. Please let us know if you need alternative methods of communication with shelter workers or others. We will make every effort to accommodate your needs.</p>
<p>Emotional Support</p>	<p>Staying in a shelter after a disaster can be stressful. If you, your children, or your family members are feeling stress, anxiety, or the need to talk to someone, trained professional counselors are available to help 24 hours a day. If you want to talk, please let us know.</p>
<p>Personal Protective Equipment</p>	<p>You may notice people wearing personal protective equipment, such as gloves or a face mask. For everyone’s safety, dispose of all personal protective equipment and tissues in a trash can.</p>
<p>Sanitation</p>	<p>In this shelter and to help keep everyone healthy, you will be asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disinfect your own belongings regularly (cots, electronics, toys, etc.); • Wash your hands for 20 seconds regularly; • Dispose of all tissues, masks, gloves, food, and other items in a trash can.
<p>Food</p>	<p>During regularly scheduled mealtimes, please do not form a line to wait for food. Instead, the Shelter Manager will share a plan to keep everyone safe during mealtimes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging hand washing before meals; • Serving individually packaged meals; • Practicing a “set it down and step back” distribution method to support social distancing. <p>If you have special dietary needs, please let a worker know.</p>
<p>Children</p>	<p>In this challenging environment, parents are responsible for supervising their children while in and around the shelter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This responsibility includes reminding children to follow social distancing guidelines. • Because of these guidelines, we cannot offer a communal play area. • Family groupings of cots is allowed for closeness and comfort. • Children should not be left unattended in the shelter. <p>If you would like to move cots or your child needs assistance or accommodations, please talk to a worker.</p>
<p>Reunification with Family and Friends</p>	<p>We know you and your loved ones may be concerned about one another’s well-being. Let family and friends know you are safe by registering on www.redcross.org/safeandwell.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage others affected by this disaster to register. • Re-register when leaving the shelter to notify loved ones of the change. • If you need help in reconnecting with friends and family, talk with a worker.

<p><i>Service and Assistance Animals</i></p>	<p>Service animals and assistance animals covered by state law are welcome in Red Cross shelters. Service animals are trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with access and functional needs, including those with disabilities. Please speak with a worker if your service animal needs food or supplies or there are other accommodations that will make your time in the shelter go more smoothly.</p>
<p><i>Pets and Emotional Support Animals</i></p>	<p>We understand that your pets are very important to you. To keep a safe and healthy environment for all residents, pets are not allowed in this shelter. A shelter worker will try to help you find shelter for your pet.</p>
<p><i>Smoking</i></p>	<p>Smoking of any kind, including e-cigarettes and other smoking devices, is only allowed outside the building in designated smoking areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please follow social distancing guidelines – remain 6 feet apart when smoking. • For safety purposes, matches and lighters may only be used outside the building. • Please dispose of cigarette butts and matches properly. <p>Some shelter buildings (like schools) do not allow smoking. Please ask a worker where smoking is allowed.</p> <p>Note: Everyone must sign in and out when exiting the shelter doors. If you exit the shelter doors to smoke, we may conduct a health check when you return to the shelter.</p>
<p><i>Alcohol, Illegal Drugs, and Weapons</i></p>	<p>To maintain a safe and welcoming environment for everyone, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and weapons (including concealed weapons) are not allowed in the shelter or on the shelter grounds.</p>

Thank you for your flexibility with adjustments that may be made to improve service. The Red Cross views disaster response and relief efforts through a lens of teamwork and mutual care, so we are always working to respond to the specific needs of our clients and the situation of each shelter. We are proud to serve and support you and are grateful for your continued input, patience, and resilience.

In partnership,

Your American Red Cross