



FIRE PREVENTION & PUBLIC SAFETY BUREAU

DIRECTIVE # 45

COLD/WET WEATHER TEMPORARY SHELTERS

Directive # 45 establishes requirements for temporary shelters. Section I of this directive shall apply to temporary shelters operating during extreme temperatures or other severe weather conditions for a maximum of 90 days. Section II shall apply only to shelters for the homeless during the period of a declared shelter crisis, pursuant to Government Code, Section 8698, et seq. and Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 12.81.

Section I

For purposes of Section I, a cold/wet weather temporary shelter is a temporary shelter operating during extreme temperatures or other severe weather conditions in an existing building for a period not to exceed 90 days.

1. Occupant load. See attached sample sketch. There should exist, 6-foot aisles and 4-foot side aisles. Shown are 8-foot aisles, with the expectation that persons will have duffel/storage at the end of beds that will utilize a portion of the 8-foot aisles. Aisles leading to exit doors shall be 8-feet wide and unobstructed by any storage material. Bed and furniture arrangements shall comply with the attached sample sketch.
2. This directive is applicable only to those shelters with a maximum occupancy load of **49** or less. Any facility wishing to establish a shelter or temporary shelter with an occupant load greater than 49 should contact the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) for permit requirements and guidance.
3. Provide a 24-hour **Fire Watch**. A minimum of one person shall be required to perform the duties of a fire watch. If one person cannot survey all areas of the shelter, additional persons will be required. Fire watch personnel must be dedicated to the task of performing a fire watch, not serving food or performing other tasks. They are responsible for a continuous patrol of the shelter for the purpose of detecting fire or other emergencies, and transmitting an immediate alarm to the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) and the occupants.
4. Provide a **basic fire alarm sounding device**. There must be a minimum of one pull station and a bell device in each area that fire watch personnel can activate to alert the occupants of a fire or emergency. A manual device (i.e., whistle or large school bell) may be sufficient.

5. Provide a **fire extinguisher(s)** 2A rating, within 75-feet of every portion of a building, structure or premises used as a shelter.
6. No temporary partitions or construction shall be allowed without first obtaining a permit/approval from the LADBS.
7. Provide smoke/carbon monoxide detectors. All existing hard-wired devices must be operable. If occupancy is not equipped with an existing hard-wired smoke/carbon monoxide detection system, battery-operated detectors may be utilized. Battery-operated detectors shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the specific manufacturers' recommendations and at a minimum of one smoke/carbon monoxide detector shall be installed in each room/area utilized as a shelter or auxiliary room/space. A weekly detector test record shall be maintained on-site and available for LAFD review.

EXCEPTION: Shower facilities

8. Provide emergency lighting in each room/area utilized as part of the shelter. Each exit pathway and required aisle shall contain lighting equivalent to 1-foot candle power and be equipped with a battery back-up. Lighting fixtures can be of the type that plug into the house power.
9. Two exits per floor are required and/or two exits per 50 occupants. All means of egress must be maintained free of any storage or other materials that would render egress hazardous in case of an emergency.
10. Provide exit signs, reflective paper or illuminated. Exit signs shall bear the word "EXIT" in letters no less than 6-inches high with a $\frac{3}{4}$ " stroke on a sharply contrasting background at all exit doors. Exit signs and evacuation routes may be on the same map and shall be centered on all shelter interior walls at a height of no less than 5-feet.
11. If food preparation is to be done on-site, requirements for cooking facilities will be determined on a case-by-case basis, depending on fire/life safety factors. On-site use of open flame devices and cooking operations will result in restrictions in addition to permit and inspection fees.

These are LAFD guidelines and other City agencies should be contacted to ensure compliance with additional City requirements or guidelines. The guidelines set forth in this directive are established to provide minimum fire/life safety for all persons in temporary shelters.



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All entities wishing to operate as a “temporary shelter” shall notify the Fire Prevention Bureau, five business days prior to shelter occupation and obtain LAFD approval prior to shelter operation.

Section II

This section shall apply only to shelters for the homeless established and operated during the period of a declared shelter crisis pursuant to Government Code, Section 8698, et seq. and LAMC, Section 12.81. Other than compliance with the below requirements and those set forth in LAMC, Section 91.8605, and unless otherwise specified in the LAMC, said shelters need not comply with the requirements for Group R occupancies. Emergency shelters established for primary purposes unrelated to sheltering of homeless persons shall require compliance with the LAMC. Additionally, all congregate residential shelters including those established as shelters for the homeless, shall be approved by the LADBS for occupancy.

1. As referenced in this directive, a shelter for the homeless may only be operated by a religious institution or non-profit, charitable organization and must be located on property owned or leased by that institution or organization.
2. Unreinforced masonry and/or non-ductile concrete building shall not be used as a shelter.
3. The maximum occupant load allowed in these facilities shall be the number determined appropriate by the professional service provider operating the facility and be computed at a rate of 70-square feet for the first occupant and 50-square feet for each occupant thereafter. The Superintendent of Building, with concurrence of the fire department may grant an increase of occupancy load provided that an aisle, seating, furniture and fixed equipment diagram substantiating the increase in occupancy load be submitted and approved pursuant to LAMC, Section 91.8605.3. Such diagram shall be posted on-site for each level where an occupant load increase is granted.
4. **Fire Safety Requirements**
 - a. Means of egress shall comply with LAMC, Sections 57.1001 through 57.1031.

- b. Smoke alarms shall be provided in all sleeping areas and shall be installed in accordance with the LAMC (Fire Code), Article 7, Chapter V, inclusive of LAMC, Section 57.907.2.11.
- c. A fire alarm system shall be provided in accordance with the LAMC (Fire Code), Article 7, Chapter V and California Building Code (CBC), Section 907.1.
- d. The use of any open flame and the possession or storage of any combustibles shall not be permitted.

EXCEPTION: The Superintendent of Building may approve the use of open flames and storage of combustibles in these buildings with written concurrence of the fire department.

- e. Sleeping quarters shall be limited to the ground floor only.
- f. Automatic fire sprinklers shall be provided for new and existing buildings or structures as required per the LAMC (Fire Code), Article 7, Chapter V and CBC, Section 903.
- g. New shelter buildings or structures shall be located in accordance with the requirements set forth in Table 602 of the CBC based on the fire-resistance rating of the exterior walls for the proposed type of construction.
- h. Portable fire extinguishers shall be provided per the LAMC (Fire Code), Article 7, Chapter V and Title 19 of the California Code of Regulations.
- i. Tents and membrane structures shall comply with LAMC, Sections 57.3101 through 57.3104, and California Code of Regulations, Title 19, Division 1, Chapter 2, Sections 303, 310, 312, 315, 316, 317, 319, 320, 321t, 324, 325, 326, 332, 334, 335, 340 and 341. The erection of tents and membrane structures shall be limited to the same level of a fire department vehicle access road or lane.
- j. All interior finishes shall comply with LAMC, Sections 57.803 and 57.804.
- k. Fire department access to building and premises identification shall be in compliance with the LAMC, Sections 57.503, 57.504 and 57.505.
- l. All new construction shall be permitted and approved by LADBS.



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5. Structural Requirements

- a. The structural design for the shelter shall comply with the provisions of the LAMC unless determined otherwise by the Superintendent of Building pursuant to the LAMC, Section 91.8605.3. All structural design documents, where deemed necessary shall be prepared and stamped by a licensed engineer or architect registered in the State of California.
- b. Shelters shall not be located in existing substandard buildings subject to mandatory earthquake hazard reduction requirements such as:
 - Unreinforced masonry (URM) buildings
 - Wood-frame with soft, weak or open-front walls
 - Non-ductile concrete buildings

6. Additional Requirements

- a. Operating procedures including a security plan and service requirements shall be developed by the professional service provider and shall be consistent with the standards imposed by Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority (LAHSA) service agreements. These procedures shall be designed to maintain order and safety within the emergency homeless shelter.
- b. All garbage, kitchen waste, and rubbish shall be deposited in approved covered receptacles which shall be emptied when filled and the contents disposed of in a sanitary manner.
- c. Shelters for the homeless required to be accessible must obtain approval by LADBS.

APPROVED BY:



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Fire Prevention and Public Safety Bureau

5-15-18
DATE

