



City and County of San Francisco

# Shelter Monitoring Committee

**Quarterly Report to Board of Supervisors and the Mayor's Office**

**May 19, 2010**

## *Executive Summary*

### *Shelter Site Visits*

The Shelter Monitoring Committee ["Committee"] conducted 28 shelter inspections in the last quarter, from January to March, 2010. Based on the February 2010 Quarterly Report, this increase, approximately 52%, is based on an increase of site visits by each of the three inspection teams and an adherence to the site schedule. The shelter inspections document the health, hygiene, and facility conditions and include interviews of both staff and clients.

### *Standards of Care*

There were 35 Standard of Care complaints filed in this quarter, January to March 2010. The complaints were regarding 8 of the 18 sites. The Shelter Monitoring Committee reviewed draft Standard of Care legislation and participated in two community meetings hosted by the Local Homeless Coordinating Board. Based on feedback at those meeting and discussion at the Committee Meetings, the Committee supported the March 1, 2010 version the legislation, with one exception. The Committee did not support any changes to Standard 17, which requires sleeping units to be a minimum of 22 inches apart.

### *Policy Recommendations*

More Case Management-There is approximately 1200 single adults in the shelter system and 11 case mangers. The Committee recommends that the ratio client to case manager be set, at minimum, from 1 case manger for every 50 clients.

Tokens-All non-CAAP clients should be eligible for tokens when any initial reservation is made in the CHANGES system to ensure the client gets to their reservation on time and has the necessary transport to arrive in time for meals, shower services, etc.

Measuring Vacancies-The Human Services Agency and other bodies, such as the Shelter Monitoring Committee, need a tool which allows them to document when each sleeping unit in the system is available for reservation and what sleeping units are not used, e.g. CAAP beds, during a night.

Nutritionist-The shelter system must maintain a nutritionist to advise shelters on how to adhere to the nutritional menus and make appropriate accommodations for clients.

### *Information Requests*

The Shelter Monitoring Committee made two Information Request of the Human Services Agency regarding token distribution and shelter system capacity.

### *Membership*

There is currently one vacancy on the Shelter Monitoring Committee.

**Shelter Monitoring Committee Quarterly Report**  
**May 19, 2010**

**Mission Statement of the Shelter Monitoring Committee**

*The Shelter Monitoring Committee is an independent vehicle charged with documenting the conditions of shelters and resource centers to improve the health, safety, and treatment of residents, clients, staff, and the homeless community. The Committee's mission is to undertake this work recognizing individual human rights and promoting a universal standard of care for shelters and resource centers in the City and County of San Francisco.*

**Site Inspections**

The inspection teams conducted 28 visits in the last quarter, from January to March, 2010. Based on the February 2010 Quarterly Report, this increase, approximately 52%, is based on an increase of site visits by each of the three inspection teams and an adherence to the site schedule. Ordinance 150.07, passed in July of 2007, requires the Committee to conduct a minimum of four inspections per site. The Committee continues to strive to surpass that required number.

The site visit teams employ a Standard of Care checklist when conducting visits to measure which components of the Standards of Care the site is in compliance with. Teams do facility checks, interview staff, and endeavor to interview a minimum of 10% of the clients at each site as well as provide outreach materials to clients who express concern about speaking to the team at the site or have follow up questions. After visits, the team captain provides an overview of the visit to Committee staff to prepare staff for possible incoming complaints and providing a report with recommendations for the site itself. This quarter Committee staff has been working to input the reports and provide them to the site as a resource with recommendations for improvement and acknowledgement of compliance with some of the Standards.

**Health and Hygiene**

The Committee continues to focus on health and hygiene standards, specifically the need for client access to soap, towels, toilet paper, and a clean site. Hamilton Family Shelter is a best practices site as it maintains clean bathrooms, provides toiletries as needed with each family, and keeps all supplies well stocked. The Dolores Street Community Services shelters also provide clean and stocked bathrooms.

All of the visits conducted at Sanctuary and Next Door, two of the largest shelters, during this quarter found a lack of soap, toilet paper, and towels in the bathrooms. Additionally, both shelters had broken ADA showers at times of visits. The Committee is working with both sites to improve compliance through meeting with management.

The majority of sites post menus and accommodate meal requests based on health or culture. United Council Resource Center's Mother Brown's is a best practice model for meals. The cook prepares options for vegetarians, diabetics, Muslims, etc. daily though incorporating certain components of the main meal. This pre-preparation is done as many individuals use the meal

Shelter and Resource Centers	Number of Visits 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter January-March, 2010	Number of Visits 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtrs. July-December 2009	Current Total Number of Visits
150 Otis Drop In Center and Shelter	1	1	2
Bethel AME Winter Family Shelter	3	0	3
Compass Family Center	1	1	2
Dolores Street Community Services- Santa Ana Shelter	2	0	2
Dolores Street Community Services- Santa Maria/Santa Marta	2	1	3
Hamilton Family Shelter	1	1	2
Hospitality House	1	2	3
Interfaith Winter Shelters	1	2	3
Lark Inn	1	3	4
Mission Neighborhood Resource Center	2	2	4
Multi Service Center South Drop In	1	1	2
Multi Service Center South	3	2	5
Next Door	3	3	6
Oshun Drop In Center	1	1	2
Providence	4	1	5
Saint Joseph's Family Shelter	1	1	2
Sanctuary	2	3	5
United Council	1	1	2
<b>Total Number of Visits</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>56</b>

Figure 1-Table of Site Visits for 2009-2010 Fiscal Year

services and may not have the opportunity to request an accommodation before arriving at the site for a meal. Hamilton Family Shelter is another best-practices example of accommodating clients with nutritious meals. Other sites may not always have a vegetarian option. During a February visit at Multi Service Center South, the cook informed the site inspection team that “extra rice and vegetables” would be provided if someone requested a vegetarian meal. The Committee stresses the need to continue to have a nutritionist available to the shelters to continue to provide technical assistance, specifically on meal options and preparation.

**Facilities**

The elevator at 150 Otis has been non-operational for the majority of this quarter. The building is owned by the City & County of San Francisco, and as such, it is the City’s responsibility to maintain the elevator. The Committee has submitted the Standard of Care complaints to the operating agency, Providence, and to the Human Services Agency, and is awaiting a response.

The Committee received several complaints regarding the storage and collection of clients' belongings by staff at sites. When teams are conducting site visits, they now ask to be shown where clients' items are being stored and how those items are logged by the site.

**Staff**

Clients are at times hesitant to speak to team members when they are conducting visits. Site inspection teams provide contact information to clients. The Committee staff has noticed an increase of call and walk-ins after site visits, particularly at the larger shelters.

**Standard of Care**

There were 35 Standard of Care complaints filed in this quarter, January to March 2010. The complaints were regarding 8 of the 18 sites. The table below provides a breakdown of the number of complaints per site:

Site	Number of Complaints
Sanctuary	12
Multi Service Center South	9
Next Door	5
150 Otis	4
Hospitality House	2
Providence	1
Untied Council	1
Dolores Street Community Services	1

Figure 2: Number of SOC Complaints for 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter, January to March 2010

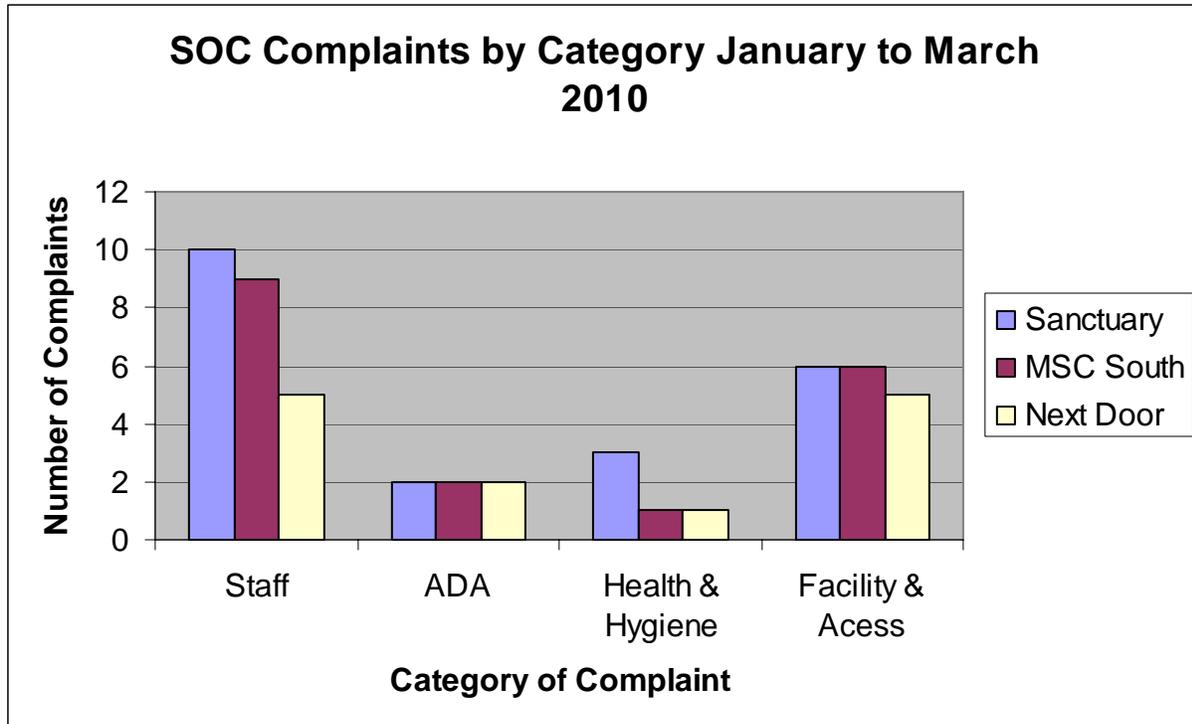


Figure 3: Chart Showing the Types of Complaints per Site for the Three Largest Shelters

The number one complaint the Committee receives is regarding staff. The Committee continues to work to develop a system which allows responses from sites and resolutions of the complaints to be documented within the reporting system.

There were a high number of complaints regarding access to secure storage from clients. Based on this number, the Committee heard from the public at the March 2010 meeting. Additionally, Committee Members documented the storage process at two of the largest shelters, Sanctuary and Next Door, which included items bagged by staff when a client is denied services or leaves unexpectedly.

### **Policy Recommendations**

#### *Standard of Care Revised Legislation*

The Shelter Monitoring Committee reviewed draft Standard of Care legislation and participated in two community meetings hosted by the Local Homeless Coordinating Board. Based on feedback at those meeting and discussion at the Committee Meetings, the Committee supported the March 1, 2010 version the legislation, with one exception. The Committee did not support any changes to Standard 17, which requires sleeping units to be a minimum of 22 inches apart. In addition, the Committee made the following recommendations:

- The Committee recommends that if the MSC South will require additional staffing to support reservations to their site being made at their drop-in center that those costs be provided by the City & County of San Francisco with an amendment to the current contract.
- The Committee has documented a deficit of case management services within the single adult shelter system, with approximately one case manger for every 100 clients. Therefore, the Committee recommends that any section of the legislation regarding case managers or case management is operationalized for shelters and resource centers so that there are clear guidelines on how the site measure client's accessibility to client rules and services, e.g. a check-list for each site and section for clients to initial once they have been provided an overview.
- The removal of the additional language in sub-section (19) within Section 20.404 Contract Requirements, line 16, page 5, "*...however, maximize the space for sleeping in shelters to the fullest extent possible...*"
- "Turn Away" counts were suggested as part of the community process in the 2008 Shelter Enrichment report. Since that time, the Committee has conducted two Turn Away counts. As long Committee staffing is stable, the Committee will be able to continue to conduct Turn Away counts annually.

### **Shelter System Recommendations**

More Case Management-There are approximately 1200 single adults in the shelter system and 11 case mangers. The Committee recommends that the ratio client to case manager be set, at minimum, from 1 case manger for every 50 clients. In a fiscal crisis, case management services are essential to ensure that clients have an individual helping them navigate out of homelessness into housing, employment, education, or other necessary services.

Tokens-All non-CAAP clients should be eligible for tokens when any initial reservation is made in the CHANGES system to ensure the client gets to their reservation on time and has the necessary transport to arrive in time for meals, shower services, etc.

Measuring Vacancies-The Human Services Agency and other bodies, such as the Shelter Monitoring Committee, need a tool which allows them to document when each sleeping unit in the system is available for reservation and what sleeping units are not used, e.g. CAAP beds, during a night.

Nutritionist-The shelter system must maintain a nutritionist to advise shelters on how to adhere to the nutritional menus and make appropriate accommodations for clients. The current nutritionist has met with all sites, which provide meals, and helped sites make improvements to the nutritional components of the Standard of Care. Below is the current status of the work the nutritionist set accomplished and the tasks left to be done:

**Current Project Goals:**

- Increase food quality by establishing menus and standard menu pattern for shelters to follow, provide education and training to staff
- Increase food safety and sanitation through training and technical assistance to shelter staff
- Address religious, dietary and vegetarian needs by providing education and technical assistance to shelter staff
- Provide on-going training and support for shelter staff and develop forms and procedures to meet goals at individual shelters
- Provide first annual Registered Dietitian (RD) evaluation of shelter food service operations

**Current Project Status:**

- Appendix A of shelter contracts have been updated to include menu pattern, food safety certification and annual RD evaluation report requirements
- SOC standards #9 (Nutritionist contact, menus), #10 (dietary modifications) and #31 (food handling staff training) have been addressed at each shelter
- RD has established rapport with each of the shelters and has provided technical assistance with staff training and food service operation needs
- Annual RD evaluations will be completed by June 30, 2010

**Recommendations for FY 10-11:**

- \$15,000 to be set aside for continued RD support, technical assistance and annual RD evaluation for all shelters
  - There is no RD staff position in the shelter network to provide professional support to the shelters
  - Contract specifications alone cannot increase the food quality, safety and sanitation issues that the SOC were trying to address
  - Individual shelters do not have the ability to access RDs to fulfill the HSA contract requirements
  - It is difficult to obtain comprehensive RD support with small individual contracts

Benefits:

- Maintain a professional resource for both shelters and city departments regarding status of shelter nutrition with limited funding
- Continued support for food quality, safety and sanitation standards
- Shelter access for additional training and technical assistance specific to individual shelter operations, changing staff and budgets
- Because RD already has completed two years of research and development, 10 hours per month can be utilized to build on systems in place and follow up on FY 09-10 evaluation reports' recommendations for FY 10-11.

**Information Requests**

The Committee submitted two Information Requests this quarter. Both requests were made of the Human Services Agency. One of the requests was to ascertain the number of tokens provided by the City & County of San Francisco to sites. The Committee has documented consistently the lack of tokens and therefore access to shelter for clients. The response by HSA was that 9470 tokens provided from July 2008 to December 2009. There are approximately 1200 single adults in the shelter system. Based on that number, the City & County of San Francisco was only able to provide transportation four times to each of those single adults between July 2008 and December 2009. The remaining 361 days of the year, the client would have to make her/his own way from the resource center to the shelter. This analysis does not include the shelter clients, e.g. PAES clients, who already receive transit costs from the City & County of San Francisco, clients receiving government benefits, e.g. Social Security, nor does it take in to account the fact that not all clients require token transportation.

The second request was for a count of the number of sleeping units provided at each site. The Human Services Agency provided the following information:

<b>Family Shelters</b>	<b>Families in Private Rooms</b>	<b>Beds</b>
Compass Family Center	13	46
Hamilton Family Residence	27	136
St. Joseph's Family Center	10	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>215</b>
	<b>Families in Dormitory Beds</b>	
Hamilton Family Emergency Center	22	46
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>261</b>
Bethel Family Shelter (Open Oct 1 – March 31)		50

Figure 5: Family Sleeping Unit Count, provided by Human Services Agency, January 2010

<b>Total Number of Sleeping Units by Site</b>	
<b>Adult Shelters</b>	<b>Total</b>
Providence	125
Hospitality House	30
MSC South	340
Episcopal Sanctuary	200
Next Door	334
Dolores Street	85
150 Otis	59
Lark Inn	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,213</b>

Figure 6: Single Adult Shelter Sleeping Unit Count, provided by the Human Services Agency, January 2010

**Membership on the Committee**

The Committee currently has one vacancy. It is for the Board of Supervisors Seat 1, which requires the applicant must be homeless or formerly homeless within the 3 years prior to appointment and living with their homeless child under age 18, for two-year term ending November 23, 2010.