**King County Funding for Men’s Winter Shelter: 2012-2015**

King County has provided funding for winter shelter in downtown Seattle for more than 20 years. One of these shelters, the **King County Men’s Homeless Winter Shelter** (called the “winter shelter”), is located in the King County Administration Building and operated under contract by the Salvation Army.

Funding for the winter shelter has been included in the County’s adopted budget each year. However, during each of the last several years, in response to increasing need, the Council has approved supplemental funding to provide for additional capacity at the winter shelter in terms of number of beds, number of hours each night, or number of months the shelter is open.

The tables below summarize the shelter’s capacity, hours, and duration as budgeted and as actually implemented for winters 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015.

**Table 1. Winter Shelter: Winter 2012-2013**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **As Budgeted[[1]](#footnote-1)** | **Actually Implemented[[2]](#footnote-2)** |
| Hours Open per Night | 8 hours | 9.5 hours |
| Days Open per Year | 5.5 months (November 1 - April 15) | 8.5 months (November 1 - June 15) |
| Number of Beds | 50 beds | 100 beds |

During winter 2012-2013, the winter shelter was originally budgeted for 50 beds for 8 hours per night from November 1, 2012, through April 15, 2013. However, as part of a supplemental budget appropriation (Ordinance 17619), the Council approved funding to increase the shelter’s capacity to 100 beds; to increase operating hours to 9.5 hours per night; and to extend the shelter’s operations until June 15, 2013.

**Table 2. Winter Shelter: Winter 2013-2014**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **As Budgeted[[3]](#footnote-3)** | **Actually Implemented[[4]](#footnote-4)** |
| Hours Open per Night | 9.5 hours | 9.5 hours (Nov-April 15) 11 hours (April 16-June 30) |
| Days Open per Year | 5.5 months (November 1 - April 15) | 9 months (November 1 - June 30) |
| Number of Beds | 50 beds | 50 beds[[5]](#footnote-5) |

During winter 2013-2014, the winter shelter was originally budgeted for 50 beds for 9.5 hours per night from November 1, 2013, through April 15, 2014. However, as part of a supplemental budget appropriation (Ordinance 17855), the Council approved funding to extend the shelter’s operations until June 30, 2014, and to increase operating hours to 11 hours per night from April 16, 2014, until June 30, 2014.

During winter 2013-2014, the winter shelter’s capacity remained at 50 beds. Instead of increasing the capacity, King County’s Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) implemented a rapid rehousing pilot project for single adults focusing on men who had been chronically homeless. The pilot was funded with $100,000 in unspent budget authority and was implemented by the Downtown Emergency Services Center (DESC) through its Connections program, which provides individualized support and basic skills training. The goal was that access to permanent housing would be more beneficial over the long term to the men who might otherwise have been served by the winter shelter.

**Table 3. Winter Shelter: Winter 2014-2015**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **As Budgeted[[6]](#footnote-6)** | **Actually Implemented[[7]](#footnote-7)** |
| Hours Open per Night | 11 hours (Oct-Dec) 9.5 hrs (Jan-Apr 15)[[8]](#footnote-8) | 11 hours (Oct-Dec, Feb-Apr) 9.5 hours (Jan) |
| Days Open per Year | 6 months (October 1 – April 15) | 6 months (October 1 – April 15) |
| Number of Beds | 50 beds[[9]](#footnote-9) | 50 beds (Oct-Jan) 100 beds (Feb-April) |

For winter 2014-2015, the winter shelter operated as budgeted during October, November and December 2014, with a total of 50 beds for 11 hours per night. The 50-bed capacity at the winter shelter was maintained and the rapid rehousing program was continued with an additional $100,000 in funding provided through Ordinance 17949.

The 2015-2016 budget ordinance (Ordinance 17941) took effect on January 1, 2015. That ordinance provided funding for 50 beds at the winter shelter for 9.5 hours per night (8:30 PM until 6:00 AM) from January 1, 2015, until April 15, 2015.

During budget deliberations in October and November 2014, Councilmembers discussed the possibility of increasing the capacity of the winter shelter for 2015, in terms of number of beds, hours, or months open. However, given that the City of Seattle Mayor’s Emergency Task Force on Homelessness had not yet concluded its work when the County budget was adopted, the Council adopted the budget with the recommendations that had been made by the Executive.

On January 6, 2015, the City of Seattle announced that it would provide $117,000 to increase the capacity at the County’s winter shelter from 50 to 100 beds through April 15, 2015. This $117,000 contribution resulted from the recommendations of the Mayor’s Emergency Task Force on Homelessness, which asked the city to take “initial steps to open additional [shelter] spaces by January 15, 2015”;[[10]](#footnote-10) and which recommended the use of City-owned (and presumably other publicly-owned) facilities to provide overnight and day services for a variety of populations.[[11]](#footnote-11)

In response to this contribution from the City of Seattle, as well as to Councilmembers’ interest in restoring the winter shelter’s operating hours to 11 hours each night, the Council approved an emergency appropriation through Ordinance 17966 of a total of $170,000 in January 2015. This emergency appropriation increased the number of shelter beds to 100 and increased shelter hours to 11 hours (7:00 PM until 6:00 AM) each night through the end of the winter shelter season on April 15, 2015.

1. Ordinance 17232 provided funding for 2012, Ordinance 17476 for 2013 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ordinance 17619 provided supplemental appropriation authority to increase the number of beds, hours, and days [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ordinance 17476 provided baseline funding for 2013 and 2014 (biennial budget). Ordinance 17619 provided supplemental funding for 2013 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ordinance 17855 provided supplemental appropriation authority to increase the number of hours and days in 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Rather than increase shelter capacity to 100, DCHS implemented a pilot project to attempt to provide permanent housing for homeless individuals (rapid rehousing). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ordinance 17855 provided supplemental funding to open the shelter on October 1 and to provide for 11 hours a night through the end of 2014. For 2015 (and 2016 – biennial budget) Ordinance 17941 will provide for 5.5 months (November 1 – April 15) and 9.5 hours per night [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The winter shelter was operated as budgeted during October, November and December 2014. Ordinance 17966 provided an emergency appropriation to increase beds and hours for 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Funding for the winter shelter for January 1, 2015, through December 31, 2016, is included in Ordinance 17941, the 2015-2016 biennial budget ordinance. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. A total of $95,266 to continue the rapid re-housing program with the goal of housing 50 men in permanent housing (in addition to the 50 men in the winter shelter) was provided through Ordinance 17949. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Emergency Task Force on Unsheltered Homelessness: Recommendations to Mayor Murray, p. 9, <http://murray.seattle.gov/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Emergency-Task-Force-On-Unsheltered-Homelessness-Recommendations-to-Mayor-Murray.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Emergency Task Force on Unsheltered Homelessness: Recommendations to Mayor Murray, p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)