



# **King County Regional Homelessness Authority Emergency Response Policy**

Updated February 12, 2026

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## Executive Summary

The King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA) serves as the lead agency for the regional emergency response system addressing homelessness. KCRHA is responsible for recommending activation of short-term emergency shelter resources, coordinating emergency planning and preparedness efforts across King County sub-regions (including the City of Seattle), and engaging contract holders to ensure alignment and collaboration during emergencies.

KCRHA fulfills these responsibilities by partnering with regional and city emergency management offices and the King County government to monitor conditions and determine the most effective response based on current information. Activation strategies are adjusted as conditions evolve and resources become available following established policies, protocols, and procedures to ensure the most effective and equitable response.

## Purpose

This Emergency Response Operations Policy (“Policy”) establishes KCRHA’s framework for expanding resources to people experiencing homelessness during critical events. This Policy will be implemented in collaboration with King County, the City of Seattle, nonprofit agencies, faith-based organizations, and other community partners to ensure a coordinated response.

## Scope

This Policy includes KCRHA’s procedures and standards for crisis, emergency response activations for extreme weather conditions, natural disasters, public health crises, hazardous environmental conditions, or other hazards (whether man-made or natural) that create risk to people experiencing homelessness (collectively “Emergency Events” or “Events”). It also describes how KCRHA will work collaboratively with participating partners to open and operate short-term emergency shelters during Emergency Events.

This Policy is not intended to address traditional emergency shelter services as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing (HUD), which provide temporary lodging and essential support for people experiencing homelessness via traditional shelters or hotel vouchers to meet acute long-term needs and stabilization services.



## Section 1: Definitions

**“Biological Hazards”** means diseases or pandemic influenza that may occur from natural matter such as bacteria, viruses, insects, or animals, including bioterrorism.

**“Geophysical Hazards”** means earthquakes, landslides, volcanic hazards, tsunamis, and other geophysical occurrences that could adversely affect the health and safety of people experiencing homelessness.

**“Intentional Hazards”** means civil disorder, including mass civil disobedience, strikes, riots, terrorism, active shooter incidents, and other intentional acts or human-caused hazards and incidents that could adversely affect the health and safety of people experiencing homelessness.

**“Transportation and Infrastructure Hazards”** means transportation incidents, fires (including wildfires), hazardous materials incidents, infrastructure failures, power outages, and other similar hazards that could adversely affect the health and safety of people experiencing homelessness.

**“Severe Weather and Climate Hazards”** mean excessive heat, extreme rain, flooding, snow, ice, extreme cold, windstorms, or water shortages.

## Section 2: System Activation Policy

KCRHA recognizes its critical role as a lead response partner in the [City of Seattle Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan](#) (COS-CEMP), [King County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan](#) (KC-CEMP), and [King County Regional Operational Plan for Extreme Weather Centers and Disaster Sheltering](#) (collectively, Emergency Response Ecosystem) emergency response system to protect people experiencing homelessness in the greater King County Region. Thus, this Policy also aligns with the definitions, activation criteria, and responses identified in the [Seattle Hazard Identification and Vulnerability Analysis](#) (SHIVA). Further, the severe weather activation criteria in this Policy are based on King County weather conditions modeling from 2018 through 2021. This modeling reflects the use of Apparent Temperature, which is an index that accounts for variable climate factors like humidity, wind chill, precipitation and visibility as a more accurate predictor for dangerous conditions.

Activation responses occur when specific environmental or public health conditions are met, such as extreme temperatures, poor air quality, or other safety criteria. The degree of plan implementation and interagency coordination needed is contingent on criteria described in distinct tiers (Activation Tier(s)). Each Activation Tier indicates the type of response needed based upon the severity and length of the emergency condition(s) and the needs of homeless individuals and families to keep them safe.



Tiered activations range from access to life-sustaining supplies to opening of indoor spaces that meet Public Health Seattle-King County (PHSKC) guidelines for social distancing, air quality, and infectious diseases, including COVID-19 protocols. Other activation procedures include community notification, transportation, and site operations.

## 2.1 Severe Weather and Climate Hazard Activations

King County frequently experiences sustained cold and wet weather during winter months, typically November through March. These months are particularly dangerous for people experiencing homelessness, who often spend prolonged periods of time outside are unprotected from the elements. Exposure to these weather conditions with inadequate clothing and supplies, significantly increases the risk of cold and wet weather-related morbidity and mortality. These risks are further increased by a disproportionate burden of underlying medical and mental health diagnoses, which also markedly increases susceptibility to the dangers of unabated cold and wet weather exposure.

Not only can extreme cold and wet-weather events lead to poor health outcomes, there is also a cumulative risk associated with prolonged exposure to even moderately cold temperatures and wet weather without appropriate supportive measures. Therefore, KCRHA employs activation policies that mitigate risks for hypothermia and cold-related negative health outcomes during the winter season (including temperatures that may not traditionally trigger a larger community-wide emergency response) as well as extreme heat conditions that may have significant negative health impacts, up to and including death.

Finally, because King County experiences significant weather variations between sub-regions, KCRHA employs flexible severe weather activations that consider local climate conditions by sub-regions.

### 2.1.1 Severe Cold Weather Activation Policy

KCRHA shall work with its partners at the National Weather Service (NWS) and the King County Office of Emergency Management (KCOEM) to monitor weather forecasts for the 39 cities and municipalities in King County. Activation information will be focused on the cities affected by the forecast. KCRHA shall also communicate with providers or partners in affected areas whenever possible and as warranted. For Seattle and North King County, current partners include City-owned or contracted partner sites at the Seattle Center, Seattle City Hall (Red Room), Salvation Army SoDo, St. Dunstan's Church Shoreline (North King), and some Seattle Parks and Recreation Community Centers.

The following are the three (3) tiers for Severe Weather Activation due to extreme cold and wet conditions, in order of increasing risk to human life:



COLD WEATHER ACTIVATION TIERS		
<b>TIER 1</b>		
<b>Tier 1: Increased Outreach and Survival Supplies Distribution</b>		
Activation threshold is met when one or more of these conditions is present based on forecasts for each of the 39 King County urban areas. Activations outside of Seattle may differ.	*Daily high temperatures predicted at 45°F or below for 3 days Apparent Temperature conditions, coupled with low temperatures, predict increased life- threatening conditions.	
<b>Tier 1: Activation Response</b>		
Before 12/31/24: KCRHA shifts to ready posture. Increased outreach through contracted providers and other formal and informal community groups to vulnerable unsheltered people.	After 12/31/24: KCRHA shifts to ready posture. Preparing for and watching for potential Tier 2.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KCRHA Programs communication through email list-serv, scheduled and ad hoc meetings</li> <li>• Geographic prioritization based on forecasted weather conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seattle: check in with Unified Care Team about increased outreach by providers</li> <li>• North King County: check in with contracted providers for increased outreach</li> <li>• Other Areas: Contact Severe Weather Responders and Outreach to note of anticipated Tier 2 or 3 activation</li> </ul>	
<b>TIER 2</b>		
<b>Tier 2: Opening of Short-Term Emergency Shelters</b>		
Activation threshold is met when one or more of these conditions is present based on forecasts for each of the 39 King County urban areas		
Daily high temperatures predicted at 40° F or below for 3 days	Daily low temperatures predicted at 35° F or below for 3 days	Snow or rain accumulation greater than 2 inches in a 24-hour period
<b>Tier 2: Activation Response</b>		
Tier 1 actions plus:	Open KCRHA-funded temporary emergency shelters (also known as severe weather shelters), contracted to engage at Tier 2; seek expansions to existing emergency shelter programs including 24/7 shelters and night- by-night shelters	Update communications materials including but not limited to KCRHA's Severe Weather webpage, and flyers, to include up-to-date information



TIER 3		
<b>Tier 3: Expanded Emergency Operations</b>		
Activation threshold is met when one or more of these conditions is present for a 24-hour period or longer		
Daily high temperatures predicted at 35°F or below	Daily low temperatures predicted at 30°F or below	Snow/rain accumulation greater than 4 inches
<b>Tier 3: Activation Response</b>		
All actions in Tier 1 and Tier 2 actions plus:	Coordination with transit and transportation partners to shelter sites (for example, medically fragile or disabled individuals)	Open emergency daytime and overnight warming centers and day centers, including libraries
<b>Where applicable:</b> Coordinate with cities to open local city halls and other City-owned properties for warming centers and/or 24/7 emergency shelters		

HISTORICAL TIER ACTIVATION DATA								
Historical Tier 1 Activation	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Number of Days Threshold Reached	7	25	2	25	33	33	38	20
Historical Tier 2	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Number of Days Threshold Reached	32	51	44	8	22	11	11	11
Historical Tier 3	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Number of Days Threshold Reached	15	31	12	16	10	16	8	19

### 2.1.2 Extreme Heat Activation

While known for moderate, wet weather, King County also experiences periods of dangerously high heat that can cause significant negative health consequences, including death. In accordance with governmental partners, KCRHA's Extreme Heat Activations shall be governed by the National Weather Service (NWS) Heat Risk Index, which considers both daytime and overnight temperature impacts.



KCRHA shall issue an Extreme Heat Activation whenever the National Weather Service issues a Category 1 or above Heat Advisory as outlined in the image included below.

**NWS HeatRisk Index<sup>1</sup>**

Category	Level	Meaning
Green	0	No Elevated Risk
Yellow	1	Low Risk for those extremely sensitive to heat, especially those without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration
Orange	2	Moderate Risk for those who are sensitive to heat, especially those without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration
Red	3	High Risk for much of the population, especially those who are heat sensitive and those without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration
Magenta	4	Very High Risk for entire population due to long duration heat, with little to no relief overnight

The following are the three tiers for KCRHA Extreme Heat Activation, in order of increasing risk to human life:

HEAT ACTIVATION TIERS	
<b>TIER 1</b>	
<b>Tier 1: Increased Outreach and Preparations</b>	
National Weather Service Heat Risk indicates to “YELLOW” in a sub-region within King County.	
<b>Tier 1: Activation Response</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Historical rates of activation for the NWS Heat Risk Index thresholds are not available. The [National Weather Service \(NWS\) HeatRisk tool](#) was first developed as a prototype for California in 2013, expanded to the Western U.S. in 2017, and became available across the contiguous United States in 2024. It differs from the 1979-developed Heat Index (Apparent Temperature) by factoring in localized, data-driven health impacts.



<p>Dissemination of key public health safety messaging and risk communications to at-risk populations.</p>	<p>Outreach to service providers to evaluate supply needs to support warehouse preparations for potential entrance into tier 2 or tier 3.</p>
<p><b>TIER 2</b></p>	
<p><b>Tier 2: Targeted Resourcing</b></p>	
<p>National Weather Service Heat Risk indicates to “ORANGE” in a sub-region within King County Includes the above actions in addition to the following conditions:</p>	
<p><b>Tier 2: Activation Response</b></p>	
<p>If ORANGE forecast for only 24 hours for a locality: Partner and support water distribution and other cooling supplies for at-risk communities and populations</p>	<p>If ORANGE forecast lasts more than 24 hours, then take all actions below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with jurisdictions to selectively activate daytime cooling centers for unsheltered individuals in heat islands/high usage areas</li> <li>• Contact providers to test their HVAC and ice making systems</li> <li>• Update communications materials including but not limited to KCRHA’s Severe Weather webpage, and flyers, to include up-to-date information</li> <li>• Scale up other activities required to meet recommendations of Tier 3</li> </ul>
<p><b>TIER 3</b></p>	
<p><b>Tier 3: Daytime Cooling</b></p>	
<p>Heat Risk indicates to “RED” and/or “MAGENTA” in a sub-region within King County Includes the above actions in addition to the following conditions:</p>	
<p><b>Tier 3: Activation Response</b></p>	
<p>For forecast RED/MAGENTA lasting only 24 hours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted outreach efforts to reach at- risk populations using 1.6-mile resolution Heat Risk with cooling center communications, cooling supplies and water distribution</li> </ul>	<p>For forecast RED/MAGENTA lasting more than 24 hours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted Heat Risk zone activation of daytime cooling centers for unsheltered individuals;</li> <li>• Stand up cooling tents with misting fans in high unsheltered population corridors, provide hydration supplies;</li> <li>• Outreach: Conduct wellness checks on elders and people living with disabilities to ensure access to air conditioning or cooling centers;</li> <li>• Coordinate transit access to take people to cooling sites;</li> <li>• Partner with jurisdictions to explore expanding hours of operation for cooling centers for unsheltered individuals to accommodate overnight use.</li> </ul>



## 2.2 Biological Hazards

Biological hazards occur from natural matter such as bacteria, viruses, insects, or animals. The only biological hazard currently recognized by the City of Seattle is disease/pandemic influenza (including bioterrorism). Diseases can have high rates of morbidity (illness) and mortality (death), affect large areas, and impede normal social functions. The impact of these diseases varies based on the virulence of the disease, duration of the illness, susceptibility of the population to the disease, and the spread of the disease within the community.

KCRHA recognizes that the greater King County region faces increased exposure to new diseases due to rapid rises in personal mobility, proximity of people to livestock, and global urbanization, all of which increase risk to individuals experiencing homelessness. Therefore, it is the policy of KCRHA to align its activation criteria with the Seattle & King County Emergency Preparedness Biological Incident Response Annex, which provides guidance to Seattle King County Public Health and its regional partners before, during, and after a biological incident and activations.

Below are KCRHA's activation tiers for Biological Hazard activations due to diseases/pandemic influenza in order of increasing risk to human life:

Activation Tier	Risk Level	Activation Criteria	KCRHA Response
<b>Tier 1 – Green</b>	Low	Detection of biological activity of concern with no local transmission; early warning indicators; no immediate operational impacts to homelessness services.	Increase coordination with Public Health Seattle & King County (PHSKC); monitor shelters; issue situational updates.
<b>Tier 2 – Yellow</b>	Moderate	Confirmed local transmission of a biological agent; increased risk to people experiencing homelessness; resource needs beginning to exceed routine capacity (e.g., PPE, isolation space).	Activate duty officer; implement infection-control protocols; prepare isolation options.



<b>Tier 3 – Orange</b>	High	Widespread local transmission (epidemic level); multi-agency coordination required; shelters or encampments experiencing clusters indicating uncontrolled spread.	Coordinate with King County and the City of Seattle Emergency Operations Center (EOC); expand isolation capacity; deploy additional staff and resources.
<b>Tier 4 - Red</b>	Severe	Severe biological hazard with high morbidity/mortality; emergency proclamations; bioterrorism requiring mass prophylaxis and federal stockpile mobilization.	Integrate into EOC operations; surge shelter capacity; support mass prophylaxis (as requested) and transport.
<b>Tier 5 - Magenta</b>	Catastrophic	Catastrophic biological incident causing system-wide failure; healthcare and shelter systems overwhelmed, requiring federal assistance and long-term emergency measures.	Coordinate long-term emergency shelter; integrate federal assets; sustain extended outreach.

## 2.3 Geophysical Hazards

Geophysical Hazards include earthquakes, landslides, volcanic hazards, tsunamis, and other naturally occurring geological events that may adversely affect the health and safety of people experiencing homelessness. The SHIVA identifies these events as some of the most consequential hazards facing the region, due to the area’s seismic complexity, steep topography, and proximity to major volcanic systems within the Cascade Range. SHIVA outlines that earthquakes, landslides, and tsunamis can cause widespread structural damage, transportation failures, and service disruptions, all of which pose significant risks to individuals who are unsheltered or residing in congregate shelter environments.

Individuals experiencing homelessness may experience disproportionate impacts during geophysical events due to exposure to the elements, limited access to structurally safe shelter, and dependency on transportation networks and public spaces that may be damaged or inaccessible following an event.



Below are KCRHA's activation tiers for Geophysical Hazard activations due to earthquakes, landslides, volcanic hazards, tsunamis, and other naturally occurring geological events in order of increasing risk to human life:

Activation Tier	Risk Level	Activation Criteria	KCRHA Response
<b>Tier 1 – Green</b>	Low/Moderate	Minor geophysical activity or advisories (e.g., small earthquakes, ground instability, elevated tsunami notices) with possible access impacts; precautionary City/County messaging.	Share City/County precautionary guidance with providers; assist with communication regarding potential access impacts; prepare to disseminate emergency shelter activation notices.
<b>Tier 2 – Yellow</b>	Medium	Significant geophysical event prompting City/County-led EOC activation to protect life and stabilize operations; may result in emergency shelter activation by City/County.	Relay City/County EOC guidance; support two-way communication to assess provider impacts; share official emergency shelter activation details; prepare for potential fund-flexibility requests as allowed by funders.
<b>Tier 3 – Orange</b>	High	Major regional geophysical event causing widespread transportation, utility, or infrastructure failure, requiring sustained City/County EOC activation and expanded emergency sheltering.	Integrate into EOC operations; Coordinate region-wide communications; engage emergency shelter activation; facilitate emergency funding adjustments as authorized by funders; maintain communication support for provider-operated sheltering.



Tier 4 – Red	Severe/Catastrophic	Catastrophic geophysical disaster causing system-wide failures, mass displacement, and federal/state declarations; long-term City/County-led unified command with extensive emergency shelter operations.	Integrate into EOC operations; Sustain long-term communication coordination; relay official City/County emergency shelter operations updates; facilitate large-scale emergency funding support as authorized by funders; maintain communication channels for Continuum of Care providers.
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## 2.4 Intentional Hazards

Intentional hazards include civil disorder, mass civil disobedience, strikes, riots, terrorism, active shooter incidents, events involving military or law enforcement activation, and other deliberate **human-caused** acts that may endanger people experiencing homelessness. SHIVA identifies terrorism, targeted violence, and social unrest as significant regional threats due to Seattle’s dense urban environment, numerous public spaces, and history of politically motivated demonstrations and violent attacks. These events can occur with little warning and escalate quickly, causing injury, disrupting essential services, damaging infrastructure, and limiting access to areas where homelessness services operate.

People experiencing homelessness are particularly vulnerable because they largely populate public spaces most exposed to violence, lack protected indoor environments, and may not receive emergency information as promptly as the general population. SHIVA notes that active shooter events, targeted violence, and extremist-motivated attacks increasingly occur in crowded public settings, heightening risk for unsheltered individuals and congregate shelter residents. Such incidents can also impede access to shelters, day centers, outreach services, and transportation systems essential for safety and service continuity.

KCRHA recognizes its essential role in ensuring safe access to homelessness services, coordinating protective actions with public safety and emergency management partners, and supporting providers through operational adjustments such as lockdown, shelter-in-place, controlled entry/exit, temporary relocation, or alternative service delivery methods.



## 2.5 Transportation and Infrastructure Hazards

### 2.5.1 Poor Quality & Wildfire Smoke Activation

Increased wildfires in the Pacific Northwest have caused periods of unhealthy air quality. Exposure to these conditions can cause immediate and long-term negative health consequences. Due to the continued exposure that our unsheltered population face during incidents of poor air quality and this population often has co-occurring conditions, the RHA will begin activation of cleaner air sites when the Air Quality Index (AQI) is Orange - Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups (Index Value of 101–150). Activation at this level is coordinated mask distribution with Public Health Seattle King County and coordination with outreach providers.

Further activation will occur when AQI escalates to Red - Unhealthy for All Groups. At this level, KCRHA will work with contracted providers to activate smoke shelters. KCRHA will also follow the wildfire smoke guidelines set in place by PHSKC.

Given that unhealthy air quality does not have traditional spikes or trends across the day, such as with heat, this type of activation requires 24/7 options for people living unsheltered. Cleaner air sites activated by KCRHA will follow guidelines set by PHSKC. KCRHA will work with community groups to connect vulnerable unsheltered populations to cleaner air sites open to the public.

## Section 3: Funding Policy

To ensure that the homeless services system can adequately address the increased need for immediate shelter during emergency response activations, KCRHA has implemented several funding strategies to support service providers. The approved Five-Year Plan prioritizes (a) adopting a seasonal weather shelter model, (b) enhancing regional collaboration, (c) expanding support to areas outside the city of Seattle, and (d) managing funding and contract administration for all jurisdictions. To support these strategies, KCRHA receives emergency response funding from the following local and regional funders:

- City of Seattle
- King County
- North King County cities in the North King County ILA (Shoreline, Lake Forest Park, Kenmore, Bothell, Woodinville)
- East King County cities in the East King County ILA (Bellevue and Redmond)

Funds will be used to expand the capacity of emergency shelter services and supplies to serve individuals, families, youth, young adults, and households experiencing



unsheltered homelessness in King County whenever an emergency response activation necessitates such expansion.

## 3.1 Emergency Response Funding Application Protocols

### 3.1.1 Severe Weather Funding

Severe weather can impact an entire region in various ways, but certain providers and programs experience an increased demand for their services during these events. Those that directly assist individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness—such as day centers, outreach workers, and emergency shelters that offer drop-in services—may be eligible for severe weather funding opportunities.

The King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA) understands that the competitive procurement process may pose challenges for some service providers, as they must simultaneously demonstrate their organizational capacity and program qualifications. To assist organizations in preparing for the competitive procurement process, KCRHA currently conducts a two-phase process to identify eligible provider agencies that are capable of delivering emergency shelter, basic needs, and support services for individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness during severe weather events. This process may be revised in the future.

#### Phase 1

During the first phase, KCRHA issues a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to identify agencies eligible to receive Severe Weather funding. Once approved, an agency's qualification status remains valid for five years. To facilitate this process, KCRHA makes available the list of required due diligence documents an agency must submit with its response to the RFQ on [kcrha.org](http://kcrha.org). (See [KCRHA Minimum Eligibility Requirements Checklist](#).)

#### Phase 2

In the second phase, KCRHA issues a Request for Proposals (RFP) to distribute Severe Weather funding for the upcoming year. Through this RFP, KCRHA invites applications from qualified agencies that are interested in providing severe weather services and supplies for youth and young adults, single adults (18+), couples, and families experiencing homelessness throughout King County. All qualifying agencies that were approved in Phase 1, as well as other agencies that meet KCRHA's minimum eligibility requirements, are eligible to apply.

### 3.1.2 Other Emergency Response Funding

Other emergency response activations, such as those related to Biological Hazards, Intentional Hazards, or Geophysical Hazards, may impact specific areas or entire regions, depending on the type and scope of the event. This can lead to increased demand for services from providers and



programs during these situations. Organizations that directly assist individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness may be eligible for funding opportunities aimed at addressing these events.

## 3.2 Emergency Response Basic Service Requirements

Agencies awarded emergency response funding must collaborate with KCRHA, King County, the City of Seattle, nonprofit organizations, and other community partners to enhance the experiences of individuals facing homelessness during emergency response activations. To be eligible for funding (regardless of response category), agencies must, at a minimum, meet the following service requirements. Specifically, the agency must be able to:

### General Operational Requirements (Applies to All Emergency Response Service Types)

- a) Develop protocols for starting, stopping, or activating services based on emergency response or severe weather conditions.
- b) Coordinate with local government agencies, emergency management, and community partners to ensure effective and efficient resource allocation.
- c) Ensure staff or volunteers are trained in First Aid, crisis prevention and de-escalation, trauma-informed care, culturally responsive practices, and emotional support.
- d) Conduct regular assessments of service operations based on guest feedback, operational experience, and evolving community needs.
- e) Collect and report program data to support compliance, performance evaluation, and continuous improvement.

### Basic Shelter Service Requirements

- a) Activate emergency shelter operations within 24–72 hours of emergency response activation.
- b) Meet all minimum infrastructure standards in the KCRHA General Emergency Response Shelter Infrastructure Considerations.
- c) Provide safe, low-barrier accommodation that protects guests from extreme temperatures, unhealthy air conditions, or other applicable emergency activation hazard(s).
- d) Ensure climate-controlled spaces, hygiene access, and seasonally appropriate meals.
- e) Maintain comprehensive shelter operations, including guest intake, assessments, on-site coordination, storage, transportation, sanitation, and food provision.
- f) Coordinate with local service providers to support referrals and wraparound services.
- g) Hotel/Motel Option: Distribute hotel vouchers as needed/applicable to provide temporary lodging during emergency activation event.



- h) Safe Parking Option: When feasible, provide on-site parking for vehicle residents during emergency activation event.

#### Basic Needs Provision Requirements

- a) Procure and distribute essential supplies for individuals affected by the emergency activation event.
- b) Provide weather-appropriate items such as blankets, warm or cooling clothing, cooling supplies, and smoke-protection gear.
- c) Distribute hygiene kits and sanitation supplies, including bottled water and personal care items.
- d) Offer hot meals, snacks, and beverages to meet immediate nutritional needs.
- e) Ensure access to hygiene facilities such as showers and restrooms.

#### Referral and Supportive Services Requirements

- a) Connect individuals to supportive services, including housing assistance, healthcare, behavioral health supports, and substance use treatment.
- b) Maintain partnerships with housing, healthcare, and behavioral health providers to support coordinated care.
- c) Provide trained staff or volunteers to offer information, make referrals, and provide emotional support.
- d) Coordinate transportation to help individuals access shelter, appointments, and essential services.

### 3.3 Emergency Response Cost Allowability Standards

Emergency response funds may be used to cover both direct and indirect costs,<sup>2</sup> so long as all costs are (a) necessary for the emergency response activities, and (b) expenditures are compliant with all applicable policies (including this policy), procedures, rules, and regulations. Applicants must also keep detailed records of expenditures, including receipts and invoices, to ensure transparency and accountability.

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<sup>2</sup> **Direct Costs** are expenses that can be clearly traced to a specific program service or activity, such as salaries for program staff, equipment purchases, and materials needed for project implementation.

**Indirect Costs** are expenses that support overall program operations but cannot be traced to a single program activity. Examples include information technology support, accounting services, and shared office supplies.



### 3.3.1 Allowable and Unallowable Costs

Emergency response funds may be used for direct and indirect costs that are (a) necessary to carry out emergency response activities, and (b) compliant with all applicable policies, procedures, rules, and regulations. Agencies must maintain complete expenditure records, including receipts and invoices, to ensure transparency and accountability.

- A. **Allowable Costs.** The following examples are allowable but are not exhaustive; other costs may be eligible if they meet all funding and policy requirements.
- Personnel Costs: Salaries, wages, and fringe benefits for emergency response staff (including hazard and holiday pay).
  - Indirect & Administrative Costs: Charged using a federally negotiated rate or the organization's actual indirect cost rate.
  - Operating Costs: Office supplies; cleaning and sanitation products; safety equipment; small equipment under \$5,000 (excluding computers/software).
  - Professional Services: Janitorial, security, protective, or other contracted services.
  - Utilities & Travel: Public utility services and travel necessary for emergency response activities.
  - Shelter & Lodging: Hotel/motel expenses for clients when no shelter bed is available; hotel/motel vouchers for staff unable to safely travel home during emergencies.
  - Food & Beverages: Seasonally appropriate meals, snacks, and beverages for the service population.
  - Facility Costs: Expenses for congregate or non-congregate shelter space, facility rental, operations, and maintenance.
  - Client Assistance: Case management, employment assistance, housing search and counseling, outpatient/mobile health services, and client transportation.
  - Severe Weather Supplies: Items providing warmth, cooling, smoke protection, or other emergency safety needs.
- B. **Unallowable Costs.** The following examples are unallowable but are not exhaustive; other expenses may also be prohibited if inconsistent with funding rules or policy.
- Construction costs.
  - Computers, software, or other capital equipment purchases.
  - Capital outlays of any type.
  - Retailer or merchant gift cards, vouchers, or certificates that can be exchanged for cash or used to purchase alcohol or tobacco products.
  - Any expenses not directly tied to emergency response activities, or that do not align with funding guidelines and objectives.



# Section 4: Emergency Response Staffing

## 4.1 Emergency Operations Manager

KCRHA shall appoint an **Emergency Operations Manager** to manage agency-wide readiness and response during emergency response activations. Key responsibilities include:

### A. Continuous Monitoring & Activation

- Maintain 24/7 on-call availability to monitor weather conditions and operational readiness.
- Recommend activation levels and operational responses based on emerging conditions.

### B. Leadership & Coordination

- Lead staff supporting Severe Weather and/or Emergency Operations activations as detailed in the KCRHA Emergency Response Operations Manual.
- Ensure coordinated implementation of emergency response activities in alignment with established procedures.

### C. Operational Implementation

- Carry out all responsibilities defined in the Emergency Response Operations Manual, including procedures for cold, heat, and smoke events.
- Ensure consistent application of emergency response protocols across teams.

### D. Policy & Documentation Management

- Maintain and update the Emergency Response Operations Manual to support continuous quality improvement.
- Prepare and submit end of event reports to KCRHA leadership summarizing actions taken, outcomes, and recommendations.

### E. Communications

- Monitor and respond to all communications directed to [severeweather@kcrha.org](mailto:severeweather@kcrha.org).
- Serve as the primary point of contact during severe weather or other emergency response activations.

## 4.2 Other KCRHA Staff

Other KCRHA staff may be assigned to assist the Emergency Operations Manager with emergency response operations. At minimum, staff will be designated from Communications, though designated representatives for other sectors may be assigned as necessary.



When activated and under guidance from the Emergency Operations Manager, Emergency Response Crew (ERC) members will perform operational, logistical, and communication functions as assigned, particularly any duties specified in the KCRHA Emergency Response Operations Manual. Responsibilities primarily include close coordination with the Director of Special Projects and the KCRHA Communications team in facilitating internal and external communication during emergency response efforts. KCRHA's Emergency Services team, or its successor, may support collaboration with contracted emergency shelter or outreach providers.

## Section 5: Companion Reference Documents

[KCRHA Minimum Eligibility Requirements Checklist](#)

