

Salvation Army Women's and Family Shelter

Madison, Wisconsin

Meeting Notes 07/29/16

- I. BASIC OPERATION- Three components: Women's Shelter, Drop-in Family Shelter, and 90 Day Family Shelter
 - a. Salvation Army is the only drop-in Women's Shelter in Dane County
 - b. Each night, the shelter has 3 staff at the building, 2 staff and 1 supervisor

- II. GENERAL COMPONENTS: Available to all three shelter components
 - a. Dining Room, serving Breakfast, Lunch for Family Shelter, Dinner and Snack
 - i. Serves approximately 120 guests on average, up to 150 in winter
 - ii. Meals are prepared by staff in the shelter's commercial kitchen
 - iii. Open to the Community on Saturday
 - iv. Shelter Guests may enter the building for dinner at 5pm
 - b. Check-In Office
 - i. Check-in Occurs at 6:30pm, check out at 8am
 - ii. Staff member there at all times for intake and monitoring of cameras
 - iii. Staff distributes necessary items like shampoo, conditioner, linens, towels, and other supplies
 - iv. Guests are offered Ear-plugs as well
 - c. Computer Lab, 5-6 computer stations
 - i. Staff member comes in to help with resumes, job applications, etc.
 - d. Conference Room: Currently seats 10 around one large table, but could be much bigger
 - i. Used for frequent staff meetings
 - ii. Used for guest programs and classes put on by community members/organizations
 - iii. Also serves as storage for toilet paper, linens, toiletries, etc.
 - e. Case Manager offices: 10 case managers on staff, with offices located along a hallway
 - i. Case managers are offered to all guests, but no longer mandatory for those staying at the shelter
 - ii. 1.5 Case Managers cover the women's shelter itself
 - iii. Those on the family shelter waitlist are offered case managers as well
 - iv. Case Managers discuss anything from increasing guest income, medical referrals, help in applying for housing, etc.
 - f. Community Dental Clinic: Operated separately from Salvation Army Staff, and available to the larger community
 - g. Guest Closets: Guest can obtain special permission to store belongings for a short period of time
 - i. Doctor's note required to store a guest's medical equipment
 - ii. Work Schedule required to store belongings during the work day

- iii. Case manager approval required to store belongings during an interview, appointment, etc.
- iv. Closets also store supplies for women who need them, including clothing, bottles, diapers, and other essentials

III. WOMEN'S SHELTER COMPONENTS:

- a. Serves 45 guests per night; capacity works for now, but ideal capacity would be 60-75 beds
- b. 85% of guests have suffered domestic or sexual abuse or assault
 - i. This population is especially sensitive to transgender women who they perceive as male being in the same space or sleeping area
 - 1. Accommodations such as moving those disrupted to a bed farther away are taken as needed
- c. Sleeping Room: Accommodates 45 beds
 - i. Large open gym with closely spaced cots, no bunk beds, arranged along the edges of the room, with a few beds in the center as needed
 - ii. 90 day per year stay limit
 - iii. 10pm lights out
 - iv. Shelter used to accommodate 30, but was able to increase capacity with additional staff
 - v. Staff sees a benefit in providing half walls in bunk room to break down the large open space, and provide more privacy/feeling of security for guests, while still allowing for easy monitoring
- d. 2 Small Lounges, connected
 - i. Located directly adjacent to the Sleeping Room
 - ii. Open all night
 - iii. Contains couches, chairs, TV, magazines and desk, along with small microwave station
 - iv. Occasionally used as a sleeping room if officers bring a guest late at night or the beds are full. Guest sleeps on couch
- e. Restrooms/locker rooms:
 - i. 3 showers and 2 toilet stalls in each, with emergency only washer/dryer
 - 1. Free laundry services are offered by another organization, Bubbles.
 - 2. Each shower stall is separated by a solid wall and has a privacy curtain
 - ii. Contains lockers for guests to store shelter supplied linens for multiple night stays
 - 1. Guests appreciate that they can keep the same sheets during the course of their stay, they feel it is more personal than the community-style linens
 - 2. Salvation Army clears the lockers once per week and launders them
- f. Hall Sleeping Area: Used as an overflow sleeping room
 - i. Some guests prefer to sleep out in the hall, including mentally ill, and transgender, if they feel uncomfortable sleeping in the main bunk room

- ii. Those guests that are intoxicated, belligerent, or causing disruption in the main bunk room must sleep in the hallway instead, but staff does not do breathalyzer tests
 - 1. Staff refers to the shelter as a “damp” shelter in that they do not allow guests to actively consume substances during their stay, but they don’t prohibit those intoxicated from staying
- iii. If temperatures are 20F or below, guests are also accommodated in the hall. They take in all women regardless of capacity or 90 day limit at these temperatures
- g. Transgender: Salvation Army accepts all those who identify as female
 - i. As noted above, conflict can occur, but the shelter does its best to accommodate everyone as equally and best as possible and provide a safe space
 - 1. Transgender Guests may choose to sleep wherever they feel most comfortable and safe, whether in the sleeping room or hallway
 - ii. Transgender guests are offered the opportunity to shower in the morning in the separate family bathroom if they feel uncomfortable in the main showers
 - iii. On average, Salvation Army shelters 1-2 transgender women per night
- h. Potential differences between Men’s and Women’s Programs:
 - i. Women Require more getting ready space in the restroom, with mirrors, makeup/hair prep space, etc.

IV. DROP-IN FAMILY SHELTER

- i. Serves 18 Guests, and made up of 2 rooms and a hall space
- ii. Only one bathroom with shower for the wing
- iii. Families with men are arranged in least disruptive location
- iv. Salvation Army is using First United Methodist facility to house families during the summer, with a capacity of 30 people
 - 1. During winter, the space will be turned over to the Porchlight Men’s Shelter
- v. Capacity to accommodate families is severely lacking, though the Methodist church helps to address the problem, there are still more than 25 people requesting family shelter
 - 1. Staff priorities those most in need, such as infants under 3 months in summer and infants under 6 months in winter
- vi. Staff would prefer to have the women’s area more distinct from the family shelter, as currently the gym/sleeping room is used as a children’s play space until later in the evening
 - 1. Guests would prefer to be able to check in and go to bed instead of waiting

V. 90 DAY FAMILY SHELTER

- a. Made up of a series of single rooms, the largest of which has 5 beds, some with bunk beds
- b. Family shelter has large shared restroom/shower for the floor
- c. 2 Bed Bug ovens are located in the Family shelter to treat belongings

- i. Staff would much prefer a full heat room to treat strollers and other large items

VI. QUEUING

- a. Guests are allowed on the property, in the green space, at 4:30pm
- b. Guests are handed random numbers for check-in order and bunk
 - i. Guests have said that they like this process because it removes some of the stress associated with getting to the shelter on time and getting a bed
- c. Guests Dine first, then go through the check-in process at 6:30pm
- d. Providing charging outlets for guest phones at the bunks could also reduce stress/queuing

VII. COUPLES

- a. Salvation Army sees a definite population in need of shelter for couples, but in discussion determined that without a clear precedent, the service may have a higher potential for misuse or abuse
 - i. Dilemma of distinguishing “original” couples from those that may have developed relationships while homeless
- b. Solution could be that staying in couples room would require a medical reason or doctors note
 - i. In cases where the partner is the main caregiver for a medical need, whether a romantic partner, or adult son or daughter

VIII. SECURITY

- a. Most altercations are managed by staff
- b. Doors lock after dinner
- c. After check-in, guests may leave the property and return before the end of dinner
- d. Guests are allowed out into the greenspace to smoke until 10pm
- e. Guests that work late may check in after normal hours if they’ve provided their work schedule

IX. PAY TO STAY

- a. Staff estimates that a high percentage of their guests classify as working poor and could benefit from a pay to stay option
- b. These guests may benefit from being separate from chronically homeless and mentally ill guests, as they work toward getting back on their feet



Exterior image of building at entrance



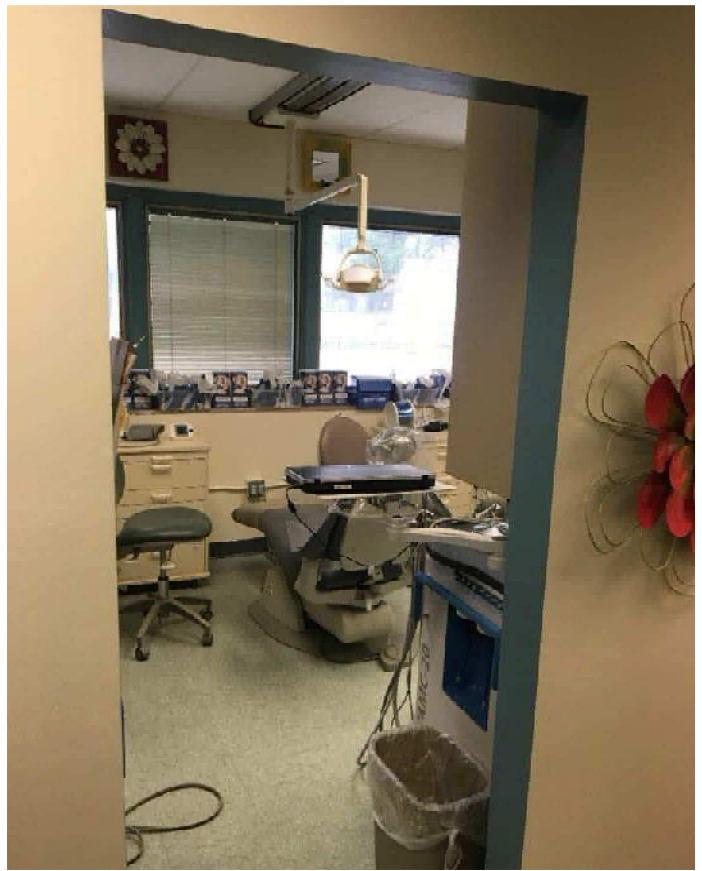
Entrance to shelter



Staff security, intake room on right staff entry on left



Intake Office



Dentist rooms located in staff wing



Computer lab for guest's



Temporary storage lockers for guest personal items



Beds in adjacent hallway for separation



Assigned Beds in single Women shelter area



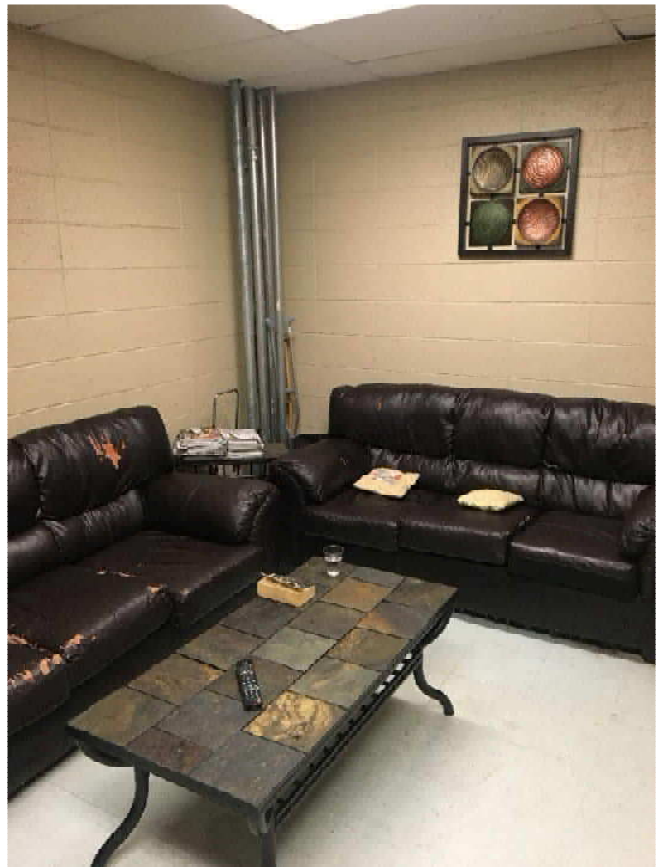
Single Women's sleeping area – beds along walls



Single Women's sleeping area in Gymnasium



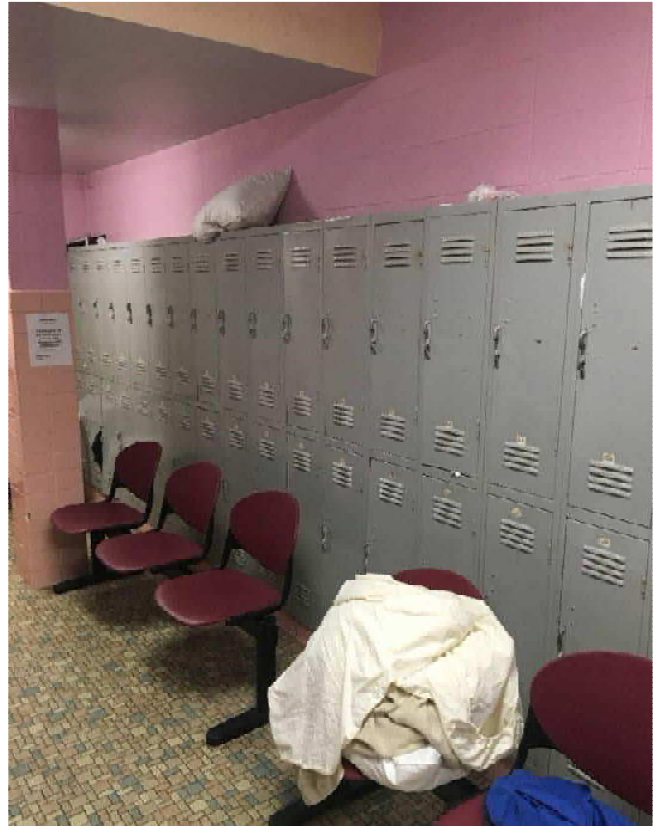
Lounge off sleeping area



Lounge area



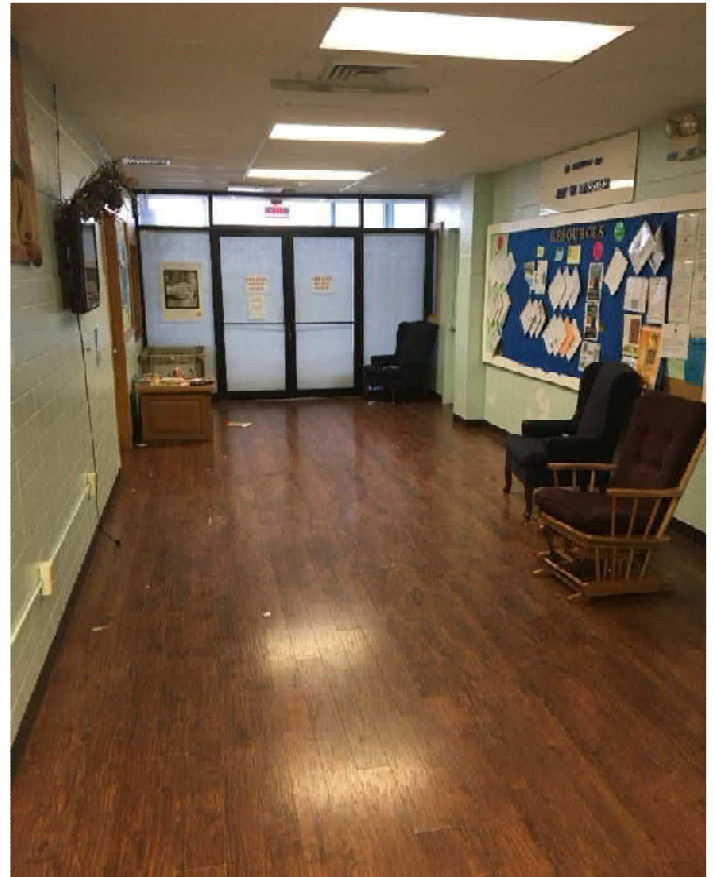
Women's showers



Women's linen lockers



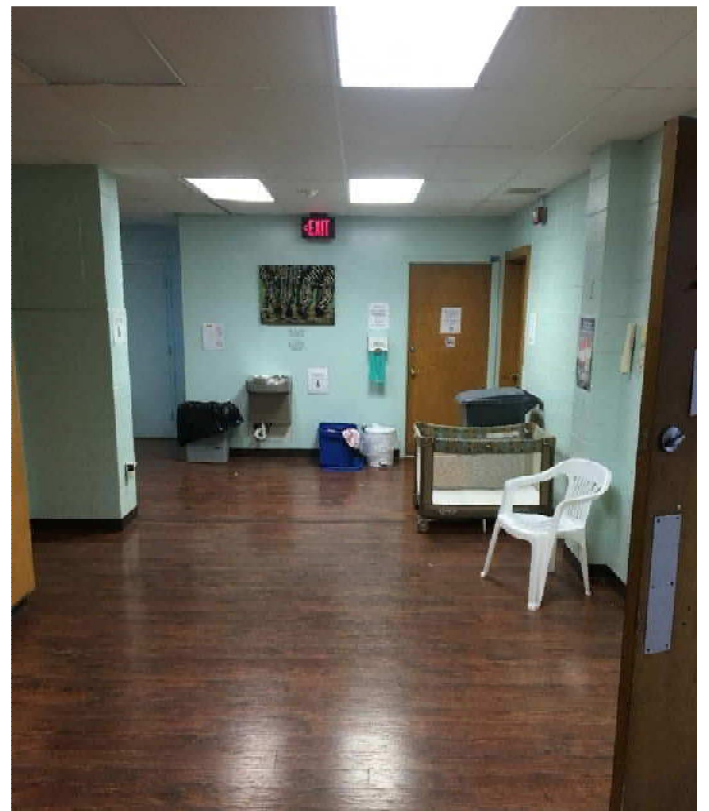
Group Dining area – off gymnasium



Drop in shelter for families



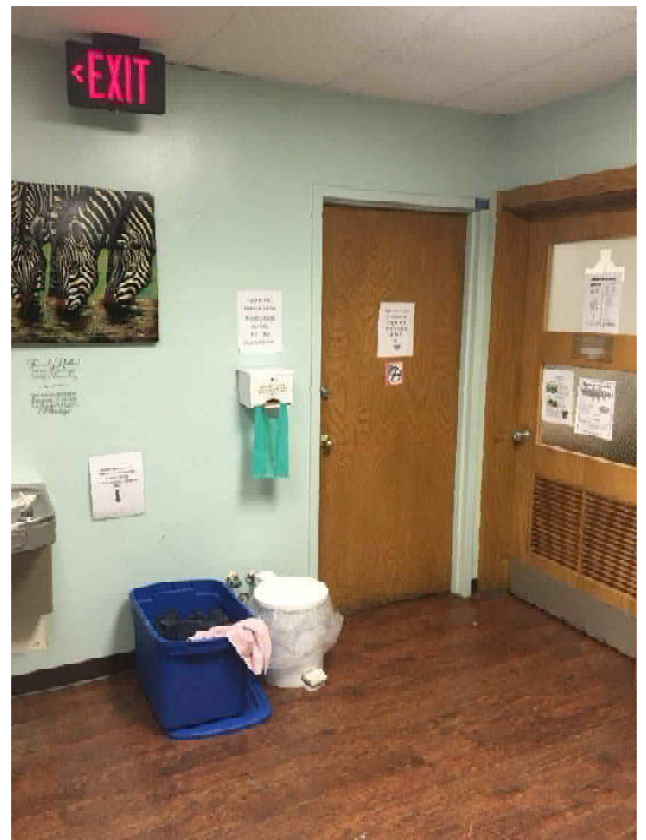
Kitchen / Serving area for meals



Drop in shelter for families - adjacent to gym



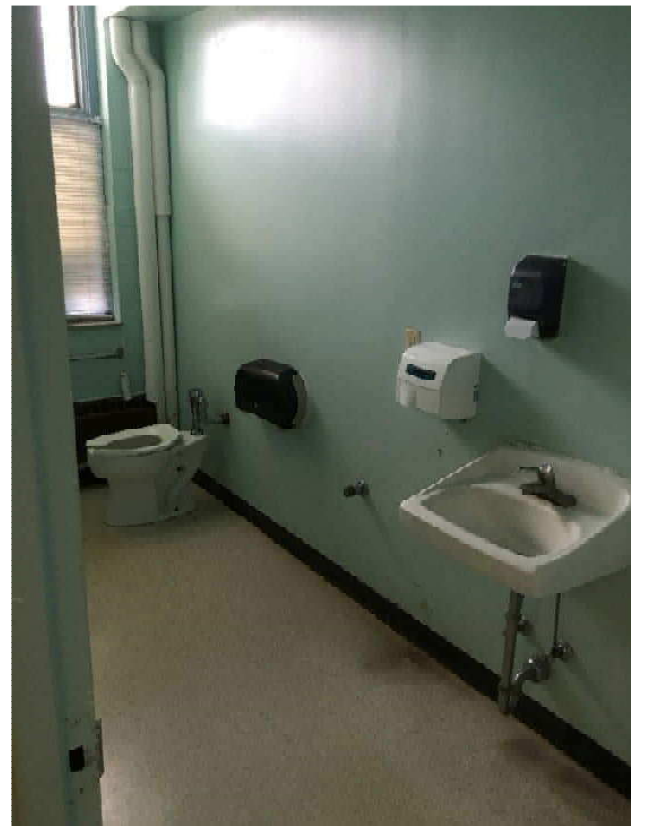
Sleeping room 1 for drop in shelter families



Access to shower for drop in shelter families



Sleeping room 2 for drop in shelter families



Bathroom for drop in shelter families