Infection Prevention Basics for Homeless Shelters

Use as a companion to LACDPH Guideline for Preparation for COVID-19 in Homeless Shelters

Education/Signage Educating Staff and Residents:

✓ Post signs at facility entrance instructing visitors and shelter guests to alert staff if they have symptoms of respiratory illness (fever, cough etc.).

✓ Assess all guests daily and upon entry for symptoms.

✓ Assure shelter guests that the facility is here to protect them, including answering their questions and explaining what they can do to protect themselves and their fellow guests.

✓ Post signs on how to appropriately wear items such as masks, and gloves.

Hand Hygiene/ Infection Control:

✓ Reinforce frequent hand hygiene: use soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

✓ Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and then dispose of the tissue and clean your hands immediately.

✓ Provide a facemask for those who are symptomatic and separate from other guests.

✓ Have mask and gloves for non-healthcare staff who are working with any guests who are ill.

Cohorting of Shelter Residents:

✓ Designate an area in the shelter for those exhibiting symptoms that is separate from other areas at the shelter; try to set aside a separate dining area and bathrooms that can be exclusively used by those who are ill.

✓ Try to assign a dedicated group of staff to support guests who are ill to limit possible exposures and ensure that staff with appropriate training are adhering to precautions.

✓ Minimize close contact and the sharing of objects such as cups, food, and drink.

Environmental Cleaning:

✓ Routinely clean and disinfect all frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs, bannisters, countertops, faucet handles, and phones.

✓ Provide tissues and no touch receptacles for disposal in restrooms and common areas.