American Red Cross

Tip Sheet: Evicting Shelter Clients

Disaster Cycle Services Job Tools
Response/Sheltering

It is sometimes necessary to evict clients from shelters for repeated or serious violation of rules, physical altercations/ fighting, verbal abuse, disturbances, or similar behavior. Eviction normally takes place after warnings and efforts to resolve issues have failed to produce compliance but may be made immediately for physical attacks.

Deciding to evict a client is a significant decision and needs to be made with care. Evictions should occur only after other options have been exercised or the threat to other clients and staff is too great to allow individuals to remain.

The Shelter Manager is responsible for maintaining a safe, secure, and welcoming environment and ensuring client compliance with shelter rules. (See Sheltering Standards and Procedures.) The Shelter Manager, in consultation with the Sheltering Manager/Coordinator, Disaster Mental Health, Life Safety & Asset Protection (LSAP) or others who can provide knowledge or perspective, makes this decision to evict a client from a shelter.

Making the Decision

- Obtain advice from staff members/Disaster Health Services/Disaster Mental Health and relevant service partners at the shelter about unresolved issues, client information, and alternative resolutions.
- Discuss options with the Sheltering Manager/Coordinator
- Obtain advice from Life Safety & Asset Protection (LSAP).
- Document client's behavior, resolution efforts, and decision in the Shelter Manager's Log for future reference. Once the decision is made, inform Sheltering Manager/Coordinator, Mass Care Manager/Coordinator, District Director, Assistant Director of Operations who in turn should inform Public Affairs in case this gets into the media.

Performing the Eviction

- At least two Red Cross personnel, which should include Shelter Manager, security, Life Safety & Asset Protection and/or law enforcement personnel, and Disaster Mental Health should be present. If law enforcement is on site, record their name. badge number and case # in the Manager's Log for future reference.
- Be calm and firm when informing the client about the eviction.
- Eviction should occur with as few other clients and staff around as possible.
- Provide a reasonable amount of time for the client to gather their possessions.
- Remove any wrist bands or ID allowing entry into the shelter.
- Escort the evicted client to the exit.

Sheltering Tip Sheets provide pointers for handling issues within the guidance outlined in Sheltering Standards and Procedures *and other Red Cross doctrine. Please send feedback to sheltering@redcross.org.*

- Inform the client that they are not to return to the shelter or to other Red Cross shelters (once Sheltering Manager/Coordinator and Life Safety & Asset Protection have been advised of this decision). Shelter Manager/Coordinator and Life Safety & Asset Protection inform all other Red Cross shelters in the area.
- If media might be present, reach out to Public Affairs and have them present.
- If the client leaves personal possessions, pack them in a bin or bag, label them, and store them in a secure location for later retrieval.

Documenting the Eviction

- Record client information, eviction rationale, eviction handling and names of personnel witnessing the eviction in the Shelter Manager's Log.
- Record the eviction on the client's registration sheet, but do not include further information. Write that a client was evicted in the General Log.
- Inform Shelter Supervisors, reception/registration, dormitory, Life Safety & Asset Protection, security personnel, and the Sheltering Manager/Coordinator of the departure and client behavior when leaving.