



## Stakeholder Information Packet | 2026 Season

*For municipal leaders, first responders, residents, businesses, and community partners*

### Primary Contacts

- Program Leadership: Marcie Burt (Program Director)
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### Shelter Location and Purpose

The Macomb County Winter Shelter exists to provide a safe, loving, warm place to spend the night for adults experiencing homelessness during the harshest winter months. The shelter operates in partnership with host churches and community partners, with professional security on site during operational hours.

Site: Trinity Christian Community Center, 8150 Chapp Ave, Warren, MI 48089.

# Executive Summary

Every winter, people in our region face nights outside in the dangerous cold. Macomb County Winter Shelter is designed to be a predictable, safety-focused overnight shelter model that protects guests and the surrounding community while coordinating closely with local stakeholders.

## 2025 Season Snapshot (for context)

Metric	Result (12/29/2024 - 3/29/2025)
Unique guests served	436
Total bed-nights provided	6,330
Total operating cost	\$116,892.50
Cost per bed-night	\$18.47 (benchmark: \$25-\$30)
Cost per unique guest	\$268.10 (benchmark: \$300-\$400)
Professional security	On site during all operational hours
Operating hours	7:00 PM - 7:00 AM, Sunday - Saturday
Eligibility	Adults 18+, independent, ambulatory

## What stakeholders can expect in 2026

- Clear rules of conduct and consistent enforcement by shelter staff and security.
- Structured intake process (including wanding, bag search/storage) and defined/secure intake entrance.
- A single point of contact and an escalation pathway for concerns, plus scheduled briefings.
- Ongoing cleanliness, litter mitigation, and respect for the host site and surrounding area.
- Transparent reporting: occupancy, guest counts, incident reports, and community feedback themes (reported in aggregate).

## How to raise a concern quickly

- Immediate safety emergencies: call 911.
- On-site urgent issues: notify shelter staff or on-site security at the facility.
- Non-urgent concerns or patterns: contact the Program Director/Manager (emails listed on the cover page).



# Main Packet

## A. Who we are and why the shelter exists

WAVE Project operates the Macomb County Winter Shelter alongside a network of host churches and partners across the region. The shelter's purpose is straightforward: prevent cold-weather harm by providing a warm, supervised indoor space overnight, along with meals and basic hygiene supports.

The shelter is not a replacement for long-term housing solutions. It is a seasonal safety net designed to reduce emergency exposure risk while connecting guests to available resources when possible.

## B. Operating model and standards

### Hours and flow

- Operating hours: 7:00 PM - 7:00 AM, seven nights per week (season dates vary based on host coverage and funding).
- Intake window: doors open at 7:00 PM, and standard intake ends at 9:00 PM; late arrivals follow the same procedures.
- Host church volunteer window: 6:00 PM - 10:00 PM each night (10-12 volunteers recommended).

### Eligibility and expectations

- Guests must be at least 18 years old, independent, and ambulatory.
- Guests receive an assigned sleeping location; couples of opposite genders do not share sleeping locations.
- All guests are expected to follow shelter rules and keep their area clean.

### Meals, hygiene, and basic supports

- Nightly dinner (hot entree with protein) and grab-and-go breakfast are provided by host church volunteers.
- Clean linens are distributed in numbered bags; guests reuse the same bedding during their stay and re-bag it each morning.
- When available, showers are provided via the WAVE Project Mobile Shower Service.

## C. Safety, security, and community protections

### Professional security and incident response

- Professional security guards (2) are on site during all operational hours.



- All guests participate in a search process at entry; prohibited items are enforced through a banned-items list managed by security.
- Guests do not have access to their bags or coats (including purses). They are instructed to take out only what they need (no prohibited items) for the evening (toiletries, medications, chargers, etc.).
- Individuals under 18, previously discharged, and those dependent on others for their care are not eligible.
- Staff make discharge decisions based on severity and safety; police or 911 are called when escalation reaches physical risk or medical need.

## Volunteer boundaries that protect everyone

- Volunteers do not give or loan money to guests and never provide rides.
- Volunteers report rule violations to staff rather than attempting to enforce consequences themselves.
- If a volunteer feels unsafe, they immediately request security and notify shelter staff.

## Cleanliness and infection control

- Volunteers perform routine nightly cleaning (cots, trash, sweep/mop/vacuum as needed, restocking sanitizers).
- Staff disinfects bathrooms nightly, re-stocks supplies, and handles any bodily-fluid cleanup (volunteers are not expected to do this).
- Handwashing is emphasized; gloves and masks are available.

## Smoking, vaping, alcohol, and illicit substance policy

- Smoking, vaping, alcohol, and illicit substances are not allowed in the shelter. This is strictly enforced.
- A designated supervised outdoor break within an enclosed non-public Trinity Christian Community Center area is permitted at 9:30 PM; guests may not possess lighters or matches.

## Myths vs. facts

- Myth: The shelter is unmanaged. Fact: The program uses structured intake, professional security, and clear rules of conduct.
- Myth: Volunteers are left to handle crises. Fact: Security and trained staff handle escalation; volunteers support meals and hospitality within clear boundaries.
- Myth: The shelter increases disorder in the neighborhood. Fact: The model emphasizes predictable routines, supervision, and rapid response pathways for issues.
- Myth: The shelter is expensive and inefficient. Fact: The 2025 cost per bed-night was \$18.47, below common national benchmarks.



## D. Community impact and value-add

### What success looks like

- Fewer people are sleeping outside during the dangerously cold weather.
- A predictable place for outreach and referrals when resources are available.
- Reduced crisis volatility by offering a supervised indoor option overnight.

### A short human story (shareable, respectful)

Behind every data point is a neighbor who hit a hard stretch, eviction, lost wages, illness, or a broken safety net. On the coldest nights, a warm cot, a hot meal, and a calm environment can be the difference between survival and tragedy. Our goal is simple and measurable: keep people alive and treat them with dignity while maintaining a safe, orderly shelter environment.

## E. Transparency and accountability

### Oversight and reporting

- We track guest counts, bed-nights, basic demographics, and geographic origin based on self-reported home city.
- We track incidents and review patterns to improve procedures.
- We report season-end outcomes publicly and can provide stakeholder briefings during the season as requested.

### Complaint intake and response

- Single point of contact for non-urgent issues: Program leadership (emails on cover page).
- Response standard (target): acknowledge within 1 business day and provide a follow-up plan within 3 business days.
- Safety issues are handled immediately through on-site security and, when needed, police/EMS.

## F. How stakeholders can engage

### Planned touchpoints

- Pre-season meetings with city/county leaders and first responder partners (agenda: operations, safety protocols, escalation pathways).
- Optional on-site walkthrough for officials and first responder leadership.
- Mid-season check-in focused on issues, trends, and adjustments.
- Post-season debrief sharing outcomes, lessons learned, and planned improvements.



## How to help (clear calls to action)

- Share the correct contact pathway for concerns so issues reach the right person quickly.
- Encourage coordinated referral practices (avoid sending people after intake hours without a plan).
- Support volunteer recruitment through host churches (meals, intake support, routine cleaning).
- Partner on warming-center messaging during severe-weather events.

## Fast Facts

- Mission: Providing unsheltered individuals who are experiencing homelessness in the winter months a safe, loving, warm place to spend the night.
- Site: Trinity Christian Community Center, 8150 Chapp Ave, Warren, MI 48089.
- Hours: 7:00 PM - 7:00 AM, seven nights per week (season dates based on funding and host coverage).
- Eligibility: Adults 18+, independent, ambulatory.
- Security: Professional security on site during all operational hours; entry search and prohibited-items enforcement.
- Meals: Nightly dinner + grab-and-go breakfast through host church volunteers.
- 2025 outcomes: 436 unique guests, 6,330 bed-nights, \$18.47 cost per bed-night.
- How to raise a concern: safety emergency -> 911; on-site urgent issue -> staff/security; non-urgent -> program leadership.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How is safety managed?

The shelter uses professional security (trained and certified in CPL, CPR, AED, and First Aid) on site during operational hours, a structured intake process with bag searches/wanding, clear rules of conduct, and an escalation pathway that prioritizes de-escalation and calls police/EMS when safety requires it.

### What happens if someone breaks rules?

Volunteers report issues to staff. Staff and security handle warnings, interventions, and discharge decisions depending on severity. Serious escalation results in calling police or 911.

### Is the shelter open to families or minors?

No. Guests must be at least 18 years old, independent, and ambulatory.



## Do volunteers provide transportation or money to guests?

No. Volunteers never give rides or money. Requests are directed to shelter staff.

## What do you do about cleanliness and public health?

Volunteers complete routine nightly cleaning; staff disinfects bathrooms nightly and handles any bodily fluid cleanup. Handwashing, gloves, and optional masks are part of infection control.

## Does the shelter increase the burden on police or EMS?

The shelter is designed to reduce crisis volatility by offering a supervised indoor option overnight. Security and staff handle most issues on site and use 911/EMS only when medically or safety necessary.

## Where do guests come from?

In 2025, guests came from Macomb, Wayne, Oakland, and other counties. The shelter functions as a regional cold-weather safety net, with reporting that helps stakeholders understand who is being served.

## How can a city official or first responder leader get a walkthrough?

Contact program leadership to schedule an on-site walkthrough and review operational protocols and escalation pathways.

# Constructive Responses

## 60–90 second overview

Macomb County Winter Shelter exists for one reason: to keep people from sleeping outside in dangerous winter conditions. We operate a structured, safety-focused overnight shelter model in partnership with host churches and community partners. The shelter runs overnight from 7:00 PM to 7:00 AM, with professional security on site (trained and certified in CPL, CPR, AED, and First Aid) and a clear intake process. In the 2025 season, we served 436 unique guests and provided 6,330 bed-nights at a cost of \$18.47 per bed-night, below common national benchmarks. We take community concerns seriously. We have defined rules, trained staff, security, and a clear escalation pathway for any issue. Our goal is a calm, predictable, well-managed shelter that protects guests and respects the surrounding community.



## Three deeper answers

### If someone is worried about safety

Safety is built into the model. Professional security is present during all operational hours, all guests go through a search process at entry, and staff handle rule enforcement. We use de-escalation when possible and call police or 911 when risk becomes physical or medical. We also provide a clear pathway for leaders and neighbors to raise concerns and get a response.

### If someone is worried about the neighborhood impact

We run a predictable routine with defined hours, supervision, and clear expectations. Guests are inside overnight, not loitering unmonitored. We also emphasize cleanliness and rapid response, and we want issues reported through the right channel so we can address them quickly.

### If someone asks what the community gains

In severe cold, shelter saves lives. It also creates a single, supervised place for outreach and coordinated response. Instead of unpredictable crisis calls scattered across the community, there's a structured system with staff, security, and clear procedures.

## Host Church Network (2026 Season List)

- Christ Church Fraser
- Christian Trinity Church
- Fellowship Chapel
- First United Methodist Church Mount Clemens
- Kensington Church Clinton Township
- King of Kings Lutheran Church
- Lakeside Assembly of God
- Love Life Family Christian Center
- Shepherd's Gate Church
- Shores Assembly of God
- Trinity Lutheran Church Utica
- The Woods Church
- Utica United Methodist Church
- Woodside Church



## Additional Information

- Our planned 2026 season is 12/21/25 – 3/22/26
- Nightly capacity target: 86 on a first-come-first-served basis
- On-site security provider: Century Security Group, LLC, 1400 Oakman Boulevard, Detroit, MI 48238

## WAVE Project Leadership

Board of Directors: <https://www.waveproject.org/leadership.html>

Executive Director: Todd Gordon



Todd Gordon is a veteran music teacher in the Lake Orion Community Schools district, a musician, a speaker, and the Executive Director of WAVE Project. He graduated from Wayne State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Music and holds a Master of Education from Saginaw Valley State University.

In 2018, Todd co-founded the Metro Detroit 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization WAVE Project. As Executive Director, he leads the grassroots organization in providing essential services, including a mobile shower service, mobile clothing closet, food pantries, and the Macomb County Winter Shelter, for people in need around Metro Detroit.

Todd and his wife, Laura, have attended Kensington Community Church for over 25 years. Todd actively serves as an Elder, teacher, and worship leader at the church.

