

AHTN Code Blue SAFETY GUIDELINES



Advocates for Homeless
& Those in Need

Code Blue goals are to:

- Provide a safe warm refuge from the cold in a respectful caring manner in a partnership with our church hosts.
- Resolve the rare conflicts which may occur between our guests without physical confrontation and calls to police.
- Not dismiss any of our guests from the Code Blue shelter or cause an arrest unless absolutely necessary.
- Prepare all our volunteers for the signs of possible conflict, make an early intervention to prevent a physical confrontation between guests.

Instructions for Code Blue Volunteers to Maintain Heightened Awareness:

- Be alert and prepared for the unexpected.
- Volunteers should become familiar with the information in the Code Blue binder.
- Know the street location of the church shelter, not just the name of the church in case a 911 call becomes necessary.
- Observe the guests, i.e., their habits, mannerisms, social interaction skills, likes/dislikes, etc. (These are important to notice something unusual).
- Realize what guests are present and who can be counted on for assistance.
- Be alert for guest exchanging anything.
- Be alert for multiple guests simultaneously going to the restroom (possible drug exchange).
- Regularly check facility, especially restrooms, for signs of drugs.
- Be alert to guests going into restroom and how they are afterwards (possible use of drugs).
- Know where to find Narcan and other first aid material.
- Do not turn back on guests who you are concerned about.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Do not show fear (weakness make you more likely to be a victim).
- Be aware of the state of our homeless guests who enter the church shelter:
 - Loud/yelling conversation
 - Strange behavior at arrival and during intake process
 - Altered appearance or actions
 - Odor of alcohol
 - Signs of drug use (e.g. dilated or pin-sized pupils, itching, tremors, detox-related pain, seizures, etc.)
 - Facial twitch
 - Any evidence of a weapon

Techniques to use at Code Blue:

- Notify other volunteers of any unusual observation of any guests.
- Volunteers should try to prevent a physical confrontation between guests by trying the following techniques:
 - Try to separate the guests verbally.
 - Tell them that 911 will be likely be called if they cannot control their anger and there will be consequences.
 - Try to reason with each person separately.

- Be aware of possible confrontation in the smoking area. If an altercation occurs:
 - Get all non-involved guests into the church.
 - Monitor doors to not allow conflicted guests into the church.
 - Prepare to call 911.
- If there is a confrontation inside the church:
 - Use calm but firm voice to try to separate the guests verbally
 - Don't get involved in the issue of the fight
 - Suggest something like "Look you can stay here, be comfortable and warm or you will be asked to leave or escorted out with help if needed. You will be much more comfortable here than at a police department."
 - **DO NOT TRY TO BREAK-UP A FIGHT** but we can't stand by and let one guest hurt another guest.
 - Volunteers should work together should a heated confrontation between guests arise. One volunteer should always be on alert to call 911 should additional assistance be needed. *If ever a volunteer is involved in any physical harm, dial 911 immediately.*
 - Tell problem guests to "take it outside". They may be allowed to return if they work out their differences.
 - If a guest enters the shelter *at any time* and appears to be drunk/intoxicated and the volunteers know the guest drove themselves to the shelter:
 - Ask the guest for car keys.
 - If the guest refuses, warn guest of a call to police.
 - If keys are still not handed in, remind the guest that they can "sleep it off here in the warm church or in the "gray bar hotel".
 - If guest does not hand over the keys, call the police.

In the event of a drug overdose that requires Narcan administration:

- Volunteers trained in administering Narcan can administer.
- Wear gloves to avoid skin-to-skin contact.
- Have another volunteer call or text 911 upon discovery of possible overdose.
- Narcan can wear off quickly and victim can be difficult to manage when coming out of unconsciousness.
- Speak calmly to victim to explain what is happening and that help is on the way
- Narcan has a shorter life-span than heroin/fentanyl, thus when it wears off the heroin/fentanyl takes over again.

AHTN will have on site:

- Narcan
- Gloves
- First aid kit

AHTN's Code word to alert volunteers to call 911: **Blue Elephant**

AHTN will be responsive for contacting the respective police department of the shelter to let them know of Code Blue Site being active.

Bus Instructions:

- When guests are boarding the bus, attendants should make eye contact with the guests and look for anything suspicious or that causes concern.
- Attendants should give new guests a copy of the Transportation Guidelines when boarding the bus.
- No beverages of any kind are allowed on the bus or in the CB shelter.
- Do not let anyone who is suspected of being heavily under the influence of a drug (including alcohol) on bus.
- Do not let anyone on bus who looks like he/she could be a danger to volunteers or other riders.
- If a person under moderate suspicion is allowed to board the bus, make sure they sit toward the back of the bus (i.e. away from driver – also other riders may intervene to calm person down).
- Should a situation arise on the bus that calls for additional assistance- ex. guests fighting, guest passes out, irritated guest, etc. the bus driver should pull over to a safe location and the attendant should call 911. If the bus team feels that dialing 911 could be more harmful, text 911 with your location and a brief description of the situation. Inform the guests that there is an “issue” with the bus and wait for help. Volunteers should never leave the bus unattended.
- Bus Team should call in the Shelter Coordinator to notify the shelter of any situations.

Bus will have the following in the glove compartment:

- First aid kit
- Glove