



PO Box 873
Fort Collins, CO 80522-0873
www.HomewardAlliance.org
www.MurphyCenter.org
(970) 658-9878

3/20/2020

COVID-19 Daily Update

Hello All,

Today was/is the first full day of operations at Aztlan Center. It was not without its operational hiccups, of course, but we are serving hundreds of individuals and improving every moment. I cannot say thank you enough to the amazing professionals who are leading this work, on the ground, every day.

Here are some updates:

- Holly LeMasurier (Homeward 2020) has been working with public health experts from Health District of Northern Larimer County to develop a set of protocols for shelter providers—at Aztlan, Catholic Charities and the Fort Collins Rescue Mission—to ensure that we are utilizing our spaces as effectively as possible... separating populations, isolating individuals with minor symptoms, refining procedures for individuals with severe symptoms, etc. This planning—and the protocols that emerge from it—will be an enormous asset to our operations, as this is uncharted territory for us all. Thank you to Holly and the team at Health District for leading this effort. We will share updates/new protocols after tomorrow's conference call.
- Lisa Dunworth (SummitStone/OFC) created this working document to identify changes to homeless services... note that this is not a replacement to the official resource guide—it is meant to highlight only those services that have changed as a result of COVID-19. Please send updates to Lisa at lisa.dunworth@summitstonehealth.org. Thank you Lisa. <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1xqafPZnzvqHNCnunQxP8V8hpgxv9NgsgH5nDADdD3c4/htmlview>
- Fort Collins Rescue Mission adopted new shift protocols to further spread out guests during dinner. Shorter shifts, more cleaning.
- We do not yet have a plan for widespread gear distribution, although we brought basic supplies (hats, gloves, socks, hand warmers) and distributed them today. We will, however, address emergency issues as they arise, and we expect to have a broader plan related to gear distribution early next week.
- We received a new batch of N95 masks today. Thank you!
- Also thanks to one of the Assistant Superintendents at PSD, who spent his day searching for thermometers, driving to schools to pick them up... and ultimately delivering them to us. We needed these thermometers desperately, and our friends at PSD stepped up.
- Homeward Alliance will be hosting a conference call to provide our stakeholders with an update relative to our operations. This is open to anyone. I will talk for a few minutes and then answer questions. If you are interested in participating or listening in, just email me and I will send you the call-in info.

We are still awaiting word on potential quarantine locations, and—like the rest of the country—we still lack clarity on the availability of testing (or even the importance of testing, given where we are in this pandemic), the processes at local healthcare facilities for people who present with symptoms (and especially people who are homeless), and if/when we will have access to the supplies—especially masks in large quantities—that everyone so desperately needs.

PO Box 873
Fort Collins, CO 80522-0873
www.HomewardAlliance.org
www.MurphyCenter.org
(970) 658-9878

I will admit that I have had moments of frustration related to the local response to this crisis—as I am sure we all have—but when I step back, I am in awe of the dozens, if not hundreds, of individuals who began advocating for people who are homeless the moment this crisis began... and haven't stopped since. The work is nowhere near done, but you are making things happen, and I am grateful to each of you.

More broadly, my frustration—really anger, to be honest—stems from what I see as the gross inequality that crises like these reveal. People who are homeless, and other marginalized populations, are virtually helpless right now... not because they lack the ability to be successful, live independently or stay healthy—but because they do not have the resources, starting with housing, to even try.

Right now, people experiencing homelessness—all across the nation—are at the mercy of their individual communities' willingness to take action... and effective action.

And so while I am grateful that our community is moving fast on this issue, it also makes me cringe to think of the communities that are not acting so swiftly—or the communities where the problem is much larger—and reminds me that this pandemic has exposed (or at least made more obvious) something fundamentally unfair about our society.

Sorry for the soapbox. My most important message really is: thank you, and keep up the great work.

David Rout, Executive Director

Phone: (970) 682-3193

Email: David@HomewardAlliance.org