



**POLICY – FMO 318**  
***Interim Use Emergency Shelters***

|                                                                                                |                                  |                           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Approved By:  | Original Policy Date: 07/31/2018 | Revision Date: <b>NEW</b> |
| Supersedes:                                                                                    | See Also: IFC Section 105.6.36   |                           |

**1. Shoreline Fire Department will regulate Interim Use Emergency Shelters in existing buildings by issuance of an Operational Fire Permit.**

- a. This policy explains application of relevant code provisions to Interim Use Emergency Shelter facilities ("shelters"). The need for shelters is great due to the homelessness crisis. These types of facilities are unique, and warrant different treatment in the construction regulatory process. The Building Official and the Fire Marshal have flexibility in applying Building and Fire code provisions provided a reasonable degree of safety is provided.
- b. Shelter facilities do not fit well into typical residential occupancy categories even though the shelters provide sleeping accommodations. Shelters are supervised while the occupants are sleeping, and shelters are required to provide features that allow occupants to easily exit the shelter in an emergency.
- c. The sleeping area and accessory spaces of an Interim Use Emergency Shelter shall be permitted to have the same occupancy classification as was last permitted for the space.
- d. Although there are provisions in the Existing Building Code Section 407 indicating that an occupancy change warrants full compliance, other sections allow flexibility for unique circumstances. For existing buildings, Section 101.3 allows the use of alternative approaches to achieve compliance with minimum requirements to safeguard the public health, safety and welfare.
- e. Interim Use Emergency Shelters will be regulated through use of an Operational Fire Permit under applicable provisions of the International Fire Code as a place of assembly, Section 105.6.36, for 180 day increments and may be approved for subsequent increments.

**2. Interim Use Emergency Shelters shall meet the following Egress requirements.**

- a. A readily discernible path to two well separated exits from each sleeping area;
- b. Shelter shall be located within one level of the ground floor;
- c. Exit lights per International Building Code (IBC) Section 1006;
- d. Exit signs per IBC 1011; and
- e. Exit paths for all building occupants shall not be blocked or locked to prevent exiting.

**3. Interim Use Emergency Shelters shall meet the following Emergency Systems requirements.**

- a. Carbon monoxide detectors according to IBC 908.7;
- b. Interconnected smoke alarms covering the shelter space and adjacent spaces. Battery operated is acceptable. Must be UL listed smoke alarms with sealed non-removable 10-year batteries;
- c. Class 2A rated fire extinguisher within 75 feet of all portions of the shelter. Additional fire extinguishers as determined by the Shoreline Fire Department (SFD); and

- d. Posting a fire safety and emergency plan according to the International Fire Code (IFC) Section 404 that contains the following:
  - 1. A floor plan or diagram showing emergency egress or escape routes and exits, portable fire extinguishers, and (where provided) areas of refuge, fire alarm manual pulls, control panel, or annunciator;
  - 2. The procedure for reporting a fire (call 9-1-1) or other emergency.
  - 3. The means of notifying occupants of a fire or emergency;
  - 4. Procedures for assisted rescue for persons with disabilities;
  - 5. A procedure for accounting for occupants after evacuation has been completed; and
  - 6. Contact information of personnel or staff who can provide further information or explanation of duties under the plan.

**4. Interim Use Emergency Shelter Operators shall implement the following policies and operational standards.**

- a. Provide supervision of the shelter through the sleeping hours. Supervision shall ensure continuous and systematic surveillance of the shelter for the purposes of identifying and controlling fire hazards, detecting early signs of fire, raising an alarm in the event of a fire, and notifying the fire department. The supervision shall include the following:
  - 1. Supervision shall be performed by at least one awake, alert adult for every 25 beds. Awake supervision is not required for 10 or fewer beds;
  - 2. Supervision shall be performed by a person knowledgeable with shelter policies, the layout of the building and the fire safety and emergency plan;
  - 3. Record of this supervision shall be maintained in a log with the time between entries no longer than every 30 minutes;
  - 4. Supervision can be provided by a shelter resident, a volunteer, or shelter staff; and
  - 5. Supervision may be shared by more than one person through the sleeping hours as long as the supervision is continuous;
- b. The shelter has a telephone available to call 9-1-1 at all times;
- c. Use of commercial cooking appliances in the building is not permitted during sleeping hours.
- d. Warming ovens or residential-type stove tops used for warming food are allowed during nonsleeping hours;
- e. Smoking is prohibited inside the building;
- f. A no tolerance policy shall be in place that prohibits drinking or drug use onsite, threats of violence, or any other criminal activity; and
- g. Implement operational standards to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities.

**5. Interim Use Emergency Shelters shall not require the following.**

- a. Fire sprinklers are not required for the sleeping area and accessory spaces.
- b. The HVAC system need not be altered to comply with current code.
- c. Requirements for change of occupancy need not be met.
- d. No building envelope improvements will be required for an existing heated space.