

APPENDIX C: EMERGENCY SHELTER AND HOUSING GUIDELINES

Joint non-competitive funds administered by the Oregon Department of Justice (ODOJ) and Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) are intended to increase meaningful access to effective services including emergency housing and shelter. Survivors are best served when emergency housing and shelter services are trauma-informed, immediate, and least restrictive. We want to create welcoming environments where survivors of domestic and sexual violence experience safety, healing and restoration. This guidance helps organizations establish survivor-centered practices that prioritize safety, security, and well-being rather than restrictive, punitive practices of housing and shelter services.

ODOJ and ODHS apply confidentiality and civil rights requirements to all programs that provide emergency shelter and housing services supported by the Joint Non-Competitive Funds and as described in the 2025-2027 Joint Non-Competitive Funds Request for Applications. In short, providers must respect the fundamental rights, dignity, and worth of all people in need of shelter, housing, and nonresidential services and programs.²²

Participation in all services must be voluntary! The resource list¹ in the end notes offers helpful information about survivor-centered practices in emergency shelter. All recipients of the Joint Non-Competitive Funds must understand and comply with the requirements outlined in this document concerning prohibited emergency shelter and housing practices. You should NOT:

- Condition emergency shelter services on participation in other services as **participation in services must be voluntary**
- Use screening tools that prevent individuals from accessing shelter or services²³ like:
 - Criminal background checks
 - Sobriety requirements
 - Requirements to obtain specific legal remedies (e.g., protection orders)
 - Mental health or substance use disorder screenings or testing
- Require participation in services like counseling, support groups, parenting classes, life skills classes, mental health or substance use disorders treatment as a condition of access to emergency shelter²⁴
- Exclusively conduct sex-specific or age-specific programming without an equal and comparable alternative (e.g. programs just for one gender and not another)
- Operate without a plan to ensure effective communication and equal access for individuals with Limited English Proficiency or disabilities
- Deny or limit survivors use of or access to appropriate auxiliary aids and services (e.g. translated or large print materials, qualified interpreters)
- Deny or prevent survivors and their minor children from being sheltered or housed together
- Restrict or limit shelter and housing services for survivors who have adolescent children

²² [Guiding Values for Serving Victims and Survivors of Crime](#)

²³ <https://acf.gov/ofvps/law-regulation/family-violence-prevention-and-services-act-final-rule>

²⁴ <https://acf.gov/ofvps/law-regulation/family-violence-prevention-and-services-act-final-rule>

- Require or discriminate against individuals on the basis of religion, religious belief, a refusal to hold a religious belief, or refusal to attend or participate in a religious practice
- Require documentation of immigration status²⁵
- Ask questions about a survivors' anatomy or medical history, or make demands for identity documents or other documentation of gender²⁶
- Prohibit or limit activities outside of shelter or require approval of outside activities before participation (e.g., overnight stays with family members, attendance at events where the abuser may be present)
- Instruct residents on how they conduct themselves outside of shelter
- Impose hardline curfews (e.g., denying entry after hours because of events, school, work)
- Use internal surveillance cameras
- Conduct surveillance activities like person or room searches
- Verify or fact check survivors' information or story
- Restrict or deny shelter or housing services or defer survivors to another program, based on perceived or disclosed protected class (race, color, national origin, religion, disability, sex (includes pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status) or other legally protected personal characteristics; this includes deferring survivors to a culturally specific or Tribal Nations program for services²⁷
- Restrict or deny shelter or housing services, or defer survivors to another program, based on language ability, limited access (e.g., lack of interpreter services), geographic location, address, or area of residence²⁸

In addition, organizations or programs are required to notify ODOJ CVSSD and ODHS when:

- A shelter facility or property owned and operated by the organization or program is scheduled for closure for any reason (e.g., maintenance, staff shortages, natural disaster)
- Staff, volunteers, or board members are living on-site at a shelter facility or property owned and operated by the organization or program (e.g., primary or secondary residence, temporary living arrangements, staff apartments, houseparent); Any on-site living arrangements are subject to ODOJ CVSSD and ODHS monitoring

This is not an exhaustive list. Please reach out to a ODOJ CVSSD or ODHS fund coordinator with questions or concerns. ODOJ CVSSD and ODHS will provide resources and referrals for technical assistance for organizations and programs that request help.

²⁵ [Sanctuary Promise; 45 CFR 1370.5\(d\)](#)

²⁶ 45 CFR 1370.5(a)(4)

²⁷ This requirement applies differently to Tribal Nations emergency shelter services. Please talk to your Fund Coordinator for more information.

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[Creating Trauma-Informed Services: Tips for Creating a Welcoming Environment](#)
[Guiding Values for Serving Victims and Survivors of Crime](#)
[The Basics of the Voluntary Services Approach](#)
[Self-Assessment Tool for Ensuring Access for People with Disabilities](#)
[Model Medication Policy for DV Shelters](#)
[Sheltering Transgender Women: Providing Welcoming Services](#)
[The Needs of Children in Domestic Violence Shelters](#)
[Safety & Privacy Considerations When Using Hotels for Emergency Shelter Stays](#)
[Oregon Fair Housing Rules for Shelter](#)
[Interior Video Surveillance Compromises Survivor Privacy and Healing](#)
[NNEDV Guidance – Cameras Inside Shelter](#)
[Abusive Power and Control within the Domestic Violence Shelter](#)
[Housing Discrimination and Fair Housing Rights](#)
[Promising Practices and Interventions to Address Housing Needs of Domestic Violence Survivors](#)
[IASC Definition and Principles of a Victim/Survivor Centered Approach](#)
[Sanctuary Promise](#)
[DOJ CVSSD Civil Rights Requirements](#)
[FVPSA Final Rule FAQs](#)