Accompaniment & Follow-Up Policy Sample Templates (3)

This document contains three policy sample templates that support **Emergency Shelter Operating Principle 4: We ensure people who have high needs receive accompaniment and follow-up services.**

### [A. Ensuring Client Community Follow-Up](#_Policy) [SAMPLE]

This sample policy offers a template for emergency shelters that do not directly provide follow-up services, but work to ensure clients are connected with external agencies and individuals who do offer follow-up services.

### [B1. Providing Accompaniment and Follow-up Services to Clients Outside of the Shelter](#_Policy_1) [SAMPLE]

This sample policy offers a template for shelters that provide accompaniment and follow-up services to clients outside of the shelter. It includes procedures for staff transporting clients in their vehicle.

### [B2. Driver and Insurance Requirements for Staff Transporting Clients](#_Policy_2) [SAMPLE]

This sample policy offers a template for shelters that provide accompaniment and follow-up services to clients outside of the shelter. It includes additional policy and procedure details for staff who are using vehicles to transport clients.

[**PLEASE NOTE (1):** The policy below is **not** mandatory. It is a **sample** that was developed from best practices and existing policies in the field (please see [Attachment 2](#Policy_Sources_Accomp_Follow_Up) for a list of Policy Sources). It is provided here as a support to emergency shelters that are developing or updating their policy on this topic. Please see [Attachment 1](#Notes_on_Customizing_Accomp_Follow_Up) for notes on customizing this policy to fit your emergency shelter and community context.]

**[PLEASE NOTE (2): This template policy is for shelters that do not directly provide accompaniment and follow-up services. For the alternative, please see the next sample policy template, “**[**Providing Accompaniment and Follow-up Services to Clients Outside of the Shelter**](#_Policy_1)**.”]**

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| --- | --- |
| **Section of Manual:** | [Number] [Name] [Example: 6.1 Admission to Shelter] |
| **Policy:** | [Number] [Name] [Example: 6.1.3 Under the Influence] |
| **Approved by:** | [Example: Executive Team, Name of Shelter] |
| **Effective:** | [Date] |
| **Revised:** | [Date; Date; Date; Date] |
| **Accreditation:** | 15.1.2,15.2.5, 15.7.1 |

Ensuring Client Community Follow-Up [SAMPLE POLICY A]

# Policy

Caseworkers ensure that clients with high needs are connected with follow-up support services as they move out of the shelter and into housing. The intent of housing follow-up is to support clients to retain their housing and increase client community integration and quality of life.

# Definitions

**Chronically homeless** “refers to individuals, often with disabling conditions (e.g. chronic physical or mental illness, substance abuse problems), who are currently homeless and have been homeless for six months or more in the past year (i.e. have spent more than 180 nights in a shelter or place not fit for human habitation).”(Government of Canada, Homelessness Partnering Strategy (date modified January 28, 2014): [www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/communities/homelessness/housing\_first/supports.shtml#chronically](http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/communities/homelessness/housing_first/supports.shtml#chronically)

**Episodically homeless** “refers to individuals, often with disabling conditions, who are currently homeless and have experienced three or more episodes of homelessness in the past year (of note, episodes are defined as periods when a person would be in a shelter or place not fit for human habitation for a certain period, and after at least 30 days, would be back in the shelter or place.”(Government of Canada, Homelessness Partnering Strategy (date modified January 28, 2014): [www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/communities/homelessness/housing\_first/supports.shtml#chronically](http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/communities/homelessness/housing_first/supports.shtml#chronically)

**Follow-up supports** help a client settle into a new home, identify local resources (e.g. library, food bank, thrift store), make connections with other service providers in the area (e.g. primary care doctor, Alcoholics Anonymous or other support groups, English or French classes, legal clinic), and develop a safety net of supports to connect with if or when issues arise (e.g. friends, family, sponsor, faith community, etc.).

A **warm transfer** is a face to face introduction where the client is accompanied by one service provider whom they trust and is introduced to a second provider whom they don’t know.

# Procedure

## 1. Assessment

The Caseworker identifies clients as having “high needs” if:

* They are experiencing chronic or episodic homelessness and/or
* They have multiple challenges that may affect their ability to maintain their housing (e.g. serious, ongoing mental health challenges, physical health challenges, cognitive challenges, substance use challenges, or other challenges).

The Caseworker talks with the client about their housing history to assess how long the client has been homeless. The Caseworker also talks with the client about their goals, housing needs, times when they have experienced housing stability, and times when they have experienced challenges to their housing stability.

## 2. Connection to Follow-Up Supports

With clients identified as having high needs, the Caseworker discusses the benefits of having follow-up supports after they have secured housing. The client may choose formal casework follow-up services, friendly visiting supports, both of these options, or neither of these options:

### 2.1 Formal casework follow-up

The Caseworker outlines the options and describes the agency or agencies that would be responsible for the follow-up once the client moves from the shelter into housing. If the client is interested in receiving supports from the agency or agencies described, the Caseworker contacts the agency to confirm the client’s eligibility and to invite the person who will likely be working with the client to come to the shelter to meet with the client (a “warm transfer”).

### 2.2 Friendly visiting

The Caseworker also lets the client know about options for friendly visiting offered by the shelter-based Chaplain and/or church-based or community-based volunteers. These options do not provide case work, but they do help to build friendships, foster integration with the community, and reduce the social isolation that many newly housed people can feel. If the client selects this option, the Caseworker arranges an in-person meeting between the client and the Chaplain or the volunteer prior to the client’s departure from shelter (a “warm transfer”).

## 3. Recording Plans for Organized Departure

### 3.1 External supports

The Caseworker records their offers to connect the client with housing follow-up casework agencies and friendly visiting supports and whether or not the client accepted these offers. If the client is not interested in either of these two options, the Caseworker will make note of any other plans and strategies discussed with the client to support housing stability and community integration.

If a client has selected to receive follow-up supports, the Caseworker organizes a “warm transfer,” an-person meeting between the client and the person who will be following up with them in the community. The Caseworker records the date of this meeting and the names of the individuals attending the meeting in their case notes.

### 3.2 Shelter Supports

Upon discharge, the Caseworker provides clients with shelter contact information and invites them to call if they are facing eviction or encountering any other issues that are jeopardizing their housing stability. All clients will receive this information, whether they have been assessed as having high needs or not.

## 4. Review

The Supervisor reviews the Caseworker’s case notes and client files for thoroughness and specific details in planning for an organized departure supporting housing stability and community integration.

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**[PLEASE NOTE (2): If your shelter provides services to clients outside of the shelter, this policy may be helpful to you. If your shelter does NOT directly provide accompaniment or follow-up services to clients, please see the previous Policy Sample Template on** [**“Ensuring Client Community Follow-up.”**](#_A._Ensuring_Client)**]**

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| --- | --- |
| **Section of Manual:** | [Number] [Name] |
| **Policy:** | [Number] [Name] |
| **Approved by:** | [Example: Executive Team, Name of Shelter] |
| **Effective:** | [Date] |
| **Revised:** | [Date; Date; Date; Date] |
| **Accreditation:** | 15.1.2,15.2.5, 15.7.1 |

Providing Accompaniment and Follow-up Services to Clients Outside of the Shelter [SAMPLE POLICY B1]

# Policy

[Name of Shelter] provides clients with accompaniment and follow-up support services to assist them to find and retain housing, connect with the services and supports they need, and improve their integration with the community and their quality of life. This policy sets the framework for supporting the safety of both team members and clients. Staff take care to minimize the risks associated with working alone, risks associated with operating a vehicle, risks associated with inclement weather, risks associated with environmental factors, and risks associated with health and safety factors. Staff are expected to use judgment and assess risk when deciding to transport clients. [Name of Shelter] does not assume any responsibility for loss of property or injury to anyone riding in a vehicle operated by a staff or volunteer. Staff are encouraged to use a program vehicle rather than a personal vehicle when available (TMOP 0401, Appendix A & Fleet Manual).

# Definitions

**Accompaniment** is when a worker physically goes with a client to meet with a service provider, access a resource, or attend another type of appointment (e.g. rental unit viewings / housing interviews, court appearances, doctor appointments, other support services, assistance moving into housing).

**Follow-up supports** help a client settle into a new home, identify local resources (e.g. library, food bank, thrift store), make connections with other service providers in the area (e.g. primary care doctor, Alcoholics Anonymous or other support groups, English or French classes, legal clinic), and develop a safety net of supports to connect with if or when issues arise (e.g. friends, family, sponsor, faith community, etc.).

# Procedures

## 1. Check-In Procedures

### 1.1 Check-In Procedure – Staff

* Prior to accompanying a client out of the shelter or following up with a housed client in the community, the staff person communicates the following information to their Supervisor:
  + Where they are going
  + The name of the client they are accompanying or visiting
  + What time the staff person will check back in with the Supervisor
* When staff have plans to be out in the community for the full day, they share their plans with their Supervisor at the beginning of the work day, including the names of the clients they are accompanying or visiting and where they are going to be at various times.
* The staff person contacts their Supervisor throughout the day to confirm any significant changes in plans.
* The staff person contacts their Supervisor immediately before entering and immediately after leaving a new or unfamiliar place or a challenging situation.
* The staff person takes steps to keep safe, including bringing another [Name of Shelter] staff member along or a staff member from a partner agency who is part of the client’s “circle of care.” Members in the client’s “circle of care” have received written consent from the client to share information relating to the client’s case plan with each other.
* The staff person follows up with their Supervisor at the end of their shift to report arriving safely back.

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### 1.2 Check-In Procedure – Supervisors

The Supervisors who are responsible for overseeing the work of staff who travel out to the community to work with clients are responsible for ensuring the following information is available and up to date:

* The [Name of Shelter] vehicles schedule.
* Staff contact information (including cell phone and home phone numbers).
* The make, model, colour, and licence plate information for the personal vehicles of staff and volunteers who use their personal vehicles to meet with clients in the community.
* Emergency contact information for staff and volunteers.

If the staff person does not check in as expected, the on-duty Supervisor calls the person’s cell phone:

* If the person does not respond to the call to their cell phone, the Supervisor calls the person’s home phone number. If there is still no answer, the Supervisor calls the emergency contact person’s number.
* If the team member has not been located using these methods, the Supervisor calls the police to report the situation. The Supervisor reports the information regarding the vehicle the person is driving.

## 2. Assessing and Managing Risks Associated with Working with Vulnerable Individuals

Any staff person providing accompaniment or follow-up services must have completed a Police Reference Check (also called a Vulnerable Sector Screening) within the last 6 months prior to submitting it to the Executive Director of [Name of Shelter]. If the person has a criminal record, the Executive Director considers the following before making a decision:

* the nature of the offence(s) and the number of convictions;
* the person’s age at the time of the offence;
* any rehabilitative efforts made by the person;
* the length of time since the most recent conviction;
* the person’s employment record;
* the specific duties and responsibilities associated with the position and the relevance of the particular criminal conviction to the position;
* the potential risk to clients;
* any information shared by the person and their references; and
* any other factors deemed appropriate.

The Police Reference Check is kept in the staff person’s file along with a record of the Executive Director’s decision to approve the person to provide accompaniment and follow-up services.

### 2.1 Assessing and Managing Risks Associated with Operating a Vehicle

Any staff person using a vehicle to provide accompaniment or follow-up services must have a valid driver’s licence and an up-to-date driving record, in addition to their police reference check. Please see [Policy on Driver and Insurance Requirements for Staff Transporting Clients](#_Policy_2) for more details. All program or fleet vehicles used to transport clients have appropriate insurance in accordance with Territorial Management Operating Policy 5204 Insurance – Fleet. Personal vehicles are not recommended due to increased insurance costs and liability of staff.

When using a vehicle, a staff person:

* Assesses their vehicle for road readiness before setting out (i.e. check fuel level, tire pressure, windshield wipers, lights, battery). See Vehicle Daily Checklist, including ensuring that insurance and vehicle registration is in any Salvation Army owned or leased vehicle at all times, Vehicle Weekly Checklist, and Vehicle Monthly Checklist.
* Ensures that they and any passengers use seat belts.
* Obeys posted speed limits.
* Drives in a safe and courteous manner.
* Refrains from talking on a cell phone or texting while driving.
* Reports any injuries or accidents, no matter how minor, to the Supervisor and Program Manager.
* Vehicle accidents in any Salvation Army owned or leased vehicle should be reported immediately to Cunningham Lindsey – 1-800-235-8784; THQ should be notified within 24 hours. Auto Accident Report Form to be filled out which is attached to Operating Policy 5204.

General vehicle expectations:

* Every person riding in the vehicle shall wear a seat belt.
* No smoking is permitted in the vehicle.
* Alcohol shall not be consumed in the vehicle. Alcohol is not be transported within a Salvation Army owned or leased vehicle, in the trunk or otherwise.
* If vomiting, bleeding, or incontinence occurs, or any other incident that results in the soiling of the vehicle, the vehicle must be cleaned thoroughly. [Name of Shelter] reimburses the staff or volunteer for the cost of cleaning their vehicle.

### 2.2 Assessing and Managing Risks Related to Transporting Clients

Staff are expected to use judgment and assess risk when deciding to transport a client, either in a [Name of Shelter] vehicle. Staff are encouraged to use a program vehicle rather than a personal vehicle when available (TMOP 0401, Appendix A).

#### 2.2.1 Assessing risks prior to departure

Staff consider level of intoxication, agitation, or any signs of aggressive behaviour before deciding whether or not transport the client. Knowledge of a client’s previous behaviours while under the influence or in crisis is helpful when assessing potential risk; extra care should be exercised with new clients. Staff do not transport a client if they believe that there would be an unacceptable level of risk to either themselves or anyone else in the vehicle. If a client is extremely intoxicated, demonstrating aggressive or threatening behaviour, being extremely agitated, the client should not be transported in a vehicle by a Salvation Army volunteer or staff member.

#### 2.2.2 Deciding not to transport a client

Whenever a staff person feels unsafe in transporting a client, they refrain from doing so. The staff person carefully assess the risks and consider possible alternatives. Staff may give the client a bus ticket and offer them instructions for how to get to their destination. A taxi may be used in a crisis situation, at the discretion of the Program Manager.

#### 2.2.3 Responding to risks while in the vehicle

If any behaviour occurs in the vehicle that the staff person feels puts safety at risk, the staff person pulls the vehicle over when it is safe and parks it. The staff person attempts to de-escalate the situation and calm the client. If de-escalation does not resolve the presenting safety risks, the staff person asks the client to exit the vehicle and provides them with a bus ticket. If the situation continues to escalate, the team member calls 911.

#### 2.2.4 Service restrictions and incident reports

If the behaviour was verbally threatening or physically aggressive, staff may consider temporarily barring the client from being transported. The staff person fills out an incident report and discusses the situation with the Program Manager. A decision about temporary barring is made and the Program Manager communicates it to the team. It should be noted that temporarily barring a client from the vehicle does not mean that the client is barred from the shelter or from receiving other services from staff.

### 2.3 Assessing and Managing Risks Related to Weather

Staff and volunteers are expected to use judgment and assess risk when deciding if it is safe to drive. Staff and volunteers take the following precautions:

* Reschedule appointments if the situation becomes dangerous. Advise the Supervisor immediately of any changes in plans.
* Plan ahead to ensure there will be enough gas.
* Clear all windows of fog.
* Keep to main roads if possible.
* Drive cautiously and match speed to conditions.
* Be cautious when passing other vehicles.
* Keep the radio tuned to a local station for weather advice.
* Follow the check-in procedure with the [Name of Shelter] Supervisor on shift.

In the winter, staff and volunteers perform the following additional tasks:

* Clear all snow and ice from the hood, roof, windows and lights.
* Wear warm clothes that do not restrict movement.
* Ensure that windshield washer fluid is operable and refill available

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**[PLEASE NOTE (2): This policy is not needed by shelters that do not have vehicles or provide transportation for clients.]**

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| --- | --- |
| **Section of Manual:** | [Number] [Name] |
| **Policy:** | [Number] [Name] |
| **Approved by:** | [Example: Executive Team, Name of Shelter] |
| **Effective:** | [Date] |
| **Revised:** | [Date; Date; Date; Date] |
| **Accreditation:** | 15.1.2,15.2.5, 15.7.1 |

Driver and Insurance Requirements for Staff Transporting Clients [SAMPLE POLICY B2]

# Policy

[Name of Shelter] provides clients with accompaniment and follow-up support services to assist them to find and retain housing, connect with the services and supports they need, and improve their integration with the community and their quality of life. [Name of Shelter] supports the safety of both staff and clients during this work. Staff or volunteers transporting drivers must have a valid driver’s licence, an up-to-date driving record, and a police reference check.

# Procedures

## 1. Driver Requirements

Authorization to drive a vehicle to transport clients is conditional on the following requirements:

### 1.1 Licence

The staff or volunteer must have a valid driver’s licence. The person will show the licence to their supervisor at the time of assignment and the supervisor will take a photocopy and keep it on file.

### Statement of Driving Record (Driver Abstract)

* The staff or volunteer must produce an up-to-date Driving Record issued by the [Province] Ministry of Transportation at the time of assignment.
* Every three years, [Name of Shelter] reviews the Driving Records of staff or volunteers using [Name of Shelter] vehicles or transporting clients.
* If the person’s licence or any conditions governing their ability to operate a vehicle changes, it is the person’s responsibility to notify their supervisor immediately. This includes, but is not limited to, cases where:
  + the person’s licence is suspended, restricted, or revoked;
  + the class of their licence is changed;
  + there are material changes to their insurance coverage;
  + they develop a health condition that may affect their ability to drive; or
  + they are informed by a medical practitioner that they may not operate a vehicle, either temporarily or permanently.

### 1.3 Police Reference Check

The staff or volunteer must have completed a Police Reference Check (also called a Vulnerable Sector Screening) within the last 6 months prior to submitting it to the Executive Director of [Name of Shelter]. (For further details, see [Policy on Providing Accompaniment and Follow-up Services to Clients Outside of the Shelter](#_Policy_1).)

## 2. Insurance Requirements

[Name of Shelter] maintains insurance coverage on the vehicles it owns to cover third party liability, accident benefits, and collision coverage. Coverage is maintained to the level specified in Territorial Management Operating Policy 5204 Insurance – Fleet.

[Name of Shelter] does not assume any liability for personal injury or damage to a personal vehicle operated by a staff member or volunteer. The Salvation Army insurance does not insure cover staff or volunteers or their personal vehicles.

### 2.1 Staff Use of [Name of Shelter] Vehicles

Staff or volunteers driving [Name of Shelter] vehicles are not required to have additional insurance coverage. [Name of Shelter] will submit the driver’s name and licence number to the insurance company providing coverage for [Name of Shelter’s] vehicles. The insurance company may run its own check of the driver’s records.

### 2.2 Staff Use of Personal Vehicles

Staff are encouraged to use a program vehicle rather than a personal vehicle when available (TMOP 0401, Appendix A). This is due to increased insurance cost and liability of staff. It is recommended that public transportation or taxis be utilized instead of personal vehicles.

Attachment 1: Notes for Shelters Customizing This Policy Sample Template

These sample policies were developed from a range of best-practice policies in place in the field (see Attachment 2) and are aligned with The Salvation Army’s Emergency Shelter Operating Principles, **Principle 4: We ensure people who have high needs receive accompaniment and follow-up services.** This document is available on Lotus Notes > Manuals > Territorial > Social Services > Toolkit.

Ministry units who are developing or updating their policies are encouraged to use these sample policy templates as a starting point. However, the policy and procedures in this document are not mandatory. Each shelter should develop its own policy, factoring in staffing capacity, available resources, funder expectations, community context, and other considerations.

There are two key words for planning the implementation of Principle 4 – “ensure” and “people who have high needs”:

1. **“Ensure.”** Emergency shelters do **not** need to dedicate their own staff members to provide accompaniment and follow-up services. Some emergency shelters do have dedicated staff who can provide these services, but this is not a requirement. The goal of Principle 4 is to ensure that people who need further assistance receive it, whether from Salvation Army staff or from other service providers in the community.

[Sample Policy A](#_Policy) provides the template for shelters that do not directly provide these services, but have partnerships with other organizations in the community who do provide these services. In many communities, there are Intensive Case Management (ICM) teams, ACT teams, outreach teams, and social workers attached to various government departments, health agencies, and community agencies. Emergency shelters often provide a critical referral point and meeting place for the establishment of these service relationships.

1. **“People who have high needs.”** The second key element to implementing Principle 4 is that not all emergency shelter clients need or would benefit from accompaniment and follow-up services. These services are intended for clients assessed as **chronically homeless**, **episodically homeless**, or as otherwise having **high needs** (e.g. serious, ongoing mental health challenges, physical health challenges, cognitive challenges, substance use challenges, or other challenges). Assessing a client’s level of need is sometimes done directly by the shelter, and sometimes by external service providers in partnership with the shelter.

Attachment 2: Policy Sources

These sample policies were developed drawing on the feedback from the 2014 Homelessness Task Team consultations and from the following resources:

### A. Ensuring Client Community Follow-Up

* The Salvation Army Peel Shelter and Housing Services, Client Community Follow-up, Policy and Procedure Manual, Section: Program, Sub Section: Case management Forms (original: 2004; updated June 2015)

### B1. Providing Accompaniment and Follow-up Services to Clients Outside of the Shelter & B2. Driver and Insurance Requirements for Staff Transporting Clients

* Toronto North Support Services, Multi-Disciplinary Outreach Team (May 2010):
  + Policy 4.2.3 Safe Arrival Protocol
  + Policy 9.1 Requirements for Drivers
  + Policy 9.2 M-DOT Vehicles
  + Policy 9.3 Driving Safety
  + Policy 9.4 Motor Vehicle Accident
  + Policy 9.5 Use of Personal Vehicle
  + Policy 9.6 Transportation of Clients
* The Salvation Army Territorial Management Operating Policies:
  + TMOP 0401 Transportation Assistance Program (effective March 1992; last updated December 2014) and TMOP 0401 Appendix A, 3.2 (effective March 1992; last updated April 2015)
  + TMOP 5204 Insurance – Fleet (effective March 1987 and last revised August 2009)
* Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, OSH Answers Fact Sheets:
  + Working Alone Off-Site (last updated August 7, 2014): [www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/hsprograms/workingalone\_offsite.html](http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/hsprograms/workingalone_offsite.html)
  + Violence in the Workplace – Parking Lot Safety (last updated October 2, 2014): [www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/violence\_parking\_lot.html](http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/violence_parking_lot.html)