

**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES**

**DHS-PB-2021-006**

<b>SUBJECT:</b>  DHS Security Management, Roles, and Responsibilities	<b>APPLICABLE TO:</b>  All DHS Directly Operated or Funded Facilities	<b>ISSUED:</b>  05/14/2021
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**I. PURPOSE**

This document outlines the roles and responsibilities of Department of Homeless Services (DHS) staff from the Division of Shelter Security Management (SSM), which oversees peace officer and contracted security operations.

**II. APPLICABILITY**

The instructions in this document apply to SSM staff, all DHS peace officers, and DHS contracted security. They are informational for all other staff.

**III. TERMS**

- A. Person-centered – An approach to service delivery that is non-directive and tailored to each client. Requires an empathetic, nonjudgmental manner to promote dignity and respect. Being person-centered involves meeting people where they are and solving problems together. It acknowledges the expertise clients have when it comes to their own lived experience.
- B. De-escalation – A technique used to stabilize a situation by using calm communication. The goal is to reduce tension between parties and find solutions to conflict.

- C. Strengths-based – An approach that values a person’s knowledge, skills, and abilities, while encouraging them to use their experience, resources, and connections. The focus is on hope, opportunity, and what people can do rather than what they can’t.
- D. Trauma-informed – An approach that recognizes the prevalence of trauma and emphasizes the importance of creating physical, psychological, and emotional safety for survivors. It focuses on what happened to a person rather than what is wrong with them.
- E. Sound Judgment - Using best judgment (based on supervisory guidance, agency procedures, and training) when gathering information to make deliberate unbiased decisions.
- F. Static Patrol – Security personal assigned to a fixed (i.e., stationary) location.

#### IV. **DHS SHELTER SECURITY MANAGEMENT (SSM)**

##### A. SSM Division Responsibility

SSM is responsible for overseeing security at all DHS locations, and also directly establishes and maintains security at some DHS sites. SSM will expand on existing practices to enhance security for New Yorkers experiencing homelessness by using a person-centered, trauma-informed approach.

SSM is responsible for overseeing all DHS peace officers, managing all DHS private security contracts, and monitoring and evaluating provider security plans.

##### B. Division Responsibilities by Title

1. **SSM Deputy Commissioner of Shelter Security Management** – Responsible for the safety and security at all locations, the Deputy Commissioner of SSM will provide high-level oversight of security operations; formulate security standards and procedures; provide leadership, motivation, and direction to staff; oversee the implementation of empathetic, productive client engagement strategies; cultivate relationships with executive and senior management; represent DHS on security matters; establish controls to ensure security operations align with DHS mandates, as well as City and State law; and advise executive staff on security policy and related issues.

2. **SSM Assistant Commissioner of Intake and Assessment** – Responsible for the safety and security at Intake and Assessment sites, the Assistant Commissioner of SSM will lead, motivate, and direct staff to use a client-centered, trauma-informed, de-escalation, and behavioral health approach to security; implement client engagement strategies that are empathetic and productive; ensure staff are regularly trained on DHS foundational topics: trauma-informed care, motivational interviewing, cultural sensitivity, mental illness and substance use, understanding violence, crisis intervention, and suicide assessment and prevention; ensure optimum coverage by balanced scheduling of staff; identify staff challenges and coordinate training that aligns with DHS values, leadership competencies, and strategic plans; and create and use methodologies to capture and report on security trends and staff performance.
  
3. **SSM Assistant Commissioner of Program Shelters** – Responsible for the safety and security at all shelter locations, the Assistant Commissioner of Program Shelter will lead, motivate, and direct staff to use a client-centered, trauma-informed, de-escalation, and behavioral health approach to security; implement client engagement strategies that are empathetic and productive; ensure staff are routinely trained on trauma-informed care, motivational interviewing, cultural sensitivity, mental illness and substance use, understanding violence, crisis intervention, and suicide assessment and prevention; identify staff deficiencies and coordinate training to ensure it aligns with organizational values, leadership competencies, and strategic plans; develop criteria and reporting mechanisms for monitoring/evaluating of private contract security staff and provider security staff; meet with program staff regularly to discuss security concerns and improvements; and create methodologies to capture and report security trends and staff performance.

4. **SSM Program Administrators** - Responsible for security operations at directly-operated and/or provider facilities, program administrators will ensure a safe and secure environment for clients, staff and visitors; provide oversight and guidance on a person-centered, trauma-informed approach for security personnel; develop assessment tools for program analyst-led site visits to measure peace officer/client engagement that promotes positive change and decreases incidents; develop security-related metrics; conduct analyses of programs' performance toward security-related goals and targets; collaborate with provider staff to analyze security plans and security/client interactions; conduct routine site visits to measure security personnel use of a person-centered, trauma-informed approach during client engagements; ensure security-related complaints are addressed efficiently and effectively; confer with staff about programmatic and personnel issues; liaise with community boards to promote and maintain positive community relations.
5. **SSM Program Analysts** - Responsible for the management of shelter security operations and processes, program analysts will provide guidance on shelter security protocols to directly-operated and DHS-contracted or funded provider shelter management staff; conduct site visits to evaluate security operations using assessment tools focused on decreasing security-related incident rates; monitor security engagement with clients and staff through routine observations, operational reviews, and site meetings to promote a client-centered, trauma-informed approach to security; analyze security performance to address security related issues; establish short-term/long-term operational goals, and identify training needs; help coordinate required training; review and follow-up on all critical incident reports; coordinate with shelter management to implement security initiatives and security plans; and maintain and analyze security related reports for the program administrator and other SSM staff.

### C. Evaluating Facility Security Plans

1. SSM evaluates each location's Security Plan annually based on set criteria, including a comparison of given aspects of the location, such as:
  - site specifics
  - general site characteristics
  - local first preventers and responders
2. Annual evaluations review key factors, including:
  - external threats
  - internal threats
  - staff effectiveness during incidents

- disability-related practices
- preventative safeguards
- site operations
- security administration
- reporting and data management
- security force/protective services
- physical security
- intrusion detection/CCTV
- access control
- client personal control
- communications & CCTV
- Lighting
- parking security
- infrastructure

## **V. DHSPD Practice Standards, Roles, and Responsibilities**

### **A. Engagement with the Staff and Client Community**

The primary role of DHSPD is to ensure the safety and security of the site and everyone in it. In order to create an atmosphere of trust and respect and to establish rapport with clients and the shelter director or their designee, DHSPD personnel must actively engage in the life of their location. This includes the following:

1. Introducing themselves using their own and others' preferred names and pronouns.
2. Communicating regularly and professionally with social services staff and notifying them about any issues needing follow-up.
3. Observe and report any unusual or harmful behavior to social service staff. These observations should be described in detail and include anything that could impact case management such as substance use or mental health concerns.
4. Bringing concerns about clients, staff, and building conditions to their immediate supervisor and/or the shelter director or their designee.
5. Attending in-house and multidisciplinary team meetings as needed to enhance collaboration.
6. Using de-escalation techniques as a first step when a client is escalating unless the client is involved in a criminal act or causing harm to self or others.

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## B. Partnerships with State, City, and Local Organizations

DHSPD must build partnerships with City and State agencies, including, but not limited to, Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA), the Department of Correction (DOC), the State Department of Corrections & Community Services (DOCCS), the Department of Education (DOE), the Administration for Children's Services (ACS), the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), the Human Resources Administration (HRA) No Violence Again (NoVA) program, and other local and State organizations.

This includes working with these agencies to achieve shared goals and objectives; building relationships with local emergency and urgent-need responders; and developing an understanding of community resources to address client issues, in order to mitigate the need to make an arrest.

### Relationships with NYPD

DHSPD must foster working relationships with local precincts so as situations arise, they can access the local precinct's resources.

## C. Security Posts

**Static and Patrol Posts** - Security personnel cover static and patrol posts.

## D. Access Control

**Screening** – Screening people at access control is essential to maintaining safety and security. DHSPD must ensure that everyone entering their locations is identified and does not possess any banned items as detailed in most current DHS "Confiscation of Contraband" procedure.

At Access Control, DHSPD must explain the security process using clear, simple language so expectations are clear, and people understand why certain safety measures are used (e.g., magnetometer). In instances where a client presents with a language barrier or cannot hear, contact Language Line or the facility's contracted sign language interpretation services provider respectively. For individuals with a mobility issue requiring aid, refer to 108-08 "Special Category Access Control Search" in the DHS PD Manual for instructions.

## E. Critical Incidents and Trauma-informed Response

Drawing on their training, DHSPD must assess each situation using a trauma-informed lens, and use clear and respectful communication to assist in conveying to an individual what is required. In instances when individuals do not comply, DHSPD will communicate their intended action before resorting to arrest.

#### F. Training Requirements

DHSPD training is regulated by the New State Division of Criminal Justice Services. In addition to state mandated training, DHSPD must take foundational training identified by DHS, and such trainings required for all City employees. SSM will track attendance/participation to ensure accountability. The SSM team will coordinate with each location's social services team about additional training. Courses will be available on a regular basis.

#### G. Supervision Requirements

DHSPD supervisors must provide regular guidance and training (or access to training) for their staff. DHSPD supervisors are required to understand person-centered and trauma-informed practices, model best practices, and guide peace officers through regular supervision meetings. Each DHSPD supervisor must monitor their staffs' performance to foster a person-centered approach to security. DHSPD supervisors must work with program site staff to build professional, cooperative relationships.

*Effective Immediately*