



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**PITTSBURGH MERCY'S OPERATION SAFETY NET
TO OPEN WINTER SHELTER NOV. 15
FOR PERSONS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS**

Shelter will follow U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention & Allegheny County Health Department COVID-19 guidance and safety protocols

PITTSBURGH (November 8, 2021) – [Pittsburgh Mercy's Operation Safety Net](#), the award-winning outreach program for persons in Allegheny County who are experiencing homelessness, will open the Winter Shelter for vulnerable persons on Monday, November 15, 2021. The seasonal, low-barrier shelter, located at [Smithfield United Church of Christ](#), 620 Smithfield St., Pittsburgh, PA 15219 in Downtown, will serve both men and women. The shelter will operate from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. seven days a week through March 15, 2022.

The Winter Shelter will adhere to public health guidance and safety protocols set forth by the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and the [Allegheny County Health Department](#). If additional capacity is needed, individuals will be directed to other local homeless service providers. For safety reasons, only persons served, Winter Shelter staff, and clinical volunteers are permitted inside the shelter. Housing, behavioral health, and other referrals and linkages will take place remotely by videoconference.

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[Community Kitchen Pittsburgh](#) will provide the meal service. Meals will be pre-packaged and served grab-and-go style, consistent with CDC protocols.

Participants will also have access to showers and laundry.

Pittsburgh Mercy will again encourage and provide COVID-19 vaccines to shelter participants who desire vaccination. Those served by the Winter Shelter will be required to have weekly COVID-19 testing on site, regardless of their vaccination status.

The Winter Shelters are funded in part by grants from [Allegheny County Department of Human Services](#); a City of Pittsburgh Emergency Solutions Grant; the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act); [Highmark BlueCross BlueShield](#); and the [United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania Emergency Food and Shelter Program](#). Additional support comes from [Pittsburgh Mercy](#), as well as through the generosity of donors.

To refer an individual for services: Please send them directly to the Winter Shelter during operating hours, 7 p.m. to 7 a.m.

To make a monetary donation in support of the Winter Shelter: Please visit [Pittsburgh Mercy's website](#) and click the [Give](#) button at the top of the page. To make a monetary donation by phone, please call [Michelle Mooney](#) at 412-697-0730. To make a donation by mail, please enclose a check payable to "Pittsburgh Mercy" and mail to Pittsburgh Mercy, Attention: Development Office, 1200 Reedsdale St., Third Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15233-2109. Please be sure to note "Winter Shelter" on the memo line.

To donate new socks, new underwear, bras, and T-shirts; gently used sweatpants, sweatshirts, hoodies, coats, hats, gloves, and boots; and personal hygiene kits, please schedule an appointment by calling 412-232-5739, ext. 4 or email Operationsafety@pittsburghmercy.org. Please do not bring donations to the shelter. There is also an ongoing need for sleeping bags and tents

Pittsburgh Mercy is hiring colleagues for seasonal positions with the Winter Shelter. Applicants should have a degree in human services or a related field or high school diploma/equivalency and four years of job-related experience working with individuals with mental illness or substance use disorders. Act 33/34/73 clearances and a pre-employment drug screening are required. To apply, click on the [Pittsburgh Mercy/Trinity Health careers page](#).

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For more information about the Winter Shelter, please call Pittsburgh Mercy's Operation Safety Net at 412-232-5739, ext. 4.

About Pittsburgh Mercy

[Pittsburgh Mercy](#) is a person-centered, population-based, trauma-informed community health and wellness provider. It is the region's only [Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic \(CCBHC\)](#) and Integrated Community Wellness Center. We reach out and offer help – and hope – to some of our community's most vulnerable populations: people who have physical and behavioral health challenges; people with intellectual disabilities; and people who are experiencing addiction, homelessness, abuse, and other forms of trauma. Our mission is to be a compassionate and transforming, healing presence within our communities. Pittsburgh Mercy is a member of [Trinity Health](#) and serves in the tradition of the [Sisters of Mercy](#). With annual operating revenue of \$112 million, Pittsburgh Mercy is one of the largest health and human service nonprofit organizations and employers in Southwestern Pennsylvania. We serve more than 33,000 people annually in 60+ locations and employ 1,200 colleagues. For more information or to make a donation in support of our mission, visit <http://www.pittsburghmercy.org>.

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