



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PITTSBURGH MERCY OPENS WINTER OVERFLOW SHELTER AT SECOND AVENUE COMMONS FOR THE SEASON NOVEMBER 15

PITTSBURGH (November 15, 2023) – [Pittsburgh Mercy](#) will open its Winter Overflow Shelter, a low-barrier emergency shelter at [Second Avenue Commons](#), 700 Second Avenue, Downtown, for the winter season on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at 7 p.m. The temporary, short-term, and seasonal shelter has the capacity to serve up to 40 adult individuals who are unhoused and experiencing homelessness. The Winter Overflow Shelter will be open from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. seven days a week until March 15, 2024, including holidays. Admission is first-come, first-serve.

Each guest at the Winter Overflow Shelter receives a warm, dry, place to sleep indoors, a mat, a blanket, and a hot dinner and breakfast. Partners and pets (one dog or cat per person) are welcomed and may remain together. Personal belongings are stored in lockers and returned to guests at check-out. Quiet hours are observed from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.

To refer an individual to the Winter Overflow Shelter, please send them directly to Second Avenue Commons during the Winter Overflow Shelter's hours of operation. If the Winter Overflow Shelter reaches capacity, individuals will be referred to emergency shelters operated by other homeless service providers and community partners. A list of Allegheny County shelters with contact information and other details can be found at connect.alleghenycounty.us.

Families who are experiencing homelessness are encouraged to contact the [Allegheny Link](#) for assistance at 866-730-2368, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

With more than 30 years of service to the homeless community in the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, Pittsburgh Mercy is one of the region's most experienced social services and homeless services providers. For over 25 years, Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) has contracted with Pittsburgh Mercy to provide year-round, emergency, temporary, and seasonal shelter services to persons experiencing homelessness. Pittsburgh Mercy also operates the year-round emergency shelter and engagement center at Second Avenue Commons.

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In years prior, the Winter Overflow Shelter historically closed for the season in mid to late March. To address growing community need and the June 2023 closing of the Winter Overflow Shelter at Smithfield United Church of Christ (UCC) at 620 Smithfield Street, Downtown, Pittsburgh Mercy expanded its Winter Overflow Shelter season and capacity and served up to 40 additional guests a night during the months of June, July, August, and early September of 2023. Between November 22, 2022 and March 31, 2023, and June 19, 2023 and September 8, 2023, Pittsburgh Mercy served 691 unduplicated individuals in its Winter Overflow Shelter.

“We welcome and encourage individuals who are experiencing homelessness to return to Pittsburgh Mercy’s Engagement Center at Second Avenue Commons during our regular hours of operation, Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.,” stated [Michael Turk](#), vice president of Community & Wellness Services, at Pittsburgh Mercy. “While visiting our Engagement Center, guests may shower, do laundry, pick-up mail, and access food, WiFi, and vital wrap-around services. They can also access linkages to benefits, housing, food, employment, primary care, behavioral health care (mental health and substance use treatment services), and get assistance with identification, legal services, and other supports. More than 813 unique, unduplicated individuals have used Pittsburgh Mercy Engagement Center services at Second Avenue Commons since it opened on November 22, 2022,” Turk added.

Pittsburgh Mercy invites interested businesses, civic groups, faith communities, and individuals to make in-kind donations for distribution to guests at the Winter Overflow Shelter and the Engagement Center. The individuals we serve most need the following items: new sleeping bags, blankets, hats, gloves, carves, boots, and socks. Donated items must be new. In-kind donations may be delivered directly to Second Avenue Commons at 700 Second Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15219 Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Donations intended for holiday distribution should be arranged in advance through Pittsburgh Mercy’s Development Office. Please email Development@pittsburghmercy.org.

Monetary donations in support of Shelter and Engagement Center services and guests at Second Avenue Commons are also welcome to expand enrichment programming, such as art, music, and haircuts. Donations can be made at <https://www.pittsburghmercy.org/give/>.

About Pittsburgh Mercy

[Pittsburgh Mercy](#) is one of the largest community health and social service providers and employers in Southwestern Pennsylvania. We offer help – and hope – to our community’s most vulnerable:

- People who have complex behavioral and physical health challenges. We are the only [Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic](#) (CCBHC) and Integrated Community Wellness Center (ICWC) in Western Pennsylvania.
- People who have intellectual and developmental disabilities
- People who are experiencing homelessness
- People who need wrap-around services to live safe, healthy, and well in the community.

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Pittsburgh Mercy serves more than 18,000 people annually in 60+ locations.

Pittsburgh Mercy is a member of [Trinity Health](#), serving in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy. Our mission is to be a compassionate and transforming, healing presence within our communities. To learn more about Pittsburgh Mercy or to donate in support of its important work in the community, please visit www.pittsburghmercy.org. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Twitter](#).

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