	DEVELOPMENT SERVICES/FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ADMINISTRATIVE/GENERAL	Effective Date: October 20, 2015
		Supersedes Policy Dated: None
	Temporary Hypothermia Center Program	Issued by: Wade Hugh, Director Development Services Matt Smolsky, Assistant Chief

Purpose


This is to establish the requirements for the operation of a Temporary Hypothermia Center in existing buildings that have a valid Certificate of Occupancy. A building approved as a Temporary Hypothermia Center shall be issued a Temporary Occupancy Permit.

Process/Procedures

1. **Temporary Activity Permit (TAP) Application** – Per Zoning Ordinance requirements, any activity that is conducted at a site or facility that is not designed for such an activity requires a Temporary Activity Permit (TAP). A TAP permit involves the coordination and approval of multiple county agencies, including the Health Department and Department of Social Services. Submit a TAP Application for the Temporary Hypothermia Center and pay the associated fee with the Land Development and Building Development Divisions. If the application is deemed acceptable by all parties, the TAP will be issued after the completion of the following procedures:
2. **Joint Safety Inspection** – A Building Code Enforcement Inspector and a Fire Code Inspector will inspect the building to determine compliance with the program criteria. As a part of the process, an administrative review of the building records will be conducted to verify legal occupancy. Work needed to correct safety violations may require additional permits and inspections prior. See the list of Commonly Found Safety Violations (attached) in order to prepare for the Joint Safety Inspection.

When all safety violations have been corrected, notify the Fire Code Inspector or Building Inspector and a joint re-inspection will be conducted.

3. **Temporary Occupancy Permit** – When the Joint Safety Inspection is approved, request the issuance of the Temporary Occupancy Permit at the Building Development Permit Counter. The Permit Technician will confirm that all permits have been approved and all fees have been paid prior to issuing the Temporary Occupancy Permit.
4. **Temporary Hypothermia Center Operation**
 - a. Notify the **Public Safety Communication Center at 703-792-6500** *prior to, and following* each Temporary Hypothermia Center period of operation. This is critical information for Public Safety first responders.
 - b. Maintain and document any required Fire Watches and complete the operational log.
 - c. Maintain onsite and make available to the Fire Code Inspector all required documents.

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Program Criteria/Minimum Safety Requirements

The Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code requires a higher level of safety for overnight housing. The following program criteria establish the minimum safety requirements for a Temporary Hypothermia Center:

1. Building Requirements

- a. The maximum occupant capacity shall be based on 35 square feet per person in the sleeping areas.
- b. Interconnected smoke detectors shall be installed in the sleeping areas and building corridors.
- c. Panic hardware (push bars or similar latch releasing mechanism) shall be equipped on exit doors of sleeping areas with a maximum occupant capacity greater than 49.
- d. Egress Requirements: General lighting and emergency lighting shall be provided illuminating means of egress and for exit signs.
- e. In buildings with furnaces or appliances fueled by gas, propane or oil, carbon monoxide detectors shall be installed in each sleeping area.
- f. Sleeping areas and their corridors leading to the exits shall be located in the portions of the building with a fire sprinkler system. If a building fire sprinkler is not available, refer to the Operation Requirements.
- g. Based on a Safety Inspection of the building, additional requirements may be identified.

2. Operational Requirements

- a. An emergency evacuation plan for each sleeping area shall be established. The plan shall be attached as part of this application and shall be on-site at all times and available to the Fire Marshal for inspection.
- b. A No Smoking Policy shall be established, maintained, and posted as such. At least one staff person or volunteer shall remain awake at all times.
- c. If the sleeping areas and their corridors are not served by a fire sprinkler system, the following is required:
 - Sleeping areas shall have an exit door directly to the outside of the building.
 - A nightly Fire Watch shall be provided. A Fire Watch Agreement approved by the Fire Marshal shall be signed by the responsible party. Participating staff and volunteers shall attend training on how to conduct a Fire Watch.
 - Sleeping rooms with one exit door shall be limited to a maximum occupant capacity of 49 (including staff and volunteers).