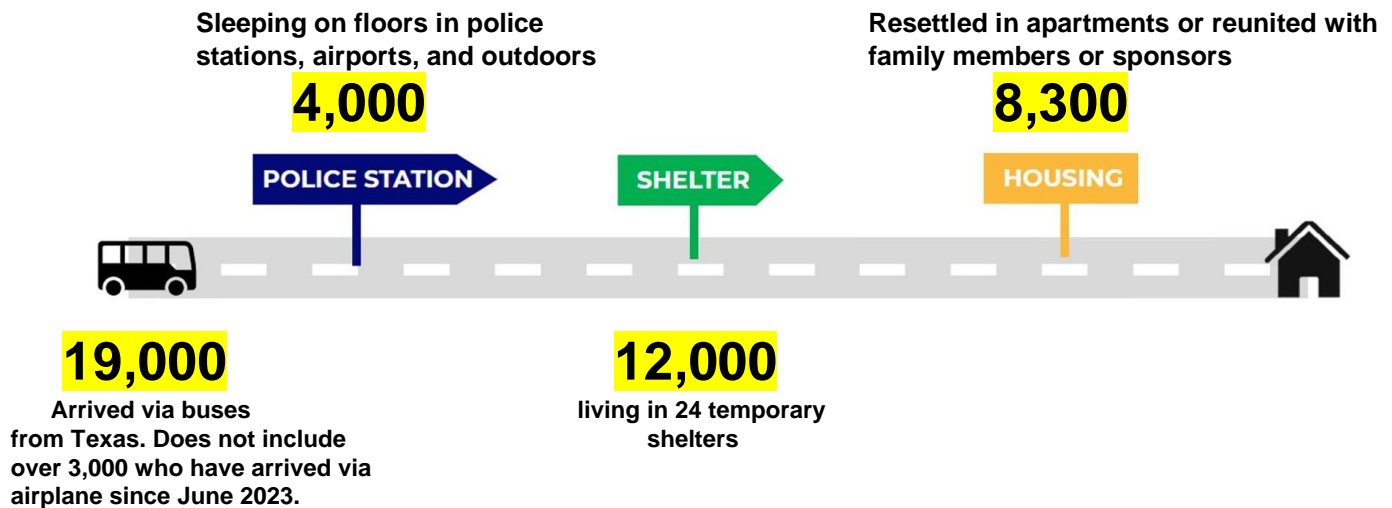


12th Ward Base Camp Temporary Shelter - FAQ

October 24, 2023



Why are individuals and families seeking asylum in Chicago?

Since August 2022, Chicago has welcomed over **19,000 individuals and families via buses and airplanes** sent by Texas Governor Abbott and non-government organizations in Texas, Colorado, and New York. The majority are **seeking asylum from Latin America and the African continent** due to US foreign policy that has created unstable economic and political conditions compromising their safety and forcing them to travel thousands of miles to safety. U.S. cities have not traditionally had the infrastructure to resettle high numbers of new arrivals. This is federal responsibility. Seeking asylum is an internationally protected right afforded to everyone.

What is the City doing to respond?

The City of Chicago continues to stand up **brick and mortar shelters at a rate of one every six days** yet cannot keep up with the demand created by the increasing number of incoming buses and flights. Twenty-five temporary shelters **currently house 12,000 residents** to support their path toward self-sufficiency. However, **4,000 asylum seekers and other migrants are sleeping on floors of police stations, airports, and outdoors as they await shelter placement as the winter quickly arrives.**

In September, the City received credible intel from the border that Governor Abbott is increasing his bus fleet to send **up to 25 buses daily, 24 hours a day**. As a result, the City is **activating a temporary stabilization strategy by standing up base camps** with the goal of providing a safer environment for new arrivals as **extreme winter weather** arrives, and to **retire the use of emergency staging areas in police district stations and airports**, as well as **relieve mutual aid volunteers** who have provided critical support for months.

What is the long-term plan?

- **Resettlement.** The City of Chicago and the State of Illinois will continue to welcome new arrivals with dignity, help meet their basic needs, and connect them to resources that put them on a path to self-sufficiency and resettlement. Together, we will provide limited temporary shelter, enrollment support for public schools, case management for State benefits and legal services to apply for asylum or Temporary Protective Status, health care services, and State-funded short-term rental assistance while new arrivals pursue legal employment authorization.
- **Facilitate outmigration** for individuals and families who want to reunify with family members and sponsors beyond Chicago. Catholic Charities provides travel support and confirms sponsors on the receiving end. Additionally, the City will Work with State to identify locations outside of Chicago for resettlement hubs to share the responsibility of Welcoming State.
- **Coordinated federal advocacy** with County, State, Illinois Congressional delegation, and external partners to reduce the financial and operational burdens, and to secure increased funding that will cover comprehensive sheltering and resettlement work in Illinois.

Five core asks:

1. Nationwide coordination of resettlement to receiving cities/States with a single federal leader,
2. Donated use of Federal land and buildings for sheltering throughout Illinois such as military bases and training facilities,
3. Flexible use of federal funding for sheltering operations and overall expenses.
4. Resources and technical assistance for expedited Temporary Protective Status (TPS) and employment authorization document (EAD) processing, and
5. Expansion of TPS and EAD for all non-citizens.

How will individuals seeking asylum and other migrants achieve self-sufficiency? Can they work?

Non-citizens need authorization from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to work. USCIS requires individuals to apply for an employment authorization document (i.e., EAD/work permit).

After submitting and confirming receipt of an asylum application to USCIS, new arrivals must wait 150 days to apply for an EAD to legally work. Working without legal authorization can compromise their chances of obtaining status to lawfully stay in the United States.

On September 20, 2023, the Department of Homeland Security announced the extension and redesignation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for 18 months. Venezuelan nationals (roughly 75 percent of those who have come to Chicago since August 2022) are afforded TPS if they crossed the border by July 31, 2023. This allows a streamlined process to obtain an EAD and protection from detention and deportation.



As of May 17, 2023, some nationals from Haiti, Nicaragua, Cuba, and Venezuela are also afforded protection from detention and deportation through a vetting process explained through the QR code.

What is the City's process for choosing shelter and base camp sites for individuals seeking asylum and other migrants?




With winter fast approaching, slower turn around for retrofitting buildings, lack of availability of large spaces like McCormick Place due to scheduled conferences and events, and the frequency of multiple unannounced buses and airplanes of individuals seeking asylum from Texas, base camps provide a temporary stabilization strategy and turnkey solutions to ensure the 4,000 people awaiting shelter in police stations, airports and sleeping outdoors have a safer alternative as they continue their path for self-sufficiency.

Through City, county, and State databases and with assistance of a real estate broker, the City identifies suitable buildings that could be quickly retrofitted for temporary shelters and vacant land that meets size and infrastructure specs to stand up base camps.



Upon site identification, Alderpersons are notified of the potential use while City staff assess viability of building or land. The City will continue to engage the Alderperson and community stakeholders.

Brick and mortar buildings typically are a shorter timeline, while land for base camps require additional assessment by City departments upon identification. The two paths are outlined below.



Brick and Mortar Temporary Shelters

1.  Buildout and timeline created for necessary renovation to ensure space meets minimum temporary shelter standards.
2.  Calculations made on how many individuals can be sheltered and composition (Families vs. Singles)
3.  Alderperson receives confirmation that site is viable with projected timeline for opening based on how much repair is needed, as well as estimated number and composition of shelter residents.


Base Camp Temporary Shelters

1.  Alderperson receives notification that land is **under consideration** to stand up a base camp through initial assessment of size (at least 3 acres of vacant land). **Before confirmation**, a thorough assessment of the infrastructure and land by City departments will take place.
2.  City Infrastructure departments conduct an assessment and participate in due diligence of the site that may include but not limited to tree trimming, removing dead trees, removing debris, rodent

abatement, grading site for hazardous conditions, illuminating areas around the site, repairing alley lighting, determining if there is existing water and sewer lines, repairing catch basins, cleaning catch basins, and performing various environmental assessments.

-  Calculation made on how many individuals can be sheltered and composition (Families vs. Singles)
-  Alderperson receives confirmation that site is viable with projected timeline for opening as well as estimated number and composition of shelter residents.

In both the brick and mortar and land identification, the last step includes:

-  The City works with the Alderperson to support in a community meeting if requested to provide details on temporary shelter opening and answer questions about operations, safety, and wrap around supports.

About the location identified in the 12th Ward:

How was this location identified as a potential site for a base camp and what was the process for informing the community?

The City identified the land through City, County, and State databases. The location met the initial assessment to stand up a base camp to shelter minimally 1,000 individuals including: over 10 acres of vacant land that may be able to place base camps.

Upon site identification, the Alderperson was notified of the potential use and that the land would require additional assessments conducted by City departments.

Following the notification, City Infrastructure departments conducted an assessment and performed due diligence of the site that included thus far: tree trimming, removing dead trees, removing debris, grading site for hazardous conditions, illuminating areas around the site, repairing alley lighting, determining if there is existing water and sewer lines, performing various environmental assessments, and bringing water and sewer to the site.

Is this site confirmed? If not, what is the status of the land assessment?

The land at 38th and California appears to be viable, and the City intends to stand up a base camp if the infrastructure can support it based on the results of the environmental assessments currently underway. City Infrastructure departments conducted an assessment and performed due diligence of the site that included thus far: tree trimming, removing dead trees, removing debris, grading site for hazardous conditions, illuminating areas around the site, repairing alley lighting, determining if there is existing water and sewer lines, water testing, performing various environmental assessments, and bringing water and sewer to the site.

When will the City begin moving people in?

Once all assessments have concluded and the environmental assessments are completed/addressed. The City will provide notice to the Contractor to put in the order for the site. It will take at least 96 hours to get equipment/supplies to the site. Once equipment has arrived, it will take several days to erect, outfit, and test systems before welcoming residents. Once the base camp is fully staffed and system tests have passed, the City will begin transitioning residents based on how long people have been waiting at police station and airport staging areas.

What happens if the site assessment does not meet the criteria for supporting the base camp?

If the site is not suitable, the City will notify the Alderperson.

When will we know that the testing is complete and what is the process for informing the community?

The Alderperson will receive weekly progress updates from the City to share with community residents.

What population will be housed at 38th S. California and how many people will be there?

Based on current composition of individuals sleeping on police station and airport floors, the base camp may serve at least 2,000 family members with children.

Who will staff the shelter?

During the initial building of the facility, equipment acquisition, required utilities, initiating services and construction staff will be provided by GWFS supplemented by local vendors. The work will be coordinated by the City. Once the facility is operational and welcoming asylum seekers and other migrants, a transition will be made to hiring local service providers and Chicago residents.

As of October 21, 2023, GWFS is accepting applications for workers and attending City hiring fairs. Learn about job opportunities here:



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How will the City maintain security within the base camp? What is the CPD safety plan?

The site will have 24/7 staffing. They will conduct regular rounds inside and around the site. CPD and the Mayor's Office of Community Safety are working together with stakeholders to implement a community safety plan, which includes regular visits to the building during every watch.

About the support City will provide the impacted community:

What is the plan to equip our local schools with the resources needed to handle the increase of students?

CPS has been prioritizing enrolling new arrival students in schools that have existing space in classrooms, bilingual teachers and supports that are nearest to the City’s temporary shelters. CPS is attempting to enroll students in schools that are best positioned to support the critical needs of new arrival children.

Not all schools nearest to temporary shelters are most appropriate for students, so CTA cards (as required for all STLS—Students in Temporary Living Situations) are provided for students who need to travel further to attend school. Because CPS knows which schools have space in classrooms, bilingual staff and other resources, when families attempt to enroll in schools without working with the CPS Office of Language and Cultural Education (OLCE) team, students may end up enrolling in schools that are not best positioned to support their students’ needs immediately. It is critical that families work with CPS to coordinate enrollment.

CPS also allocated additional dollars, based on 20th day enrollment at schools, as they do annually, to schools that have received new students. Those schools whose 20th day enrollment increases reflected additional new arrival students often received additional English Language Program Teacher positions (a half- or full-time additional position) based on the contractual ratios. CPS is continuing to receive requests from principals as approved by network chiefs for additional staff and resources as enrollment of new arrival students continues beyond the 20th day.

The CPS OLCE continues to coordinate enrollment at schools via the Welcome Center at Clemente High School and CPS mobile staff teams enrolling new arrival students at shelters in coordination with the Mayor’s Office, DFSS, OEMC, the CTU and mutual aid partners. The City is working to set up additional strategic conversations with CPS and 12th ward community leaders.

What is the City’s plan to ensure the safety of the Brighton Park community?

The City will work with community-based organizations in the area and City agencies to develop strategies that address community’s needs and answer to safety concerns by standing up a shelter safety committee composed of shelter staff and residents, City departments, Chicago Police Department, representatives from the alderperson’s office, and community partners for ongoing planning and execution of strategies to keep shelter residents and staff safe along with the surrounding community. For example, the City will work with CPS and community organizations to increase the presence of safe passage workers. The City will also have ongoing community engagement by meeting with organizations and community members in the area to provide updates and address areas of importance to ensure the safety of people inside the base camp and throughout the 12th Ward.

How can the community remain involved moving forward?



Since August 2022, Chicagoans across the City have generously contributed through donations, mutual aid, and sheltering through their faith community sponsorships, and have advocated for more federal and State resources for this humanitarian effort. **Please visit chicago.gov/support to learn more about how to help those seeking asylum and other migrants.**

Advocate

Contact your congressperson and the White House to demand increased funding that will cover comprehensive sheltering and resettlement work in the City, county and State. Five core asks:

1. Nationwide coordination of resettlement to receiving cities/States with a single federal leader,
2. Donated use of Federal land and buildings for sheltering throughout Illinois such as military bases and training facilities,
3. Flexible use of federal funding for sheltering operations and overall expenses,
4. Resources and technical assistance for expedited Temporary Protective Status (TPS) and employment authorization document (EAD) processing, and
5. Expansion of TPS and EAD for all non-citizens.

Contact your State Representative and Senator to demand that Illinois:

1. Create shelter and resettlement hubs in at least two other municipalities directly supported and operated by the State
2. Increase Asylum Seeker Emergency Rental Assistance Program by \$50 million
3. Create a sustainable funding stream for Chicago to cover 30-40% of costs from shelter to resettlement services.
4. Support Chicago Public Schools
 - Increased the Students in Temporary Living Situations (STLS) services for all students
 - Additional resources and flexibility in licensing of Bilingual educators
 - Expedite existing capital projects and new construction for replacement purposes

Donate

1. Support mutual aid groups helping at police districts
2. Amazon Wish List: chicago.gov/support
3. Winter items (new preferred) dropped off at **4401 W. Ogden** (Mon-Friday, 8AM-5PM)
4. Winter items (new and gently used) dropped off at one of **Cradles 2 Crayons** several locations

Volunteer

1. The City is developing a volunteer program that will make it possible for community members to volunteer on site at shelters and base camps.
2. Volunteer with mutual aid groups helping at police districts



3. Each shelter site will have a **shelter and safety committee** composed of shelter staff and residents, City departments, Chicago Police Department, representatives from the alderperson's office, and community partners for ongoing planning and execution of strategies to keep shelter residents and staff safe along with the surrounding community. Contact newarrivalschicago@cityofchicago.org

Shelter/Housing Leads

Suggest potential shelters or rental units <https://www.chicago.gov/City/en/sites/texas-new-arrivals/home/shelter.html>

About GardaWorld Federal Services (GWFS) and Base Camp logistics:

Why is the City using GWFS for base camps?

The State of Illinois went through a thorough vetting process to contract with GWFS prior to the Johnson administration. Using the State contract allowed the City to expedite procurement times (typically 6-18 months) for contract execution to ensure that an alternative to sleeping outdoors or in police stations was secured prior to the onset of winter.

City of Chicago's contract outlines an initial agreement through September 10, 2024 and the State of Illinois Contract extends through August 1, 2026.

With winter fast approaching, slower turn around for retrofitting buildings, lack of availability of large spaces like McCormick Place due to scheduled conferences and events, and the frequency of multiple unannounced buses and airplanes of individuals seeking asylum from Texas, base camps provide a temporary stabilization strategy and turnkey solutions to ensure the 4,000 people awaiting shelter in police stations, airports and sleeping outdoors have a safer alternative as they continue their path for self-sufficiency.

What staffing and services are provided under the contract?

A suite of services that support a well-functioning and complete shelter operation, including:

- Temperature-controlled lodging, beds and bedding, lockable storage, restroom facilities, including ADA-compliant restroom and shower units, hand washing stations
- Pick-up/drop-off laundry services
- Mobile kitchen and food services providing 3 meals a day
- Unlimited potable drinking water available at all times
- Sanitation facilities and waste removal
- New arrival intake
- All facilities will be heated or air conditioned
- Unarmed security will be on-site, with multiple guards per shift, as well as security cameras and badged access.
- The site will be lighted for visibility with the option of adding fencing.
- GWFS will provide daily communications and reports to a designated City Government liaison to keep the City informed on shelter operations as well as coordinate any changes to services or shelter operations.
- Contract offers full staffing/management which the City will take advantage of in the set-up of initial operations and transition to local teams.
- Contract contains additional and optional services for: transportation, childcare, interpretation, basic medical care, behavioral health specialists and basic case management. However, the City prefers local hiring and Chicago-based community organizations and businesses for the above services.
- All employees (local and GWFS contracted staff) will be subject to an extensive background screening process using a third-party service provider, First Advantage.

Can outside agencies, Chicago-based organizations, and local resources be involved?

The contract allows for the provision of wrap around services. These services can be subcontracted by GWFS or the City can contract directly with local providers. *Discussions are underway with local providers and the City and State to confirm they are interested and able to provide services.*

Will GWFS hire locally?

During the initial building of the facility, equipment acquisition, required utilities, initiating services and construction staff will be provided by GWFS supplemented by local vendors. The work will be coordinated by the City. Once the facility is operational and welcoming asylum seekers and other migrants, a transition will be made to hiring local service providers. As of October 21, 2023, GWFS is accepting applications for workers and attending City hiring fairs. **Learn about job opportunities here:**



How can we be certain that GWFS’s standards of operation center human dignity and respect?

GWFS facilities are prefabricated insulated structures. These facilities meet American Red Cross standards for structures used in disaster and other emergency conditions.

GWFS will follow the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services shelter operations guidelines. Additionally, the City and State will activate a third-party Human Rights watchdog to ensure guidelines and protocols are followed to protect human rights.



Restroom Facilities: We will provide a temperature-controlled sanitation tent that has standard rest rooms (pictured left), including ADA compliant restroom / shower combos.

Shower Facilities: The temperature-controlled sanitation tent will also hold standard showers for guest use (pictured right), including ADA compliant. Each shower setup will have individual stalls with lockable doors.



Hand Washing Stations: We will provide handwashing stations in the sanitation and dining areas.

Heat and Air Conditioning: All housing / living structures will be temperature controlled to 70-72 degrees F.

Laundry Services: We will provide a pickup and drop off laundry service through multiple local partners.

Kitchen and Food Services: We will provide a mobile kitchen trailer and refrigeration at the facility that will support safe meal preparation, and food serving will occur at a designated dining facility. GWFS will provide food service staff to support 3 meals per day per guest plus snacks.

Do temporary shelter/base camp residents have freedom of movement?

Yes. Shelters are open 24/7 and residents sign an agreement to abide by a daily 11:00 pm curfew unless they have prior approval because they are working or have notified their case manager in advance of another urgent matter requiring their return after curfew.

What rules and expectations are there for shelter/base camp residents?

Rules include:

- Upon leaving or entering the facility, new arrivals must sign in and out with front desk staff. At entry and re-entry, clients are also subject to an entry screening including a metal detecting screening device.
- New arrivals must abide by 11PM curfew. After curfew, new arrivals may not leave the facility except for urgent reasons (e.g., employment) or in case of emergency.
- New arrivals may not have visitors within the facility.
- Drugs and alcohol are not allowed on the property. If alcohol, illicit drugs, and marijuana are found, items will be confiscated, discarded, or reported to CPD.
- New arrivals must respect the entire property and treat it carefully.
- Smoking is not permitted.

Residents may be discharged for violation of rules

- Unless the reason for discharge is violence or active threat toward others, resident may be placed at another shelter.

There is a grievance policy where new arrivals may dispute dismissal if they feel they have been improperly removed from a shelter or would like to submit a complaint against staff. Typically, grievances are reviewed within 3 days.



Is sheltering and supporting individuals seeking asylum and other migrants taking away resources from unhoused Chicagoans?

The City has not diverted funding from the homeless shelter system to support the new arrival mission and we are working to enhance and expand services for unhoused Chicagoans. Mayor Johnson's budget proposal includes \$250 million continue investments in new, long-term homeless solutions, including developing new non-congregate shelter spaces and increasing permanent supportive housing options.

What resources has the City invested to support local unhoused residents?

The City invested \$117 million in its recovery budget to transform the City's response to homelessness. One of those investments included continuing the investment in rapid rehousing beginning with the Expedited Housing Initiative (EHI), which has used \$35 million in CARES funding to house over 1,800 households. This year, another \$35 million of ARP and Corporate funds was invested to house an additional 1,200 households and help 1,000 currently housed households remain housed.

If you wish to leave additional comments/feedback, please email newarrivalschicago@cityofchicago.org