

Public Health Inspection Criteria for Encampments

Considered an “Emergency Shelter” for Public Health Inspections

- **Sanitation**

- **Sewage disposal** – Make proper waste disposal available either through access to permanent washrooms or through portable toilets. Porta-johns should be maintained on a regular basis to ensure they are kept clean, fully stocked, and pumped out as needed.
- **Garbage disposal** - Ensure availability of proper garbage receptacles to mitigate pests. These should include properly sealed containers with lids. Ensure these receptacles are available and accessible to all people living in designated areas. Provide adequate waste management and frequent removal, including protective equipment used for removal.

- **Potable Water** - Ensure access to potable water source for purposes of drinking and sanitation onsite.

- **Pest Control** - Ensure frequent garbage collection; food removal must be considered to prevent attracting rodents or other pests, which may increase the chance of vector-borne disease. It is recommended that a pest control company be contracted to set up an integrated pest management program. Avoid excessive clutter/hoarding within the encampment area which can increase the risk of rodent infestations. Consider designated storage areas to avoid this.

- **Food Safety** – Ensure food is provided by approved sources. Consider proper storage of food if food is planned to be stored onsite. Provide education about proper storage of hazardous foods. Non-hazardous foods should be encouraged in the absence of refrigeration, however proper storage and disposal of all food is essential to avoid pests.

- **Infection control**

- **Handwashing, hand sanitizer** – Access to handwashing is essential for reducing the risk of disease transmission (potable water with soap and a method to dry hands). Alternatively, access to alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be considered depending on the population.
- **Cleaning** – Access to cleaning products and/or the provision of routine cleaning of shared spaces such as sanitation facilities, areas of toileting, washing etc.
- **Safe distancing/spacing** - to reduce spread of communicable diseases. The size of the land used for the encampment should be considered in relation to the current population expected to use the site. The expected growth of the population using the site in future should also be considered.
- **Harm reduction** – Safe disposal of sharps to avoid injury.
- **Vector-borne disease** – Living outdoors increases the risk of exposure to vector-borne disease including mosquito-borne illnesses. Controls to reduce this burden include removing standing water around the encampment, keeping grass cut, providing adequate waste management and frequent garbage removal, and avoiding excessive clutter/hoarding within the encampment area.

- **Exposure to Extreme Weather** – When considering exposure to heat, plans for the encampment space should include access to shaded area, via trees etc. and plans for access to cooling centers and emergency centers when needed (inclement weather). When considering exposure to the cold, plans for the encampment should include access to heat, and should include a plan for accessing a warming center or emergency shelter when required (inclement weather).
- **Additional considerations** - Pets, fire safety, security, harm reduction and hygiene supplies, access to health care services, and outbreak planning.