



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**\*\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\*\***

**MAYOR BREED ANNOUNCES START OF ANNUAL  
INTERFAITH WINTER SHELTER PROGRAM**

*For over three decades, the program has provided additional beds for people experiencing homelessness during the winter season*

**San Francisco, CA** — Today, Mayor London N. Breed, the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH), the San Francisco Interfaith Council (SFIC), and Episcopal Community Services (ECS) announced the return of San Francisco's Interfaith Winter Shelter program, an initiative that with the involvement of various faith communities offers shelter and other services like hot meals and mobile showers to people experiencing homelessness during the winter.

Now in its 35th year, the program officially opens today and operates through Sunday, March 24, 2024 and will increase shelter capacity by 30 to 80 beds per night depending on each site's space. This year, the shelter will rotate between five different locations, each represented by a different faith community, to provide prepared meals and beds in preparation for the winter season.

San Francisco provides shelter and housing to nearly 16,000 homeless and formerly homeless individuals every night of which over 3,000 are in shelters. Over the last five years, the City has added over 1,100 beds to its shelter portfolio, a nearly 50% increase. During that same time, San Francisco has helped over 10,000 people exit homelessness.

"San Francisco is a city of compassion and, thanks to our many initiatives and partnerships to address homelessness head on, we have made a lot of the progress in providing housing and shelter opportunities for people in need," **said Mayor London Breed**. "The winter season can be very challenging for people living on our streets and it is our collective duty to offer safe and warm options for shelter for our unhoused populations. I want to thank our partner faith organizations for their decades of support with this program, which truly represents the spirit of San Francisco."

The Interfaith Winter Shelter program is a seasonal, overnight-only (6:00 p.m.-7:00 a.m.) congregate shelter operated by ECS in partnership with SFIC and HSH. The program rotates between the Canon Kip Senior Center, Saint Mary's Cathedral, St. Mark's Lutheran, and First Unitarian Universalist Church. Placements will be on a "first come, first served" self-referral basis. HSH funds services for the program.



"What we initially thought would be a one-year emergency shelter is, this November, entering its 35th season," **stated SFIC Executive Director Michael Pappas**. "The San Francisco Interfaith Council is grateful that our City's communities of faith and religious institutions can offer those in the greatest of need safe and welcoming shelter, home cooked meals, love and dignity, during the coldest and rainiest months of the year."

"Expanding our shelter capacity during the winter season is a vital service which ensures that vulnerable people experiencing homelessness have a safe respite during the coldest months of the year," **said Episcopal Community Services Executive Director Beth Stokes**. "The winter shelter is a quintessential San Francisco story of collaboration between the City, nonprofit organizations, and faith-based institutions, and Episcopal Community Services is proud to have supported this partnership for over 31 years."

Dinner and breakfast will be served every day throughout the 2023-2024 Interfaith Winter Shelter Program. All sites will welcome all genders and accept self-referrals, ages 18 years and older. Families and unaccompanied minors cannot be accommodated and are encouraged to find other shelter options [here](#).

For more information, including dates and hours of operation for each site, please visit: [hsh.sfgov.org/services/how-to-get-services/accessing-temporary-shelter/](https://hsh.sfgov.org/services/how-to-get-services/accessing-temporary-shelter/) or call the San Francisco Homeless Outreach Team (SFHOT) at: (628) 652-8000.

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