

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES
ADULT SERVICES

PROCEDURE 02-420

SUBJECT: Screening and Shelter Referral	APPLICABLE TO: Adult Shelter Facilities	ISSUED: March 28, 2000 REISSUED: October 10, 2001
ADMINISTERED BY: Division of Adult Services	APPROVED BY: Marcia Stevenson, Deputy Commissioner	

I. PURPOSE

To provide a formal policy framework and detailed instructions for the screening of shelter applicants and clients at Adult Services facilities and referrals to shelter beds throughout the shelter system.

II. APPLICABILITY

This procedure applies to all shelter staff, Intake staff, Program Analysts, and Program Administrators.

III. FORMS

420A Notice of Referral to Shelter
420B Shelter Case Tracking Form: Screening
W-601U SCIMS Data Entry Form

IV. RELATED PROCEDURES

00-402 Client Transfer Process
00-409 Suspension of Services
00-411 Client Carfare Distribution

V. INTRODUCTION

Screening is conducted seven days, around-the-clock at all Department of Homeless Services (DHS) facilities. The purpose of screening is to determine at which facility a homeless adult requesting temporary emergency housing assistance (shelter) will receive services.

Designated staff posted at the shelter entrance screens all individuals not listed on the current bed roster who request shelter. Screening staff interviews each shelter applicant or client and conducts a Shelter Care Information Management System (SCIMS) inquiry to determine appropriate shelter assignments in accordance with DHS Official Shelter Policy guidelines, as follows:

- NEW APPLICANT (not previously registered in SCIMS) to the Adult Services system is referred to the Men's 30th Street Intake facility or a Women's Intake-Assessment/Triage and Referral facility. Intake staff assigns a Homeless Assistance Number and finger images the applicant. At the completion of the intake process, the applicant becomes a client in the DHS system. Intake then assigns the client to an assessment facility, where his or her needs are identified before assignment to an Official Shelter.
- RETURNEE APPLICANT (known to SCIMS) absent twelve months (365 days) or more from the Adult Services shelter system for is referred to the Men's Intake facility or a Women's Assessment/Triage and Referral facility.
- RETURNEE (known to SCIMS) absent less than twelve months from the shelter system is referred to his/her Official or Last Transfer Shelter, which will evaluate the client to determine if s/he remains appropriate for their program.

The Official Shelter is the shelter in which the client was lodged other than a temporary shelter by SCIMS Authorization Code 1 (New Authorization), Code 11 (PRU Referral) or Code 12 (CRU Authorization of Brad H. Class).

The Last Transfer Shelter is the shelter to which the client was last transferred under one of the following SCIMS Termination Codes: Code 84 (Reassigned to Another Adult Services Shelter), Code 87 (Official Assignment by Assessment) or Code 33 (DHS Transitional Facility).

The Shelter Director and the shift supervisor ensure that Screening Staff, in all cases:

- 1) Check SCIMS Screen 22 (Client Lodging History Inquiry) before an individual is lodged or referred to another shelter. The SCIMS inquiry is mandatory twenty-four hours a day.
- 2) Maintains Shelter Case Tracking Form: Screening (Form 420B) to account for all individuals seen.
- 3) Does not turn away an individual under any circumstances until staff decides his/her status in SCIMS and completes the appropriate referral to an intake facility or another shelter by issuing the Client Notice of Referral to Shelter (Form 420A) and travel directions to the client.

Returnees do not receive carfare upon referral to their Official or Last Transfer Shelter. Carfare for referrals to other Adult Services facilities is limited to New Applicants and Returnee Applicants to the Men's Intake facility or to a Women's Assessment/Triage and Referral facility only. See Client Carfare Distribution (Procedure 00-411).

Clients listed on a shelter's current bed roster who present shelter ID prior to 10 P.M. are admitted to that facility and are not subject to this procedure.

VI. DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS

1. SCREENING STAFF

a. INTERVIEWS individual not listed on the current shelter bed roster, as follows:

- (1) Asks for name, date of birth and Social Security Number. Requests written referral and personal ID.
- (2) Contacts Supervisor immediately for emergencies or problem situations occurring at the shelter entrance. Security staff follows current security manual.

b. CONDUCTS SCIMS INQUIRY - Accesses SCIMS Screen 22 (Client Lodging History Inquiry) under the individual's name, H.A. Number, Social Security Number and/or date of birth.

(1) If H.A. NUMBER NOT FOUND, the individual is a NEW APPLICANT.

(2) If H.A. NUMBER FOUND -

- (a) Crosschecks personal information given by applicant/client with case data on SCIMS.
- (b) Checks Field 23/Alerts in the Personal Data Section of Screen 22. Notifies Supervisor immediately if one of the following Alert codes flashes:

10 Needs Special Attention	15 Signs Domestic Violence	40 Impairment Exemption
11 On Dialysis	16 Winter Alert	41 Shelter Benefits Denied
12 Life Sustaining Medication	20 212-566-0259 TB Maybe	44 Client Must Complete AFIS
13 Life Support Medication	23 No Contract Shelter	52 Deceased
14 Needs Special Diet	30 Medically Inappropriate	86 Suspension of Service

(c) If ABSENT TWELVE MONTHS OR MORE, prompt will flash "Case Closed Over 12 Months" on Screen 22. The client is a RETURNEE APPLICANT.

(d) If ABSENT LESS THAN TWELVE MONTHS, the client is a RETURNEE. Determines the client's Official Shelter or Last Transfer Shelter lodging by following "Guidelines for the Identification of Shelter Status of Returnee Clients Absent Less Than Twelve Months" on Page 6.

c. LOGS data onto Shelter Case Tracking Form: Screening (Form 420B) under the following columns: Time (client arrived at shelter), Client Name, H.A. Number, Social Security Number, Date of Birth, Referral Source (name of agency or self-referred) and New or Returnee.

d. LODGES Returnee absent less than twelve months who has returned directly to his/her Official Shelter or Last Transfer Shelter, as follows:

(1) Directs client to a designated area for lodging authorization and bed assignment.

(2) Updates SCIMS Screen 1/Client Personal Data, as needed. Inputs Code 1/New Authorization on SCIMS Screen 2/Lodging Authorization.

(3) If another worker will enter the case data into SCIMS, completes SCIMS Data Entry Form

(W-601U). The data entry worker must generate and attach the W-601U turnaround printout to the case record.

(4) Enters lodging outcome on Shelter Case Tracking Form: Screening (Form 420B) in the following columns: Accepted (Yes), Official Shelter or Temporary Shelter (check under whichever applies) or Refused Bed (if client refused shelter offered).

(5) BED NOT AVAILABLE –

(a) If a bed does not become available by 10:00 p.m. curfew, calls Vacancy Control to obtain a temporary bed assignment at another shelter.

(b) Fills out Notice of Referral to Shelter (Form 420A). Checks “Temporary Assignment” box. Client and worker sign form. Issues Form 420A to client. Arranges transportation.

The Temporary Shelter will lodge the client as Code 4 (Temporary) in SCIMS and call the Official Shelter the next morning to reserve a bed and return the client. See Client Transfer Process (00-402).

e. REFERS New/Returnee Applicant to Men’s Intake or Women’s Assessment/Triage and Referral facility or Returnee to his/her Official or Last Transfer Shelter, as follows:

(1) Fills out Notice of Referral to Shelter (Form 420A): Enters the name of the facility to which the applicant/client is being referred. Checks “New Applicant/Returnee Applicant” or “Returnee” box, whichever applies. Explains referral to client who then signs the form. Worker signs and enters the date/time the client will leave referral shelter. Issues 420A to client. Copy to shelter files. Gives travel directions.

(2) If an applicant is being referred to Intake facility, arranges transportation through Vacancy Control.

(3) Enters outcome on Shelter Case Tracking Form: Screening (Form 420B) under the following columns: Accepted (No) and Referred To (name of facility).

f. LATE ARRIVALS –

(1) If a client, not on the current bed roster, arrives between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m., after checking status on SCIMS, calls Vacancy Control to obtain a bed assignment, which may be at another shelter.

(2) If the client arrives after 2 a.m., checks shelter status on SCIMS.

(a) If client is at Official Shelter, the shelter accommodates the client. Vacancy Control will not make bed assignments again until after 8 a.m.

(b) If client belongs at another shelter, issues Notice of Referral to Shelter (Form 420A) and travel directions. No carfare is issued.

- a. Takes charge of emergencies or problem situations when notified by Screening Staff, as follows:
- (1) Calls 911, if necessary, for police or EMS. Follows Incident Reporting Procedure (97-001) and Suspension of Services Procedure (00-409).
 - (2) Counsels applicant/clients in crisis, mediates disputes between clients and staff, intervenes with any client who may require special handling and obtains interpretation assistance for those with limited English-speaking ability.
- b. Calls Vacancy Control to refer and coordinate agency transportation for a disabled or frail applicant/client to an accessible facility. Fills out and issues Client Notice of Referral to Shelter (Form 420A) to client.
- c. Acts on Alert Codes found on Screen 22 when notified by Screening Staff.
- e. If Alert Code 86/Suspension Of Services is found, accesses Screen 9/Suspended From Facility. Inserts H.A. number. Identifies whether the client's Official Shelter or a Temporary Shelter carried out the suspension. Calculates whether the suspension period (1 to 7 days) has elapsed:
- (1) If the Suspension period has elapsed - Readmits the client if s/he has returned to his/her Official Shelter or refers the client to his/her Official Shelter by issuing the Client Notice of Referral to Shelter (Form 420A) to the applicant/client.
 - (2) If the Suspension period has not elapsed - Informs the client of the date when and the shelter where, s/he may reenter the shelter system.
 - (3) During a Winter Alert, readmits client whose suspension period has not expired and who returns to his/her Official Shelter. Informs the client that s/he may be transferred (for safety reasons) and/or must complete the suspension period when the Winter Alert has been lifted.
- f. At end of the shift, reviews Shelter Case Tracking Form (Form 420B) for accuracy and completeness and signs-off under the appropriate shift.
-

VII. Guidelines for the Identification of the Shelter Status of Returnee Clients Absent Less Than Twelve Months

Accesses the Shelter Care Information Management System (SCIMS) Screen 22 (Client Lodging History Inquiry) from the Master Menu and inserts client's last/first name, H.A. number, or Social Security number.

- Identifies the shelter code in Field 78 (Official Shelter) on the Personal Data Section of Screen 22. Next, goes to the Field 43 (Last Transfer Shelter) in the Authorization Section of Screen 22 and compares the shelter codes found in Field 43 and 78.
 - If the shelter codes found in Fields 43 and 78 are the same, then the shelter code listed in both fields is the client's Official Shelter. Checks the most recent authorization code in Field 45 to verify that the matching codes identified in Fields 43 and 78 are correct. Refer client to Official Shelter.
 - If Field 43 does not contain a shelter code, the code found in Field 78 is the client's Official Shelter.
 - If the shelter codes in Fields 43 and 78 do not match, this signifies that the client failed to report to the Last Transfer Shelter listed in Field 43. The Last Transfer Shelter code found in Field 43 always supercedes the Official shelter code found in Field 78.
 - ° Checks transfer date next to the most recent Authorization Code 1 or 11 in Field 45 to verify that the Last Transfer Shelter code is correct.
 - ° The Last Transfer Shelter code will postdate the most recent Termination Code 84 or 87 found in the column under Field 45/Authorization.
 - ° The code listed under Field 48/ Shelter next to most recent Authorization Code 1 or Code 11 is the Transfer Shelter to which the client should be referred.
 - If no shelter code is found in Field 78, this signifies that the client was never assigned to an Official Shelter. Clients, who are new or absent from shelter system for twelve months or more, must be referred to Intake and Vacancy Control for men or an intake-assessment facility for women.
-