

Situation Report

Situation Report: 12.26.2021		
Incident Name: December 2021 Winter Weather		
OERS Number: OERS #2021-3265		
EOC: Fully Activated	Unified Commanders: Jonna Papaefthimiou, Portland Bureau of Emergency Management Lee Girard, Department of County Human Services Marc Jolin, Joint Office of Homeless Services Chris Voss, Multnomah County Emergency Management	
Date: 12/26//21	Time: 1800	All posted Situation Reports for the December Cold Weather Emergency Response are archived on the County's website.

To submit updates / actions to this report, email the Multnomah County EOC Situation Unit at eo.situationunit@multco.us with the subject line: Update for December 2021 Winter Weather Situation Report.

Multnomah County and City of Portland December 2021 Winter Weather Emergency Response

Executive Summary

To prepare for the winter weather incident forecasted by the National Weather Service for the 2021 holiday season, Multnomah County and the City of Portland initiated a collaborative response. Implementing lessons from the Severe Winter Weather in February 2021 and Heat Waves in Summer 2021, we are leveraging the strengths of our partners and community. Together, warming interventions and communications strategies were put in place to minimize the impacts of cold weather and prevent deaths. The County and its partners are strategically prioritizing communities with the greatest needs, using race/ethnicity disparity research, community voice and wisdom, and public health best practice.

On December 23, 2021, Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury and City of Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler declared a State of Emergency as the region braced for a prolonged stretch of freezing temperatures and snow. The first severe weather shelters opened at 3:00 pm, Saturday, December 25, 2021 and shelters are planned to operate 24-hours a day throughout the cold weather incident.

- [Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury's Emergency Declaration \(December 24th until January 3rd\)](#)
- [City of Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler's Emergency Declaration \(December 24th until December 31st with a possibility of an extension\)](#)

- [Oregon Governor Kate Brown's Emergency Declaration \(December 24th until January 3rd\)](#)

National Weather Service (NWS) Forecast

December 26

- Temperatures (Portland Airport) reached a high of 36 degrees, after an overnight low of 28 degrees.
- Snow fell through the day in the Portland Metro Area - clouds cleared at times, raising temperatures and melting much of the snow at the valley floor. Higher elevations saw more accumulation.
- Due to above freezing temperatures during the day, cold overnight temperatures raised concerns about icy roads and black ice.
- A [Winter Storm Warning](#) remains in effect until 4:00am Monday morning.

Forecast

- Snow is not expected after midnight tonight, December 26. Additional snow may be possible late Monday into Tuesday, with an inch currently predicted in low-lying areas. After that, conditions should remain dry until at least late in the week. Overnight lows are expected to remain cold.
- [Weather Forecast Portland Airport \(as of 5pm, December 26\)](#)
 - Forecast overnight low temperature tonight - **20 degrees**
 - Forecast high temperature, December 27 - **30 degrees**
 - Overnight low temperature, December 27-28 - **24 degrees**
- [Weather Forecast Troutdale Airport](#)
 - Forecast overnight low temperature tonight - **22 degrees**
 - Forecast high temperature, December 27 - **31 degrees**
 - Overnight low temperature, December 27-28 - **24 degrees**

Closures

Many organizations and local businesses have modified services and hours of operation to keep employees and patrons safe from the cold. Throughout the County, it will be necessary to call ahead or check online before leaving home to make sure your destination site will be open.

Decisions regarding closures of Multnomah County operations will be made at 5:00 am on December 27, and the City of Portland will discuss potential closures at 8:30 pm December 26. **Portland Parks & Recreation** program closures and service adjustments can be found on their [Inclement Weather Policies and Closures](#) site.

NE 238th Drive in Wood Village between Arata Road and Glisan Street closed for several hours on December 26th due to hazardous conditions. Because of concerns of refreezing roads and black ice, take precautions when traveling, even if roads appear clear.

Operations Section

The Operations Section is coordinating and ensuring the support of warming interventions. Warming interventions are designed to provide options for those seeking respite from the severe weather, and include severe winter weather shelters and the distribution of warming resources to those remaining outdoors.

Shelter Plan

Multnomah County and the City of Portland's Mass Care and Shelter team provide compassionate care for community guests seeking relief from the cold. They operate and support severe winter weather shelters which are a type of [Disaster Resource Center \(DRC\)](#) with heat, warming resources, water, food, and support services. If you or someone you know wants to help, please click on the link with the name of the shelter locations to reach the volunteer signup web page.

The City of Portland and Multnomah County began jointly operating five Severe Weather Shelters at 3:00 PM December 25. Guest capacity reached 80% across all shelters overnight on the first night of opening. As a result an additional shelter opened on the evening of December 26. The latest shelter operation information is available at multco.us/cold and 211info.org.

- The following 24-hour severe winter weather shelters are **open** with guest counts as of 6:45 am December 26:
 - [The Portland Building, Downtown, \(1120 SW 5th Ave\)](#)
 - 70 guests (70 capacity)
 - [East Portland Community Center, Mill Park, \(740 SE 106th Ave\)](#)
 - 22 guests (40 capacity)
 - [Salvation Army Moore Street Gymnasium, \(5325 N Williams Ave\)](#)
 - 14 guests (50 capacity)
 - [Mt. Scott Community Center, Mt. Scott, \(5530 SE 72nd Ave\)](#)
 - 18 guests (21 capacity)
 - [Sunrise Center \(18901 E Burnside St\)](#)
 - 40 guests (40 capacity)
- As a result of the high guest counts at those shelters, an additional severe weather shelter at [120 SE Market Street](#) will open at 8PM on December 26.

County shelters have a “no turn away” policy because of life-threatening cold temperatures and will create additional capacity during this event as needed. Severe weather shelters do not require identification or any other documentation for entry. All shelters are ADA accessible and pets are welcome at all locations. Survival kits with life-saving gear — tents, sleeping bags, warm clothing — will also be distributed as needed at each severe weather shelter site.

In partnership with 211, the City and County are offering free transportation for guests to shelters, using City and County resources. Trimet is also waiving fares for people traveling to a shelter, and offering ticket vouchers



for guests leaving shelters. Volunteers from Portland's Neighborhood Emergency Teams are partnering with 211 to provide additional remote dispatching assistance and are available to respond to requests to clear snow from driveways and sidewalks for persons with mobility issues (requested through PBOT dispatch).

COVID-19 Safety Protocols

To ensure the safety of guests, staff and volunteers, COVID-19 safety protocols are in place and everyone inside the shelter must be masked at all times (except when consuming food or drink). Shelters will have N95 or KN95 masks for guests and staff available. Shelter staff and volunteers must be fully vaccinated.

Please assume that guests and staff members have COVID and act accordingly. The new COVID variant Omicron is confirmed in Multnomah County and is expected to spread quickly in the coming days and weeks. Fully vaccinated people may get sick with Omicron but are still unlikely to get seriously ill. Those who are boosted have a lower risk of being infected at all. Any unvaccinated person is at very high risk of getting and spreading COVID.

Guest COVID testing is voluntary. Shelter guests who request a COVID-19 test will be offered one via AMR or on-site rapid tests. Transport to isolation rooms may take several hours because of the weather. If testing, transport or isolation rooms become unavailable we will do our best to separate anyone who is sick or COVID positive from others.

COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics

Vaccination clinics will be available for Severe Weather shelter guests. This service is supported by Multnomah County Public Health and American Medical Response and is planned for all locations at scheduled times between December 26 and December 29.

Multnomah County Libraries

[Multnomah County Libraries](#) were open normal operating hours on December 26th to provide additional warming spaces for residents.

Administration

The Administration Section strives to ensure recruitment and training that creates an inclusive, positive, productive, and healthy work environment across all response operations. Team members remain nimble and address the changing conditions throughout the emergency response. They provide equity and inclusion support, as well as human resources and labor relations consultation. Staffing for the entire response is coordinated through this section.

Staff and Volunteers

Multnomah County Human Resources and the City of Portland are recruiting staff to volunteer for paid temporary reassignment to work at the severe winter weather shelters. A [series of training videos](#) was designed to help prepare community members to work in these settings. In addition to county and city staff,

members of the public are also being recruited to volunteer at severe winter weather shelters with a public message for recruitment sent out on December 25 (Christmas Day). If you know of someone who is interested in volunteering or donating gear for the response, please click this [link](#).

Neighborhood Emergency Response Teams (NETs)

Portland [Neighborhood Emergency Teams \(NET\)](#) are providing critical assistance to this response in several aspects of the response including the following:

- Assisting with 211 and providing shelter transportation dispatch
- Driving and logistics section support roles
- Supply preparations at Joint Office of Homeless Services (JOHS) and County Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
- Storm drain clearing
- Accessibility assistance at TriMet stops
- Responding to requests via PBOT dispatch for snow clearing on sidewalks and driveways for those mobility / access needs.

Joint Office of Homeless Services (JOHS)

The Joint Office of Homeless Services (JOHS) was established in 2016 to oversee the delivery of services to people experiencing homelessness in Multnomah County. The office represents a shared commitment between Multnomah County and the City of Portland in making services easier to access for those in need. This work is only possible because of the partnership and collaboration of many community based organizations and volunteers who provide essential contributions to outreach, staffing, and distribution efforts.

JOHS Resource Distribution

During a severe winter weather event, the Joint Office of Homeless Services distributes cold-weather sleeping bags, socks and tents to providers, community-based organizations, and individuals who wish to redistribute in their neighborhoods. To request gear, schedule an appointment via email to celeste.duvall@multco.us (link sends e-mail).

Since 12/20, JOHS and their partners have distributed these resources:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ● 580 refillable drinking bottles | 2,962 cooling towels |
| ● 6,300 electrolyte packets | 13,890 KN95 masks |
| ● 3,234 pairs of socks | 1,610 Ponchos |
| ● 1,020 Mylar Sleeping Bags | 2,414 pairs of Hot Hands |
| ● 526 sets of Hoodies and Sweatpants | 2,220 sets of knit hats and gloves |
| ● 822 Fifteen degree Sleeping Bags | 2,890 Tarps |
| ● 491 Tents | 2,292 70% wool blankets |

The JOHS Supply Center has been staffed by volunteers and is currently well supplied.

Outreach workers from several partner organizations have been operating in every part of the County distributing gear. Contracted provider outreach teams have distributed even more gear that was staged at their

work locations to provide easy access. We have been doing a Coordinated Outreach Mission with all outreach teams covering as much of the County as possible each day sharing out information to the houseless about shelter locations and giving gear to those who choose not to go inside.. JOHS is currently operating with multiple outreach partners.

How to help

If you see someone outside who is unsheltered and whose life appears to be in danger, call 9-1-1. If you see someone about whom you are concerned during cold weather (for instance, they are not dressed for the weather conditions), call Multnomah County's non-emergency response line at 503-823-3333 to request a welfare check.

Public Information and Joint Information System (JIS)

The Public Information Section uses an equity lens to create and disseminate vital information to the public, assuring accessibility and relevance to communities. Public Information Officers (PIOs) current priorities include communicating out [resources](#) to mitigate the impact of this extreme cold weather incident on County residents.

A Joint Information System (JIS) was established with Washington, Clackamas, Clark and Multnomah County, the cities of Portland and Gresham, Trimet and 211 on December 23. The JIS will meet daily during the December 2021 Winter Weather response and post regular updates to [Care for When It's Cold](#). The JIS is responding to a growing number of media requests, has a shared media protocol, and a social media plan where they are monitoring and posting messages in multiple languages. A number of resource materials have been created to publicize the opening of [additional severe weather shelters](#) and to encourage community members to [volunteer for shifts at severe weather shelters](#).

- [Pets During Cold Weather](#)
- [Cold Weather Tips to Print and Post](#): Includes the
 - [Help for when it's cold - Information for Older Adults](#)
 - [Help for when it's cold - Information for Cold Weather Safety](#)
 - [Help for when it's cold - Information for Pet Owners](#)
- The City and County have multiple social media accounts that are updated regularly in different languages with emergency messaging. Please visit and share:
 - [Multnomah County Emergency Management Facebook](#)
 - [Multnomah County Facebook](#)
 - [Multnomah County Instagram](#)
 - [Multnomah County Twitter](#)
 - [City of Portland Facebook](#)
 - [City of Portland Twitter](#)
- Portland Water Bureau also provided tips and precautions to local news on how to prepare your home for the winter weather and avoid frozen pipes.

Logistics

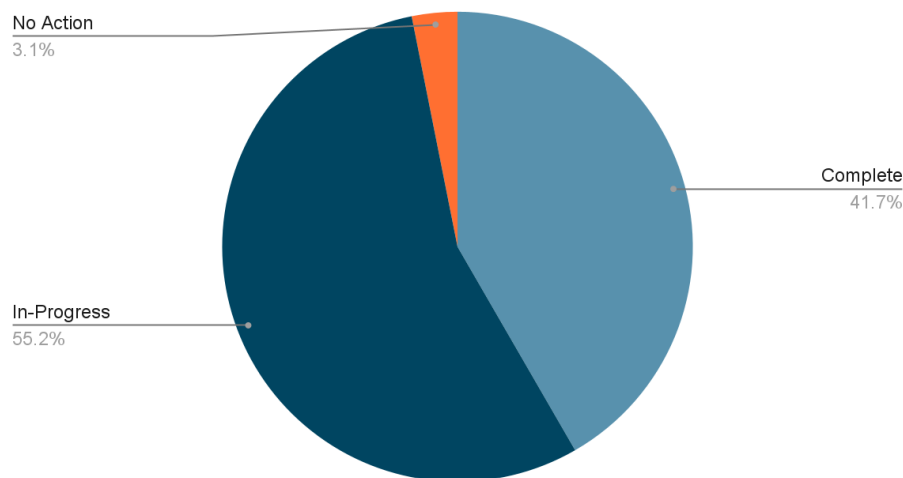
The Logistics Section supports the actions of all other emergency response sections. Logistics focuses on procedures for activating, dispatching, distributing, allocating, tracking, and deactivating resources, supplies, and materials needed for emergency and disaster operations.

For the current winter weather response, the Logistics Section's priorities include purchasing, coordinating, and delivering the supplies needed to set-up shelters sites, delivering requested needs to community partners, and supporting DRC sites to acquire supplies throughout the duration of this incident.

Resource Requests

The Logistics Section is currently addressing over 90 resource requests to support winter weather operations.

Resource Request Status



Supply Unit

The Supply Unit gathered resources to prepare for winter weather operations. With the assistance of Ground Support and the Resource Request Lead, the Section has staged upwards of 50 pallets of supplemental materials to deliver in support of five shelters, staged dozens of additional pallets of supplies for new shelter sites and is working to deliver any additional supplies needed for operations.

Summary of Supplies

- Clothing Items: Underwear, boots, socks, sweatshirts, pants, hats, gloves: 5,000
- Winter Gear: Tents, sleeping bags, tarps, ponchos: 2,500
- Food Items: Coffee, tea, granola bars, oatmeal, cup o'noodles, snacks, water and breakfast items : 60,000
- Pet Supplies: Food, litter, trays, leashes, kennels, bowls: 250
- Floor Protection Material: Ram board, plastic sheeting, tape and application tools

Food Unit

The Food Unit is supporting meal services to each of the five open shelters sites. As of mid-day December 26, the City-County has provided 882 meals in coordination with community Partners US Foods, [Feed the Mass](#), [Blanchet House](#), and [Stone Soup PDX](#). The Food Unit has coordinated meals for the shelters through December 31.

Ground Support Unit

The Ground Support Unit has assisted with the distribution of resources to shelter sites during the build-up to operations. The team has transported supply trailers, pallets of supplemental supplies, and completed general transports supporting this incident. The Ground Support Unit will continue to support incoming resource requests for shelters and other critical inclement weather operations throughout the duration of this incident.

Public Health and Emergency Services

Emergency department and urgent care visits were at the typical season levels for December 25. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) volumes were low, but hospitals remain in crisis due to COVID-19.

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers will be located at severe warming shelters throughout the incident between 2:00 pm. - 7:00 pm)

Behavioral Health staff are working with emergency response teams for this incident and are working with a health outreach program. The walk-in clinic is open.

211

[211info](#) connects people with health and social service organizations. At the core of this work is the Community Information Center, supported by 211's Resource Database team. 211 provides enhanced information and referral and assistance programs that support specific populations and service needs.

Planning for the December 2021 cold weather incident included:

- Adding [severe weather shelter](#) information to prominently feature on the [211info homepage](#). This resource includes county-specific information about severe weather shelters in 29 Oregon counties.

211 Utilization Data

December 26, 2021, as of 8:00 am, 211 had reported the following:

- Moteled 2 families.
- Received 15 transportation requests.
- Over 100 Calls across the state to 211 line; 60 of those calls were from Multnomah County.

[Planning](#)

The planning section provides administrative and documentation support that helps organize the response;

and creates situational awareness and the development of a common operating picture. This work helps to inform the priorities and objectives of the response. The Planning Section ensures the accurate documentation of actions taken and continues to provide updates to the tools that connect all partners across the response. This organizational framework aims to reduce duplication and increase efficiency and effectiveness of the cooperative effort of this response.

Stay Informed, Get Help, Get Involved

Activated Call Centers

Call Center	Phone Number	Email	Hours
211 Call Center	211 or 866-698-6155	help@211info.org	Seven days a week, 24 hours a day.
Behavioral Health Call Center	503-988-4888 Toll-free: 800-716-9769 TTY: 711		Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week
Aging & Disabilities Resource Connection	503-988-3646	adrc@multco.us	Information and assistance to older people, people with disabilities, and caregivers, open 24 hours a day, seven days a week
Multnomah County COVID-19 Call Center	503-988-8939		Information and assistance available on Severe Heat resources, cooling centers, and COVID-19 vaccine and testing sites and business guidance

More questions?

- Consult [Multnomah County Care for When It's Cold](#).
- Contact [211](#):
 - Call 2-1-1 (open 24/7)
 - Visit [211info](#)
 - Text your zip code to 899211 (standard message and data rates may apply)

Media

For media inquiries related to the December 2021 Winter Weather incident please **contact Julie Sullivan-Springhetti**, Multnomah County Public Information Media Coordinator at: **503-502-2741**.



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This is the situation report for 12/26/2021.	