



City of Seattle

Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Human Services Department

Catherine Lester, Director



PRESS RELEASE

Compass Housing Alliance Opens City-Funded Enhanced 24/7 Homeless Shelter

Compass at First Presbyterian Opens to Provide Holistic and Responsive Solution for Local Homelessness Crisis

SEATTLE— August 30, 2017— Compass at First Presbyterian opened its doors today, bringing a holistic and responsive solution to Seattle’s homelessness crisis. With an emphasis of providing stability, growth, and community to support services, Compass Housing Alliance will operate the 24/7 “enhanced shelter,” which brings 100 much-needed, new shelter beds to Seattle. Through a \$1.3 million grant from the City of Seattle, Compass Housing Alliance will combine safe shelter, complete wrap-around services—including meals, laundry and shower facilities—and intensive case management. The model aligns directly with the City’s Pathways Home plan announced last fall.

“The opening of this new low-barrier shelter brings the City one step achieving our top homelessness priority: permanent housing,” said Mayor Ed Murray. “Thank you to the faith leaders and the center’s neighbors. We will not be successful in our effort to address homelessness unless everyone takes responsibility and collaborates on this work.”

“The City funding acknowledges Compass Housing Alliance’s proven and innovative, person-centric approach to providing shelter and support to Seattle’s homeless population,” said Janet Pope, executive director of Compass Housing Alliance. “The 24/7 enhanced shelter model offers individuals the opportunity to stay in one place, which is the stability they need while searching for a permanent solution, rather than returning to the streets each day and hoping for a bed somewhere that night.”

Pope added that enhanced shelter is a smarter solution for addressing homelessness, providing a safe place to stay, nutritious meals, and the time and resources needed for a full assessment of each individual’s needs, while connecting community, stability and growth to services working toward addressing the barriers to housing. The shelter will serve men and women, offer storage for possessions, and will welcome pets.

The new shelter initiative was made possible in collaboration with Seattle First Presbyterian Church, which is providing an optimal space for the shelter’s unique purpose and will be located at the property at 1013 8th Ave, in Seattle.

"We follow a faith tradition that champions the concerns of the last and the least in society," said Reverend Heidi Husted Armstrong, pastor of Seattle First Presbyterian Church. "We are so thankful to partner with Compass Housing Alliance and in helping people, our lives will also be changed."

"With this enhanced shelter support, individuals can readily secure the appropriate resources to navigate the system toward a successful housing placement," Pope explained. "The new shelter follows the successful model that Compass Housing Alliance has implemented across our other shelter and housing programs. We can have greater impact in developing a 24/7 facility of this capacity."

"The City is very excited for this shelter to open," said Catherine L. Lester, Director of the City's Human Services Department. "It demonstrates the power of partnership in addressing homelessness and speaks to a need we are finding for people to have shelter that also accepts pets, possession, and their friends/family."

The enhanced shelter approach is a direct response to the real needs of people who need both immediate and longer-term support to successfully transition out of homelessness. It also provides space for people to bring their possessions and to come inside with their pets or companions. Accommodating these issues can reduce the challenges people living outside face in seeking access to shelters.

The shelter will have an on-site manager to interact with the community, provide oversight and ensure that the church grounds are well maintained.

"Compass Housing Alliance has nearly 100 years of experience serving a vulnerable population and have advocated for this system-changing, 24/7 model within the four shelters that we operate. We are pleased to continue our partnership with the city in implementing this evidenced best practice in our community," Pope explained.

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NOTE TO EDITORS

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About Compass Housing Alliance

Founded in 1920, Compass Housing Alliance (CHA) is an established provider of emergency shelter, housing, and support services to homeless and low-income individuals. CHA is a housing expert providing transitional, permanent and low-income housing, serving families, women, veterans, and individuals in need. CHA touches the lives of over 10,000 annually through 23 locations throughout the Puget Sound region.

www.compasshousingalliance.org

About the City of Seattle Human Services Department

Through a focus on six areas of impact, *the Seattle Human Services Department works to connect people with resources and solutions during times of need so we can all live, learn, work and take part in strong, healthy communities.*