

Beaverton Severe Weather Shelter

Report for Nov. 1, 2017- Mar. 30, 2018
Just Compassion of East Washington County

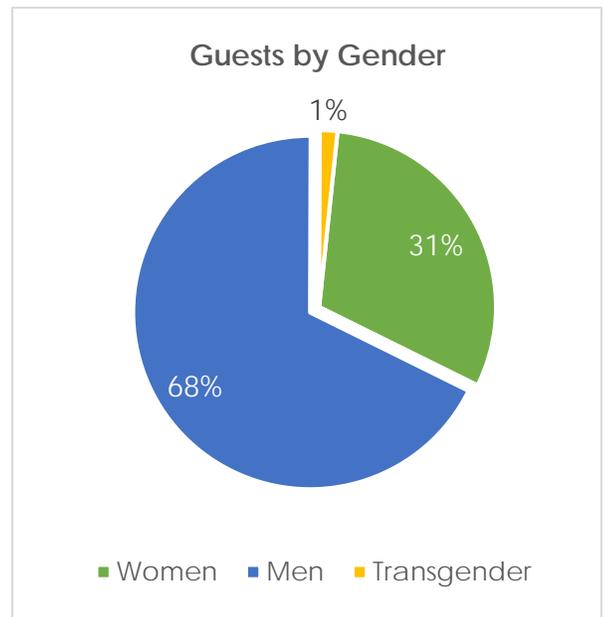
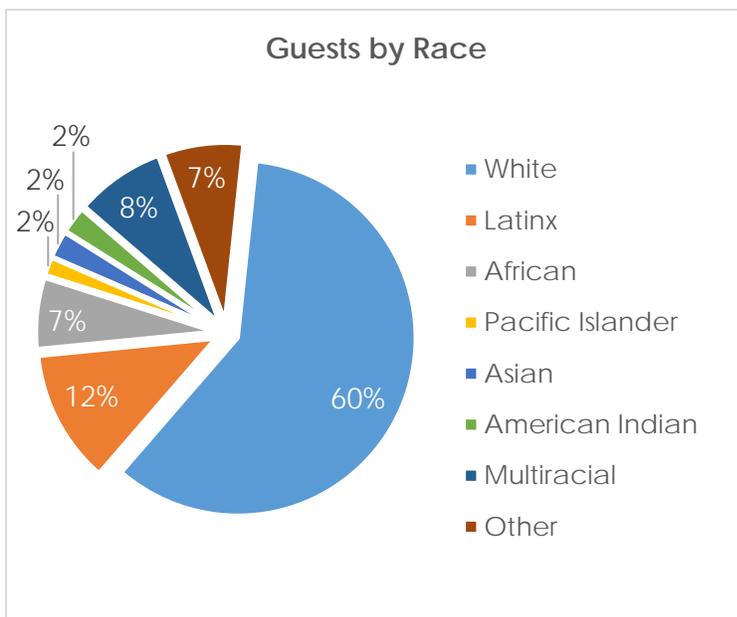
31 days of opening
188 people served
713 bed stays
1,500 hours of volunteer service

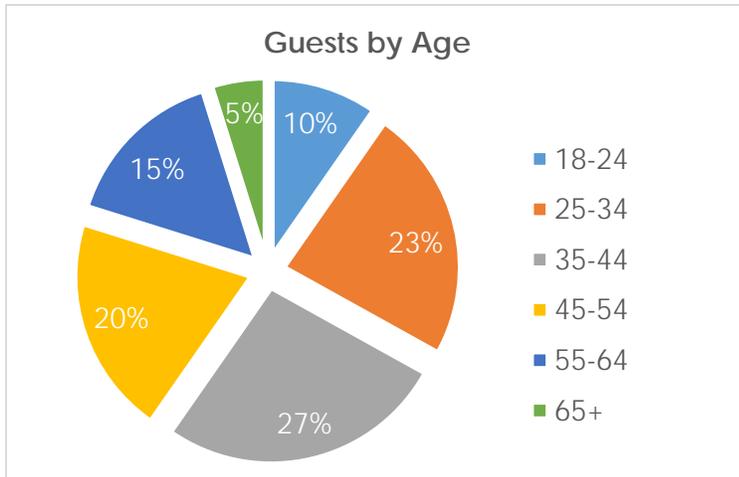
About. The Beaverton Severe Weather Shelter opened in January 2017 to provide a warm, safe place for adults experiencing homelessness to stay during the winter.

Just Compassion of East Washington County is a coalition of religious, service, civic, and business organizations that have joined to network and share resources for creating a safe and hospitable community for those without homes and living in poverty. They contracted with the city to provide shelter services. After a successful pilot from January-March 2017, the shelter expanded to be open for the winter season from November 2017-March 2018.

The shelter is located in the Beaverton Community Center, with capacity for up to 30 adults in the Community Room. This shelter is part of the Washington County Coordinated System, and with the opening of the Beaverton shelter, adults experiencing homelessness have a shelter available every night of the week in Washington County.

Guest Stats. The Beaverton Severe Weather Shelter was open for 22 Thursdays and opened the doors on nine weekend days when temperatures dropped below freezing.





Summary. The majority of guests at the shelter were white men between the ages of 35-44. There was a significant increase in the number of women staying in the shelter from last season, and staff continue to see a wide range of ages from 18-72. Eleven guests at the shelter reported veteran status. The guests reported being primarily from Beaverton/Tigard.

Guests receive a sleeping pad, blanket, and pillow each night at the shelter. Meals on Wheels provides a dinner and breakfast. Bus tickets from Trimet and shower vouchers for Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District are distributed at closing each morning. At the end of the season, 23 guests completed surveys about the shelter:

- 90% marked high satisfaction with volunteers (host monitors, greeters/servers) and with oversight staff (shelter coordinator, managers) and indicated they were treated with courtesy and respect
- 80% liked the mat locations and felt that they were provide a safe space
- 70% were satisfied with bedding and supplies
- 60% were satisfied with the line up to get into the shelter, clothing distributions, food, and showers

In the six weeks since the shelter closed, one guest found an apartment, three guests started jobs, and two guests are pursuing Social Security disability insurance.

Volunteer Stats. With only one paid coordinator, volunteers are the lifeblood of the shelter. Nine volunteers serve the shelter on any day of opening, with (4) greeters/servers, (3) overnight host monitors, and (2) morning help. The current list of volunteers is around 65 people, with around 40 of the volunteers recruited and trained this season. The biggest challenge continues to be recruitment of male volunteers willing to stay overnight.

As of May 30, 18 volunteers had completed surveys about their experience at the shelter. 100% of respondents said that they are planning to volunteer for the shelter next season. On average, they agreed with all of the following statements:

- I felt prepared to volunteer
- I felt safe with volunteering
- There was enough dedicated time to debrief with other volunteers/staff



- The number of volunteers was right for the work needing to be done
- The guidelines and rules at the shelter were clear to guests and enforced fairly
- Overall, I enjoyed my experience volunteering

While there are many volunteers, spots filled quickly as they had an affinity for returning multiple times, with one volunteer working all but two of the days we were open! When asked what the most rewarding part of volunteering at the shelter was, all of the respondents answered that it was talking to and interacting with the guests.



“For me the most rewarding part was seeing guests laugh, talk and connect with each other. The SWS provided a space for community building that may not have taken place otherwise.”

“We see a lot of familiar faces during the season and I’m glad that community members with nowhere else to go at least have this shelter to come to during the winter.”

2018-2019 Winter Season. The Beaverton Severe Weather Shelter will reopen in November 2018. Just Compassion of East Washington County will continue to recruit and train volunteers and orient a new Shelter Coordinator.

We will also be forming a volunteer committee that will help guide the continued development of the shelter, with several people expressing interest in being more involved. While we anticipate that the services will be largely the same, we will continue to identify resources provided to guests and ways to make the shelter a safe, welcoming environment. This includes installing security cameras in the main Community Room and continuing to work with the Washington County Severe Weather Shelter Network to strengthen communication and support to all shelters.

Thanks for your continued support of this important resource for individuals experiencing homelessness!