

UNDERSTANDING SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS SEEKING EMERGENCY SHELTER IN CHARLES COUNTY

Currently, Charles County does not have an immediately available, walk-in shelter, but does have a coordinated entry process with the Department of Social Services as the single point of access. In the future, there will be a "No Wrong Door" process in place where other agencies can be an access point for homeless individuals.

What to do if an individual asks for help with finding shelter:

Available Monday - Friday, 8am-4pm

- ✓ Call the **Charles County Department of Social Services Customer Call Center** at 301-392-6400.
- ✓ Go to the **Department of Social Services** at **200 Kent Avenue, La Plata** (for VanGo route support, visit <https://bit.ly/3OG6bcg>).
- ✓ Call **LifeStyles of Maryland** at 301-609-9900 (available Mondays – Fridays, 9:30am- 5pm).

Available After Hours

The Charles County Sheriff's Office is designated as the County's after-hours initial point of contact for individuals requesting emergency shelter.*

- ✓ Call the **Charles County Sheriff's Office Non-Emergency** line at 301-932-2222.
- ✓ Notify the station clerk that you are supporting an individual seeking shelter & request an officer to respond to the individual's location to do a welfare check.
- ✓ If an emergency shelter is available, the individual may need to find transportation to the shelter through VanGo, cab service, or rideshare.

If these options are unavailable, officers may speak to Social Services regarding alternate modes of transportation, who may contact LifeStyles and/or other agencies if additional support is needed to assist the individual.

**Please note that response times will vary due to officer availability, the location of the individual, call volume, prioritization of calls, etc.*

Helpful Tips

- ✓ Offer to assist the person with calling or provide them with this information.
- ✓ A message may need to be left at one of the numbers above, then wait for a callback.
- ✓ The intake call could take between 5-15 minutes. Be mindful of this time if offering your help or providing a phone.
- ✓ Ask the person if they are an individual or if they have a family with dependent children who are also experiencing homelessness before calling.

When to Dial 911

If the person

- ...is experiencing a medical emergency.
- ...has threatened harm to self or others.
- ...reports they are a victim of a crime.