

Code Blue: Morris County Procedures

2025-2026

The Morris County Office of Emergency Management (MCOEM) is responsible for issuing Code Blue alerts for Morris County consistent with NJ S-3422. This legislation, signed into law on January 21, 2020, requires that a Code Blue alert is declared by the County OEM when the National Weather Service predicts temperatures will reach 32 degrees Fahrenheit or lower. The MCOEM generally strives to issue Code Blue Alerts for multiple days at a time, when feasible, and will update any Code Blue alerts by 10 AM for any day-of activations as a result of an updated NWS weather prediction. This determination initiates the Code Blue protocol to take effect. Director Jeff Paul and Emergency Management Specialist Erika Hauser serve as the contacts for all Morris County activations. During normal business hours, they can be reached at (973) 829-8600 or oem@co.morris.nj.us. Any after hours inquiries should be directed to the Morris County Communications Center at (973) 285-2900 and you can ask to speak with the on-call OEM representative.

Referrals to Warming Centers

If an individual is unsheltered, community organizations working with them during regular business hours (M-F 8:30am-4:30pm) will connect the individual to the Office of Temporary Assistance (OTA) to be screened for warming center/shelter options. Agencies and callers may reach OTA by calling the Intake Line at 973-829-8264. If it is after hours (M-F 4:30pm- 8:30am, holidays, and weekends), agencies and callers may reach NJ211 by dialing 2-1-1 or 1-877-652-1148.

Emergency OTA on-call contacts for community providers and 211 during Code Blue are:

- Lucy D'Anna, Administrator of Social Work: ldanna@co.morris.nj.us
 - Work Cell: 973-747-0411
 - Personal Cell: ***For 211 and Agency Directors Only *Do Not Distribute**** (email for access)

During business hours, community providers including Nourish NJ, Family Promise/Our Promise, and the Mental Health Association will connect clients to OTA for warming center referrals as needed. OTA will provide bus tickets to community providers who need to transport community members to warming center locations.

Overnight Warming Center Locations

OTA and 211 will make all reasonable attempts to place community members in warming center and shelter options prior to resorting to motel placement. The Market Street Mission and Homeless Solutions Warming Center are primary referral placements based on appropriateness and eligibility outlined below.

Market Street Mission (MSM)

OTA and 211 will gauge Market Street Mission (MSM) vacancy and appropriateness with callers on Code Blue Nights. 16-20 guests can be accommodated each night. Eligibility is outlined below:

- Male overnight guests only
- Limited psychotropic medications (*refer to psychotropic medication policy below*)
- No medications that require intravenous administration
- Must be able to walk up a few stairs

- No substance use or active intoxication

Agencies/staff should call MSM's main line and ask for the Resident Director/House Manager at 973-538-0431. Alternatively, staff can contact Glenn Ruggerio/ Ronnie Spicer at 973-538-0310, or Jacob Gaeta at 973-993-2878. Code Blue nights of shelter will not count against the maximum number of nights a guest can stay for emergency shelter at MSM.

Psychotropic Medication Policy:

MSM's approved psychotropic medications are listed below. If a potential client is prescribed any of these medications, please inform the intake counselor during the screening process. Additional mental health history and biopsychosocial information may be requested, and we will need time to review. Admission to MSM while on the following medications will be made on a case-by-case basis.

- SSRIs: Celexa, Escitalopram (Lexapro), Paroxetine (Paxil, Pexeva), Fluoxetine (Prozac, Sarafem), and Sertraline (Zoloft)
- Serotonin Modulators and Stimulators: Vilazodone (Viibryd) and Vortioxetine (Trintellix)
- Serotonin and Norepinephrine Reuptake Inhibitors (SNRIs): (Effexor), Desvenlafaxine (Pristiq and Khedezla), Duloxetine (Cymbalta), and Levomilnacipran (Fetzima)
- Bupropion (Aplenzin, Wellbutrin)
- Buspirone (Buspar)
- Atomoxetine (Strattera)

Hours:

Check-in time for overnight guests is 5:00pm-6:00pm daily. All overnight guests must leave by 6:45am or 8:15am if they stay for chapel (must stay in chapel).

Showers:

Community agencies must call MSM and ask for the Resident Director/House Manager to refer a community member for a shower outside of traditional shower times, as those can be accommodated. Traditional shower times are outlined below:

- Women: Monday-Friday 1:00pm-3:00pm
- Men: Monday-Friday 9:00am-11:00am

Homeless Solutions Warming Center (Overnight Shelter)

The Warming Center at Homeless Solutions will be open from December 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026 regardless of whether or not a Code Blue is called. There is a limit of 16 overnight guests. Men/women will be separated via movable room dividers. The Warming Center opens daily (7 days per week) for overnight guests at 4:30pm. On weekdays overnight guests can stay until 7:00am, with extended Saturday hours to 9:00am. The Warming Center will be open all day on Sundays, for guests reserved for *both* Saturday and Sunday evenings.

OTA staff will offer the Homeless Solutions Warming Center to clients who are appropriate for placement (based on bed availability, only singles/couples no families). OTA will make and track all daytime referrals from 8:30am-4:30pm between their Dover, Morristown, and mobile offices. OTA will provide a daily reservations list for Warming Center beds (for 1-3 nights time) by 4:00pm to Homeless Solutions, including any scheduled weekend reservations. Contact information for OTA is outlined in the "Referrals to Warming Centers" section above.

OTA will email the following agencies of the bed capacity left at Homeless Solutions at approximately 4pm daily: 211, Family Promise/Our Promise, Edna's Haven/MHA, Nourish NJ, and Homeless Solutions.

OTA and 211 staff are responsible for informing guests of the rules at the Homeless Solutions Warming Center. If requested, guests can be provided with a copy of the rules, and they will also be posted at Homeless Solutions.

The maximum consecutive nights for placement are 3 nights (per reservation), unless there are holidays, closures, and weekend arrangements. When possible, OTA staff should seek to reserve consecutive nights of placement on Mondays and Thursdays per Homeless Solutions' request. However, consecutive reserved nights by an OTA staff member will be accepted any weekday by Homeless Solutions. A guest must call back OTA to reserve additional nights of shelter beyond 3 consecutive nights. If guests need placement through the weekend, OTA staff will specify to Homeless Solutions that the authorization is through the weekend for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights. Clients who are referred to the Homeless Solutions Warming Center need to be made aware if they are referred for a bed 3 times and do not show for the reserved bed 3 times, unless there are extenuating circumstances, they will be referred exclusively to other warming center options. Referred clients must also be made aware that if they do not show up for a reserved night in a consecutive stay, the remainder of their consecutive stay will be cancelled unless re-reserved. A call back is therefore necessary. Clients can call OTA or 211 afterhours (the Homeless Hotline) to cancel a bed placement prior to 11pm the night of their placement. Extenuating circumstances include, but are not limited to, hospitalizations, medical emergencies, etc.

Guests must arrive by 11:00pm **unless there is an emergency**. This must be communicated to the staff at Homeless Solutions by OTA/211 staff (for example if a client must work until 11pm and will not arrive to the shelter on time).

Service animals are permitted at the Warming Center. Emotional support animals are not permitted at the Warming Center.

The sign-in sheet for guests at the Homeless Solutions Warming Center will act as a release of information with Code Blue providers. Homeless Solutions will send a list to OTA daily of guests that stayed at the Warming Center and guests that did not show up after being referred by 211 or OTA.

Afterhours (M-F 4:30pm-8:30am, weekends, holidays):

211 staff will offer the Homeless Solutions Warming Center to homeless callers if spots are still available, prior to 11pm. Once a client has accepted placement, the 211 workers will contact Homeless Solutions (973) 993-0900 extension 210 and ask for the Warming Center to request a client be placed on the list for the night. If transportation is needed, taxi can be arranged for the client to get to the center.

211 staff will keep track of the referrals being made keeping in mind the maximum capacity. 211 staff will be notified internally of availability as OTA will be emailing by 4:00pm each business day the daily reservations and will specify if there is no availability at the Warming Center. 211 staff will not reserve consecutive bed nights at the Homeless Solutions Warming Center, only single nights, unless a guest needs to be extended over a weekend or holiday until the next business day. 211 will receive notification from OTA of any clients no longer allowed to stay at Homeless Solutions due to rule noncompliance. 211 will review the list prior to making referrals.

After 10:30pm, 211 staff will refer exclusively to other Warming Center locations, including motel placement if necessary.

The warming center is limited to individual placements only and is unable to accommodate families at this time.

Due to capacity limitation and commitment to maintaining a safe and orderly environment, shared sleeping arrangements for couples are not available. All residents will be assigned individual accommodation in accordance with shelter guidelines.

Motel Placements

OTA and 211 will place community members in motels when no other overnight Warming Center option is feasible or appropriate.

211 will provide a list to OTA of all motel placements and non-placement calls during afterhours. 211 will make every reasonable effort to enter placements into HMIS prior to 8:30am the following business day for OTA follow-up with placed community members. If HMIS entry cannot be completed by 8:30am the following business day, all pertinent information will be emailed to OTA prior to 8:30am the following business day.

Pets

Limited motel vendors through OTA allow guests with pets.

Transportation

Guests leaving Homeless Solutions Warming Center on weekdays and Saturdays will receive a bus ticket if they do not have a ride or car. Community providers should be mindful of this when distributing bus tickets. Clients who call 211 or OTA when bus options are not available may be offered transportation to a shelter or warming center option via taxi service. Transportation via taxi service is prescheduled by OTA on Sundays and holidays for guests staying at Homeless Solutions Warming Center, when available. Sunday operational hours at the Homeless Solutions Warming Center are extended for reserved guests to assist with no available Sunday public transportation. 211 will contact the local police departments for emergency ride requests on Code Blue declared days/nights if no other options are feasible.

Bus ticket requests and completed bus ticket logs should be sent to Inayah Suliman via email at: isuliman@co.morris.nj.us. Inayah Suliman may be reached at 973-829-8025 or Esther Fageyinbo 973-326-7804 or at efageyinbo@co.morris.nj.us. Please include Lucy D'Anna in emailed correspondence ldanna@co.morris.nj.us.