

Warming shelter to stay open with public staffing

Oshkosh Herald

Day By Day Warming Shelter has temporarily closed its facility and will resume normal operations Jan. 9 after citing significant staffing shortages and guests' use of illegal drugs during their stay at the shelter.

Winnebago County and the city of Oshkosh will ensure the emergency shelter remains open continuously during severe weather expected in the area at least through Dec. 24.

County Executive Jon Doemel issued an emergency declaration Tuesday allowing the shelter to remain open at 449 High Ave.

"I'm thankful for all of the community members who have offered support to provide a warm place for people without a home as we weather this storm," Doemel said "I'm also grateful for our county staff that are dedicating time to work at the shelter, so we can keep our community members safe."

The emergency shelter can house up to 25 adults and is open on a first-come, first-serve basis for anyone 18 years and older. Beginning Saturday evening, the shelter will be open daily from 6 p.m. to 8 a.m.

"This closure will allow our workforce to stabilize and focus on our mission, of providing temporary shelter, individualized services and opportunities for self-sufficiency to empower the most vulnerable adults in our community," shelter board president Gretchen Withers said in a statement. "To shift our culture back into alignment with our mission, we will be using this time to ensure our shelter is free from drugs and paraphernalia and staff will receive additional training and have time to collaborate, and we will work to address appropriate staffing needs going forward."

Withers said Day By Day staff will be collaborating on re-establishing healthy boundaries, revising rules along with identifying appropriate consequences that their guests face when choosing to not follow the established rules.