



Lincoln Chronicle

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COMMUNITY

Lincoln County moves into new, permanent winter homeless shelter in downtown Newport this week

November 30, 2023



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Lincoln County winter shelter manager Chantelle Estess gets ready to let the lineup of homeless people check in to stay the night Wednesday at the county's new shelter on Southwest Seventh Street in downtown Newport.

By **QUINTON SMITH/YachatsNews**

NEWPORT – One month earlier than expected, Lincoln County has moved its first all-weather winter homeless shelter into a 4,000-square foot building one block off U.S. Highway 101 in downtown Newport.

The county launched its first shelter program Oct. 3, splitting time between two churches. But it was able to make the move this week to the former Crossroads NonViolent Education building at 351 S.W. Seventh St.

The Housing Authority of Lincoln County, which has partnered with the county's shelter program, purchased the property in October for \$650,000 and quickly got the facility ready to use.

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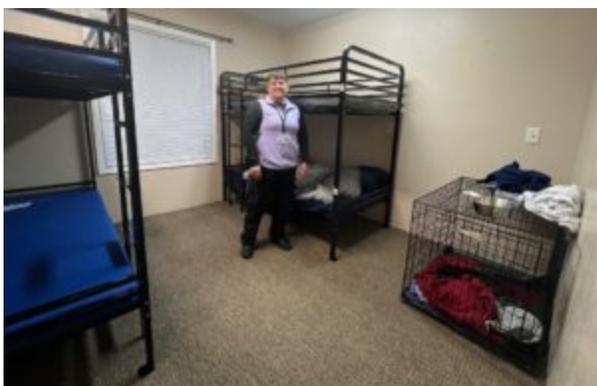
Lincoln County

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Now, instead of a mat on the floor, the shelter's 18-30 nightly guests have beds to sleep in, showers to use, an eating area, and cabinets to store their belongings.

“One man started crying when he saw his own bed,” said shelter manager Chantelle Estess, who has been working nonstop to get the county's new program up and running since her hiring in September. “It was the first bed he's had in years.”



Winter shelter manager Chantelle Estess shows one of the sleeping quarters for men that will be expanded next year during major remodeling to be done during the spring and summer.

There are no walk-in shelters for the homeless in Lincoln County that are open seven days a week. It's also the county's first effort to create and operate a six-month shelter program not pegged to bad weather or relying solely on volunteers to run it.

The 37-bed shelter opens at 6 o'clock each night, seven days a week. A line begins forming outside about 5:30 and staff begins checking in the guests at 6, making sure they've signed an agreement to follow a [two-page list of rules](#). Once inside, they put their belongings in special tagged bags for storage.

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The Lincoln County jail is providing food – sandwiches, salads, fruit and the like – until a cafeteria and potentially donated dinners become available.

Each guest gets a pillow, sheet and sleeping bag for their bed. If the person is returning the next night, Estess said, their bedding is not changed.

Estess said 70 percent of the people seeking shelter overnight are from Lincoln County “from Yachats all the way to Siletz.” Nearly 60 percent of guests are men. Men and woman sleep in separate rooms and there is one room for married couples. Several women who return each night have their own special comforters on their beds.

Dogs are allowed, but must be leashed and kept in crates or cages.

There is one room set aside for seniors with single beds – not bunk beds — closer to the floor.

And that’s what Estess and others say is breaking the stereotype of Lincoln County’s homeless community – they’re older. The oldest client so far was 80, Estess said, and 57 percent are older than 55.

“We have an aging population that are being forced out of housing and cannot find a suitable replacement,” said Karen Rockwell, executive director of the housing authority. “This is not the clientele that you hear horror stories about. This is a group of people that really needs to sleep at night.



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After a muffin, coffee or juice in the morning, the overnighters are out the door by 7 a.m.

County effort

Jacobson

Although homelessness is considered a top issue across Oregon and in Lincoln County, there had been no local coordinated winter shelter plan until county commissioner Kaety Jacobson began pushing the idea last spring. Commissioners then decided to spread one-time federal funds over two years to hire staff and open and operate two shelters – the one now in Newport and another in Lincoln City it hopes to have up and running in January.

It hired Estess full-time to run the program, and a staff of eight on six-month contracts to run the Newport facility. It relies on some volunteers – there are 20 now but more are needed – to help in the early evenings and mornings.

The county is in the process of adding two “navigators” to direct shelter clients and others in the community to other social services.

The Newport shelter also shares space with Agape Respite Center, a new nonprofit open two days a week that has picked up much of the services that Grace Wins Haven used to provide before it folded last spring.

The county committed \$200,000 a year for two years to help operate the shelters and created a new shelter



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coordinator position in its general fund budget at a cost of more than \$200,000 for two years. Its health department has committed another \$125,000 and five of seven cities in the county – Waldport and Toledo declined — contributed \$108,000.

The housing authority is handling the property purchases and equipping the buildings.

The county has backed off an earlier plan to open a tent-type shelter on property it owns on the north edge of Lincoln City. The housing authority is doing due diligence on a building it hopes to purchase soon, Rockwell said. That could mean a shelter would open in January to serve north Lincoln County.

The Newport site will undergo a major remodeling after it closes for the season March 31. That will involve opening up many of the small rooms, create a cafeteria, improve showers and laundry facilities and install a fire sprinkler system.

Winter shelter staffer Gabby Santos, left, conducts a standup meeting Wednesday evening before checking in homeless for the night. Listening are shelter manager Chantelle Estess, fellow staffers Andrea Ibarra, Eric Vaughn, and Emmy Attebury, and volunteer Brandy Ketcher, a nursing student at Oregon Coast Community College.

Huge impact

Jacobson said the county and community owes “a big thank you” to St. Stephens and First Presbyterian churches in Newport for stepping up to offer their



LETTERS FROM READERS

Have you done everything possible to prevent ICE detention facility?

buildings and volunteers for the first two months of the program.

However, having a regular, single complete facility will not only bring consistency to the homeless, but also make it better for staff and volunteers.

“We were physically moving everything – sleeping bags, pads, supplies – every day,” said Jacobson.

“We were constantly putting up and taking down. Not having to do that every day frees up staff and volunteers to focus on the people and helping them in all the other ways they need help.”

Rockwell said having one physical location for the shelter can help bring stability to the whole system so it can move on to the next challenge – coordinating services.

“It’s a big win for the community,” she said.

Estess said the move – although stressful this first week – is critical to the overall success of the program.

“There’s been amazing support from the county, from employees, and from volunteers,” she said.

“Now we can be more structured, offer more services like clinics, work with the medical community, and build the trust we need.

“It’s just a huge move.”

County counsel overstepping her role, giving poor advice to commissioners

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OBITUARIES

Jean Esteve of Waldport

Max E. Glenn of Yachats

Elizabeth R. Groth of Yachats

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CIVIC CALENDAR

FEB 10:30 am - 12:30 pm

9

Yachats Rural Fire Protection District board monthly meeting

FEB 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm

10

Want to help?

- The shelter is especially looking for kitchen volunteers and organizations to help provide hot meals 1-2 days a week. Go to the [county's webpage to look at forms](#) or call Chantele Estess at 541-270-2396;
- The shelter needs wool socks; mittens and gloves; knit hats, jackets and men's and women's underwear. Call to set a time to drop off.

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December 9, 2025

11 Comments

Yachats Public Works & Streets Commission

- FEB 10 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm
Annual Yachats "State of the City" public presentation
- FEB 10 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Lincoln County School District board of directors
- FEB 12 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm
Port of Newport special commission meeting
- FEB 12 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Lincoln Soil and Water Conservation District monthly board meeting
- FEB 15 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
Yachats "open mic" night
- FEB 16 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Newport City Council work session and regular meeting
- FEB 17 10:00 am
Southwest Lincoln Water People's Utility District board
- FEB 17 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Yachats Planning Commission work session and regular monthly meeting

[View Calendar](#)

PUBLIC & LEGAL NOTICES

Public Notice: Lincoln County, Oregon is soliciting proposals to provide environmental services

Lincoln County School District NOTICE OF INTENT TO

Jeanette

December 1, 2023 at 2:00 pm

God bless

Feral Being

December 1, 2023 at 4:00 pm

“that’s what ... is breaking the stereotype of Lincoln County’s homeless community – they’re older. The oldest client so far was 80 ... and 57 percent are older than 55 ... We have an aging population ... being forced out of housing and cannot find a replacement.”

I appreciate this solution to a heartbreaking problem. It helps to keep America from looking like Calcutta, where dead and dying people lie unattended on some streets. We don’t have to become that tragic, do we? Are we? Please, not in America.

I have no problem with my tax dollars supporting well-managed, safe and quiet shelters for the most disadvantaged among us. Merry Christmas and much respect to the churches, workers, volunteers and the secret benefactors who facilitate these opportunities to present America as a nation of compassionate beings.

George

December 2, 2023 at 10:24 am

I don’t think it should close at 7. There is nothing open and where are the homeless people supposed to go when it’s cold outside and nothing is open. Also those mats are pathetic and also I think the county can do better.

azure

December 2, 2023 at 1:11 pm

I agree re: 7 am closing but the article specifically states that beds, not mats, are provided for people to sleep on. Bunk beds for singles, single (non-bunk) beds for seniors. I wonder if the some of the county/city loop bus will eventually stop at the shelter on their last trip?

AWARD Newport High Auditorium

**Lincoln County School District
NOTICE OF INTENT TO
AWARD Waldport High
Auditorium**

**Lincoln County School District
NOTICE OF INTENT TO
AWARD Toledo JR/SR High
Auditorium**

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Vacancy – Depoe Bay City
Council**

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Lauri

December 2, 2023 at 5:08 pm

Agreed. Especially if they are older, let them have some time in a heated warm environment

Michelle

December 2, 2023 at 4:09 pm

It's important to have a shelter but locating it right next to Dance and All That Jazz, which is a local dance studio for children, doesn't seem like proper placement. Our kids deserve to be safe too.

Annoyed

December 3, 2023 at 7:13 pm

What is so unsafe about having them next to a kids jazz studio? These people have mental health issues, and currently are dealing with some of the hardest things they've ever had to deal with being homeless. Those children are the last thing any of them are thinking about hurting, I can promise you that.

Denise Ramirez

December 2, 2023 at 9:36 pm

FYI — C.H.A.N.C.E. Recovery is a day shelter at 158 W Olive St. Next to parole and probation they are open 9:00 to 4:00 and are serving coffee warm breakfast a warm lunch a day room and other services to help people with employment services getting a cell phone ID along with peer delivered services to help an individuals with whatever needs they have.

Sam

December 13, 2023 at 8:43 pm

That is a great resource and I am happy they are willing to help and offer them coffee and breakfast and the possibility of finding a solution or perhaps a job.

Marci Frederic (she/her)

December 4, 2023 at 2:36 am

I'm really disappointed that once again the most minority in the community is not recognized or served in this community.

You mentioned, men, women, elderly and yet not one mention of any part of the LGBTQIA2S+ community especially gender expansive individuals. What room are they supposed to sleep in. Are you going to put these individuals in with men or women or the elderly. What if these individuals are elderly.

I think once again the Cis gender community forgot about my trans and gender expansive community.

So very disappointed in the people that have had a hand in this...

Sam

December 13, 2023 at 8:41 pm

I think it's wonderful we are able to help those people that are homeless, I hope things can turn around for them, it's a shelter not a motel and it's temporary solution.

Comments are closed.



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