



Crisis Cooling Center

Program Outline

Revised:6/7/2024

A Crisis cooling center is a public health service and a lifeline for many during extreme summer heat. These centers are crucial for preventing heat-related illnesses and deaths among vulnerable populations. These include the elderly, children, those with preexisting health conditions, and individuals experiencing homelessness, who are disproportionately affected by extreme heat.

During heat waves, temperatures can soar to dangerously high levels, making it difficult for individuals without access to air conditioning to stay safe. Prolonged exposure to excessive heat can lead to heat exhaustion, heat stroke, dehydration, and other serious health complications. Crisis cooling centers offer a refuge where people can escape the heat, rehydrate, and find temporary relief.

Furthermore, these centers offer a range of essential services. They provide medical attention, hydration stations, cooling devices, and educational materials on how to stay safe in extreme heat. By doing so, crisis cooling centers protect public health and save lives during the most severe summer temperatures by reducing the risk of heat-related health issues.

The Crisis Cooling Center, a temporary facility provided by Take Action Today (TAT) and community partners during extreme heat, has specific limitations. It is not an overnight shelter or homeless shelter and is not designed for continuous 24/7 operation. The Center will only be open for a limited number of hours and a limited number of days and will provide limited services.

The Center is not a daycare for children, the elderly, or others who cannot care for themselves.

For the safety of all guests, no pets are allowed in the Center.

Objective:

To provide a safe, cool, and supportive environment for individuals during extreme heat conditions while offering recovery support services, access to community resources, showers, laundry facilities, and nutritional support.

Opening the Cooling Center

The decision to open or close the Center will be based on weather conditions, particularly heat index and humidity levels. Southern Illinois is known for its high humidity levels, which can exacerbate the impact of extreme heat on individuals.

Heat Index: When the heat index reaches or exceeds 100°F, consideration will be given to opening the cooling center.

The Site Supervisor and Executive Director will decide whether to open in coordination with the Franklin Emergency Management Agency.

Operating Hours

The Center will be open from 10:00 am until 6:00 pm Monday through Friday.

- During periods of extreme Heat (when the heat index remains above 100°F past 6:00 pm), the Center may remain open until 10:00 pm.
- The Center may be open on Saturday and Sunday from time to time when staff/volunteer levels allow it.

Capacity:

Currently, the Center's capacity is limited to 25 guests at a time to help ensure the safety of all guests, volunteers, and staff.

Center features:

- Safe space to cool off
- Hydration station
- Shower
- Laundry
- Some nutritional support
- Access to recovery support services
- Linkages to Care
- Linkage to Community-based resources
- Support groups

When appropriate staff/volunteers and supplies are available, some first aid/medical care may be provided. TAT staff are not medical professionals, but TAT management will work to coordinate with local healthcare providers.

Key Personnel:

- **Site Supervisor:** The Site Supervisor is an experienced TAT staff member responsible for managing day-to-day operations at a specific Recovery Resource Center. The Site Supervisor will coordinate with TAT Directors for support when needed.
- **Cooling Center Supervisor:** The Site Supervisor may identify one staff member or volunteer to serve as the Cooling Center Supervisor and manage the center's activities on any given day.

Best Practices:

1. Introduction and Welcome Desk
 - Greet and register attendees
 - Provide orientation and information about available services
 - Distribute welcome kits (water, cooling towels, masks, hand sanitizer)
2. Cooling and Rest Area
 - Provide a cool, comfortable area with seating
 - Offer hydration stations with free bottled water and electrolyte drinks
 - Provide cooling amenities such as fans and misting stations
3. Recovery Support Services
 - Offer one-on-one recovery coaching services
 - Host group support meetings and workshops
 - Provide information about ongoing recovery programs and services
4. Community Resources Linkages
 - Connect attendees with local community-based resources for housing, employment, healthcare, and more
 - Provide brochures, flyers, and contact information for service providers
 - Assist with filling out forms or applications for assistance
5. Shower and Laundry Facilities
 - Provide access to clean shower facilities with essential toiletries
 - Offer laundry services, including washers, dryers, and detergent
 - Maintain cleanliness and order in these areas
6. Nutritional Support
 - Provide light meals, snacks, and nutritional supplements
 - Accommodate dietary restrictions and preferences
 - Ensure food safety and hygiene
7. Health and Safety Station
 - Have trained medical personnel available for health assessments and emergencies
 - Stock first aid supplies
 - Provide COVID-19 safety supplies like masks and hand sanitizers
8. Feedback and Improvement
 - Collect feedback from attendees to - Conduct surveys and feedback forms to gather information on attendee experience
 - Use feedback to improve services and address any immediate concerns continuously
9. Security and Staff Coordination
 - Ensure adequate staffing, including volunteers, social workers, and security personnel
 - Train staff and volunteers in crisis response, customer service, and basic medical care
 - Conduct regular check-ins and briefings to ensure smooth operations
 - Partner with local organizations and agencies:
 - Coordinate with healthcare providers for on-site medical assistance
 - Work with local shelters, food banks, and social services to expand support
 - Engage with volunteers and community groups for additional manpower and resources



COOLING CENTER GUIDELINES

By signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read and understood the rules and guidelines outlined below and agree to follow them while at the Cooling Center. I also understand that if I violate any of these rules or guidelines, I may be asked to leave the Cooling Center and be restricted from returning.

1. UPON ARRIVING AT THE Cooling CENTER FOR THE FIRST TIME, GUESTS WILL BE EXPECTED TO COMPLETE A GUEST REGISTRATION FORM. AFTER THAT, REGISTERED GUESTS WILL BE EXPECTED TO SIGN IN AND OUT EACH TIME THEY VISIT.
2. NO WEAPONS OF ANY KIND ARE ALLOWED IN THE COOLING CENTER OR ON TAKE ACTION TODAY PROPERTY.
3. NO VIOLENCE OR THREAT OF VIOLENCE WILL BE TOLERATED. THIS INCLUDES PHYSICAL, VERBAL, SEXUAL, OR IMPLIED. ANY VIOLATION OF THIS RULE WILL BE REPORTED.
4. NO CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES (OTHER THAN LEGALLY PRESCRIBED MEDICATION) MAY BE BROUGHT INTO THE COOLING CENTER OR ONTO THE PROPERTY. YOU WILL BE GIVEN THE CHANCE TO DESTROY ANY ILLEGAL CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES BEFORE ENTRY WITHOUT FEAR OR RISK OF CRIMINAL ARREST.
5. SEX OFFENDERS ARE NOT PERMITTED AT THE COOLING CENTER.
6. A PHOTO ID IS REQUIRED BEFORE YOUR FIRST STAY. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A PHOTO ID, YOU WILL BE PERMITTED TO STAY, AND WE WILL ASSIST YOU IN OBTAINING ONE THE FOLLOWING DAY, FREE OF CHARGE.
7. NO GUEST MAY ENTER THE WARMING CENTER IF THEY ARE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL OR NARCOTICS UNLESS THEY CAN BEHAVE AND FUNCTION APPROPRIATELY.
8. THE COOLING CENTER WILL OPEN AT 10 AM AND CLOSE AT 6 PM.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE RULES AND GUIDELINES AND AGREE TO FOLLOW THEM.

GUEST SIGNATURE

DATE

COOLING CENTER STAFF SIGNATURE

DATE



COOLING CENTER
GUEST REGISTRATION FORM



GUEST NAME _____ BIRTHDAY _____

GENDER (circle one) MALE FEMALE NO ANSWER ETHNICITY _____

MARITAL STATUS (circle one) SINGLE MARRIED DIVORCED SEPARATED OTHER _____

HOMETOWN _____ ARE YOU A VETERAN (circle one) YES NO

ANY CURRENT HEALTH PROBLEMS (circle one) YES NO

IF YES, PLEASE EXPLAIN BELOW

DO YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS FOR YOUR SAFETY (circle one) YES NO

IF YES, PLEASE EXPLAIN BELOW.

ARE YOU REQUIRED BY LAW TO REGISTER AS A SEX OFFENDER (circle one) YES NO

ARE YOU THE SUBJECT OF AN ORDER OF PROTECTION OR NO CONTACT ORDER (petitioner or respondent) YES NO IF SO, WHO IS THE OTHER PARTY _____

ARE YOU IN NEED OF ANY SERVICES OFFERED TAKE ACTION TODAY (circle one) YES NO

IF SO, WHAT SERVICES ARE YOU IN NEED OF _____

LIABILITY WAIVER

I understand that Take Action Today makes every effort to ensure my safety and the security of my belongings. However, Take Action Today is not liable for any personal injury or damage to personal property. I take full responsibility for securing my possessions while in the cooling center and when leaving any possessions unattended. I have read this waiver and understand that I am releasing Take Action Today from any liability by signing.

GUEST SIGNATURE

DATE

WARMING CENTER STAFF SIGNATURE

DATE