Notification of Temporary Suspension of Day-Shelter and Overnight Residential Operations

Dear City/County Leadership:

Bethesda Center for the Homeless is notifying you of a significant operational change that will affect the community's homeless-services system. After careful review of our financial position and ability to sustain the current 24-hour shelter model, the Board of Directors and leadership have determined that Bethesda must temporarily suspend day-shelter and overnight residential operations.

Approximately 100 individuals may be affected. Bethesda also plays a critical role in the local homeless-services system: it is the only emergency shelter serving single adult women in Forsyth County. We recognize the disruption this will cause and are notifying you now to support coordinated planning.

Continuing the current model without addressing Bethesda's underlying financial and operational challenges would put the organization's long-term viability at greater risk. We are therefore using this period to stabilize the organization and develop a sustainable model for future services.

As part of this effort, Bethesda is working with an outside consultant to provide objective guidance as we evaluate operations, service delivery and long-term sustainability. A Board member is underwriting the cost of this engagement, allowing Bethesda to access this expertise without drawing on funds needed for ongoing services.

Services That Will Continue

Bethesda will not cease all operations. During the suspension:

- Case management will continue by appointment, including resource navigation and referrals.
- Onsite medical clinic visits will continue, subject to scheduled appointment arrangements.
- Staff will help connect individuals with available community resources and partner organizations.
- A limited operational presence will remain at the Center for essential communications, administrative functions, mail, building operations and safety.
- Leadership will continue working with community, governmental, faith-based and philanthropic partners on a sustainable path forward.

Timing and Coordination

Bethesda is targeting Sunday, October 25, 2026, for the suspension of day-shelter and overnight residential operations. Because the Center operates a 24-hour facility, the transition may occur earlier if staffing, safety or operational conditions require it. We will communicate any change in timing directly to guests, staff, community partners and governmental agencies as promptly as possible.

We ask the City and County to work with Bethesda and community partners to identify available resources and referral options for individuals affected by the transition, and to help coordinate urgent needs during this period.

Request for Stabilization and Restart Funding

Bethesda is asking the City and County to consider emergency stabilization and restart funding to address critical existing obligations and maintain limited essential operations while the organization develops a sustainable model.

Based on Bethesda's FY 2026–2027 operating budget, the prior monthly operating requirement was approximately $76,875. Through position eliminations, reduced service hours, suspension of nonessential

services and other expense controls, Bethesda anticipates reducing its ongoing monthly operating requirement to approximately $36,000 during the suspension.

We estimate that approximately $65,900 is needed to address critical existing obligations, including outstanding accounts payable, immediate facility obligations, and approximately $30,500 in short-term loans from Board members and the Executive Director that were used to sustain operations.

Bethesda is requesting a minimum of approximately $150,000, with a goal of securing up to approximately $250,000. The minimum request would cover critical existing obligations and approximately three months of reduced operating expenses; funding near the upper end would provide up to six months of operating runway for financial stabilization, operational and facility planning, fundraising, and development of a responsible restart model.

These funds would not be used to maintain the former 24-hour shelter model. They would support critical obligations, limited essential services, facility and organizational infrastructure, and the work necessary to determine and implement a financially sustainable model. Bethesda will continue reducing expenses wherever possible and pursuing private donations, foundation support, grant reimbursements and other available funding.

Public stabilization support would provide a bridge to complete this work from a position of greater stability rather than continued crisis. We welcome the opportunity to discuss this request and coordinate next steps.

Sincerely,

Amanda A. Burton, MBA, RN

Executive Director
Bethesda Center for the Homeless