

# Situation Report

<b>Situation Report:</b> 02-25-2022		
<b>Incident Name:</b> February 2022 Winter Weather		
<b>OERS Number:</b> OERS #2022-0416		
<b>EOC:</b> Fully Activated	<b>Unified Commanders:</b> Jonna Papaefthimiou, Portland Bureau of Emergency Management Lee Girard, Department of County Human Services Marc Jolin, Joint Office of Homeless Services Justin Gibbs, Multnomah County Emergency Management	
<b>Date:</b> 2/25/2022	<b>Time:</b> 1935	<a href="#">All Situation Reports for the February Cold Weather Emergency Response will be archived on the County's website.</a>

To submit updates / actions to this report, email the Multnomah County EOC Situation Unit at [eoc.situationunit@multco.us](mailto:eoc.situationunit@multco.us) with the subject line: Update for February 2022 Winter Weather Situation Report.

## Multnomah County and City of Portland

### February 2022 Winter Weather

### Emergency Response

#### Executive Summary

Multnomah County, The Joint Office of Homeless Services and the City of Portland initiated a collaborative response to an extreme cold weather event forecast for the week of February 21-25. Implementing lessons from past Winter Storm and Summer Heat events, partners leveraged the strengths of our community. Together, warming interventions and communications strategies are put in place to minimize the impacts of cold weather and prevent deaths. The response is strategically prioritizing communities with the greatest needs, using race/ethnicity disparity research, community voice and wisdom, and public health best practice.

On February 22, Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury and City of Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler each declared a State of Emergency for their respective jurisdictions as the region braced for severely cold overnight temperatures. Overnight severe weather shelters opened on February 22 at 8:00 p.m. until 10 a.m. the next morning. Low temperature thresholds continued through the week and overnight shelter operations continued on February 23 and 24. As the result of continued frigid temperatures, the City of Portland extended its emergency declaration until February 25.

- [Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury's Emergency Declaration \(February 22 until February 24\)](#)
- [City of Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler's Emergency Declaration \(February 22 until February 24\)](#)

## Response Timeline

*All recorded weather information is from the National Weather Service, Portland Airport (PDX) Weather Station unless otherwise noted.*

### February 21-22, 2022

Rain, and snow at higher elevations, persisted into the evening on February 21 before clearing out and being replaced by a cold front pushing down from the north. Overnight temperatures reached a low of 32 degrees on the morning of February 22, with wind chills dropping to 21 degrees. Shelter activation thresholds were not met, based on overnight temperatures and the lack of any snow or ice accumulation.

Black ice was a concern in the morning, but no widespread problems were reported.

Emergency shelter activation was planned for the evening of February 22 with conditions getting colder and winds strengthening.



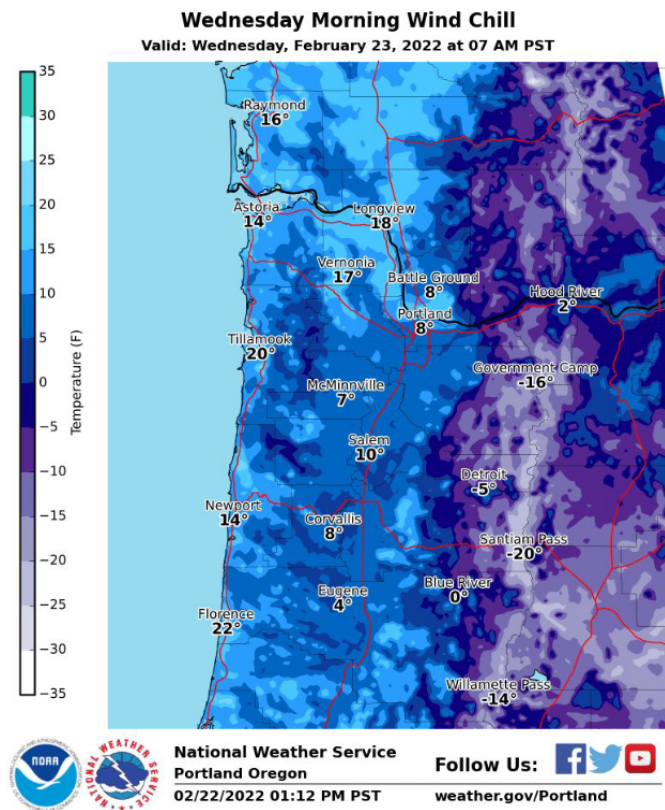
*Graphic 1 - Supplies staged at Market Street Shelter before opening (Motoya Nakamura, Multnomah County)*

## Night of February 22-23, 2022

Five severe weather shelters opened at 8pm, as clear skies dropped temperatures and strong eastern winds were forecast to bring wind chills to single-digit lows at night. **230 guests** sheltered overnight at the five facilities, and shelters remained open until 10am because of the lingering morning cold.

Because of the lack of snow or ice and warming daytime temperatures, shelters did not meet thresholds for 24-hour operation.

Gusting winds were not as strong as forecast but wind chills still reached a low of 15 degrees. The overnight low of 26 degrees was not reached until about 6am the next morning temperatures rebounded to 39 degrees during the day.



Graphic 2 showing forecast wind chill lows across Northern Oregon and Southern Washington. Portland was projected to have a low wind chill of 8 degrees at the time this map was published, but the reported low ended up being 15 degrees.

## Night of February 23-24, 2022

Shelters reopened at 8pm as overnight lows were again predicted to dip into the low to mid 20s. The same five shelters were used and **217 guests** stayed overnight. With cold temperatures projected to again persist in the morning before warming up in the day, it was decided to keep shelters open from 8pm to 10am.

As predicted, lighter winds and returning clouds kept temperatures and wind chills higher than the previous night, and reported temperatures were on the warmer side of the projected ranges. The overnight low was 30 degrees and wind chills bottomed out at 22 degrees. A dusting of snow stuck to the ground at low elevations in the morning, leading to some icy roads and school opening delays, but it melted quickly in most areas as the daytime high reached 41 degrees.

## Night of February 24-25, 2022

Sheltering was extended to a third night as forecasts trended colder again overnight. Shelter census counts did meet thresholds for requiring additional shelter locations, but capacity was expanded at the Sunrise Center to meet the demand in East County and a total of **292 guests** were sheltered overnight. As warmer temperatures moved in on Friday, shelters closed at 10am to conclude this response.

The overnight low was 24 degrees with a windchill low of 18. Temperatures were expected to rise during the day to 48 degrees.

Friday night was expected to drop to a low of 31 degrees, above thresholds for severe weather sheltering. Gusting winds remained in the forecast, leading the Joint Office of Homeless Services to maintain enhanced outreach through Friday night. Rain was expected to return to the area on Saturday and bring significantly warmer nights.

## Closures

With the exception of Portland Parks Bureau Community Centers which were used as shelter sites, no Multnomah County or City of Portland services closed or reduced hours during the event. Information regarding community centers' schedule changes were posted on the [Inclement Weather Policy and Closures](#) page.

Multnomah County Libraries remained open for normal scheduled hours, providing warm spaces during the day for all community members.

TriMet operated on normal schedules and provided fareless rides to and from warming shelters a few hours before opening and a few hours after closing each day.

Light snow accumulations impacted driving conditions throughout the county in the morning of February 24 leading to some accidents and temporary road closures and late openings and closures of some schools.

## Operations Section

The Operations Section coordinated and ensured the support of warming interventions. Warming interventions are designed to provide options for those seeking respite from the severe weather, and include severe winter weather shelters and the distribution of warming resources to those remaining outdoors.

### Shelter Plan

Multnomah County and the City of Portland's Mass Care and Shelter team provided compassionate care for community guests seeking relief from the cold. They operated and supported severe winter weather shelters, which are a type of [Disaster Resource Center \(DRC\)](#) with heat, warming resources, water, food, and support services.

The City of Portland and Multnomah County opened five Severe Weather Shelters for three nights which began at 8:00 pm on Tuesday, February 22. Because of warming temperatures during the day, all five shelters operated overnight only from 8:00 pm to 10:00 am. Information was available at [multco.us/cold](https://multco.us/cold) and [211info.org](https://211info.org).



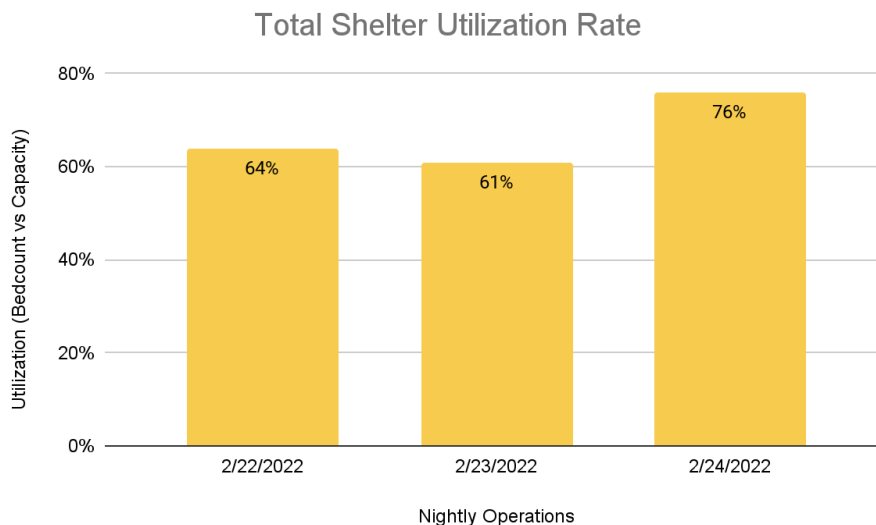
*Graphic 3- Map showing the five severe weather shelter locations*



Severe Weather Shelters	Location	2/22/22 (guests/capacity)	2/23/22 (guests/capacity)	2/24/22 (guests/capacity)
<b>Mount Scott Community Center</b>	<a href="#">5530 SE 72nd Ave</a>	71/71	40/71	52/71
<b>East Portland Community Center</b>	<a href="#">740 SE 106th Ave</a>	32/60	29/65	49/60
<b>Market Street Shelter</b>	<a href="#">120 SE Market St</a>	76/125	70/125	96/125
<b>Salvation Army Moore Street Community Center</b>	<a href="#">5325 N Williams Ave</a>	13/60	34/60	30/60
<b>Sunrise Center</b>	<a href="#">18901 E Burnside St</a>	38/46	44/48	65/65
	<b>Total Nightly Bed Counts:</b>	<b>230/362</b>	<b>217/353</b>	<b>292/381</b>

*Table 1- JOHS severe shelter locations with nightly bed counts and capacities (211).*

#### Utilization Rate of Severe Weather Shelters



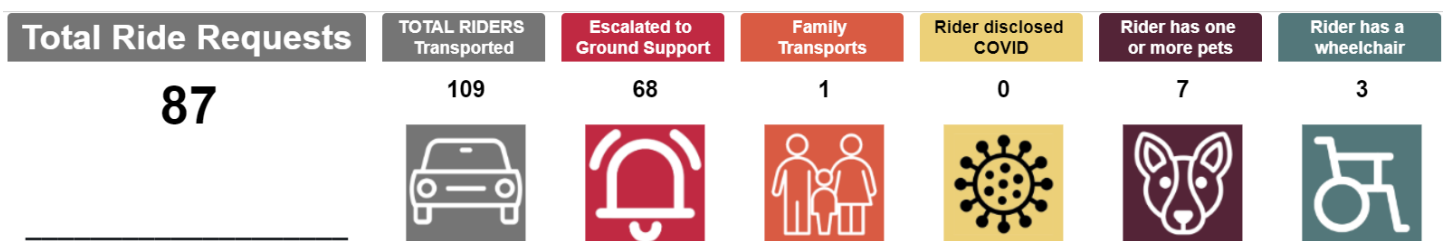
*Graphic 4 Utilization rate of shelter operations (211)*

Throughout the event, the severe weather shelter system operated below the utilization rate necessary to initiate the activation of additional facilities, although Mt Scott Community Center and Sunrise Center did reach capacity on different nights. There were no reports of shelter guests required to be moved to a different shelter because of capacity limitations. County and City shelters have a “no turn away” policy due to the risk to life from severe cold temperatures and do not require identification or any other documentation for entry. All

shelters were ADA accessible and pets were welcomed at all locations.

For the first time, a Guest Ambassador position was created on the Operations team to conduct a walkthrough to evaluate and ensure that severe weather shelters were a welcoming space for guests. This was in addition to walkthroughs conducted by specialists to evaluate shelter safety, environmental health and accessibility. A new safety handbook was also prepared to better standardize emergency response and incident reporting protocols.

As shelters concluded operations on February 25, cold-weather gear was distributed to guests, including tents, sleeping bags and warm clothing. Outreach workers and behavioral health staff were present to assist guests with resources and guidance.



Graphic 5- Shelter transportation requests summary for the February 2022 Winter Weather (PBEM)

In partnership with 211, the City and County again offered free transportation for guests to shelters, using City and County resources. Trimet waived fares for people traveling to and from shelters on public transportation throughout the shelter operations and provided bus tickets for guests when the shelters closed. Volunteers from Portland's Neighborhood Emergency Teams (NETs) partnered with 211 to provide additional remote dispatching assistance.

211 arranged some transport through cabs or rideshares, but the majority were conducted by the Emergency Operations Center's Ground Support Unit, which resides within the Logistics Section. The unit received 68 calls from dispatch and transported 205 guests to the severe weather shelters and as shelters closed, the unit transported some guests to their destinations."

### COVID-19 Safety Protocols

To ensure the safety of guests, staff and volunteers, COVID-19 safety protocols were used in shelters with everyone inside the shelter required to be masked at all times (except when consuming food or drink). Shelters had N95 or KN95 masks for guests and staff available. In addition, shelter staff and volunteers were required to be fully vaccinated.

COVID-19 testing was made available for any guests that presented with symptoms of illness. Guests with positive tests were able to be relocated to the existing Voluntary Isolation Motels (VIMo's) to prevent COVID-19 outbreaks, however no positive tests were reported.

## Outreach

Outreach teams including [Transition Projects](#), [Cascadia](#), [JOIN](#), [Janus Youth Program](#), [Multnomah County Sheriff's Office HOPE team](#) and others performed outreach throughout the incident to encourage unhoused neighbors to seek shelter overnight due to the cold, while also providing cold weather gear.

The Joint Office of Homeless Services (JOHS) and outreach providers divide Multnomah County into 37 zones to ensure all areas of the County receive outreach support. Outreach teams were active every night throughout the response. The teams were also stationed at each shelter location with warm weather gear on Friday night, after the closing of all locations, in case people showed up seeking shelter.

The Joint Office of Homeless Services Supply Center is open on a regular basis from Monday through Friday, and provides winter gear to outreach partners and mutual aid groups to distribute during this response. Severe Weather Outreach began on February 17 and by February 25, these partners distributed:

526	Sleeping Bags	1108	Tarps
1360	Thermal Mylar Sleeping Bags	308	Hoodies
467	Tents	1404	Gloves
1376	Blankets	1428	Hats
2676	Socks	308	Sweatpants
640	Ponchos	1400	Hand Warmers

*Table 2 total number of distributed cold weather gears from February 17-25 (JOHS)*

The [Portland Community Organizations Active in Disaster \(COAD\) program](#) sent a Weather Alert email to COAD members with information around the cold weather and shelter operations on February 21. The English and Spanish warming shelter flyers were included, as well as an invitation to a virtual Cold Weather Community Call held on the morning of Tuesday, February 22. The call was hosted by the COAD coordinator and provided updates on the week's weather and shelter information. The meeting was open to all partners, community organizations, and faith organizations.

## Staffing and [Administration](#)

The Administration Section strives to ensure recruitment and training that creates an inclusive, positive, productive, and healthy work environment across all response operations. Team members remain nimble and address the changing conditions throughout the emergency response. Staffing for the entire response is coordinated through this section as well as human resources and labor relations consultation.

### General Staff and Volunteers

Multnomah County and the City of Portland recruited staff to volunteer for paid temporary reassignment to work at the severe winter weather shelters starting February 22. Online recruitment for shelter staff began on Friday,



February 18. Additional staffing recruitment messages were released each day to target specific locations and roles with missing shifts and to cover new shifts created as the sheltering operation was extended. In this response, staffing volunteers from the general public were not sought, but some volunteers from Neighborhood Emergency Teams and Community Based Organization partners were contacted.

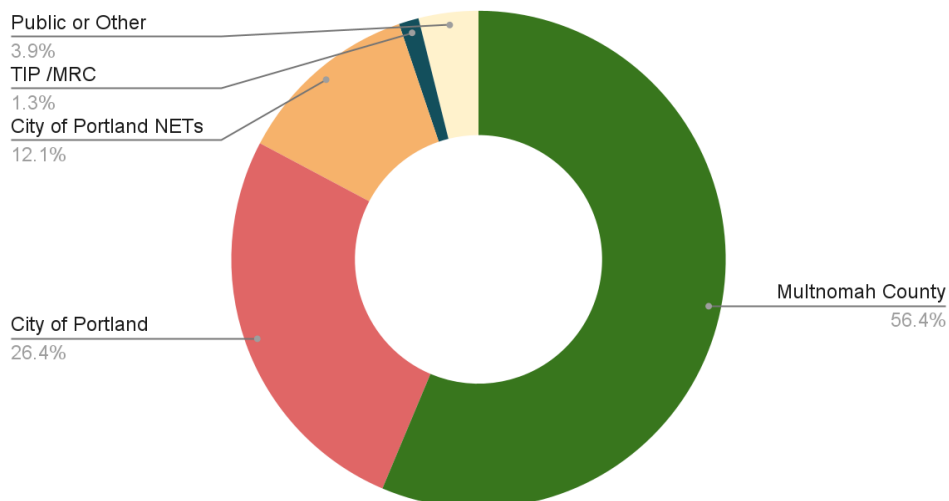
#### Staffing Summary for February 2022 Winter Weather

Organization	Individuals	Total Shifts	Shelter Shifts
Multnomah County Employees	173	242	203
Portland Employees	81	86	44
NET	37	52	18
Trauma Intervention Program/Medical Reserve Corps	4	8	8
Public or Other	12	7	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>280</b>

*Table 3 - Breakdown of individuals assisting the with the response and shifts filled (Admin Section)*

A total of 307 staff and volunteers assisted with the February 2022 Winter Weather event in roles spanning across all parts of response. As noted on the table above, some individuals covered multiple shifts. About 70% of all shifts focused on the three severe shelter locations operated by the City of Portland and Multnomah County. This count does not include shelter staffing that were filled by Transition Projects (Market Street) and Cultivate Initiatives (Sunrise Center). In addition, the numbers do not include logistics section volunteers who provided support with deliveries, resource request fulfillment and staging supplies at shelter sites.

#### Share of Volunteers



Graphic 6 - Staffing and volunteer makeup for the response

**Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)** volunteers and Behavioral Health staff were located at severe weather shelters to provide support for guests and staff. Behavioral Health staff also worked with emergency response teams for this incident and health outreach programs.

**Logistics Drivers and Volunteers** 50 individuals filled more than 85 shifts for the logistics section, many took multiple shifts with a total of 500 hours worked. They assisted with deliveries of supplies, food and materials to support shelter operations. Logistics section volunteers also assisted with demobilization efforts on February 25 as shelters concluded operations.

### **Neighborhood Emergency Response Teams (NETs)**

Portland [Neighborhood Emergency Teams \(NET\)](#) are providing critical assistance to this response in several aspects of the response. In addition to shifts logged as Person in Charge and Shelter General Staff, NETs filled specialized roles as:

- Dispatchers for 211 Shelter Guest Transportation
- Ground Support Guest Transportation Drivers
- Ground Support Ride Along Guest Service Providers
- JOHS Logistics Warehouse Support Team Members

## [Public Information](#) and Joint Information System ([JIS](#))

The Public Information and Joint Information System uses an equity lens to create and disseminate vital information to the public, assuring accessibility and relevance to communities. Public Information Officers (PIOs) current priorities include communicating out [resources](#) to mitigate the impact of this extreme cold weather incident on community members.



Graphic 7 - Spanish-language flier created to advertise the Multnomah County Care For When It's Cold webpage.

A Joint Information System (JIS) was established with the City of Portland, TriMet and 211. The JIS met daily during this response and posted regular updates to the [Care for When It's Cold](#) webpage as well social media accounts. The JIS responded to media requests, shared media protocols and planned social media, including messages in multiple languages. On February 19, outreach workers began distributing a flier that identified the shelter locations, which was available in English and Spanish, and it was posted on the [Care for When It's Cold](#) webpage.

Below is the number of social media posts for the February 2022 Winter Weather response. Please note that this does not include additional messaging created by the City of Portland:

<b>Multnomah County Social Media</b>	<b>Posts in English</b>	<b>Posts in Spanish</b>
Facebook	13	2
Twitter	25	8
Instagram	10	2
<b>Condado de Multnomah Facebook page</b>		4
<b>Joint Office of Homeless Services</b>		
Facebook	2	
Twitter	6	
Instagram	3	

*Table 4 Number of social media posts released during the response*

Below are some resources that the JIS published in their Care for When it's Cold webpage.

- [Pets During Cold Weather](#) (Oregon Humane Society)
- [Cold Weather Tips to Print and Post](#) Includes:
  - [Help for when it's cold - Information for Older Adults](#)
  - [Help for when it's cold - Information for Cold Weather Safety](#)
  - [Help for when it's cold - Information for Pet Owners](#)
- The City and County have multiple social media accounts that are updated regularly in different languages with emergency messaging. Please visit and share:
  - [Multnomah County Emergency Management Facebook](#)
  - [Multnomah County Facebook](#)
  - [Multnomah County Instagram](#)
  - [Multnomah County Twitter](#)
  - [City of Portland Facebook](#)
  - [City of Portland Twitter](#)

## Logistics

The Logistics Section supported the actions of all other emergency response sections and focused on procedures for staging, distributing, allocating, tracking, and deactivating resources, supplies, and materials needed for operational priorities.

### **Resource and Supply Units**

For the current winter weather response, the Logistics Section fulfilled **63** resource requests related to shelter operations, providing additional materials as needs were identified. The section continued to intake and fulfill resource requests related to the COVID-19 pandemic while also supporting this response.

### **Food Unit**

In coordination with contracted providers, the Logistics Section provided **850** breakfasts to the five severe weather shelters throughout the three night sheltering response.

### **Ground Support Unit**

The Ground Support Unit assisted with the distribution of resources to shelter sites during the build-up to operations. For this response, the unit transported two supply trailers and **25** pallets of supplemental supplies to shelters. In addition, the unit provided individual deliveries of paperwork, face coverings and other essential materials as needed.

## 211

[211info](#) connects people with health and social service organizations. At the core of this work is the Community Information Center, supported by 211's Resource Database team. For this response, 211 provided transportation assistance for shelter guests to get transportation to and from shelters. [Severe weather shelter](#) information was prominently featured on the [211info homepage](#). This resource includes county-specific information about severe weather shelters in 29 Oregon counties.

## Stay Informed, Get Help, Get Involved

### Activated Call Centers

Call Center	Phone Number	Email	Hours
<a href="#">211 Call Center</a>	211 or 866-698-6155	<a href="mailto:help@211info.org">help@211info.org</a>	Seven days a week, 24 hours a day.
<a href="#">Behavioral Health Call Center</a>	503-988-4888 Toll-free: 800-716-9769 TTY: 711		Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week

<a href="#">Aging &amp; Disabilities Resource Connection</a>	503-988-3646	<a href="mailto:adrc@multco.us">adrc@multco.us</a>	Information and assistance to older people, people with disabilities, and caregivers, open 24 hours a day, seven days a week
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## More questions?

- Consult [Multnomah County Care for When It's Cold](#).
- Contact [211](#):
  - Call 2-1-1 (open 24/7)
  - Visit [211info](#)
  - Text your zip code to 899211 (standard message and data rates may apply)

## Media

For media inquiries related to the February 2022 Winter Weather Response please **contact Julie Sullivan-Springhetti**, Multnomah County Public Information Media Coordinator at: **503-502-2741**.

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Date; Time Approved	2052 hours
This is the situation report for 02/22/022- 02/25/2022.	