



COVID-19 FAQs

The Acadiana Regional Coalition on Homelessness and Housing (ARCH), with the support of volunteer organizations, has been working to maintain the health and safety of Acadiana citizens experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although this unprecedented event is challenging our normal efforts to end homelessness, we are working diligently to seek the most appropriate and effective solutions. Here are the answers to some of the most frequently asked questions related to homelessness and housing:

What happens if a person experiencing homelessness begins to show symptoms of COVID-19?

The State of Louisiana has set up "Isolation Centers" at several state parks. These Isolation Centers are for those who have been tested for COVID-19, do not have a safe home in which to self-isolate, and whose symptoms do not warrant hospitalization. Individuals may stay at an Isolation Center until they receive a negative test result or until they have recovered and are no longer considered contagious. Case Managers at Isolation Centers will coordinate with local homeless service providers to arrange discharge locations.

How has the COVID-19 health crisis impacted the homeless response system?

Emergency shelter operations have been modified in order to meet social distancing requirements. At some shelters, this means utilizing other buildings within their facilities to properly space out individuals needing shelter. In other instances this means decreasing bed capacity in order to comply. Additionally, housing placements have stalled due to the high level of social contact and public housing office service suspensions.

How many people are in emergency shelters right now?

As of March 30, 2020, there were 236 households in emergency shelters across our region. 21 of these households were families with children. At this time, most shelters are not equipped to receive additional households into shelter. In order to provide safe shelter for individuals not able to enter shelter, a hotel program is being developed for eligible households. This will expand our region's ability to provide shelter in the short-term response to COVID-19. However, this is not a long-term solution.

How can the community help at this time?

ARCH is accepting donations to cover the cost of the hotel program. **Text DONATE to 337-242-7688 to give.**

If you have been an active volunteer with an homeless provider agency, continue to remain in contact with them about volunteer efforts. If you would like to be informed about new opportunities to volunteer, register with United Way of Acadiana (www.unitedwayofacadiana.org/volunteer) to be included in ongoing ways to help our neighbors in need.