

# **Mass Care Sheltering in Florida**

**Michael Whitehead**

**State Mass Care Coordinator**

**October 16, 2012**

Public sheltering during emergency evacuation is planned, resourced and managed by local emergency management in collaboration with local agencies and community partners. Public shelters are designated as either general population or special needs, though some shelters may be designated for both populations. Special Needs Shelters, established by Statute and Rule (SpNS), are staffed and resourced to meet the needs of persons that may need assistance in a shelter due to physical, mental, cognitive or sensory disabilities. Special needs services are utilized to minimize deterioration and maintain health status.

The two types of shelters are necessary as SpNS require significant quantities of specially trained staff, consumable and durable medical supplies and other equipment. Staff must also be scheduled for at least two shifts per day for 24-hour a day coverage. These resources are in very limited supply.

Persons with disabilities, functional or access needs must be able access the same programs, services and information as the general population. In addition, persons with disabilities, functional or access needs must be provided the right of self-determination. If the person chooses to shelter in a general population shelter, they have the right to do so.

For public shelter planning in Florida, typically the most resource intensive events are evacuations for large major hurricanes. The forecast swath (or error cone) of a large hurricane can simultaneously affect multiple regions of the state, and possibly require counties (or regions) outside of the hurricane's forecast swath to host evacuees in local public shelters. Individual counties often activate multiple facilities spread across the jurisdiction to meet this surge in demand for public shelter space. Each of these shelters must be adequately staffed and resourced. These shelters are described as "evacuation" shelters, and are generally opened about 24 to 36 hours before forecast onset of tropical storm force winds, and remain open for about 72 hours after the end of storm conditions.

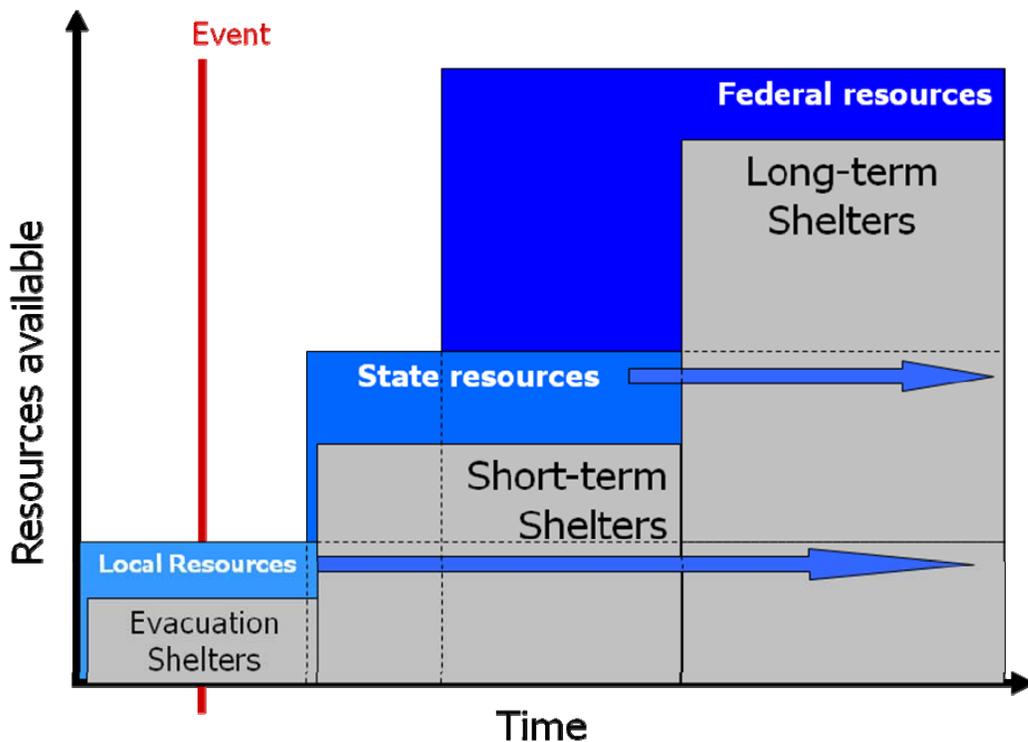
During the evacuation phase of an emergency, county emergency management and their shelter partners must rely on locally available resources. Due to a combination of distance from available resources to local delivery points (causing long lead time for delivery), potential for exposing resources to hazardous

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conditions and damage, and post-landfall priority considerations, state resources are not deployed to individual pre-landfall counties. Instead, state (and possibly federal and interstate mutual aid) resources may be sourced, acquired and staged for expedited deployment to regions and counties with greatest post-landfall need.

When storm conditions have subsided and it's safe to deploy, state resources are surged to the areas of greatest impact. The state resources are supplemental to local and mutual aid resources. The state resources may begin to arrive as early as 24-hours (if not earlier) after exiting of storm conditions. Federal and interstate mutual aid resources may also be available to support the resource surge. By about 72 hours, state and other outside resources are expected to be deployed into all impacted counties where there is a need.

**Figure 1 – Shelter resource availability and shelter type compared to life cycle of an emergency event.**



After evacuation orders are lifted and utilities (electric, water, communications, etc), transportation and emergency services restored, the demand for public shelter space rapidly dwindles. Individuals and families that can return home will do so. Therefore, during the post-evacuation phase of an emergency there are

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fewer public shelter facilities in operation. Subsequently the demand for public shelter resources will also diminish.

About 72 hours to a week after a major emergency or disaster event the population needing public shelter stabilizes into those persons that cannot return home (due to storm damage) and have no family or other housing alternatives. Public evacuation shelters, which have been historically located in K-12 public schools, will be demobilized, and other non-school facilities transitioned into “short-term” (or standard) shelters. Short-term shelters are fewer in number than evacuation shelters with fewer occupants needing assistance to survive. Resources can be consolidated into fewer facilities. Also, given the additional deployment time, state, mutual aid and (in some cases) federal resources can be brought to bear. Figure 1 below shows shelter resource availability and shelter type during the life cycle of a major or catastrophic event.

Utilities and local services are generally restored and community “normalcy” (or “new normal”) is well underway within about two weeks after a major emergency or disaster. The number of persons needing public shelter to survive diminishes to those that may need long-term assistance. Resource needs also continue to diminish as long-term public shelters are used. State and other outside resources will continue to be provided to supplement local capabilities.

*Above information prepared by the Florida Department of Health, Special Needs Shelter Interagency Committee Functional Needs Support Services (FNSS) Subcommittee, August 2012*

Resource requirements vary according to the kind of shelter needed. The table below identifies the kinds of shelters needed and the associated resource requirements. Additional resource considerations, to include staffing, can be found in the [Shelter Guidance Aid, October 2010](#).

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KIND OF SHELTER NEEDED	INTENT / PURPOSE OF THE SHELTER	SPACE CONSIDERATIONS	SANITATION CONSIDERATIONS (PER DAY)	FEEDING AND LOGISTIC SUPPORT CONSIDERATIONS
<b>Shelter In Place</b>	Populations that are directed to remain in their existing/current living accommodations due to an incident or an event.	Home, current living accommodation or present location.	Contingent upon current location.	Contingent upon current location.
<b>Temporary Evacuation Points</b>	A safe staging area utilized for durations typically of several hours for populations that will be or have been displaced by an incident or an event.	May be open – not controlled or defined facility areas. Example: Parks, commercial or public facilities, parking lots.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 toilet per 40 persons</li> <li>• Showers – N/A</li> <li>• Hand wash sink – 1 per - 120</li> <li>• 30 Gallon trash container with lid/plastic liner is recommended per 10 persons.</li> </ul>	Sufficient food supply and logistics support to provide snacks, hydration and sanitation for population (reference typed resource definition tables for the Mobile Kitchen and Field Kitchen Units).
<b>Emergency Evacuation Shelters</b>	A safe congregate care, environmentally protected facility utilized for durations typically not to exceed 72 hours by populations displaced by an incident or event.	20 square feet per person (dormitory - area)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 toilet per 40 persons.</li> <li>• 1 shower per 72 persons.</li> <li>• 1 hand wash sink per 20 persons.</li> <li>• 5lbs of dry waste disposal capability per person.</li> <li>• Laundry capabilities meet demands of 33% of population.</li> <li>• 1.5 Gallons of sewage disposal capability per person.</li> </ul>	Sufficient supply and area to feed population using two shifts (seating) per meal, serving two meals plus snacks / hydration to each person per day.
<b>Standard / Short Term Shelter</b>	A safe congregate care, environmentally protected facility utilized for durations typically not to exceed 2-weeks by populations displaced by an incident or event.	40 square feet per person (dormitory-area)  Additional space will be required for individuals requiring Functional Needs Support Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 toilet per 20 persons.</li> <li>• 1 shower per 48 persons.</li> <li>• 1 hand wash sink per 20 persons.</li> <li>• 5lbs of dry waste disposal capability per person.</li> <li>• Laundry capabilities meet demands of 33% of population.</li> <li>• 1.5 Gallons of sewage disposal capability per person.</li> </ul>	Sufficient supply and area to feed population using two shifts (seating) per meal, serving two meals plus snacks / hydration to each person per day.
<b>Long Term / Mega Shelter (Scope of services)</b>	A safe congregate care, environmentally protected facility utilized for durations typically longer than 2-weeks for populations displaced by an incident or an event.  The focus of this kind of shelter is not on the number of people sheltered but on the need for additional or supplemental services due to the extended period individuals will be sheltered.	60-80 square feet per person as needed (dormitory area); personal space 40 square foot per person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 toilet per 20 persons.</li> <li>• 1 shower per 25 persons.</li> <li>• 1 hand wash sink per 20 persons.</li> <li>• 5lbs of dry waste disposal capability per person.</li> <li>• Laundry capabilities meet demands of 33% of population.</li> <li>• 1.5 Gallons of sewage disposal capability per person.</li> </ul>	Sufficient supply and area to feed population using two shifts (seating) per meal, serving two meals plus snacks / hydration to each person per day.