

# Enhanced Outreach Guidelines, Specifications and Requirements

February 2024

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## 1. Introduction

Enhanced Outreach is a Queensland Government initiative under the Homelessness Program and is to be delivered in accordance with the Homelessness Program Guidelines, Specifications and Requirements.

The support and brokerage is provided by Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) providing assertive outreach, including with the departments Critical Response Team (CRT) via a co-responder model.

These guidelines provide information regarding the aims and purpose of Enhanced Outreach and its operational specification and requirements.

The guidelines outline the purpose, scope, principles, and operational procedures for the use of Enhanced Outreach funds and provide guidance on the use of this additional funding made available under the Homelessness Program.

## 2. About Enhanced Outreach

Enhanced Outreach funding is time-limited funding to 30 June 2026 and intended to increase the capacity of existing SHS to respond to all people experiencing homelessness. The purpose of Enhanced Outreach is to provide assertive outreach with a deliberate and strategic attempt to end homelessness.

This funding is to assist people who are living in unsafe situations such as sleeping rough, sleeping in cars, tents and temporary dwellings and to support them to immediate and appropriate accommodation. The funding is also to support people experiencing chronic homelessness where they are residing (for example; parks, shelters, squats) including identifying and working with people who are couch surfing. This includes First Nations people, people experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence, young people, young families, families, and older people.

This funding is being delivered as part of the expansion of the department's CRTs to locations across Queensland and is funding to support a co-responder model. SHS delivering outreach must work collaboratively with CRTs in the department by providing a dedicated response to support people experiencing homelessness by undertaking assertive outreach using the co-responder approach. This collaborative approach requires SHS to work with the CRT to develop and utilise a Know by Name list. This is **a comprehensive list of households experiencing homelessness, updated in real time and shared with collaborating co-responders.**

Enhanced Outreach can provide immediate short-term temporary accommodation (for example, in hotels and motels) for singles, couples and families experiencing homelessness in Queensland for up to three days. Where this occurs, Enhanced Outreach workers are to provide immediate, pro-active support to engage with SHS funded separately to deliver the Immediate Housing Response (IHR), and/or Case Management. The IHR provider will provide further short-term temporary accommodation and then facilitate transition to safe and secure housing through the private rental market, or the social housing system.

## 3. About After-Hours Outreach

After-hours Outreach is an extension of Enhanced Outreach, and this guideline also applies to After-hours Outreach. In addition, After-hours Outreach Services are funded to deliver a two-worker model, 24 hours per day, seven days per week service, including public holidays.

After-hours Outreach must deliver the same level of support and assistance after hours and be a contact and support in the location/s within which the SHS operates.

This includes:

- delivering proactive Enhanced Outreach after-hours
- being an after-hours contact for the Homeless Hotline and providing outreach to clients being referred through the Homeless Hotline where a person requires support
- supporting people who are accommodated in temporary accommodation without support, such as in hotels and be an after-hours contact for these accommodation providers
- support people who may flow between couch surfing in social housing, boarding houses and rough sleeping, which may include attending locations after-hours where people are known to be couch surfing
- ensuring the smooth transition of individuals supported after hours, to SHS's funded for Enhanced Outreach and the CRT.

Should a client accommodated under the IHR or Regional Discretionary Fund (RDF) require assistance outside of normal working hours, SHS delivering After-hours Outreach may be contacted and will be required to attend the temporary accommodation and provide the necessary support.

From time to time, the CRT may work outside of their normal hours of operation and accompany SHS funded to deliver After-hours Outreach.

## 4. Related guidelines

All SHS must operate in accordance with the Homelessness Programs Guidelines, Specifications and Requirements: [Homelessness Program Guidelines](#).

The Enhanced Outreach Guidelines, Specifications and Requirements are in addition to these guidelines. Should there be any conflict between these two sets of Guidelines, the Enhanced Outreach Guidelines, Specifications and Requirements take precedence.

Additionally, SHS are encouraged to become familiar with the [IHR Guidelines, Specifications and Requirements](#), noting the linkage between Enhanced Outreach and the IHR.

## 5. Program outcomes

Enhanced Outreach is specifically designed to assist in initial engagement and triage of needs with clients experiencing homelessness. It is designed with a focus on rapidly building trusting relationships which will assist in facilitating an end to the client's homelessness.

Once a client has built a trusting relationship with the SHS support worker delivering Enhanced Outreach and they are open to short-term temporary accommodation, a warm referral to a SHS delivering Temporary Supported Accommodation (TSA) or the IHR is to be completed. The SHS funded to deliver the TSA or IHR has overall responsibility for the provision of short-term temporary accommodation, ongoing case management and transition into longer term accommodation.

Enhanced Outreach is also provided to support people experiencing chronic homelessness where they are residing (for example; parks, shelters, squats) including identifying and working with people who are couch surfing (traditional outreach).

The Government, through the Homelessness Program provides funding to SHS to deliver Enhanced Outreach via two components:

- brokerage to purchase short-term temporary accommodation for up to three days, for example; hotel or motel accommodation where the IHR provider is unable to arrange intake, assessment and short-term temporary accommodation on the same day as the referrals is completed.

To assist singles, couples, and families to return to an area where they have a locational need to be, or where they have informal support, such as through family connections.

To provide brokerage in accordance with the [Guidelines for the use of Brokerage Funds in Specialist Homelessness Services](#) while a client is being supported by the Enhanced Outreach service.

- support worker funding enables SHS to employ professional workers to engage clients through assertive outreach, including outreach with the department's CRT to deliver the co-responder model and to record housing outcomes.

## 6. Underpinning approaches to service delivery

In addition to the approaches described in the Homelessness Program Guidelines, it is expected that the delivery of SHS funded under the Enhanced Outreach will be underpinned by the following approaches:

- assertive outreach
- transition to Immediate Short-term Accommodation
- co-responder model
- all other options first, including reasonable travel costs
- no exits to homelessness where possible
- no wrong door
- accommodation with support
- referrals and linkages with the broader housing service system
- capturing outcomes data to inform an understanding of homelessness in Queensland.

### 6.1 Assertive Outreach

SHS funded to deliver Enhanced Outreach must complete assertive outreach with clients who are sleeping rough. They must engage with the clients where they are sleeping rough. This could include and is not limited to, streets, parks, beaches, vacant lots or buildings, bus shelters, or in bushland. Sleeping arrangements can also include in cars or makeshift dwellings.

Standard service responses are not appropriate for all clients; Enhanced Outreach is also designed to assist customers that may be isolated, alienated, unwell, unable or unwilling to attend a service for assistance. Enhanced Outreach should remove all barriers to a client receiving assistance, aiming to establish a trusting relationship where the goal is to end the client's homelessness.

When completing reporting for Enhanced Outreach, clients are only considered as having received assistance under this funding if the engagement has occurred where the service has gone out to support the client where they are, including where they are sleeping rough, or while they are in a hotel for example. This is not a centre-based service, and clients should not have to attend the services location for support.

### Transition to Immediate Short-Term Accommodation

Enhanced Outreach providers must ensure that any person who is in need of immediate short-term accommodation and has no other alternative accommodation or housing options, is provided with this service through the local housing and homelessness system wherever possible. This will in most cases include a direct warm referral to a TSA or IHR provider to provide this accommodation and to take on ongoing case management support for a client.

Where a warm referral is not possible immediately, Enhanced Outreach brokerage funds should be utilised to immediately address the homelessness by providing short-term temporary accommodation for up to three days, provided they have no other options available to them (such as with family, friends or self-funding).

Within three days of entering short-term temporary accommodation, ongoing accommodation and support for these households must transition to SHS delivering services under the IHR program.

If an Enhanced Outreach provider faces any barriers to transitioning a client in hotel accommodation within three days of a warm referral to IHR, the CRT and the relevant Housing Service Centre (HSC) must be notified so that assistance can be provided to the client, and information can be shared with the Contract and Partnership Officer. In these instances, the HSC through the RDF must further extend accommodation or alternative accommodation arrangements made to ensure the client remains accommodated and does not exit into homelessness.

Explicitly, as with the IHR, Enhanced Outreach is not intended to assist households to relocate to Queensland or within Queensland. Where a household has moved to Queensland or a location within Queensland without their own secure accommodation option, brokerage should be utilised to assist the household to return to the original location or an alternative location where they can access informal support such as through family connections.

## 6.2 Co-responder model

SHS funded to deliver Enhanced Outreach must work to deliver a co-response to assist clients sleeping rough, working with the Department and local networks and the broader service system.

Enhanced Outreach providers must work closely with the department's CRT's, meeting with their local CRT's at least once each week and attend various sites together where it has been identified that people experiencing homelessness are sleeping rough.

SHS' providing Enhanced Outreach are also required to work in collaboratively with SHS' funded to deliver the IHR and other local support services. They will share information appropriately to ensure that risks are considered when placing people in motel/hotel accommodation and that this process operates as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Information sharing will also enable a Know by Name list to be established for the local area, which will support the delivery of the most appropriate and sustainable responses to addressing homelessness. Additionally, it is a requirement that SHS funded to deliver Enhanced Outreach to participate in local Housing and Homelessness Networks and participate in their local Place Based Response Teams (PBRT's) and Care Coordination Groups, where these exist in their local areas.

## 6.3 All other options first

Enhanced Outreach brokerage funds must not be used to assist clients into hotel accommodation who can **immediately** access any other reasonable accommodation or housing options.

Singles, couples, and families experiencing homelessness must be assisted through the existing housing and homelessness system wherever possible. Singles, couples, and families who can access safe accommodation and housing **immediately** through other means should be supported to access this accommodation.

Explicitly, as with the IHR, Enhanced Outreach is not intended to assist households to relocate to Queensland or within Queensland. Where a household has moved to Queensland, or a location within Queensland without their own secure accommodation option, brokerage should be utilised to assist the household to return to the original location, or an alternative location where they can access informal support such as through family connections.

## 6.4 No exits to homelessness

The Homelessness Program guidelines state that services are required to: 'where possible, not exit any client into homelessness' and to 'provide support that is proactive, persistent, reliable, practical and comprehensive'.

Services funded under Enhanced Outreach will pursue every strategy possible, within the short time they are working with clients to ensure that singles, couples, and families do not exit short-term temporary accommodation into homelessness, where the service has arranged the accommodation and is awaiting the SHS funded to deliver the IHR to commence working with the client. Once clients have engaged with the provider funded under the IHR, Enhanced Outreach providers are no longer responsible for ensuring there are no exits to homelessness.

Where the same SHS is funded to deliver Enhanced Outreach and/or After-hours Outreach and the IHR, the team managing the IHR is responsible for ensuring there are no exits to homelessness.

## 6.5 No wrong door

If clients are not appropriate for the service – for example; the client is not within the SHS' geographical catchment, the minimum acceptable level of service is a warm referral to an appropriate SHS.

## 6.6 Accommodation with support

When using brokerage to secure short-term temporary accommodation for singles, couples, and families, where the IHR funded service cannot provide a same day response, SHS' will arrange accommodation with consideration to the type of accommodation which services funded under the IHR must deliver. Details are set out in the [IHR Guidelines](#).

As per the Homelessness Program guidelines, case management is a mandatory service approach for all services as it puts identifying and responding to the client's expressed needs at the centre of all aspects of service delivery. The main elements of case management, relevant to Enhanced Outreach are:

- entry assessment with a focus on a comprehensive process to determine households existing housing options and establish the need for assistance under the IHR prior to referral
- co-ordination, including warm referral to the SHS funded to deliver the IHR within the location or other suitable SHS including SHS providing TSA
- follow-up to ensure that engagement has occurred with the SHS who will provide short-term accommodation, ongoing case management and assistance to transition to longer term accommodation options
- collating a Know By Name list, reporting the data for each households' pathway through the system and transition to longer term accommodation options.

Under no circumstances, is a client aged under the age of 16 years to be accommodated in Enhanced Outreach-funded short-term, temporary accommodation. SHS assistance to young people aged under 16 years must be delivered in line with the *Supporting Young People Under 16 Years of Age: Guidelines for Good Practice for Specialist Homelessness Services*.

Households experiencing domestic or family violence (DFV) and in need of short-term accommodation should be referred to DVConnect for assistance in the first instance or to the funded DFV specialist services.

Any SHS accommodating a household experiencing DFV with Enhanced Outreach funding will ensure that specialist DFV services are engaged to ensure safety plans are in place and share this information with the SHS that continues to work with the family under the IHR.

Services are required to proactively seek to engage clients in brief intervention case management until they are appropriately accommodated and clients are not required to formally agree to case management in order to receive assistance, including referrals to the SHS delivering the IHR, or short-term temporary accommodation (for up to a maximum of three days) where assistance under the IHR is not available on the same day as the referral.

It should be noted that depending on the length of time support is required by the client, the brief intervention case management may intensify in response to need.

Where short-term temporary accommodation is provided under Enhanced Outreach and the client disengages, an indirect approach is recommended to ensure the safety of the client, continuity of the relationship with the accommodation provider and successful referral to the IHR provider.

Additionally, where short-term temporary accommodation is provided under Enhanced Outreach, the SHS is responsible for managing the behaviour of clients while in the accommodation, including taking responsibility for managing any damage which may occur. As a result, SHS may wish to implement a behaviour agreement with clients that are accommodated.

## 6.7 Referrals and linkages with the broader housing service system

SHS funded to deliver Enhanced Outreach must ensure appropriate referrals and linkages with the broader housing service system, where required, to ensure appropriate brief intervention case management.

While the largest proportion of this assistance will be provided by services funded to deliver the IHR for clients that are reluctant to engage, and other interventions are required. This is a requirement of the SHS delivering Enhanced Outreach.

SHS should ensure that where appropriate clients are referred into the Care Coordination Group for further assistance under the Coordinated Housing and Homelessness Response.

## 6.8 Customer Contributions

Collecting a financial contribution has many benefits including preparing singles, couples, and families for paying rent in longer term housing and providing a rental payment history.

However, noting that clients supported under Enhanced Outreach are experiencing homelessness and are in crisis, if accommodation is required to be provided by the Enhanced Outreach worker, contributions are not required.

Ongoing short-term accommodation provided by the IHR provider will likely see customers required to contribute up to 25 per cent of gross assessable household income. This will be calculated on a case-by-case basis, with the case management process taken into consideration.

## 7. Underpinning definitions

### Definition of 'single'

A 'single' person is a person who engages with the Enhanced Outreach provided and is sleeping rough on their own and requires to be accommodated alone for the duration of the accommodation.

'Single' status is independent of whether the person presenting is married, in a registered relationship, or in a de-facto relationship.

For the purposes of this initiative, expectant mothers are considered to be presenting as a family.

### Definition of 'couple'

A 'couple' refers to two people seeking to be accommodated together for a portion of or the duration of their accommodation.

'Couple' status is independent of whether the person presenting is married, in a registered relationship or in a de-facto relationship.

A 'couple' cannot be comprised of siblings or a parent/guardian with a dependent.

### Definition of 'family'

A family is defined as a single parent/guardian or couple with at least one dependent or an expectant mother or a family unit – for example; parents with adult children or sibling families.

### Definition of 'homelessness'

For the purposes of Enhanced Outreach and not with respect to the broader Homelessness Program, a person is considered to be experiencing homelessness if they are living in:

- improvised dwellings



- 'sleeping rough,' noting that this includes people sleeping in cars.

## Definition of 'assertive outreach'

A persistent and purposeful approach used with people who do not present to, or have difficulties engaging with housing, homelessness and other related support services.

An enforcement approach is not to be taken, instead, this should be a combination of persistent engagement with client choice.

## Definition of 'Co-response'

Co-response models are programs in which there are partnerships between agencies, where the responders work together/jointly.

In these Enhanced Outreach Program Guidelines, Specifications and Requirements a co-response approach is required between SHS funded to deliver Enhanced Outreach and the department's CRTs.

## 8. Service delivery framework

The Enhanced Outreach service delivery framework comprises two service categories:

- brokerage
- support worker funding, including a component for on-costs including administration.

### 8.1 Brokerage

Brokerage can be used flexibly under Enhanced Outreach and the primary purpose of the brokerage is to fund short-term temporary accommodation for up to three days in most cases or to assist a client or household to secure other accommodation options – Emergency Brokerage.

#### Eligible expenditure

SHS can use this emergency brokerage funding flexibly to secure an immediate short-term temporary accommodation response for singles, couples, and families experiencing homelessness. As such, a critical category of eligible expenditure is the purchase of short-term temporary accommodation, including and not limited to hotel and motel accommodation, and pet boarding.

Emergency brokerage can also be used to pay for damage to short-term temporary accommodation where this cannot be appropriately recouped from the client or is not the responsibility of the client. Client behaviour agreements may assist to minimise damage and SHS are encouraged to consider implementing these.

SHS can also use this emergency brokerage funding for goods and services that are required to enable the client/s to reside in the short-term temporary accommodation.

The following is a non-exclusive list of eligible emergency brokerage expenditure items, where this secures a short-term temporary accommodation response or assists the customer or household when they enter accommodation:

- purchase of essential services that are not offered by the agency or available from a free service including and not limited to:
  - pre-paid phones to support engagement
  - travel costs for households to relocate to an area where there is a locational need to reside
  - travel costs to access alternative, safe, and sustainable housing options, including interstate and overseas
  - health and allied health, including medications

- hygiene
- mental health and alcohol and other drug services
- childcare services for up to three days
- pet boarding for up to three days
- groceries required to ensure the customer/household can eat well when they enter accommodation, for the duration accommodation is provided before transferring to the IHR provider.

## Limitations

Organisations should not expend emergency brokerage funds on short-term temporary accommodation if an IHR provider can meet with and complete an intake assessment with a client or household experiencing homelessness on the same day or on items that can be purchased under other emergency response initiatives, for example through Community Recovery assistance packages or Emergency Relief.

**Emergency brokerage funds cannot be used to purchase temporary structures, including tents and swags, or for any improvised dwelling.**

Emergency brokerage funds will not be directed toward administrative/overhead costs. Some provision for these costs is made through the support worker funding component – refer below.

## Management of clients in temporary accommodation

Where households are provided with a short-term temporary accommodation response and where an IHR provider cannot provide immediate assistance, the SHS funded to deliver Enhanced Outreach must work with households to facilitate their initial stability in the accommodation and their transition to being supported by the IHR or SHS provider funded to deliver case management for a longer period.

The service must seek to provide a flexible and tailored response, in accordance with the purpose of funding and work pro-actively and collaboratively with local CRTs and HSCs.

Duration of stay in short-term temporary accommodation must be managed closely, recognising that hotel or motel accommodation is not an ideal accommodation option for households or the overall responsibility of a service funded to deliver Enhanced Outreach. Services must ensure that a referral to an IHR or other appropriate SHS is made on the day of engagement, or on the first working day following engagement.

## Sustainable services

Organisations have the responsibility for balancing demand for emergency brokerage and the funding allocated to ensure that the organisation's funding allocation is sustainable that households receive appropriate and timely case management support and that emergency brokerage is available across the full term of the funding agreement.

## Tracking and monitoring

Organisations in receipt of Enhanced Outreach funds are required to complete the Enhanced Outreach and After-hours Reporting template for all expenditure.

Each organisation is required to submit the completed Outreach Brokerage Report template or templates to their Contract and Partnership Officer within ten business days after the end of each quarter, to enable the department to have oversight of expenditure and the responses being delivered in each region, with new, and exiting service users identified in the outputs.

Each organisation is also required to submit the Outreach Financial Acquittal (**Attachment 3**) within five business days of the conclusion of the Financial Year, demonstrating the expenditure of all or a portion of the brokerage funds provided.

SHS must continue to capture all client data for clients supported in their reporting to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare for the SHS Collection.

If an Organisation determines it has reached its capacity to continue to deliver services, due to demand for the response, the Organisation should contact both their Contract and Partnership Officer and the CRT so that assistance can be gained in prioritisation.

Organisations are required to maintain a Know by Name list of the households they have identified as requiring assistance and to share this information with CRT. This list will support the organisation to report of a household's pathway through the housing system and record their transition into longer-term accommodation options.

## 8.2 Support worker funding

Support worker funding is provided to enable SHS to increase support worker capacity to undertake assertive outreach and provide brief intervention case management support to clients.

It is also provided, in a limited manner, to enable organisations to administer Enhanced Outreach funding.

### Eligible expenditure

SHS' should primarily use this funding to employ additional support workers or increase the hours of support workers. It is reasonable for these support workers to be engaged in the following work:

- enhanced Outreach, working out in the field, engaging with customers who are sleeping rough and who may be isolated, alienated, unwell, unable or unwilling to attend a service for assistance
- intake and assessment
- connection and referral to SHS funded to deliver the IHR
- arranging short-term temporary accommodation if an IHR provider cannot assist on the same day as the initial engagement and the customer wants/will accept short-term temporary accommodation
- if accommodation is arranged, supporting households to sustain the emergency accommodation until they transition over to be supported by the IHR provider
- maintaining records (for example; Know by Name list) and reporting on outcomes
- engaging with a range of stakeholders, including and not limited to SHS funded to deliver the IHR, other SHS as necessary, the department's CRTs and HSCs, local government and sectoral service providers, and other community support, to source additional client support services and transitional services.

### Limitations

Support worker capacity allocated under Enhanced Outreach should not be responsible for the delivery of services funded under other SHS.