

CIRCULAR



Title
Cold Weather Reminder – 2024-2025 Hypothermia Season
Number
CIR-24-11
Effective Date
November 1, 2024
Expiration Date
May 1, 2025
Related to:
GO-OPS-308.04 (Interacting with Mental Health Consumers) GO-OPS-308.14 (Interactions with Homeless Persons)

The 2024-2025 hypothermia season begins November 1, 2024 and ends March 31, 2025.

Hypothermia alerts will be called when the National Weather Service (NWS) forecast indicates that the actual or forecasted temperature, including wind chill, is 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below. The Department of Human Services (DHS) will call an overnight hypothermia alert when the forecast is 40 degrees Fahrenheit or below and the predicted chance of precipitation is 50 percent or greater.

Members shall be aware of people experiencing homelessness and others suffering from, or at risk of, hypothermia. Members shall look for such factors as being out in the cold without proper clothing or shelter and whether someone's clothing is wet, which can contribute to hypothermia.

- If emergency medical assistance is required, members shall request an ambulance, remain on the scene until arrival, prepare necessary reports, and make required notifications.
- If the person does not require emergency medical assistance, members shall determine if the person is willing to seek shelter and request the Office of Unified Communications (OUC) to contact the Hypothermia Hotline. Members shall inform OUC there is no need for medical assistance and provide the person's description, name, and location. Absent special circumstances, members are not required to remain on the scene.

Members shall transport those who are subject to an FD-12 (Application for Emergency Observation and Diagnosis by a Physician or Psychologist of the Person, Officer or Agent of DC Department of Behavioral Health, or an Officer to Make Arrests) and refuse to move to a warm and safe setting to a mental health facility for emergency evaluation. Witnessing subjects' behavior directly is not required for transport.

Pursuant to [GO-OPS-308.04 \(Interacting with Mental Health Consumers\)](#), members shall assist the Department of Behavioral Health with transporting individuals who have been determined to need a mental health evaluation.

Members encountering residents on a call for service who do not have heat in their residence during this season or during a cold emergency alert, shall notify OUC to contact the DC Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency to report the location where

assistance may be needed.

District commanders shall ensure their members give special attention to areas surrounding non-shelter intervention sites (e.g., hypothermia shelters and warming centers).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pamela A. Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Pamela A. Smith
Chief of Police