

LOCAL NEWS

Hennepin County shelters over capacity as winter weather persists

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MINNEAPOLIS — The winter trifecta hit hard this week with snow, heavy winds and subzero temps.

"I mean we are hearing on the news and we're hearing from folks all over the place that we shouldn't be going outside if we don't need to be," said Emily Bastian, Vice President of Homelessness with Avivo Village.

Conditions no one should have to be in, yet there are still people living outside in Hennepin County that Bastian and her team are trying to reach.

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"Going tent to tent and encampment to encampment to see who is still outside," said Bastian.

Even with all of the county's 12 single adult shelters now at capacity.

"Two nights ago there were 7 individuals who were seeking shelter, who were turned away," explained Bastian.

Leading Hennepin County to ask shelters and living spaces like Avivo Village which only has room to house a hundred in their tiny homes, to increase their capacity limits.

Avivo agreed to add an additional 10 people and as of Thursday evening there were 3 spots left.

"It is some mats on the floor in common areas," said Bastian.

Resources which David Hewitt, Hennepin County's Director of Housing Stability says, county leaders are actively working to provide.

"We have a team 'Homeless to Housing' that's moved 363 people this year literally, directly from the streets or shelters into permanent housing," said Hewitt. "We have brought online two new shelter programs just this month that added an extra 75 beds."

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Lives in the form of numbers which Bastian says have been exacerbated by recent events.

"Covid, George Floyd's murder, civil unrest, and eviction moratorium that was lifted," said Bastian. "We are still at a place where the need outweighs the resources that we have right now." She went on to say, "We know that we need more shelter beds and not just overflow cold weather emergency beds."

If you or someone you know is in need of shelter, [click here](#).

If you would like to donate to Avivo Village, supporting those in need, [click here](#).

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