

Timothy Jeffries, Director

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DES Works With Community Partners to Assist the Homeless with Temporary Shelter

PHOENIX – The Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES), in conjunction with several community partners and agencies, has assisted in coming up with a plan to help hundreds of homeless individuals who have been displaced by the closure of a temporary “overflow” shelter west of downtown Phoenix.

“It is this agency’s privileged opportunity to assist in this noble effort,” said Director Timothy Jeffries. “We are proud to partner with other agencies and charities to demonstrate our genuine care for the 2.2 million Arizonans that we passionately serve.”

Division of Aging and Adult Services Assistant Director Scott Lekan said, “The efforts of all the organizations involved have made a tremendous impact on solving the homeless issue, but we know there is more work to do.”

DES and three other agencies working on this matter will provide funding for St. Vincent DePaul, which will take in those who had previously been staying at Lodestar Day Resource Center at 11th Avenue and Jackson. Participants in the Funders Collaborative, which includes DES, the Arizona Department of Housing, Maricopa County and The Valley of the Sun United Way, will each provide a portion of the necessary means to help St. Vincent DePaul operate an indoor shelter for up to 250 people through February of 2017.

The Men’s Overflow Shelter operated by Central Arizona Shelter Services was deemed uninhabitable and closed in 2015. Last May, Lodestar and St. Vincent DePaul began taking in an average of 439 people a night who had been displaced by the closure. Now, Lodestar plans to phase out its shelter services in October 2016.

Due to efforts by the Funders Collaborative, which resulted in more than \$4.5 million dollars in new funding being directed towards those who are not considered chronically homeless, space at St. Vincent DePaul should be adequate. In addition, the City of Phoenix has also dedicated vouchers for permanent housing.

As a result of these combined efforts, approximately 500 individuals have been placed in housing, and a new model for providing temporary shelter is being developed that will target the most vulnerable, the chronically homeless, and those with disabilities.

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The Arizona Department of Economic Security makes Arizona stronger by helping Arizonans reach their potential through temporary assistance for those in need, and care for the vulnerable.

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