



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***Homeless Leadership Coalition members launch cooling centers for unhoused in response to the local heat wave.***

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With the national weather service issuing an excessive heat watch for Central Oregon, members of the Homeless Leadership Coalition are organizing cooling centers for the unhoused and others in need. Cooling centers will operate during the heat of the day when individuals experiencing homelessness are most at risk of heat illness. These locations will provide shade, water, and connection to services.

Coalition members including Shepherd's House, Jefferson County Faith-Based Network, and churches like First Presbyterian of Bend, Mountain View Fellowship of Redmond and the Madras Free Methodist Church are offering space, staff, and resources to operate indoor cooling centers while service providers and mutual aid groups are organizing to support at area encampments with a focus on supplies to endure the heat.

"For those with no place to shelter during the day, the option of a cooling center will hopefully bring a sense of relief and safety, said Colleen Thomas, Chair of the Homeless Leadership Coalition. "We have been monitoring the weather and working closely with community partners and agencies to come up with a plan to provide safe and cool places for individuals with the impending excessive heat. The opportunity to open these cooling centers is a step in the right direction and we will continue to advocate for year-round and long-term options for our vulnerable neighbors."

According to Diana M Burden, DNP, FNP-BC, Clinic Medical Director for Mosaic Medical's Prineville and Madras Clinics, "Heat related illnesses can be avoided if people have access to proper light weight clothing, adequate water, and access to cool indoor spaces. However, for our houseless populations this is much more challenging. With limited opportunities to be in a cool indoor environment, and in some cases, minimal access to water they are much more likely

to have heat related illnesses. To help our houseless populations, encourage them to seek shelter in a local cooling shelter, provide them with additional fresh water, allow them to sit in shaded areas of local businesses. If individuals are noted to have any of the following symptoms, they should be encouraged (or assisted) to go to the nearest urgent care/emergency room, or, call 911 for assistance.

Heat exhaustion and heat stroke are two of the most concerning heat related illnesses. Symptoms of heat stroke can include hot, dry red skin, fast strong pulse, dizziness, nausea, and confusion. Symptoms of heat exhaustion can include heavy sweating, cold, pale skin, fast weak pulse, muscle cramps, tiredness, and headache. “

“No one person or service provider can do this work alone, ” said Lindsey Stailing, Vice-Chair of Homeless Leadership Coalition, “the HLC thanks partners from across the region for collaborating to provide these lifesaving resources to our unhoused neighbors.”

### **Bend Cooling Centers**

From 12-5pm on Saturday and Sunday, June 26, 27 and July 3, 4 at the First Presbyterian Church, 230 NE 9th Street, Bend, OR. Pets are welcome.

From 12-5pm Monday through Friday, June 28- July 2 at Shepherd’s House, 275 NE 2d Street, Bend, OR. Pets are welcome.

Helpers and Street Kitchen Collective will provide support to those residing at Hunnell Road beginning Saturday.

### **Redmond Cooling Centers**

From 11am-6pm on Sunday, June 27 and from 2-6pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday at NE 17th and Greenwood, Redmond, OR. Organized by Redmond Collective Action.

From 12-5pm Monday through Friday, June 28-July 2nd at Mountain View Fellowship, 1475 Southwest 35th Street, Redmond, OR. Organized by Redmond Service Providers. Transportation available via Dial-a-Ride. Pets are welcome.

### **Madras Cooling Center**

The Jefferson County Cooling Center will operate at the Madras Free Methodist Church, 976 S. Adams, Madras from 12-5pm daily, beginning this Saturday, June 26th through July 4th. Transportation will be available at the corner of 4th and Maple (behind Sonic) at 11:45 am daily.

### **Outreach Services**

Deschutes County Homeless Outreach, Central Oregon’s Veteran’s Outreach, Jericho Road,

Cascades Youth and Family Services Street Outreach and Mosaic Medical will maintain outreach schedules with a focus on providing access to water and other basic needs in response to the extreme heat.

**Want to help?**

Donations of water, electrolytes and sunscreen will be accepted at the cooling center locations during open hours.

Redmond Collective Action is seeking volunteers and donations through this sign up form:

<https://signup.com/go/nJrjXGn>.

Helpers and Street Kitchens Collective are organizing here: <https://signup.com/go/RzoGYDK>

Additional information regarding locations, volunteers, and donation needs will be shared via the Homeless Leadership Coalition and Pandemic-Partners social media channels.

**About Homeless Leadership Coalition:** The Homeless Leadership Coalition (HLC) is a collaboration of community partners in Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson counties and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. Coalition membership includes nonprofit homeless assistance providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, people with lived experience of homelessness, and others who care about the issues facing our unhoused neighbors.

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