



City and County of San Francisco

Shelter Monitoring Committee

MEMORANDUM

TO: Shelter Monitoring Committee
FROM: Committee Staff
DATE: November 14, 2023
RE: **October 2023 Staff SOC Report**

Client Complaints

Six formal complaints were submitted through the SMC in October 2023.

****Note: SMC receives Standard of Care complaints each month that do not end up being submitted in writing, either because they were resolved informally or the client did not provide basic necessary details. Narratives provide an overview of the types of complaints forwarded to each site. Not all sites have had a chance to respond to the complaints. Complaints may have already been investigated to the satisfaction of the site or its contracting agency; however, the Committee must allow for each complainant to review the responses and the complainant determines whether s/he is satisfied. If the complainant is not satisfied, the Committee will investigate the allegations listed in the complaint.*

Central Waterfront Navigation Center (Violence Alleged)

Client 1, Complaint 1

Complaints submitted to SMC: 10/12/2023. Submitted to shelter: 10/12/2023

Response received: NO RESPONSE AS OF 11-13-23

Alleged Standard of Care (SOC) Violations:

- SOC #1 (Treat clients equally, with respect and dignity...)
- SOC #2 (Safety...)
- SOC #31 (staff training)

Allegation #1 (SOCs 1, 2, 31):

During the night, after misinterpreting what he saw, a staffer warned the client. The client told the staffer to leave him alone. The staffer came back, presented him with a write-up, and threatened him, saying, “we can go outside.” In the morning, the same staffer followed him out and attempted to throw him down the stairs at the front entrance.

Allegation #2 (SOCs 1, 2, 31):

Staff need to be better trained and motivated. The client has experienced repeated examples of disrespect and unfair treatment, e.g., he did not get a proper replacement for his lost tent, and his case manager’s bad advice led to lost money when he applied for copies of his vital records. Worse, she told other guests the client is “always talking about them,” which was an invitation to these guests to dislike and/or retaliate against the client. Some have done so.

Allegation # 3 (SOCs 2, 31):

The complainant alleges he tripped and fell on a mat near his bed that the shelter allowed to remain in place against its own rules. He suffered a shoulder injury. Staff did not report this incident.

Client 1, Complaint 2

Complaints submitted to SMC: 10/12/2023. Submitted to shelter: 10/12/2023

Response received: 10/29/2023

Alleged Standard of Care (SOC) Violations:

- SOC #1 (Treat clients equally, with respect and dignity...)
- SOC #8 (ADA)
- SOC #17 (written notice of the status of repairs)

Allegation #1 (SOCs 1, 8, 17):

- Staff at night play basketball, which disturbs the sleep of clients. The disabled shower room is always locked. There is no signage indicating when the facilities will be back in service.
- *The complainant was told the ADA single bathroom and shower is closed at night for safety reasons. There are ADA stalls elsewhere. There was never basketball playing on the facility grounds.*

Allegation # 2 (SOCs 1):

- The complainant alleges he is falsely being accused of being a bully and accused of using the showers without permission. He notified staff but was written up nonetheless.
- *The client can use the showers whenever he requests. He refused to ask certain staff members. Protocol calls for clients to sign up for showers so that staff are aware of who is in there, because the doors can be locked from the inside.*

Client 1, Complaint 3

Complaints submitted to SMC: 10/27/2023. Submitted to shelter: 10/27/2023

Response received: **NO RESPONSE AS OF 11-13-23**

Alleged Standard of Care (SOC) Violations:

- SOC #1 (Treat clients equally, with respect and dignity...)
- SOC #31 (training)

Allegation #1 (SOCs 1, 31):

- Client states that he was treated unfairly, threatened with a write-up on October 26, 2023 for no apparent reason and then DOS'd on Friday morning, October 27, 2023. He alleges that on Thursday, October 26, he was unable to enter the kitchen per instructions from the site manager. He did not do so. She was with two police officers and a new shelter guest who was lying on the floor. The complainant asked the officers to ask him if he would like one of his donuts. The officer told the complainant that the guest did, so the complainant walked around behind the site manager and gave the other guest a donut. Five minutes later the site manager told the complainant, who was eating the remaining donut nearby, that she was going to write him up. This made no sense to him (or to the officers). The next morning he was awakened by the site manager and escorted off the premises. He was never given his possessions. The complainant believes he has not been treated equally or with respect.

Hospitality House

Complaints submitted to SMC: 10/12/2023. Submitted to Shelter 10/16/2023.

Response received: 10/24/2023

Alleged Standard of Care (SOC) Violations:

- SOC #1 (Treat clients equally, with respect and dignity...)
- Standard 10 (dietary modifications to accommodate request from clients based on religious beliefs and practices)
- Standard 17 (Note in writing ... when a maintenance problem will be repaired ...)

Allegation #1 (SOC 1):

- The client had his valuable possessions discarded before the period he was given on intake was up. After just over two weeks' absence, he was told his valuable pack, tools, eyeglasses, clothes, and other valuables had been discarded. He did not get a phone call in advance to let him know this would be happening. The complainant sees this unfair treatment as retaliation for his having brought some concerns to the attention of the shelter while he was there.
- *The resident was released due to excessive absences on 8/25/23. His property was discarded on 9/1/2023. They give all residents seven days to retrieve their property and do not have the capacity to store items any longer. The information is shared during intake with the case manager, and is posted. If they have a number for the individual, they attempt contact prior to releasing their bed. They check with local hospitals and jails. It has not been common practice to contact the client a second time before disposing of their property but will do so in the future.*

Allegation # 2 (SOC 10):

- Staff were aware that the client has a dietary restriction (no pork) but took no action to procure meals to accommodate his needs.
- *Meals on Wheels provides food and generates the menu. Vegetarian options are provided upon request to all residents who have dietary or religious restrictions.*

Allegation # 3 (SOC 17):

- The complainant alleges that both showers must be turned on to get hot water. There is no information posted about this.
- *No issues with the shower temperature had previously been reported by residents or staff and maintenance staff say there are no known issues.*

Allegation # 4 (SOC 1):

- The client says staff routinely spoke to him and others in a rude tone.
- *Management could not confirm or deny the client's experience. With more information on who the client is referring to, if not all staff, they could respond more completely. Hospitality Houses take pride in offering good customer service, and being rude to any resident is not tolerated. The client received one verbal warning for being aggressive towards staff, but no further incidents were ever reported.*

A Woman's Place

Complaint #1

Complaints submitted to SMC: 10/18/2023. Submitted to Shelter: 10/23/2023

Response received: 10/27/2023

Alleged Standard of Care (SOC) Violations:

- SOC 1 (Treat clients equally, with respect and dignity...)

- SOC 13 (...facility available to shelter clients for sleeping at least 8 hours per night.)
- SOC 25 (Require all staff to wear a badge...)
- SOC 31 (...training regarding homelessness ... people with ... disabilities, women, and trauma victims...)

Allegation #1 (SOCs 1, 13)

- The client alleges that a client in a neighboring bunk continuously harassed her and those around her, making noises, even during quiet hours. She did not use headphones to listen to music and movies. She regularly ate, drank, opened and closed her locker/drawer, and intentionally maximized the volume and frequency of her bodily noises. This guest also intentionally and indecently exposed herself. Despite being made aware of this repeated behavior by the complainant and other guests, and witnessing it themselves, staff failed to take appropriate action.
- *Staff verified the complainant was afraid bodily fluids had been put on her bed. They helped her get new bedding to make her feel more comfortable. The other client was written up for indecent exposure and the complainant was promised follow up by 10/19/2023. Staff reported that the complainant called the guest she had issues with “stinky” and worse names. This guest denied she was doing anything. The complainant said, “you need to keep the fan on you, you are a dirty b---.” Staff tried to de-escalate but the complainant argued, yelled, and was disrespectful. She was given verbal warnings. The other guest did not react to the insults. The complainant admitted she had been yelling and using offensive language towards staff. Management was unable to follow up because the complainant exited herself voluntarily from the program on the morning of 10/18/23.*

Allegation #2 (SOC 1, 25, 31):

- After several days of suffering (see Allegation #1), and being ignored, the complainant asked for grievance forms. Staff were asleep and became visibly upset at being awakened. They appeared to be under the influence and would not tell the complainant their names. They told their coworkers she was causing trouble. Staff focused on the client’s having finally spoken up to the perpetrator of the harassment, rather than the harassment itself. They came to her together in the morning to scold her, acting like she was to blame. She felt intimidated. She says she is a cooperative, easygoing person who abides by the rules. She did not do anything wrong, yet ended up being treated as if she was the troublemaker. Staff joined together to make her out to be “disruptive” for requesting that her human rights and dignity be respected.
- *The shelter states staff are trained monthly using the Shelter Training Guide, to include a trauma-informed approach when de-escalating guests, speaking with the guests involved separately from each other and common space for privacy and dignity, and resolving issues without the use of intimidation. Staff are trained to de-escalate the person who is presenting escalated behavior. The alleged harasser was not escalated. The complainant was. Nevertheless, she was provided a Guest Input Form. The Grievance Process is posted and complaints are addressed promptly. On the morning of 10/16/23 site directors spoke with the complainant, and at the time she decided to file an internal complaint instead of an official grievance. Being under the influence of substances at work is grounds for disciplinary action. All staff are aware of this. Finally, new nametags have been provided to staff and they will wear these moving forward.*

Monarch

Client #1

Complaint submitted to SMC: 10/14/2023. Submitted to shelter: 10/20/2023.

Response received: NO REPSONSE AS OF 11-13-23

Alleged Standard of Care (SOC) Violations:

- SOC 1 (Treat clients equally, with respect and dignity...)
- SOC 2 (Safety)
- SOC 8 (... services go to those shelter clients most in need of case management...)
- SOC 11 (Health Code prohibits smoking in homeless shelters)
- SOC 25 (Require all staff to wear a badge ...)
- SOC 28 (...access to free laundry services...)

Allegation #1 (SOCs 1, 2):

- On 9/29/2023, a male staffer walked into the complainant's room alone and unannounced. The excuse was that he thought he was entering the office. This same person jokes about "beautiful women outside." The complainant went to management, but it was not taken seriously.

Allegation #2 (SOCs 1, 8):

- Client states her case manager is unprofessional and ineffective. Her complaints to management have not been responded to. He was unaware of key elements of her history. He lost his phone. He missed appointments. Her previous counselor failed to show up for set appointments on three separate occasions. No one bothered to notify her. She herself always shows up on time. It appears she is essentially on her own trying to find housing.

Allegation #3 (SOC 11):

- The client complained repeatedly to staff about people smoking in the building. There has already been a fire in one of the rooms. On 10/13/2023, a supervisor nonchalantly remarked that someone was smoking weed. Fire safety does not appear to be a serious concern.

Allegation #4 (SOC 11):

- On 10/12/2023 the fire alarm in the building went off. It turned out to be just a drill. There was no prior notice given. When brought to management's attention it was suggested that either the hotel staff set it up or it was random.

Allegation #5 (SOC 25):

- Some of the male staff members wear their badges clipped below their waste. It is hard to see their names. The complainant mentioned this to a supervisor in early October when she complained about a staff member ignoring her complaint about someone smoking. She had to identify him by his description rather than by name.

Allegation #6 (SOC 28):

- The complainant turned in sheets, blankets and towels for laundry and in return received nothing, not even paper towels. She ended up having to dry her hands on her clothing.

Allegation #7 (SOCs 1, 2):

- Guests were expected to leave the site at 8am on 10/18/2023 for pest control. The complainant was not given adequate advance notice. She has health Issues and needs to make arrangements to avoid aggravating these. She was unable to do so. Standing outside ended up causing pain in her back. In fact, she ended up having to seek medical attention. This illustrates a continued lack of respect for the residents and failure to communicate. That same night she was forced to

call the police as another resident blared music full force outside her window late at night. After she called the police at 3am, she went to the lobby and was told by staff she was not allowed to wait there for them. They told her to wait outside—at 3am in the Tenderloin. Staff do not respect guests or evince concern for their safety. Staff appear to be retaliating against her and contrive reasons to write her up. She feels harassed, bullied and utterly disrespected. It seems clear management wants to force her out. Another example of this took place on 10/19/2023 when the site manager came to her room unannounced with the City Building Inspector and several other people. (This re-inspection again found mouse feces in her bed.)

October 2023 Client Complaints by Standard

Standard of Care	Number of complaints alleging violations of this Standard
Standard 1: Treat all clients equally, with respect and dignity...	12
Standard 2: Provide shelter services in an environment that is safe ...	5
Standard 8: Ensure case management services go to those most in need	2
Standard 10: Make dietary modifications...	2
Standard 11: Health Code prohibits smoking in homeless shelters ...	2
Standard 13: ...sleeping at least 8 hours per night...	1
Standard 17: Note ...when a maintenance problem will be repaired ...	3
Standard 25: Badges...	2
Standard 28: Free laundry services with hot water and dryer...	1
Standard 31: Training	5

Please note that each complaint can include alleged violations of more than one SOC.

Total Client Complaints FY 2023-2024*

Site	Site Capacity*	7/23	8/23	9/23	10/23	11/23	12/23	1/24	2/24	3/24	4/24	5/24	Total (FY23-24)	Red indicates late response
	*COVID capacity													
711 Post/Ansonia	250 beds	0	0	0	0								0	
Bayshore Nav	128 beds	0	0	1	0								1	
Bayview Nav	203 beds	0	0	1	0								1	
Buena Vista Horace Mann	69 mats	0	0	0	0								0	
Central Waterfront Nav	44 beds	0	1	0	2/3								4	2
Division Circle Nav	186 beds	0	1	3	0								4	
Ellis Semi-Congregate	123 beds	1	0	0	0								1	
Hamilton Family	26 families	0	0	0	0								0	
Harbor House Family	30 families	0	0	0	0								0	
Hospitality House	22 beds	0	0	0	1								1	
Lark Inn	35 beds	0	0	0	0								0	
MSC South Shelter	218 beds	0	0	0	0								0	

Monarch	92 beds	0	0	2	1								3	1
Next Door	248 beds	1	0	0	0								1	
Providence Family	51 beds	0	0	0	0								0	
Sanctuary	136 beds	0	0	0	0								0	
A Woman's Place	25 beds	1	0	0	1								2	
Total	Single adult: 1688 beds/mats	3	2	7	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	3
	Family: 83 families and 120 beds/mats													

*Late responses are in red

Staff Update and Committee Membership

Membership (Admin. Code Sec. 30.305)

There are currently two unfilled seats on the Shelter Monitoring Committee:

Seat 1 - Must be homeless or formerly homeless who is living or has lived with their homeless child under the age of 18. (These requirements are being revised in accord with the changes proposed by the SMC in 2022.)

Seat 5 - Shall be held by a person nominated by one or more community agencies that provide behavioral health, housing placement, or other services to homeless people.

If you or anyone you would be willing to recommend is interested in applying for a Seat on the Committee, please contact staff at 628-652-7706 or email shelter.monitoring@sfgov.org for more information.

FY2023-2024 Upcoming Meeting Calendar

- Jan 17
- Feb 21
- Mar 20
- Apr 17
- May 15
- Jun 19