Cobb County
Fire & Emergency Services

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Memorandum

DATE: November 18, 2026

TO: Fire Marshal's Office (FMO), Building Owners and Tenants

SUBJECT: Temporary Warming Shelters

This document provides the minimum guidelines for facilities such as churches or community centers that allow people in the facilities to stay warm during cold weather. The FMO does not establish a temperature threshold for when a facility should open, however, a facility must follow the minimum guidelines to operate a warming shelter.

All temporary warming shelters must follow the minimum guidelines identified below:

- The facility must be protected with a sprinkler system & fire alarm system. Both systems require a current annual inspection free of critical deficiencies.
- The Fire Department must be notified when the facility will be open for a temporary warming shelter. Send notifications to fmoinspections@cobbcounty.org
- All exits must be unlocked and be free and clear of any obstructions at all times.
- A periodic fire watch must be conducted while the facility is utilized as a temporary warming shelter. Personnel conducting the fire watch must have a means such as a cell phone to contact the fire department and notifying occupants if an emergency should occur. A fire watch log must be maintained during the fire watch. The log must identify the person conducting the watch and the date and time.
- Temporary cooking appliances will not be permitted in warming shelters. Cooking is only allowed where the cooking appliance is protected with a commercial type hood and a fire suppression system.
- Space heaters, candles and smoking shall not be permitted in warming shelters.

11-18-26