

**Memorandum of Understanding  
Use of Facilities as a Comfort Centre during an Emergency**

**Between**

**[Name of Facility]  
Herein referred to as the "Facility Owner"**

**And**

**Lunenburg County Regional Emergency Management Organization  
Herein referred to as "Lunenburg County REMO"**

The Facility Owner desires to enter into an agreement with Lunenburg County REMO to provide its facility as a Comfort Centre during a loss of infrastructure caused by severe weather, an emergency event, or a declared State of Local Emergency.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) does not limit the xxxx {Fire Hall or Community Centre or Church Group} from activating their facility as a Comfort Centre on their own initiative. If such an activation takes place, the Facility Owner agrees to inform Lunenburg County REMO of the Comfort Centre activation.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Comfort Centre** is a facility that is used for residents who are Sheltering-In-Place and remaining in their homes during an emergency but do not have full services such as electricity, heat, and water. Comfort Centres are intended to provide: a place to go to get warm/cool; light refreshments; charge electronic devices; provide updates; community gathering point; and washroom facilities. To operate as a Comfort Centre, the facility must have a generator.

Comfort Centres do not provide overnight accommodations and will not accept evacuees. If, during the daytime operations, the Comfort Centre volunteers identify a requirement for overnight shelter, such requests shall be forwarded to the Lunenburg County Regional Emergency Management Organization, at which time a decision will be made to provide overnight shelter (see Emergency Shelters definition).

**Emergency Shelter** is a facility opened at the request of the Lunenburg County Regional Emergency Management Organization in a large-scale emergency and is operated by the Canadian Red Cross, under the direction of Department of Community Services. An Emergency Shelter includes providing personal services, accommodation and can include psycho-social services. To operate as an emergency shelter, the facility must have: a generator; running water available during power outages; kitchen facility; showers; and a large space for cots to be set up.

**AGREEMENT:**

1. The parties agree when this facility is opened as a Comfort Centre, the facility’s volunteers are responsible for the care and upkeep of the facility. The attached Guidelines provide guidance as to the offerings of a Comfort Centre.
2. Following the international standard for emergency preparedness, it is recommended residents prepare personal preparedness kits for their family and pets to Shelter in Place for up to 72 hours. It is further recommended Comfort Centres open after 72 hours have passed. In extenuating circumstances, consideration may be made to open a Comfort Centre prior to 72 hours.
3. The parties further agree this facility will not be used as an overnight Emergency Shelter. If an overnight Emergency Shelter is required, the request will be made to the Lunenburg County REMO for consultation with NS EMO, Department of Community Services, and the Canadian Red Cross.
4. Lunenburg County REMO shall advertise the location of Comfort Centres for use by any resident or persons in need without regard to their place of residence. Advertising can only be completed once opening time and closing time are provided to Lunenburg REMO.
5. Any facility on a well shall meet safe drinking water guidelines at the time of opening to the public. To ensure safe water quality, the Facility Owner shall submit test samples of its water supply annually to a health authority for clearance as a safe source of potable water.
6. Any facility offering food shall be made in a commercial kitchen using safe food handling practices, or only offer pre-packaged food.
7. Any facility dependent on a septic system shall ensure the system is fully operational, able to meet the capacity needs of the facility for extended periods.

**WITNESS WHEREOF:** This Memorandum of Understanding executed by Lunenburg County REMO and Facility Owner, made this:

\_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lunenburg County REMO  
Representative:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Facility Owner:  
Representative:

## COMFORT CENTRE FACILITY GUIDELINES

The priority is to ensure the safety and comfort of people using the Comfort Centre. Steps to become an approved Comfort Centre and be posted on the REMO website for residents:

- A facility expresses interest to the Lunenburg County REMO.
- A Facility Profile, including three contacts, is completed (reviewed annually).
- A Memorandum of Understanding is signed by the Facility Owner and REMO.
- The Comfort Centre determines its opening and closing times and relays the information to REMO by calling (902) 930-1085 or emailing [info@emergencymeasures.ca](mailto:info@emergencymeasures.ca) for advertising to residents and sharing with media.

The following criteria for comfort centres locations should be considered.

- Following the international standard for emergency preparedness, it is recommended residents prepare personal preparedness kits for their family and pets to Shelter in Place for up to 72 hours. It is further recommended Comfort Centres open after 72 hours have passed. In extenuating circumstances, consideration may be made to open a Comfort Centre prior to 72 hours.
- There is a generator on site for alternate power.
- Physical location is safe and is in a central location, with adequate parking, away from potential hazards.
- The Centre is not opened when RCMP or Transportation Authority is requesting residents stay off the roads.
- Building and grounds are barrier-free and wheelchair accessible.
- Any facility on a well shall meet safe drinking water guidelines at the time of opening to the public. To ensure safe water quality, the Facility Owner shall submit test samples of its water supply annually to a health authority for clearance as a safe source of potable water.
- Food, if any is provided, is made in a commercial kitchen using safe food handling practices or offer only pre-packaged food.
- The building has heating and where possible, air conditioning.
- There are adequate power outlets to allow visitors to charge devices.
- A first aid kit and an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) are on site.
- There is enough available seating for the number of expected visitors, as well as facility personnel.
- There is adequate space outside the property in the event of telecommunication outages for a portable communications hub (provided by the Province, if available). Requests to be made to REMO if required.
- Adequate staff/volunteers are available for at least the first 24 hours.
- The Comfort Centre determines its opening and closing times and relays the information to REMO by calling (902) 930-1085 or emailing [info@emergencymeasures.ca](mailto:info@emergencymeasures.ca) for advertising to residents and sharing with media.

## Comfort Centre Facility Profile

General Information		
<b>Name of Facility</b>		<b>Civic Address of Facility</b>
<b>Municipality</b>		<b>Mailing Address of Facility</b>
<b>Contact Person 1</b>	<b>Daytime Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
<b>Contact Person 2</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
<b>Contact Person 3</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
<b>After Hours Procedure to Open Facility</b>		
<b>Type of Facility:</b>		<b>Capacity of Facility</b>
Comfort Centre <i>(no overnight accommodations)</i> Emergency Shelter		Comfort Centre Emergency Shelter
<b>Services that could be offered at a Comfort Centre:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> A place to get warm/cool <input type="checkbox"/> Charge electronic devices <input type="checkbox"/> Washroom facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Share information/updates <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> Light refreshments <input type="checkbox"/> Tea/coffee <input type="checkbox"/> Potable or Bottled Water <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-packaged food <input type="checkbox"/> Prepared food		
<b>Location of Emergency First Aid Kit?</b>		<b>Location of Automated External Defibrillator (AED)?</b>

Physical Information			
<b>Wheelchair Accessible</b>		<b>Washrooms Accessible</b>	<b>Elevators, chair lift, etc.?</b>
Yes	No	Yes	No
<b>Number of Washrooms?</b>		<b>Number of Showers?</b>	
Male _____	Female _____	Unisex _____	Male _____ Female _____ Unisex _____
<b>Physical Dimensions, Approx. Square Footage</b>		<b>Is there a room for comfort of animals (pets)?</b>	
		Yes	No
<b>Water Source</b>	<b>If Well</b>		<b>Date Well Last Tested</b>
Municipal	Well (GPM) _____	Potable	Non-Potable
<b>Wastewater</b>		<b>Is the facility alarmed?</b>	<b>Is there an Emergency Evacuation Plan?</b>
Municipal Sewer	Septic		Yes
			No

Kitchen Facilities								
Number of Fridges?		Number of Freezers?		Number of Stoves?		Number of BBQs?		
Gas	Electric	Gas	Electric	Gas	Electric	Gas	Electric	
# of Tables			# of Chairs			Number of Sinks?		
Overall Kitchen Rating					Date of Health Inspection?			
Less than Residential		Residential		More than Residential				
Other Information Regarding the Kitchen								

Electrical					
Type/size of electrical panel (amp)			Number of 110V outlets		Circuit Breakers or Fuses?
200	400	600			Yes      No
Generator	Type			Generator Testing	
Yes	Fixed	Manual Transfer Switch		Frequency:	
No	Portable	Automatic Transfer Switch		Last Tested:	
Capacity				Make, Model, Size:	
Full Building		Limited			
List the areas served including elevators, and lifts, rooms, etc.					

Miscellaneous					
Primary Heating Source	Electric	Propane	Natural Gas	Oil	Other
Times the Comfort Centre may be open if required during a long term power outage			Any Hazardous Materials stored onsite (propane, glycol, etc.). If yes, explain.		
Are there any volunteers available and ready to assist should the Comfort Centre be required on short notice?			How do the volunteers get mobilized for the Comfort Centre?		
Yes		No			
Date Completed			Completed by (please print)		
Notes and special features or anything else related to the facility.					

## Comfort Centre Response Plan Activation Checklist

### Before opening:

- Advise REMO the Centre's opening and closing times by calling (902) 930-1085 or emailing [info@emergencymeasures.ca](mailto:info@emergencymeasures.ca) so info can be shared with media and residents.
- Volunteers to report to the location at least one hour before it is scheduled to open.
- Turn on the heat/air conditioning and other necessary equipment.
- Set up chairs and post signage, if required.
- Prepare any refreshments (tea, coffee, etc.) that will be offered.
- Check the washrooms to ensure they are clean and have an adequate supply of soap, toilet paper, and paper towels.

### After opening:

- Advise the Regional Emergency Management Organization that the centre is open by calling (902) 930-1085 or emailing [info@emergencymeasures.ca](mailto:info@emergencymeasures.ca).
- Re-stock supplies as required.
- Post closing times in a visible location for residents.
- Support the Comfort Centre Manager in providing reports to REMO.
- Advise Manager if you need to leave so your position can be filled.
- Advise the Manager of any security concerns.

### Daily closing:

- Advise visitors that the centre will be closing at least 15 minutes in advance.
- Once the doors are closed and locked, check the facilities, clean them and replenish supplies as required.
- Ensure all equipment has been turned off or unplugged and that the heat/air conditioning is set to the appropriate level for overnight.
- If possible, leave together and be mindful of personal safety when returning to your vehicle or home.

### Deactivation:

- The Manager will lead the deactivation process, supported by volunteers.
- Check the facilities, clean and replenish supplies as required.
- Clean up as required and place garbage, compost, and recycling in the appropriate places.
- Ensure all equipment has been turned off or unplugged and that the heat/air conditioning is re-set to the appropriate level.
- The Manager will host a debrief and all volunteers should participate in an after-action report.
- Tell your Manager if you need Critical Incident Stress Management.

### ACTIVATION TRIGGERS

Following the international standard for emergency preparedness, it is recommended residents prepare personal preparedness kits for their family and pets to Shelter in Place for up to 72 hours. It is further recommended Comfort Centres open after 72 hours have passed. In extenuating circumstances, consideration may be made to open a Comfort Centre prior to 72 hours.