



Shelter Monitoring Committee

MEMORANDUM

TO: Shelter Monitoring Committee
FROM: Committee Staff
DATE: September 13, 2025
RE: July 2025 Staff SOC Report

Client Complaints

Nine formal complaints were submitted through the SMC to City shelters in July 2025; 11 in August.

****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 each complainant to review the response, 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.*

Taimon Booten (01)

Client 1

Submitted to SMC: 6/27/25 Sent to shelter: 7/1/25 SMC received response: 7/2/25

Standards of Care (SOC) Violated: 1, 2, 13

Allegation #1 (SOCs 1, 2)

- The complainant asserts she was bullied by another guest. The client complained to staff, but they ignored her concerns. Some staff have shown favor to the clients that have been bullying her, discriminating against her. Some laugh at her. Sometimes there are conversations with staff in English so the client will not understand. The client brought a bilingual Taimon Booten client as a witness to visit the SMC. She attested to having observed the bullying. She told us that when she spoke up for the complainant, she was accused of bullying the person she confronted.
- *The shelter responded that clients may feel nothing is being done; however, they are not always able to tell them what has been done, e.g., write-ups, due to the other guests' privacy. However, every complaint or concern of this client was addressed to the best of their ability. Sadly, other guests believe the complainant is picking on them as well. Staff are tasked with creating a safe and fair environment for everyone. They offered mediation, but the complainant declined.*

Allegation #2 (SOCs 13)

- The complainant claims staff do not support stated quiet hours. Other clients stay out until late and when they return they are loud, disregarding the fact that others are sleeping. Then when it's daytime they want to sleep and will become angry and disruptive if anyone wants to turn on the lights or make any noise. The staff allows this and do not enforce their own posted rules.
- *The shelter responded that they do enforce quiet hours as best they can. They are a congregate shelter and folks are allowed to come in and out. They have staff posted in the dorm and*

supervisors do rounds at least once every 30 minutes. If guests are making noise they are asked to quiet down and they generally do.

Client 2 (02)

Submitted to SMC: 6/27/25 Sent to shelter: 7/3/25 SMC received response: 7/3/25

Standard of Care (SOC) Violated: 1, 2, 8

Allegation #1 (SOC 8)

- The complainant alleges that, due to her ADA-related needs and wheelchair use, she requested that a nearby dorm door remain unblocked and open. Her request was denied without any appropriate explanation of why this accommodation could not be met.
- *Management reports that they recently went through a shelter expansion. HSH and contractors added beds which included the permanent closing of an exit door. There are multiple other doors guests can use. HSH and One Workplace were responsible for ensuring the changes were up to ADA and fire code standards. As construction neared completion, the site manager brought the client into the dorms before anyone was there and asked her to pick what bed she wanted and would feel most comfortable in. She was given the bed she asked for which has space for her wheelchair and is near a plug.*

Allegation #2 (SOCs 1, 2)

- The complainant reported experiencing a hostile and discriminatory environment in the shelter. She observed staff allowing clients to make cruel, passive-aggressive comments about a Spanish-speaking resident, sometimes in English, seemingly so the resident would not understand. Staff either ignored the comments or laughed them off. When the complainant, frustrated by the staff's inaction, confronted one of the clients, she was given a warning notice for bullying/harassment of another guest. She believes this was done in retaliation for her speaking up. As far as she could tell, the other guest did not get written up.
- *The shelter says the client is not telling the whole story. "The situation began in the manager's office." The client came in and "screamed" at her, then went into the dorm and "started a verbal argument" with the other guest, "calling her an "ugly and "big nosed bi***." The other participant did yell back. Both guests were spoken to; however, as far as the shelter could see, the complainant started the altercation.*

Embarcadero Navigation Center (03)

Submitted to SMC: 6/27/25 Sent to shelter: 7/1/25 SMC received response: 7/2/25

Standard of Care (SOC) Violated: 1, 2, 3, 9, 13

Allegation #1 (SOC 1)

- The client says that cleaning staff member was operating a walkie-talkie at "an excessively loud volume." He "politely asked her several times to turn it down, but she...she ignored [him]." He approached other staff. They dismissed his concerns. He "just wanted to rest in peace," so he approached two separate staff members to address the issue. Both told him the noise level was necessary so staff could hear communications. Knowing this was not really correct, he went to a supervisor, who dismissed his complaint, telling him it was "going nowhere." The complainant explained how frustrating this was, especially when other concerns were being ignored. He was simply asking for respect and that guests' basic human needs be recognized. Another staffer joined in and told the client *he* was the problem, which made him feel attacked and belittled. All he wants "is a safe place to rest while [he] works to rebuild [his] life." He is doing all he can to move forward, but is "treated as an inconvenience."

- *The shelter said they realize it must be frustrating to have to hear the staff's radio when one is trying to sleep. Unfortunately, they need to have their radios on so that they can hear important messages from their colleagues and respond to emergencies. However, even outside quiet hours, the manager said he would ask staff to temporarily turn down their radios a bit if possible when near the complainant's bed area. The supervisor was trying to convey that the radios need to stay on for staff to hear their communications, that he would try to resolve the matter without needing to reach out further for support with it, because he believed it could be easily dealt with in that moment. Generally speaking, the client was encouraged to share concerns.*

Allegation #2 (SOCs 2, 3, 13)

- *The client says the shelter is "unsafe, unsanitary, and run by staff who seem either burned out or indifferent." The bathrooms are "filthy and unsanitary...rarely cleaned, often without toilet paper. People defecate in shower areas. Showers are missing curtains" and there are frequently people "passed out from drug use...Drug use is rampant—heroin and crack are used in the bathrooms and showers openly in the early morning, and nothing is done about it." Guests "with untreated mental health issues scream throughout the night." A night-shift staffer told him noise was his problem and suggested earplugs.*
- *Per the shelter, supervisors also do walkthroughs regularly to check to make sure everything is ok in the facility. The janitors clean the dorms and the restrooms regularly and they have an outside cleaning crew every weekday to clean the restrooms. Unfortunately, a lot of times right after they finish cleaning the guests make a new mess. Guests often take away the toilet paper; however, as backup the shelter is regularly passing out individual roles to clients. They let the client know this. Regarding the shower curtains, unfortunately the guests tore some of them down. Replacements are on order. Regarding guests doing drugs openly, this "is not true—we regularly hold the guests accountable with writeups for open drug use." However, "we can't simply exit somebody for using drugs once." A lot of "guests struggle with addiction it isn't easy for them to stop right away." They "provide them with resources such as AA or NA and follow up with harm reduction Behavioral Health therapists to see what additional support they need to stop."*

Allegation #3 (SOC 9)

- *The client reports that "Kitchen staff handle food without gloves or hairnets and eat while preparing meals. Dining areas are often covered in spilled food and trash."*
- *Management promised to remind all kitchen staff to wear gloves when serving food. They also tell the clients to leave their trash on the dining room tables. This is because the guests don't always properly sort the trash, recycling, and compost. Regarding the hair nets, this is not something they have done since they don't actually prepare food at the shelter. However, the idea has merit and they will encourage the staff to cover their hair as much as possible with hats or other items to make sure hair doesn't get in the foods. They have not had any complaints about this happening. DPH's registered dietician was involved. She looked at the shelter's records and discussed best practices with management.*

Compass UAV

Client 1 (04)

Submitted to SMC: 7/9/25 Sent to shelter: 7/17/25 SMC received response: 7/25/25

Standards of Care (SOC) Violated: 1, 3, 8, 20, 21, 30

Allegation #1 (SOCs 1, 8, 30)

- *The client stated that his case manager asked him what his immigration status was and intimated he might not be entitled to services. He did so in a way that caused the client and his wife to be very concerned that this information might be inappropriately used. There was no clear indication that the information was necessary for any other reason. He had to wonder if this might be retaliatory, i.e., in response to the client's previous requests that services be provided in accord with the Standards of Care.*

- *The shelter acknowledged the sensitive nature of conversations about immigration status. At the same time, they need to know how best to understand the clients' needs. However, the purpose of the questions from the case manager may not have been communicated with sufficient clarity or sensitivity. They followed up with the staff member to emphasize trauma-informed communication and the importance of explaining the purpose of such inquiries in a respectful and non-threatening manner.*

Allegation #2 ((SOCs 1, 8, 20, 21, 30))

- Case management services have not been provided in compliance with the ADA. They have been for the most part provided in English, lately, with little use of Spanish-language interpreters or a Language Line. Some printed materials are being supplied only in English. The complainant knows he and his wife need to do their best to find work, and they are willing to work; however, they need extra support, given their disability status. They have been waiting for a year just for their City work permits.
- *The shelter verified that the family has received Urgent Voucher Program materials in Spanish. But the text letting them know program agreement documents would be placed in all the shelter program rooms was sent in English only. They are currently looking into improving mass messages to make sure they can message families in their preferred language. At the same time, their case manager is bilingual in Spanish and has conducted multiple conversations and worked diligently with the family in their preferred language.*

Allegation #3 (SOC 3)

- According to them, the hotel the family is staying in is not clean and well maintained. They have noticed that bedbugs or some similar vermin are beginning to cause them skin irritation. This is especially concerning, insofar as the complainant has health conditions that could be complicated by infections, etc.
- *The family has been moved to another room at the hotel. The shelter arranged for pest control to inspect and treat the room to which the family was initially assigned. No bed bugs were found. Management spoke to the clients and offered to move them again to another room and have pest control to treat their room. Additionally, they offered to support the family to wash their belongings. The family declined both the offer to be moved again and to wash their belongings. They said they were still willing to offer an additional move and to support the family to wash their belongings.*

Client 2 (05)

Submitted to SMC: 7/18/25 Sent to shelter: 7/21/25 SMC received response: 7/25/25

Standards of Care (SOC) Violated: 1, 2, 30

Allegation #1 (SOCs 1, 2, 30)

- The complainant asserts she was attacked and hurt by another family at SF Central Hotel. Another client complained that the children in the area are too loud when they are playing. One day the complainant and her partner were chatting with a neighbor when a woman burst out of her room and began yelling at them to "Get you and your ugly a** f***ing baby away from my door." She poked the baby. This sparked an argument between the families, appalled by this kind of treatment towards an infant. This attracted the neighbors, including a resident who lived downstairs. The assailant then punched the complainant in the face and her partner joined the fray. Another resident stepped in to separate them. This individual provided his name and contact information to corroborate what he witnessed, which aligns with the complainant's report. Another neighbor provided video footage. The complainant went to the hospital and was diagnosed with a face contusion. Despite not having instigated the altercation, the complainants were immediately DOS'd for engaging in violence. The complainants pleaded with the shelter manager and explained that they were actually victims, pointing out there were multiple witnesses and asking her to check the video surveillance. The shelter manager responded that none of that mattered because they

were “involved”. The complainants were provided no referral information or any options to support themselves. (At the hearing, video surveillance was provided, but with no audio it is difficult to interpret.)

- *The shelter responded that the recording was not presented to the program by the complainant in the internal hearing for the immediate denial of service. They do not discharge families on weekends. The complainants were given the option to remain in the shelter until Monday. This policy allows families time during business hours to seek alternative shelter accommodations. Staff often supports this process by accompanying families to the family access point to seek alternate accommodation. However, when a UAV staff member visited the shelter hotel on Sunday, they had already left the shelter. The family was offered support to search for alternative accommodation, including appointments at an Access Point to explore alternative shelter options during their grievance process. The family declined these offers. The program stated they are committed to creating as much safety as possible for all clients. When a situation involves physical violence between clients, they investigate to understand what occurred. In this case, based on what they observed in the video footage, it was appropriate to issue immediate denials of services for all involved in the incident.*

Baldwin (06)

Submitted to SMC: 7/18/25 Sent to shelter: 7/22/25 SMC received response: 7/28/25

Standards of Care (SOC) Violated: 1, 2, 30

Allegation #1 (SOCs 1, 2, 30)

- The client complainant alleges persistent harassment by staff since his arrival a few months ago. He reports being threatened with Denial of Services (DOS) on at least three separate occasions, each requiring intervention from supervisory personnel. He states that he has verified diagnoses and active Reasonable Accommodations on file, which support both his dietary needs and a preference for increased seclusion. Despite purchasing his own food, he notes that items have previously gone missing from his designated food storage area. The complaint outlines several specific incidents: A supervisor ordered him to move from a kitchen table, stating it was for staff use only, despite the complainant already being seated there. In a separate instance, while using a microwave in a common area (with prior approval), he was told to leave. When he requested to finish making tea and then show documentation, the supervisor demanded immediate compliance. While submitting laundry that slightly exceeded the weight limit due to hand-washed items, a supervisor allegedly responded with disrespect, became argumentative, and threatened him with DOS. The complainant was also confronted by staff over a can of pineapples in his food box. He explained that another staff member had previously authorized it and even directed him to a site can opener. He proceeded to file a grievance regarding the interaction. Upon attempting to submit his grievance, a supervisor allegedly refused to accept it and escalated the situation by approaching the complainant in an aggressive and threatening manner.
- *The site manager responded that, according to multiple staff, the guest wanted to heat something up but was asked to wait while the staff attended to another guest that was in front of him. While they went to get the meal to heat, the complainant walked over and without approval proceeded to heat his own item. Regarding laundry, they have explained to the client why there is a weight limit and informed him moving forward if he needed something large to be dried they will assist him. The supervisor in question was coached on the right approach to communication. Canned goods that are not self-opening are prohibited in the site. They promised, however, to work out an accommodation. There was an agreement with the client that due to previous grievances being submitted but not responded to, management would collect these. On the day in question, they were busy in meetings and he was directed to a supervisor who was unaware of the agreement. The complainant “said some [blunt] things,” and it appears the supervisor did respond unprofessionally. When this was brought to*

management's attention (by the supervisor himself), he was held accountable. Discussions have been held and this sort of response from the supervisor is not expected to recur.

Bayshore Navigation Center

Client 1 (07)

Submitted to SMC: 7/24/25 Sent to shelter: 7/28/25 SMC received response: 7/29/25

Standards of Care (SOC) Violated: 1, 30

Allegation #1 (SOCs 1, 30)

- The complainant asserts that her case manager informed her she was being transferred to another site. This came as a surprise to the complainant as no one had discussed this transfer with her prior to being notified that she was to pack her belongings in plastic bags. The complainant then asked for her nice bags that were in the site's storage facility. Staff went and looked but could not find them.
- *The shelter answered the complaint saying this was not initiated by them. The client had been waiting on a bed at another site. It became available with the stipulation that she must be there for intake by 4 p.m. A Lyft was arranged, and staff worked to prepare her for a timely transition. The client requested access to her stored belongings. Staff attempted to retrieve them from storage but were unable to locate them. In an effort to ensure the transfer could still proceed within the required time frame, staff suggested that the client use large bags provided on-site to pack her belongings. This suggestion was made solely to facilitate a timely transition—not out of any disrespect. She declined this option and also declined to provide a description of her bags, which limited staff's ability to conduct a more targeted search. Upon meeting with the client later, she provided a description, which led to their successful identification. They had been labeled with her original bed number from the time of intake, rather than her current bed assignment. The shelter stated they are committed to treating all clients with dignity and respect and regret any distress the complainant experienced. They subsequently took steps to improve labeling and tracking of personal belongings to help prevent such occurrences in the future.*

Client 2 (08)

Submitted to SMC: 7/24/25 Sent to shelter: 7/30/25 SMC received response: 8/5/25

Standards of Care (SOC) Violated: 1, 30

Allegation #1 (SOCs 1, 0)

- Since arriving at the site, he says he has experienced ongoing provocation and disrespectful behavior from staff members. He reports that staff have at times raised their voices toward him and unnecessarily escalated situations that could have been handled calmly. On one specific occasion, the complainant recalls watching television when a staff member began yelling at him. When he informed her that he intended to file a complaint regarding her behavior, she responded by saying, "I am going to file a complaint against you." The complainant has diagnosed mental health conditions that may result in him speaking aloud without addressing anyone specifically. He reports that staff often respond by yelling at him, which exacerbates his symptoms. He feels there is a double standard in place, as staff members speak to him in a disrespectful manner, yet when he attempts to defend himself, he is met with threats of being discharged or issued written warnings. Additionally, the complainant reports an incident in the dining area where he and his partner were asked to leave by a particular staffer. When they asked why, she told them they were loitering and that the space was reserved for others to eat, despite the fact that no one else was present. The complainant notes that this employee has spoken to him in a demeaning tone not used with other residents, which he believes indicates a pattern of unfair treatment.
- *The shelter responded that they "take all reports of staff-resident interactions seriously and are committed to fostering a respectful and supportive environment for everyone. While staff are expected to maintain*

professionalism at all times, [they] acknowledge that some interactions may not have been handled as calmly or thoughtfully as they should have been. [They] recognize the importance of understanding and responding appropriately to individual mental health needs and acknowledge that further staff training in this area may be beneficial.” They assured the complainant that the specific concerns regarding the employee’s conduct would be reviewed internally, and that they would take appropriate steps to ensure all residents feel treated fairly and respectfully.

Hamilton Family Shelter

Client 1 (10)

Submitted to SMC: 7/28/25 Sent to shelter: 7/31/25 SMC received response: 8/4/25

Standards of Care (SOC) Violated: 1, 8, 9, 30

Allegation #1 (SOC 1)

- The family (complainants) state they have received multiple write ups for minor infractions, e.g., when their small, pacific dog “barked” (very gently) or their 17-year-old son was “left unattended.” At the same time, their numerous written requests were only responded to, if at all, verbally and in equivocal, if not meaningless, language. The gratuitous write-ups, along with the expressions on the face of the site’s assistant manager when he sees the clients, are evidence of his negative feelings towards them.
- *The shelter asserted that the family was informed of the Service Animal Policy that states how the Service Animal is cared for and how it must behave during the shelter stay. They signed this agreement that is in the family file. The agreement is important to keep the shelter environment safe and quiet for the families to reduce trauma and stress. The owner must always be in full control of their animal. When the dog is barking, this is considered unruly, disruptive or aggressive behavior. The family has been informed that the dog needs a muzzle to keep this behavior under control and avoid the shelter violation. When the dog is barking while in the shelter it is a violation of the Service Animal Care Policy. The Shelter rules also clearly state that children under 18 years old are not allowed in the building without an adult present. The family received a third warning and a Non-immediate DOS was issued. The parents could have but did not approach the Case Manager or the Shelter Manger to discuss removing the first and second violations when corrective action was taken. This might have avoided the non-immediate DOS.*

Allegation #2 (SOCs 1, 8, 30)

- The complainants report that a letter to their son from the Immigration and Naturalization Service dated May 1, 2025 was not handed over to them until the latter half of July. The impact of this delay could be significant. The letter was also opened, which is hard to understand, since it was clearly marked as being from the INS, addressed to a known guest, in a business-sized (#10) envelope, with just one page of correspondence inside. That is, not at all likely to include contraband. The clients wonder if this level of negligence and scrutiny could evidence malice or discrimination.
- *The shelter responded to say that when mail is delivered it is processed by the front desk staff and placed in the family’s mailbox on the 3rd floor. Special important mail, e.g., related to Immigration, is handed directly to the assigned Case Manager due to the sensitive nature of the information and that it may be time sensitive. The complaint states that this alleged document was handed to them. It does not state the date, time and who provided this document to them. The Shelter Manager discussed this issue with the assigned Case Manager. She stated that the parents had not informed her of any information that was received from INS or that there was a problem with how mail was provided to them. She has not heard any complaints about their mail. If there was an important issue about an INS document, it would be a good idea to communicate this to the family Case Manager so that the client would get necessary assistance, especially if it was time sensitive.*

Allegation #3 (SOCs 9, 30)

- The family has repeatedly been served spoiled or undercooked food. This has led them to avoid eating what is provided by the shelter, fearing it might sicken them. They have had to use their own limited resources, therefore, to buy food. They accept bottled water and occasionally some fruit, but report that the majority of their nutritional needs are no longer being met by the shelter.
- Staff have not received a complaint from any of the family members. This makes it difficult to investigate and address this allegation. To do this properly, it would be helpful to have dates and times.

Total Client Complaints FY 2024-2025*

Site	Site Capacity	7/25	8/25	9/25	10/25	11/25	12/25	1/26	2/26	3/26	4/26	5/26	6/26	Total FY25-26 Red indicates late response	Complaints per 100
Adante	70 Rooms														
711 Post/Ansonia	250 beds														
Baldwin	179 beds	1	1											2	1%
Bayshore Nav	128 beds	2												2	2%
Bayview Nav	203 beds														
Gough Cabins	70 rooms														
Central Waterfront Nav	60 beds														
Compass Family UAV	130 beds	2												2	2%
Dolores Street	92 beds														
Division Circle Nav	186 beds		1											1	0.5%
Ellis Semi-Congregate	130 beds														
Embarcadero Nav Cntr	200 beds	1												1	0.5%
Gough Cabins	70 rooms		1											1	1%
Hamilton	27 fams	1												1	4%
Harbor House Family	30 fams														
Interfaith Winter Shelter	30-80 bed														
Lark Inn	36 beds														
MSC South Shelter	327 beds		2/2											4	1%
Mission Cabins	68 beds		1											1	1.5%
Monarch	93 beds														
Next Door	334 beds		2											2	1%
Oasis Family	54 beds														
Sanctuary (ECS)	200 beds		1											1	0.5%
Taimon Booten	75 beds	2												2	3%
AWP Drop In	30 beds														
A Woman's Place	25 beds														
Total		9	11											20	3

*Late responses are in red

¹ Multiple complaints from the same client(s)

Continued on the next page

July 2025 Client Allegations by Standard

Standard of Care	Number of allegations of violations of this Standard
Standard 1: Treat all clients equally, with respect and dignity...	11
Standard 2: Provide shelter services in an environment that is safe ...	5
Standard 3: Cleaning/ Janitorial	2
Standard 8: ADA	4
Standard 9: Engage a nutritionist...	2
Standard 13: ... sleeping at least 8 hours per night.	2
Standard 15: Provide shelter clients with secure property storage...	0
Standard 17: post ... when a maintenance problem...	0
Standard 28: ...access to free laundry services...	0
Standard 30: Training... (Was 31 before change in Admin Code)	7

August 2025 Client Allegations by Standard

Standard of Care	Number of allegations of violations of this Standard
Standard 1: Treat all clients equally, with respect and dignity...	15
Standard 2: Provide shelter services in an environment that is safe ...	5
Standard 3: Cleaning/ Janitorial	1
Standard 8: ADA	4
Standard 9: Engage a nutritionist...	0
Standard 13: ... sleeping at least 8 hours per night.	1
Standard 15: Provide shelter clients with secure property storage...	0
Standard 17: post ... when a maintenance problem...	0
Standard 28: ...access to free laundry services...	0
Standard 30: Training... (Was 31 before change in Admin Code)	7

Note that each complaint can include alleged violations of more than one SOC or multiple violations of the same SOC.

Staff Update and Committee Membership

Membership ([Admin. Code Sec. 30.305](#))

There are currently **three unfilled seats** on the Shelter Monitoring Committee:

Seat 2 - shall be held by a person who is homeless or has been homeless within the three years prior to being appointed to the Committee, and who has a disability.

Seat 7 - Shall be held by persons nominated by one or more nonprofit agencies that provide advocacy or organizing services for 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 628-652-8080 or email shelter.monitoring@sfgov.org for more information. the Homelessness Oversight Commission has a nominations subcommittee charged with recommending appointments to the SMC (and some other related groups). Applicants submit a [form](#) and the candidate(s) name is added to the Nomination Committee meeting agenda and invited to meet the members who conduct a soft interview. At this point, the candidate is also able to ask committee members questions. The full HOC will vote to approve the candidacy

Shelters are reminded that they have **five business days** to respond to complaints or ask for an extension, e.g., if they are unable to interview a key witness. It is important to respond to all of the listed allegations in order to fulfill the requirement. Late responses are indicated in the matrix.

FY2025-2026 Upcoming SMC Meeting Calendar:

TBD