



City and County of San Francisco
Shelter Monitoring

MEMORANDUM

TO: Shelter Monitoring Committee
FROM: Committee Staff
DATE: October 22, 2026
RE: September 2026 Staff SOC Report

Client Complaints

Eight formal Shelter Monitoring complaints were submitted to City shelters in September 2026.

****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.*

MSC-South, Client 1 (24)

Submitted to SMC: 8/27/26 Sent to shelter: 9/2/26 SMC received response: 9/2/26
Standards of Care (SOC) Allegedly Violated: 1 (respect)

Allegation 1 (SOCs 1, 2)

- The client reports shelter staff threw away food they were supposed to store for her. She had received approval to have this stored. She reported it in mid-August but two weeks later, after repeated follow-ups, had not been reimbursed. Staff made light of her plight. She had obtained a reasonable accommodation from the shelter. Also, on August 27, the shelter closed the community room. Residents were “unable to access the room or its hot water” for several hours.
- *The shelter reported that management took steps to address the client’s concerns and replaced the items having potentially been discarded by staff. However, based on the complainant’s own written statement indicating she personally discarded certain items, the shelter does not believe it is responsible for replacing everything. The shelter believes it acted in good faith throughout this process by:*
 - *Approving and implementing the requested reasonable accommodation.*
 - *Investigating the guest's complaint after it was reported.*
 - *Reviewing statements from all involved parties.*
 - *Replacing items believed to have been affected by staff actions.*
 - *Working to resolve the matter fairly and respectfully.*

Based on the information available, the shelter argued they made reasonable efforts to address the guest's concerns while also adhering to shelter policies and maintaining accountability for actions taken by both staff and guests.

Embarcadero Navigation Center Client 1 (26)

Submitted to SMC: 9/1/26 Sent to shelter: 9/4/26 SMC received response: 9/8/26

Standards of Care (SOC) Allegedly Violated: 1 (Respect, fairness); 12 (Bedding)

Allegation 1 (SOC 1)

- The complainant alleges that shelter staff unfairly denied her access to the shelter and targeted her because she advocates for herself and other guests. On August 6, 2026, at approximately 2:30 a.m., she returned from work carrying two work bags she routinely carried and that she staff had documented when she left the shelter. However, the front-door monitor and a supervisor told her there was no record of the bags and refused to allow her to enter with them. When she asked what she could bring inside, she was allegedly told she would not be permitted to enter the shelter at all that night. Consequently, Complainant slept in her car.
- *The shelter said that they recognizes the client's concern she was DOS'd because of her advocacy. However, based on the information available, the August 6, 2026 incident was related to a property-policy issue and not retaliation. She arrived at the shelter with several bags of personal property. Staff explained that the property could not be brought into the shelter without documentation showing that it had previously been removed from the site, consistent with site procedures. The interaction escalated, and the client became verbally abusive. The responsible supervisor instructed her to exit the building briefly in an effort to de-escalate the situation and maintain a safe and orderly environment. While the site understands that she ended up sleeping in her vehicle that night, this was not based on her advocacy or complaints.*

Allegation #2 (SOC 12)

- In connection with the above, the client alleges that when she returned on August 7, 2026, other guests informed her that someone had slept in her assigned bed and that staff had removed that person's bedding while wearing protective suits. The complainant was concerned her bed had been contaminated; other guests had unsuccessfully asked staff to wash and sanitize her bedding. When the complainant attempted to raise the concern the Site Director, she refused to speak with her and instructed her to leave the office. A case manager later intervened and told the complainant that an emergency wash would be conducted. Approximately one hour later, when she found that the bedding had not been cleaned, she was informed that she was required to strip the bed herself. The complainant then collected her belongings, left the shelter, and slept in her car throughout the weekend because she did not believe the bed was safe to use.
- *The client spoke with the site manager regarding concerns that another guest may have slept in her assigned bed and requested that that guest be denied services. They could not comply. They offered to provide her with fresh bedding. However, she "became increasingly upset and began yelling and cursing, making it difficult to resolve the matter at that time." The bed was eventually stripped and fresh bedding put on it.*

Allegation #3 (SOC 1)

- Also, the complainant alleges that shelter staff retaliated against her for advocating for other guests. She reports staff had previously appeared irritated when she raised concerns during town hall meetings. On September 1, 2026, Complainant observed staff refusing to allow another guest and his service animal into the dining area. After hearing staff provide inconsistent explanations regarding which animals were permitted, the complainant joined the discussion and questioned the apparent discrepancies. Staff reportedly told the complainant to mind her own business. The disagreement

lasted approximately five minutes. Shortly thereafter she was issued a denial of service for “ongoing, uncontrollable disruptive behavior presenting a clear risk to the facility’s safety.” The complainant disputes this characterization and alleges that the DOS was disproportionate and issued in retaliation for questioning staff and advocating for another guest.

- *The site recognizes the guest’s right to advocate for herself and other guests. However, they dispute the contention that her denial of service was issued in retaliation for her advocacy. On September 1, 2026, she intervened in a conversation between a supervisor and another guest regarding the site’s policy prohibiting animals from eating in the dining area. She began yelling, and staff made multiple attempts to de-escalate and redirect the situation. The denial of service was issued because of the continued disruptive behavior and the need to maintain safety and order within the facility. It was not issued because she advocated for herself or another guest. The site takes her concerns seriously and remains committed to providing services in a respectful, safe, and equitable manner.*

MSC-South, Client 2 (27)

Submitted to SMC: 9/2/26 Sent to shelter: 9/8/26 SMC received response: 9/9/26
Standards of Care (SOC) Allegedly Violated: 1

Allegation 1 (SOC 1)

- The guest-client says staff are rude, dress inappropriately, shine lights in guests’ eyes at night, make noise, and retaliate against people who speak up.
- *The shelter met with staff and reviewed the complaint. One of them acknowledged commenting that Women’s World needed to be cleaned, explaining that trash around the bed area could attract rodents, and bed bugs. But they stated that they always treat this client with appropriate cordiality and respect. They denied allegations that they shine flashlights in guests’ faces . Be this as it may, they had one team member do a refresher on Customer Service. She understands she should contact the supervisor on duty if there are any concerns she has.*

St. Joseph Family Shelter (28)

Submitted to SMC: 9/4/26 Sent to shelter: 9/16/26 SMC received response: 10/ /26 (Late)
Standards of Care (SOC) Allegedly Violated: 1 (Dignity), 15 (Storage)

Allegation 1 (SOC 1)

- According to the complainant, she has experienced inequitable treatment based on language barriers, ethnic background, and immigration status. She reports that she was initially placed in a larger room but was told she had to move because it was intended for a larger family. She later observed staff assign the room to an English-speaking family of the same size as hers. The complainant also spoke with the site director about briefly leaving her two cats in the room while escorting her daughters to school and applied for a Reasonable Accommodation. Later, while at breakfast preparing to take her daughters to school, a staff member/cook loudly scolded her in English, which she does not speak, leaving her unable to understand or explain herself. When another staff member attempted to intervene, the original staff member responded, “No! She needs to know the rules!” No translation services were offered. The complainant learned what had been said through her English-speaking daughter, who later explained it to her. She subsequently received a write-up and met with the director, who “advised her to find another shelter.” The complainant reports witnessing other situations, including support animals being left in rooms, involving English-speaking families who were able to advocate for themselves and were not disciplined.

- *The shelter reviewed the various elements of this complaint. As for the incident involving the disposal of dinner, they acknowledged the frustration caused by inconsistency regarding meal availability. "At the time of the incident, a staff member from another department was covering the Residential Assistant position and did not know the practice was to hold food for 30 minutes after meal service to allow families an opportunity for seconds, when available, and to provide a grace period for late arrivals." The client was aware that dinner service ends at 8:00 p.m, and she arrived after the designated mealtime. Be this as it may, the shelter recognizes that staff should consistently communicate meal service expectations and applicable accommodations.*

Prior to the complainant's room transfer, staff discussed the move with her, and she was agreeable to relocating to a room designated for a family of three. Furthermore, there was a plumbing leak in her original room. Maintenance was unable to determine whether the leak originated from the toilet or shower without restricting the use of those fixtures at separate times. The room transfer provided an opportunity to investigate and address this concern. The decision to place another family of three in the client's former room was based on an accommodation-related need specific to another family. Staff observed that the head of household was experiencing mobility difficulties when navigating the stairs and ultimately determined that a first-floor placement near the elevator would better support their accessibility needs and allow them to access case management services and the laundry room more comfortably. Given room configurations and occupancy at the time, alternative first-floor placements would still have required relocating another family. They attempted to explain their general room transfer procedures to the client, but could not disclose the specific circumstances involving another family's accommodation needs due to confidentiality.

Regarding the client's service animals, staff described the interaction as a reminder and verbal warning regarding the requirement that animals not be left unattended. It was noted that the shelter did not document a formal written warning related to this incident. It was not possible to determine the exact language used or how the conversation was communicated, but they promised to reinforce the importance of clear, respectful communication and appropriate documentation when discussing potential program violations with families. They reviewed the program's requirements regarding unattended animals and explained the operational and safety considerations associated with those expectations. They recognize the challenges these requirements may create for clients and are committed to communicate "applicable policies consistently while ensuring accommodation requests are reviewed through the appropriate process."

During their grievance meeting, the Site Director also acknowledged a communication gap involving the client's initial request for an accommodation to leave her service animals unattended. Specifically, she had not received the written information explaining the program's restrictions regarding leaving animals unattended. She expressed that, had she received this information beforehand, she would not have gotten the service animals. The Director followed up with the Case Manager, who confirmed that the document had not been provided to the client. She acknowledged the client's frustration regarding this oversight. They have since reinforced the importance of providing and reviewing relevant program policies with families, particularly when those policies may affect accommodation requests or ongoing program participation. They have also pre-made new intake packets making sure all documents are provided at intake so they do not have this problem again. They will also ensure that accommodation requests are reviewed individually and in accordance with applicable requirements.

Regarding the concern that the client was advised to seek placement at another shelter, the client's Case Manager reported she was considering requesting a transfer to Clara House because she

believed her accommodation needs involving her service animals could be met there. They made it clear they could submit a transfer request on her behalf but could not guarantee placement at Clara House or any specific location, as transfers depend on availability and HSH's placement decisions. Soon thereafter the client decided she was no longer interested in pursuing the transfer. The client's impression of having received a threat might have been related to this. The shelter certainly recognizes the importance of communicating anything involving transfers, self-exits, or alternative placements clearly, respectfully, and in a trauma-informed manner.

Allegation 2 (SOC 15)

- The client reported the site has a significant rodent problem, and she has found mouse droppings in both her food cabinet and assigned room.
- *This concern was not included in the internal grievance we recently reviewed with the client, so it was not specifically addressed during that meeting. However, the client previously submitted a grievance reporting what appeared to be mouse droppings beneath her dresser, along with items that did not belong to her. Since that report, the shelter met with their cleaning and maintenance staff to reinforce room preparation and inspection expectations. Staff have been instructed to thoroughly clean and inspect rooms before they are made available for new referrals, including the interiors and undersides of dressers and other furniture. Additionally, both the Site Manager and Director now conduct a final review to confirm that rooms meet cleanliness and readiness standards before they are posted as available. Regarding ongoing pest control, they promise to continue monitoring and documenting reported concerns and coordinating any necessary pest control services or maintenance follow-up. Terminix is visiting monthly, and when a past problem arises, they fumigate.*

Sanctuary ECS (29)

Submitted to SMC: 9/9/26 Sent to shelter: 9/11/26 SMC received response: 9/14/26
Standards of Care (SOC) Allegedly Violated: 1 (Respect), 2 (Safety)

Allegation 1 (SOC 1)

- The guest reports she faces “discrimination from the black Staff members here at the Shelter.” She feels that since the manager and supervisors there “are black, [they] show favoritism toward black people.” She says that when she asks for clean sheets, they refuse. She “always have trouble with this.” She “asked [redacted] to move her to another bed because hers had fleas. She also complained the people sleeping next to her won't let her sleep. Lastly, she feels staff are conspiring to “kick her out.”
- *Per the shelter, the complainant “faces no discrimination from any staff at Sanctuary.” They say they treat all clients with respect and dignity and the same is expected of the clients to staff. Linen exchange for the women floor is every Tuesdays. All clients are supposed to turn their linen for staff to wash only once a week. In an emergency situation they offer new linen, otherwise the client can wash their linen as they please on Tues, Thurs, Saturday and 4 hrs. on Sundays. The complainant has difficulty following program policies and procedures and when staff try to explain these to the complainant, she immediately tells them they are discriminating against her. Regarding the request to be switch to another bed, she “is currently occupying bed [x], a lower “311 bunk.” They cannot move a 311 client to a CAAP bed vice versa. It also should be clear that a write-up is issued to any clients that violates rules.*

Allegation 2 (SOC 2)

- The guest reports that an employee who works in the cafeteria became very aggressive, shouting and gesticulating on 9/9/26, in response to being asked for a second helping of breakfast. She comes across as aggressive, “like she doesn’t care about poor people.” She got into the complainant’s space, and acted like she was on the verge of striking her. She followed the client, daring her to “say it to my face!” The complainant is afraid of her, “because she is a violent person.” The Site Manager overheard/witnessed the commotion.
- *An employee was serving breakfast and announced when seconds were being served. Unfortunately, by the time the complainant arrived, the seconds were gone. She became upset and told the shelter employee she was lying. Please note that the food is not prepared at Sanctuary site. Leftovers are given out on a “first come, first served” basis. Breakfast is officially served from 7am - 8am. Around 9:40, while the site manager was getting some supplies, he heard the complainant accusing the supervisors on duty of discriminating against her. The complainant has also not adhered to 48-hour absence and when informed about the policy and procedure she would tell staff that they are discriminating against her.*

Bayview Drop-in Center (30)

Submitted to SMC: 9/16/26 Sent to shelter: 9/17/26 SMC received response: None
Standards of Care (SOC) Allegedly Violated: 1

Allegation #1 (SOC 1)

- The complainant says she was told by a manager at the shelter that she and her large family have only (two weeks) to depart. This is an unreasonably short timeframe. She expressed concern that there may be an element of discrimination in the decision, given what she sees of how other families at the shelter are treated. She is hoping there will be more time to prepare.
- *The shelter did not respond; however, the family was not in fact exited on the date they were given.*

Central Waterfront Navigation Center (31)

Submitted to SMC: 9/16/26 Sent to shelter: 9/17/26 SMC received response:
Standards of Care (SOC) Allegedly Violated: 1, 30

Allegation 1 (SOCs 1, 30)

- The complainant reports there is a female staff member who “brings her pet dog to work in the mornings and she lets it be in the kitchen near the food.” She was disrespectful on September 6 when asked her to keep her dog away from the food.
- *The shelter responded that the employee admitted that she was helping another client watch her dog while the guest took a shower. The site manager had a conversation with her about “proper procedures.” They have a kennel where animals are to be placed when they are in the showers. She was assigned to review the Five keys Handbook regarding respectful and professional workplace. She was also assigned retraining in food handling and cultural humility.*

Embarcadero Navigation Center, Client 2 (32)

Submitted to SMC: 9/18/26 Sent to shelter: 9/23/26 SMC received response: 9/28/26
Standards of Care (SOC) Allegedly Violated: 1

Allegation 1 (SOC 1)

- The client-guest told Shelter Monitoring that on 09/11/2026 he was treated disrespectfully and unprofessionally by a staff member. This was witnessed by other community providers. According to the complainant, the employee spoke to him in an offensive manner stating, “oh you blind huh”. The complainant asserts that this staff member is often on breaks and refuses to assist clients and has a habit of berating and yelling at other staff in front of the clients, et al.
- *The shelter responded that when the employee said, “Oh, you blind huh,” her comment was not intended to be disrespectful or offensive. She is herself also visually impaired and was attempting to communicate that she understands what it is like. The shelter understands the comment may have been perceived differently, but the intent was not to disrespect or belittle her. As for this employee allegedly being frequently on break, shelter management clarified that all staff are allotted breaks. These breaks are intended to be uninterrupted. Outside of their scheduled breaks, staff are expected to remain available, professional, and responsive to guest needs. Regarding concerns about the employee’s interactions with other staff, the shelter said it had not received any complaints from staff. Be this as it may, they reinforced with her the expectation that all staff communicate with one another in a professional and respectful manner, including when working in front of guests and community providers.*

Total Client Complaints FY 2026-2027*

Site	Site Capacity	7/26	8/26	9/26	10/26	11/26	12/26	1/27	2/27	3/27	4/27	5/27	6/27	Total FY26-27 Red indicates late response	Complaints per 100
711 Post/Ansonia	250 beds	1											1		
Baldwin	179 beds														
Bayshore Nav	128 beds	1											1		
Bayview Drop-in (Felton)	N/A	1	2/1	1/1									4	2	
Bayview Nav	203 beds														
Central Waterfront Nav	60 beds			1									1		
Compass Family UAV	130 beds														
Dolores Street	92 beds	1/1											1	1	
Division Circle Nav	186 beds	1	1										2		
Ellis Semi-Congregate	130 beds		1										1		
Embarcadero Nav Cntr	200 beds	2	1	2									5		
Gough Cabins	70 rooms														
Hamilton	27 fams														
Harbor House Family	30 fams														
Hospitality House	22 Beds														
Interfaith Winter Shelter	30-80 bed														
Jerrold Commons	68 Beds														
Lark Inn	36 beds														
MSC South Shelter	327 beds	1	1/1	2									4	1	
Lower Polk TAY	75 beds														
Mission NRC	30 chairs														
Next Door	334 beds	2											2		
Oasis Family	54 beds														
Sanctuary (ECS)	200 beds	3	1	1									5		
St. Joseph Family	10 rooms			1/1									1	1	
Taimon Booten	75 beds														
AWP Drop In	30 chairs														
A Woman's Place	25 beds	2/1	1										3	1	
Total		15/2	8/2										31	6	

*Late responses are in red ¹ Multiple complaints from the same client(s) ² Transition from Urban Alchemy to Five Keys April 2026

Standard of Care

Number of allegations of violations of this Standard

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

SOC ↓	SOC Description	7/26	8/26	9/26	10/26	11/26	12/26	1/27	2/27	3/27	4/27	5/27	6/27	Total FY26-27	Complaints proportion
1 a	Rudeness/discrimination	8	5	4										17	0.25
b	Disrespect for property	3	1	2										6	0.09
c	Retaliation (up to DOS)	4	1	1										6	0.09
d	Staff ignore complaints	1	2											3	0.04
e	Theft by staff alleged														
2 a	Other guests	2	1	1										4	0.06
b	Staff pose a threat	1												1	0.01
c	Facility is unsafe	3	1											4	0.06
3a	Restrooms, Cleanliness		1											1	0.01
3b	Generally dirty site	2												2	0.03
4	No hygiene products														
5	Harmful pest products														
6	First Aid, etc.														
7	Drinking water														
8	ADA	2												2	0.03
9	Good nutrition	2												2	0.03
10	Dietary options														
11	No smoking violation														
12	Clean bedding	1		1										2	0.03
13	Quiet time/ Sleep	1												1	0.01
14	Daytime access to beds														
15	Storage/property	3	1	1										5	0.07
16	No access to electric outlets	1												1	0.01
17	No notice of repairs														
18	Phone unavailability														
19	22 inches between beds														
20	Postings in Spanish														
21	Translation services														
24	Denial of Service > 5PM														
25	Employee badges														
26	Transportation available														
28	Laundry problems	2												2	0.03
29	OSHA														
30a	Training - hand washing														
30b	-Food handling	1												1	0.01
30c	-Emergency procedures														
30d	-Aggressive clients														
30e	-Mental health issues														
30g	-ADA requirements	1												1	0.01
30h	-Shelter training manual	3												3	0.04
30i	-Cultural humility	2	1											3	0.04
Total		43	14											68	1

Staff Update

Several allegations of discrimination were made this month. Site inspections are continuing (by staff). Some old SMC flyers needed to be replaced. Not all sites are conducting monthly fire/emergency drills. We added *GLIDE Transitional Age Youth Health and Wellness Drop-in Center*, which opened January 29 at 888 Post St. We are dropping *AWP Drop-in Center* from our list of covered sites; it is monitored by the DPH.