

2016

NEW YORK STATE SHELTER INSPECTION REPORT

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS



**Office of Temporary
and Disability Assistance**

Homes and
Community Renewal

Office of Children
and Family Services

Division of Homeland Security
and Emergency Services

Office of Fire
Prevention and Control

New York State Shelter Inspection Report

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I. INTRODUCTION

Background

More than 75,000 people throughout New York State sleep in homeless shelters of various types, and approximately 4,000 homeless people sleep on the street each year. In his 2016 State of the State message, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo committed to improving the conditions in homeless shelters so facilities are safe, clean and well-maintained. As part of that commitment, Governor Cuomo directed a multiagency effort, led by the Office Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), to inspect every emergency shelter in the state that houses homeless persons at public expense, as well as to develop other initiatives to combat homelessness.

This report describes the main findings and conclusions from this Shelter Inspection Initiative. The State found that 97 percent of all homeless shelters violated at least one of the NYS Habitability Standards. These violations were found disproportionately in Uncertified Shelters – i.e., those shelters that are not currently subject to State regulations or annual State inspections. The State will take immediate action to direct local social service districts to develop corrective action plans to remediate all of these violations. The State will take actions with respect to 2,160 family units and 161 single adults that could result in the closure or appointment of a Temporary Operator within 180 days, if all violations are not addressed within that time. This is in addition to the 116 apartment units which required immediate remediation during the course of the Shelter Inspection Initiative.

Behind these numbers of violations lies the experience of vulnerable families and adults who frequently face behavioral health and other challenges. There is a human consequence when the homeless system fails, and it is clear that the system is most at risk when shelters that historically have lacked direct State oversight continue to go unregulated. A central conclusion of this report is the need to expand the State's oversight role from the 151 Certified shelters it now regulates to the 765 Uncertified homeless shelters as well. The State will develop new regulations to better ensure that all homeless shelters are safe, clean and well-maintained.

OTDA was assisted in this Shelter Inspection Initiative by other New York State agencies with expertise in building inspections, including the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES), Homes and Community Renewal (HCR), Office of General Services (OGS), Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). The State team inspected 916 homeless shelters (638 in New York City and 278 more throughout the rest of the state) over a 35-day period. The inspectors found many instances of violations of habitability and safety standards that affected the health and safety of shelter residents. Violations of these safety and habitability standards include the following:

- 578 examples where there was a lack of effective security, including missing or inoperable cameras and understaffed or untrained guards
- 89 instances involving the presence of weapons and/or drugs
- 1,273 occasions of missing or inoperable fire safety equipment and plans
- 204 situations where inspectors identified serious structural deficiencies
- 309 incidents of rodent infestation
- 1,139 instances where there was evidence of pervasive mold and mildew
- 480 cases of extensive chipping, peeling or bubbling paint in units

Safety and security was another focus of the Shelter Inspection Initiative. The six violent deaths occurring in New York City shelters so far this year, as well as the other of violent incidents resulting in serious injury, highlight the urgency of completing the review of security in the New York City shelter system, which was recently announced by the New York City Department of Homeless Services. As described below, the State is implementing emergency regulations that will address security issues in the shelter system statewide. The Governor has been calling for increased security in shelters since the 2016 State of the State and has directed OTDA to send a series of actions to local social service district following a number of widely publicized incidents of violence in shelters over the last few months. On January 29, 2016, a stabbing occurred at the Boulevard Shelter that left one shelter resident dead. In response the State directed the New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS) to station law enforcement officers at the shelter to ensure the safety of the residents. On January 31, 2016, an attack at the 53rd Street Men's Shelter in Manhattan led the State to call for an increased presence of law enforcement at the facility and require a thorough security assessment of the shelter. On February 10, 2016, a knife attack at a Staten Island shelter left a mother and two of her children dead, and a third child critically injured. On April 1, 2016, at the Men's Shelter on East 3rd Street in the East Village, a death of a resident the police have ruled as a homicide occurred as a result of a fight with another resident. On April 15, 2016, a resident was killed by another resident at the 30th Street Men's Shelter. Five days later, a resident at the Atlantic Assessment Center was rushed to the hospital after another shelter resident assaulted him with a three-foot steel pipe.

True accountability for the homeless shelter system requires that the State remain independent and objective in identifying problems and violations of standards, while working with local social service districts to correct those deficiencies once they are identified. The need for independent and objective inspections of homeless shelters is reinforced by the fact that in many circumstances, the local social services district is also the operator of the shelter. In order to maintain objectivity and the integrity of the inspection process, OTDA will continue to inspect shelters independently and on an unannounced basis, as it has always done with Certified shelters (see page 8 for definition). At the same time, the State has been and will continue to work with local social service districts to correct deficiencies that have been identified and to advance other programs to combat homelessness.

Strengthening State Oversight of Homeless Shelters

Many of the findings from the State's Shelter Inspection Initiative underscore and confirm the findings of previous examinations of the homeless shelter system conducted over the last two years by the State, the New York City Department of Investigation, the Office of the New York City Comptroller and the Office of the State Comptroller. The rapid growth of the homeless shelter system in recent years and the persistent nature of safety, habitability, and security-related violations in the shelters make clear the need for strong State oversight of the homeless shelter system and rigorous State enforcement mechanisms when deficiencies fail to be corrected. In response to this need, the Cuomo administration is taking the following actions to improve the safety, habitability and homelessness services provision of every emergency homeless shelter in New York State.

ACTION 1: ESTABLISH CONSISTENT REGULATORY STANDARDS FOR ALL HOMELESS SHELTERS:

Of the 916 homeless shelters inspected during this initiative, only 151 are officially certified by the State. The existing certification program requires shelters and their operators to undergo a rigorous program review, including routine inspections, budget reviews and supportive services program evaluations.

The Shelter Inspection Initiative showed that Certified shelters have proportionally fewer violations than do Uncertified shelters. Expanding the certification requirement across all shelters in New York State will significantly improve the pathway to permanent housing for the State's homeless citizens.

Specifically, the certification process allows OTDA to review and approve all aspects of the shelter operation. Importantly, shelters must renew their certification status with the State every four years for Adult Shelters and five years for Family Shelters. The dramatic expansion of the homeless shelter system in recent years, however, has created a situation in which over 80 percent of all emergency homeless shelters are not certified, which creates a significant gap in regulatory oversight.

To address this gap in regulatory oversight, OTDA will promulgate new regulations to cover all emergency homeless shelters receiving public funds in New York State. The information gathered during the Shelter Inspection Initiative and through the resultant corrective action plans will allow OTDA to establish these regulatory standards, which can be applied to each category of shelter regardless of certification status. These regulations will include a requirement that all emergency homeless shelters be inspected by the State on an annual basis. In addition, the State will develop criteria for Operating Plans, to be reviewed and approved by OTDA, that will enhance the State's oversight of emergency homeless shelters and provide minimum standards that must be met statewide.

ACTION 2: REQUIRE SUBMISSION OF A COMPREHENSIVE SECURITY PLAN:

In light of increasing safety concerns at homeless shelters across New York, State regulations will require the operator of each emergency shelter to submit a security plan to both OTDA and the local social services district, which will be assessed by the local district as part of developing a comprehensive security plan for the district.

Each local district will be required to submit its comprehensive security plan to OTDA for approval to help ensure that emergency shelters operating within the district are adequately providing security and protecting the physical safety of residents and staff. State regulations will also require that all serious security incidents be recorded and immediately reported to OTDA.

ACTION 3: REVIEW AND APPROVE SHELTER REIMBURSEMENT RATES:

Currently, the State only approves reimbursement rates paid by local social service districts to Certified Tier II Family Shelters. On average, the State (including federal TANF funding under the State's control) covers 60 percent of the cost of Certified and Uncertified Family Shelters in New York State. One finding of the Shelter Inspection Initiative was that shelter reimbursement rates varied widely among shelter types, and these rates were inconsistently correlated with quality or the level of services provided.

A new regulation, first published in September 2015 will, once adopted, extend OTDA's rate approval authority to all shelter types by inserting OTDA into the rate approval process. This will be effectuated by requiring the local services district to submit a budget for each shelter for review by OTDA, which will establish the basis for the reimbursement rate of that shelter. In order to better influence the nature and type of arrangements that local social service districts make with shelter operators, the State will require all homeless shelters receiving State funding to submit an Operating Plan to both the local social service district and the State in order to ensure that reimbursement rates are appropriate for the type of shelter services being provided and are sufficient to keep the shelter safe, clean and well maintained.

ACTION 4: PROVIDE NOTICE OF VIOLATION TO 892 SHELTERS AND REQUIRE LOCAL SERVICE DISTRICTS TO IMPLEMENT CORRECTIVE ACTION PLANS TO REMEDY VIOLATIONS:

OTDA will work with the local social service districts (LDSSs) that contract with shelter operators to ensure the timely correction and/or repairs of all violations. OTDA has set specific timetables for corrections based on the severity of the violation and will require photographic or other evidence of corrections.

ACTION 5: IMMEDIATE STEPS TO REMEDY DEFICIENCIES TO AVOID CLOSURE OR APPOINTMENT OF A TEMPORARY OPERATOR FOR SPECIFIC SHELTERS:

The State is taking immediate steps to remedy deficiencies at specific shelters that have either severe physical or programmatic violations. Together these sites house a total of 2,160 families and 161 single adults. Two shelters that include 270 family units will be closed in 90 days. In addition, two shelters, one with 91 family units, and the other with 143 adult beds, will be placed under a Temporary Operator unless violations of regulations have been resolved within 90 days. Other shelters with the most severe violations per unit will be subject to closure in 180 days, if these violations have not been remedied or addressed in a fully funded capital plan. These include 21 family shelters that house 947 family units, an adult shelter with 18 beds, and 852 apartments managed by two shelter operators at multiple cluster site or former hotel locations.

In the State's 2016-17 Enacted Budget, OTDA was authorized to designate a Temporary Operator for homeless shelters in situations in which the current operator has been found to have significant financial, operational or health and safety issues.

ACTION 6: WORK WITH THE TENANT PROTECTION UNIT ON BUILDING CONDITIONS AND ENFORCEMENT:

To improve habitability and safety conditions in cluster site shelters, OTDA is working with the New York State Department of Housing and Community Renewal (HCR), including its Tenant Protection Unit (TPU) and the Office of Rent Administration (ORA), on enforcement in certain apartment buildings that house homeless families and are also subject to rent regulation. To date, TPU and ORA have inspected 19 rent regulated buildings where homeless families are being housed. Seven of these were visited at the request of OTDA. HCR found numerous deficiencies in the public areas and rent regulated apartments, ranging from defective entry doors to mold, peeling paint and plaster, signs of vermin, cracked floors, missing light fixtures, and broken windows. Owners have been directed to repair these deficiencies. Going forward, HCR will continue to evaluate whether units in cluster site buildings have adhered to requirements to register units as rent regulated and, as appropriate, pursue compliance with applicable regulations regarding the conditions.

The balance of this report presents a summary of the findings of the Shelter Inspection Initiative and a description of the standards by which violations were judged. The Shelter Inspection Initiative was undertaken at the direction of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to improve the lives of homeless New Yorkers.

II. NEW YORK STATE SHELTER INSPECTION INITIATIVE

Overview

Description of the Homeless Shelter System

New York State's shelter system includes a variety of homeless shelter types which provide emergency housing for homeless families with children, homeless "adult families" without children, and homeless single adults. All shelters are currently categorized as either Certified—meaning they are subject to specific OTDA regulations and reporting requirements—or Uncertified.

Certified shelters for families with children are known as Tier II Family Shelters, and Certified adult shelters are known as Certified Single Adult Shelters. There are 151 Certified shelters in New York State.

- **Tier II Family Shelters** provide shelter and services to 10 or more homeless families, are inspected at least annually, and are governed by standards set forth in Part 900 of Chapter 18 of the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR). Every Tier II Family Shelter must comply with all applicable State and local laws related to buildings, construction, fire prevention, plumbing, heating and electrical systems kitchen and food service, sanitation, maintenance and health and safety. These shelters are also subject to periodic recertification requirements by OTDA. Tier II shelters are required to have procedures for admissions and a plan for providing needed care, services and support to children and families, and ensuring that the children are attending school. Within 10 days of placement into a Tier II facility, families must be provided with a written services plan designed to help the family achieve permanent housing. The services plan must be reviewed with the family bi-weekly and revised as necessary. Residents must also be provided with assistance in locating and applying for adequate housing, securing necessary supportive and social services programs and any necessary psychiatric and mental treatment. Child care also must be provided, either on- or off-site. All facilities must also include, at a minimum, a sleeping area, access to three meals a day, adequate supervision and health services.
- **Certified Single Adult Shelters** generally house 20 or more single adult males or females. These shelters are certified by the State of New York and undergo yearly inspections to ensure safety and quality of service provision. They take part in a recertification process every four years.

Uncertified shelters, by contrast, comprise a wider range of housing types. There are 765 Uncertified shelters in New York State.

- **Hotels/Motels** in New York City are generally buildings that previously were commercial hotels or motels and have been converted to shelter use. In the rest of the state, traditional motels are generally used to house many recipients of temporary housing assistance. Hotels are subject to regulatory requirements under 18 NYCRR § 352.3, have fire safety requirements similar to those applicable to Tier II Family Shelters, and must adhere to local fire and building codes.

- **Cluster Sites** are privately owned apartment buildings in which some units are used as shelters to house homeless families. A cluster site shelter may be one or more apartment units in one or multiple buildings. In some cases, the owner of the building is also the shelter operator, while in other cases the shelter operator is leasing units from a third-party landlord. Cluster sites are not governed by standards set forth under Part 900 but are subject to State oversight through local social service districts. They are required to maintain a good state of repair and sanitation and conform to applicable State and City Laws, regulations and directions.
- **Tier II “Look Alike” Shelters** are family shelters that function like Certified Tier II Shelters, but lack key facilities and programmatic services required of Certified Family Shelters. Look-Alike shelters are not currently regulated by OTDA.
- **Uncertified Shelters for Adults** house 19 or fewer single adult males or females, or are such shelters pending certification.

Shelter Inspection Initiative Process

To monitor and evaluate the safety and habitability of shelters throughout the state, OTDA developed a standard set of criteria —The New York State Habitability and Safety Standards, which are based on the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Minimum Standards for Emergency Shelter, HUD Housing Quality Standards, and other sources—to determine whether shelter conditions are safe, clean, and well maintained. During the Shelter Inspection Initiative, State inspectors discovered many of violations of these standards. The New York State Habitability and Safety Standards can be found in Appendix A.

Over a 35-day period, OTDA collaborated with other State agencies to inspect all emergency shelters in New York State that house homeless persons at public expense. Inspectors completed 916 inspections, 638 in New York City and another 278 throughout the rest of the state, to create a baseline of conditions in the shelter system, identify and fix violations, close regulatory gaps in oversight and to inform future policy recommendations.

Over 170 inspectors from OTDA, the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES), Homes and Community Renewal (HCR), Office of General Service (OGS), Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) were deployed throughout the state to conduct rigorous and comprehensive shelter inspections. Inspection teams, which ranged from two to four inspectors depending on the size of the shelter, conducted these inspections. If a shelter was found to have life-threatening deficiencies, immediate action was taken to move the family or remediate the deficiencies to ensure their safety. If major structural concerns were found, an inspector team would revisit the shelter with the assistance of a structural engineer and/or mechanical engineer who had the specific expertise needed to determine whether the deficiencies required immediate action. All inspection reports were cross-reviewed to ensure accuracy, and reports of shelters with violations of higher severity were confirmed by a specialist physical plant inspector.

These inspections were necessary to:

- Verify whether responsible local parties are operating facilities in accordance with established standards;

- Identify and remedy any unacceptable conditions that need to be fixed, and in the case of structural problems in particular, to develop prescriptive and enforceable corrective action plans; and
- Inform consideration of policy reforms needed to improve State oversight of homeless shelters.

The severity level of violations found by the in-depth inspection review were defined by whether conditions were:

- **Satisfactory:** A condition in which a building, building component or individual item performs sufficiently.
- **Unsatisfactory (Level 1):** A condition in which a building, building component or individual item is functional but in need of minor repair – typically fixable without substantial expenditure.
- **Significant (Level 2):** A condition in which a building, building component or individual item performs as designed, but needs repair or other action to meet habitability standards or make it structurally sound.
- **Severe (Level 3):** A condition in which a building, building component or individual item needs major repair or other action to meet habitability standards in order to function, and without repair will likely jeopardize the safety of shelter residents.

Complementary Efforts of Comptrollers

The work of the New York State Shelter Inspection Initiative is being complemented by activities from the offices of three comptrollers. The State Comptroller, Thomas DiNapoli, conducted approximately 400 statewide field visits with OTDA and local social service districts. Based on these findings, the Office of the State Comptroller is coordinating its work with county and city comptrollers and is currently performing a risk assessment, which will be the basis of an audit plan that will include a mix of programmatic and fiscal audits. The objective of these audits is to verify that controls are in place to maintain safe and livable shelter conditions and to ensure State and local shares of shelter funding lead to high-quality outcomes.

New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer’s audits and investigations have focused on conditions in shelters and the provision of shelter services to families with children. New York City Comptroller staff have conducted shelter site inspections as well as program and fiscal reviews in connection with ongoing audits and investigations of shelter providers, shelter contracts and agencies that provide services to families with children.

Buffalo City Comptroller Mark Schroeder coordinated with the City of Buffalo Department of Permits and Inspections (CBDPI) and the Erie County Department of Social Services (ECDSS) for their participation in the inspection process. The unannounced inspections began on February 24, 2016 at the Buffalo City Mission, the area’s largest homeless shelter, where Comptroller Schroeder and personnel from CBDPI, ECDSS, and OTDA inspected the premises using the New York State Habitability and Safety Standards and Inspection Checklist. Comptroller Schroeder was present for the inspections at all 12 Buffalo sites.

Summary of Violations

Overall results of the New York State Shelter Inspection Initiative include the following:

- **25,815** total violations, of which **4,344** were classified as Severe (Level 3) and **6,998** were classified as Significant (Level 2).
- **80 percent** (or 20,727) of all violations and **89 percent** (or 3,851) of Severe violations were found in Uncertified shelters. Specifically, Uncertified family shelters accounted for 71 percent (or 18,325) of all violations and 82 percent (or 3,550) of all Severe violations.
- **69 percent** (or 630) of all shelters had at least one Severe violation. This includes **72 percent** (or 549) of Uncertified shelters, and **51 percent** (or 77) of Certified shelters.

Uncertified shelters comprise of approximately 54 percent of all family units and adult beds, yet accounted for 80 percent of total violations, and 89 percent of all Severe violations found during the Shelter Inspection Initiative. Uncertified family shelters account for 36 percent of all family units in the shelter system, yet accounted for 82 percent of all violations in family shelters, and 91 percent of all Severe violations in family shelters. In contrast, Certified shelters comprise 46 percent of all family units and adult beds, and accounted for only 20 percent of all violations, and 11 percent of Severe violations found during the Shelter Inspection Initiative.

Table 1: New York State Shelter Inspection Initiative Summary of Findings¹

Shelter Breakdown				Violations Breakdown			
Type	Shelter Count	% of all family units/adult beds	% of Total Violations	Total	Severe	Significant	Unsatisfactory
Certified	151	46%	20%	5,088	493	1,432	3,163
Adult Shelter	91	33%	5%	1,215	129	331	755
Single Adult	91	33%	5%	1,215	129	331	755
Family Shelter	60	13%	15%	3,873	364	1,101	2,408
Tier II Family Shelter	60	13%	15%	3,873	364	1,101	2,408
Uncertified	765	54%	80%	20,727	3,851	5,566	11,310
Adult Shelter	129	18%	9%	2,402	301	484	1,617
Adult Family	12	3%	2%	426	34	91	301
Adult Family Hotel	7	2%	2%	611	88	129	394
Single Adult	110	13%	5%	1,365	179	264	922
Family Shelter	636	36%	71%	18,325	3,550	5,082	9,693
Cluster Site	380	11%	45%	11,595	2,542	3,329	5,724
Hotel	73	10%	11%	2,966	475	836	1,655
Tier II “Look Alike”	183	15%	15%	3,764	533	917	2,314
Totals	916	100%	100%	25,815	4,344	6,998	14,473

¹ Violations are current as of April 28 2016

In addition to total violations, the number of Severe violations is also an important measure of shelter quality. The evaluation included an analysis of violations at four different volume ranges: zero violations; one to five Severe violations; six to ten Severe violations; and more than ten Severe violations. The contrast between the performance of Certified and Uncertified shelters is pronounced when the volume of Severe violations is compared, as shown in table 2 below.

Table 2: Volume of Severe Violations among Certified and Uncertified Shelters

Total Severe Violations	0 Severe		1 to 5 Severe		6 to 10 Severe		> 10 Severe	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Certified	74	49%	49	32%	17	11%	11	7%
Uncertified	216	28%	290	38%	142	19%	117	15%
Total	290	32%	339	37%	159	17%	128	14%

As indicated in table 2, Certified shelters are far less likely to have Severe violations than are Uncertified shelters. 49 percent of Certified shelters have at zero Severe violations of health, safety and sanitary standards, as compared with 28 percent of Uncertified shelters.

Also, Uncertified shelters are more likely to have a high volume (six to ten) of Severe violations of health, safety and sanitary standards than are Certified shelter – 19 percent of Uncertified shelters have five or more Severe violations, whereas only 11 percent of Certified shelters have between six and ten Severe violations.

Uncertified shelters are also more likely to have a very high volume (more than 10) of Severe violations of health, safety, and sanitary standards. 15 percent of Uncertified shelters have more than 10 Severe violations, as compared with 7 percent of Certified shelters.

SHELTER SECURITY AND FIRE SAFETY

State regulations require that all shelters ensure residents' safety and security. Title 18 NYCRR 900.11 and 491.8 require Certified shelters to establish and maintain adequate surveillance of the grounds, facility, and residents within the shelter. OTDA has historically required Certified shelters to include specific provisions that help to ensure this requirement is met. These required provisions vary based on the type of shelter, but typically include measures such as closed-circuit television surveillance, stationed security guards at all times, monitoring of all entrances, metal detectors at entrances, sign-in and sign-out log books, etc. These are basic, prudent security standards that all shelters should follow. However, inspectors discovered numerous instances of violations of these basic standards that affected the safety and security of shelter residents across New York State. Inspectors identified over 4,000 instances where shelters violated this standard of practice, with 1,081 (27 percent) classified as Severe, 1,110 (27 percent) classified as Significant, and 1,832 (46 percent) classified as Unsatisfactory.

Photo 1: A homemade shank found during the inspection of a Bronx cluster site.



Photo 2: A door that had been broken for several months at a Brooklyn cluster site apartment.



Inspection reports detailed specific incidents in this category, including the following examples:

- An Uncertified family shelter in the Bronx had only one security guard on site to monitor and protect 184 people. Moreover, many surveillance cameras were not operational, and because there was only one security guard at all times, no hourly rounds were conducted throughout the facility.
- An upstate family shelter in Syracuse had no fire safety plan, no available fire escape, no security guards, no cameras, and not enough beds for all shelter residents.
- A homemade shank was found at a cluster site in the Bronx.
- An intoxicated man who was not a resident was able to gain entry to a Bronx cluster site where he harassed and verbally assaulted occupants.
- Inspectors found the lock broken and the security guard asleep at his desk, down the hall from the door. Additionally, there was no sign-in at the desk enabling security to keep track of individuals coming and going throughout the day.

The majority of safety and security-related violations occurred in Uncertified shelters. For example, inspectors recorded 44 incidents where shelters did not have security cameras on the premises. Of these violations, 40 were located at Uncertified family shelters, half of which were cluster sites. Moreover, there were seven instances of weapons found in shelters, all of which were in New York City. Six of the weapons were found in Uncertified family shelters (four in hotels, two at cluster sites) and the other weapon was found at a Certified adult shelter.

As shown in Table 3, cluster sites alone comprised approximately 50 percent of all safety and security-related violations with 2,008 total. Nearly 60 percent of cluster site safety and security-related violations were classified as either Severe or Significant.

Table 3: Safety and Security-Related Violations by Shelter Type

Shelter Type	Total	Severe	Significant	Unsatisfactory
Certified	533	83	164	286
Tier II Family Shelter	313	53	91	169
Single Adult	220	30	73	117
Uncertified	3,490	998	946	1,546
Cluster Sites	2,008	667	526	815
Tier II “Look Alike”	593	128	159	306
Hotel	448	123	144	181
Single Adult	299	49	73	177
Adult Family Hotel	92	23	32	37
Adult Family	50	8	12	30
Total	4,023	1,081	1,110	1,832

During the New York State Shelter Inspection Initiative, State inspectors recorded 81 instances where drugs, including marijuana and cocaine, were found in shelters. The majority of these violations took place in Uncertified shelters, often in cluster sites and hotels. Although shelters should have measures in place to prevent it from occurring, at times drug use is present and jeopardizes the security of shelter residents. A recent report by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene found that drug overdose was the leading cause of death for the city’s homeless and that drug abuse deaths were higher among homeless individuals in shelters than those living on the streets.²

² New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. (2016). Tenth Annual Report on Homeless Deaths. Retrieved April 30, 2016 from http://www.capitalnewyork.com/sites/default/files/HomelessDeathsLL63%20report_%202014-2015.pdf

Photo 3: Evidence of drug use (cocaine) in a Bronx cluster site unit.



The need to improve safety and security in shelters is highlighted by recent investigative journalism reports. The March 2016 NY1 News analysis of 1,700 incident reports found that 552 of the 826 incidents New York City labeled as “violent” last year took place in family shelters — most of them involving child abuse or domestic violence. In addition, the analysis found there were least 31 overdoses and 25 arrests for drug possession, use, or sale at homeless shelters in 2015.³

Uncertified family shelters were found to have the most safety and security-related issues that were classified as Severe, the most prevalent of which was the shelter lacking any State-certified security guards. Specifically, cluster sites accounted for a majority of all Severe safety and security-related violations, including 61 cases in which the doors to access the facility, including roof access, could not be locked and therefore allowed non-residents easy access to resident units. When looking at common safety and security-related violations across all severity levels, an inability for staff to quickly communicate with residents in the case of emergencies, missing or non-functioning security cameras, and locks in various levels of working condition were also notable violations.

Fire safety is of utmost importance to ensuring the health and well-being of shelter residents. While localities such as New York City have their own building and fire codes that address the safety needs of the general population, the needs of the shelter residents may require enhanced fire safety measures. New York State has the statutory authority to require these measures, an authority which has been acknowledged by New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS). OTDA has required that all shelters, regardless of size, have fire safety plans, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, filled and recently inspected fire extinguishers, emergency exit lighting, and access to a second means of egress.

³ Gross, Courtney. (2016). Unsafe Haven: Drug Use Rampant at City Homeless Shelters. TWC News/NY1. Retrieved April 30, 2016 from <http://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/politics/2016/03/16/unsafe-haven--drug-use-rampant-at-city-homeless-shelters.html>

All shelters are also required to hold frequent fire drills. In addition, depending on the size and type of shelter, OTDA may require additional fire safety measures, such as hard-wired smoke detectors and a loudspeaker system for evacuating the building quickly in the case of fire.

As shown in Table 4, inspectors identified more than 3,400 violations related to the fire safety standards during the New York State Shelter Inspection Initiative, including 1,866 (55 percent) Severe, 593 Significant (17 percent), and 954 (28 percent) Unsatisfactory violations. Moreover, Uncertified shelters accounted for 3,061 (90 percent) of the fire safety violations, including 91 percent of the Severe fire safety violations. One notable example of extensive fire safety violations was at an Uncertified family shelter in Brooklyn where inspectors identified 95 percent of its smoke detectors as non-functioning or non-operational.

Table 4: Fire Safety-Related Violations by Shelter Type

Shelter Type	Total	Severe	Significant	Unsatisfactory
Certified	352	160	72	120
Tier II Family Shelter	211	108	37	66
Single Adult	141	52	35	54
Uncertified	3,061	1,706	521	834
Cluster Site	1,843	1,097	285	461
Tier II “Look Alike”	475	258	81	136
Hotel	327	190	60	77
Single Adult	249	94	50	105
Adult Family Hotel	115	45	33	37
Adult Family	52	22	12	18
Total	3,413	1,866	593	954

Photo 4: Burn marks near a lighting fixture indicated electrical failures and a serious fire hazard.



Photo 5: A fire escape was detached from a 3rd floor unit.



Fire safety violations accounted for 43 percent of all Severe violations, the most prevalent of which was major impediments to residents safely entering and exiting units in the event of a fire (248 Severe instances). Other common fire safety violations classified as Severe included non-functioning or non-existent smoke detectors in resident units and fire safety plans that were not approved by local fire departments. Specifically, there were 189 cases in which a majority of a facility's smoke detectors were defective or missing and 149 cases in which a majority of a facility's fire extinguishers were missing or had expired.

STRUCTURAL DEFICIENCIES

A shelter that is not structurally sound can pose a serious threat to the health and safety of occupants. During the course of the Shelter Inspection Initiative, the State took immediate action in 116 apartment units in light of structural problems that posed imminent danger.

Evidence of structural deficiencies included poor conditions related to the building's façade (e.g. holes, cracks, pointing), mechanical hardware (e.g. boilers, heating and cooling systems, elevators), and infrastructure (e.g. roof damage, improper drainage). Examples of violations include the following:



Photo 6: The appearance of major structural problems required an engineering assessment at an upstate Uncertified adult shelter.

- A family hotel in the Bronx that had substantial plumbing deterioration, and as a result half of the units were without access to hot water;
- Over 40 cases in which the façade of a building was in need of extensive repairs for roof leaks and cracks on the exterior walls; and
- A Bronx cluster site where broken and warped 2x4s were used to support a sinking bathtub on the floor directly above; had the tub fallen, it would have landed on the building's main gas line.

As shown in Table 5, inspectors found over 1,900 violations related to structural deficiencies, including 204 cases that were classified as Severe. 83 percent (1,602) of all structural-related violations were found in Uncertified shelters. Specifically, 49 percent (944) were discovered in cluster site shelters, of which approximately 46 percent were classified as either Severe or Significant.

Table 5: Structural-related violations by shelter type

Shelter Type	Total	Severe	Significant	Unsatisfactory
Certified	326	37	96	193
Tier II Family Shelter	166	19	56	91
Single Adult	160	18	40	102
Uncertified	1,602	167	512	923
Cluster Site	944	114	319	511
Tier II "Look Alike"	275	18	79	178
Single Adult	174	16	46	112
Hotel	157	16	55	86
Adult Family Hotel	37	3	8	26
Adult Family	15	-	5	10
Total	1,928	204	608	1,116

Photo 7: Facility-wide water damage that was likely the result of the failing roof. Flashing in disrepair and water pooling up on the roof indicated improper drainage.



Photo 8: Rotting and corroding window lintels, peeling and chipping paint, as well as rodent feces.



Other common structural deficiencies that inspectors reported as Severe included cracks in the walls or the building's façade, evidence of extensive water stains or water damage and substantial damage to the roof of the facility. There were 73 cases of leaky roofs of which 22 were classified as Severe. The extent of these structural deficiencies, and the threats they pose, call for heightened State oversight.



Photo 9: Due to extensive water damage to the ceilings and walls of this Bronx cluster site, the bathroom of this unit was collapsing in. A Pringles can was used to keep the ceiling from collapsing on the tenants.



Photo 10: The exposed bottom of a bathtub in a Bronx cluster site where broken 2x4s were used to support it. Had the tub fallen it would have landed on the building's main gas line.

SANITARY CONDITIONS AND OTHER LIVING STANDARDS

There were over 15,129 habitability-related violations in the areas of sanitary conditions and other living standards; this represents 59 percent of all violations found during the Initiative. Proper sanitary conditions are defined as housing facilities that are (a) in proper operating condition, (b) may be used in privacy, and (c) are adequate for personal cleanliness and the disposal of human waste. This includes, but is not limited to, an uncontaminated water supply, adequate ventilation, no evidence of vermin and mold/mildew, and the functioning of essential household appliances (such as toilets, showers, or faucets).

Specific examples of unsanitary condition violations detailed in the inspection reports include the following:

- A Bronx cluster site with green and black mold in a unit where small children were present;
- A Bronx cluster site with Severe infestation and evidence of rat feces in a baby's crib; and
- A Bronx adult family hotel with only three operating bathrooms and showers available for 130 men.

As shown in Table 6, there were over 9,000 violations related to unacceptable sanitary conditions, of which 76 percent (6,932) were found at Uncertified shelters. Of all violations related to sanitary conditions, 309 involved cases of insect or rodent infestation, and 1,180 involved the presence of mold and mildew. 54 percent of these mold and mildew violations were classified as Severe or Significant. Evidence of peeling and bubbling paint, which could contain lead, can be a sign of water damage and was also prevalent in the shelters (480 violations).



Photo 11: Rat feces were found in a baby's crib. The mother told inspectors that rather than allow her baby to sleep in the crib where mice have been, she sleeps with the child in her own bed.



Photo 12: A dead baby rat on the stairwell at a Bronx cluster site.

Table 6: Breakdown of Violations Related to Sanitary Conditions

Shelter Type	Total	Severe	Significant	Unsatisfactory
Certified	2,204	87	645	1,472
Tier II Family Shelter	1,793	69	521	1,203
Single Adult	411	18	124	269
Uncertified	6,932	436	2,106	4,390
Cluster Site	3,737	310	1,321	2,106
Tier II “Look Alike”	1,314	55	318	941
Hotel	1,146	56	338	752
Single Adult	328	8	44	276
Adult Family Hotel	209	6	33	170
Adult Family	198	1	52	145
Total	9,136	523	2,751	5,862

The pictures below demonstrate the extent of the mold and mildew that inspectors found in certain shelter units. In many cases, young children were exposed to these hazardous conditions.



Photo 13: There was a large mold presence in a resident’s closet.



Photo 14: This bathroom for a family of five in this Bronx cluster site had been “under construction” for several months. The water in the bathtub did not turn on, and the family was forced to use a bowl to fill the tub in order to bathe each day.

Photo 15: An infant's crib was next to severe mold damage at a Bronx cluster site.



Photo 16: Water damage was so extreme that mold and mushrooms grew from the floor of this unit in this Bronx cluster site.



Of all sanitary violations related to sanitary conditions, the most Severe violations (199) and the most total violations (2,991) were with respect to poorly operating and unsanitary bathroom facilities. Evidence of these problems are below in photos 17 and 18.



Photo 17: A moldy bathtub at a Bronx cluster site apartment. The family in this unit was moved.



Photo 18: An unusable bathtub at an adult family hotel, which had only three working bathrooms and showers for over 130 men.

Reforming the Shelter Rate-Setting Process

In conducting the New York State Shelter Inspection Initiative, it became clear that shelter rates vary widely among shelter types and do not correlate with the quality or level of services provided. For example, the chart below indicates that in New York City, Certified Tier II family shelters on average receive a lower daily (per diem) rate than Uncertified shelters that use a similar congregate model. This is a concern, because Certified Tier II family shelters are required to provide a comprehensive package of supportive services, while the Uncertified “look-alike” shelters do not have the same regulatory mandate. The findings of the Shelter Inspection Initiative indicate that these Uncertified shelters are not providing the same level of services to shelter residents. As the chart below indicates, daily rates for emergency shelter in New York City can fluctuate between a \$55 and \$155 daily rate, and there is no indication that the disparity in these rates is related to the services provided in the shelter.

The State currently approves budgets upon which the rates are based for all Certified Tier II family shelters. The State lacks the authority to review rates of all other shelter types before they are established by local social services districts. This is notable because the State currently contributes 60 percent of the funding needed to operate family shelters in New York State (including federal TANF funding under the State’s control).

Enhanced involvement in the rate setting process will allow the State to avoid wasteful spending, while also ensuring that there are sufficient rates in place to maintain adequate services, case management, and security in shelters. For that reason, the State will adopt regulations that allow it to review and approve shelter rates for all shelters. Local districts will be required to enter into contracts with providers using these established and approved rates, which will be arrived at through analysis of proposed operating budgets and subsequent negotiations with local districts. These negotiations will ensure that the costs contributing to the approved rate are allowable by law and regulation, and necessary to the operation of the shelter.

Table 7: Variation of New York City Shelter Reimbursement Rates⁴

DHS SUBMITTED RATES	Distinct Count of Facility code	Minimum Daily Rate	Maximum Daily Rate
Adult Family Hotels	11	\$60	\$90
Adult Family	8	\$106	\$140
Cluster Sites	8	\$73	\$106
Direct Run	4	\$72	\$153
Family Hotels	46	\$55	\$117
Tier II “Look Alike”	31	\$90	\$148
Tier II Certified	33	\$67	\$155
Totals	141⁵		

⁴ Family Shelter Reimbursement Rates – January 2016. Submitted by the NYC DHS.

⁵ NYC groups cluster sites by provider. Thus, the total rates provided equals 406 shelter rates.

Concern with the non-contracted rates paid to shelter providers was cited in reports by the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI) in 2014 and the New York City Office of the Comptroller in 2015. The DOI report noted that in certain cases, landlords with multiple violations continue to earn full rent, often two to three times market rate, despite the substandard conditions.⁶ Based on information provided by the New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS), the average monthly rate for an apartment in a cluster site program is approximately \$2,451, while the market rate for non-DHS buildings in the same neighborhoods range from \$528 to \$1,200 a month.

⁶ DOI found seven of the 16 cluster site programs operate without a City contract. The lack of a contract makes it extremely difficult to successfully enforce the various health and safety codes.

Conclusion:

In his 2016 State of the State message, Governor Cuomo said:

“We have a true human crisis that is a litmus test for society’s compassion and government’s competence. There has been a recent explosion in the number of homeless people living on our streets. It is a human tragedy...it is imperative that we improve the conditions of the shelters and restore the public’s trust in the system. We need a true independent review, inspection, and action plan from objective experts to go forward.”

The State’s unprecedented Shelter Inspection Initiative is part of a sustained commitment to improve the conditions of life for the homeless – and those at risk of homelessness – in New York State. The violations of habitability and safety standards that have been identified through the Shelter Inspection Initiative will be addressed with shelter operators and local social service districts, and the Corrective Action Plans developed to address these problems will be rigorously enforced. Strengthened State oversight of the homeless shelter system is an important part of improving conditions in homeless shelters.

The challenges of improving conditions in homeless shelters in New York State will not be solved overnight. But in partnership with local social service districts, nonprofit organizations who serve the homeless population, homeless shelter providers, and the homeless themselves, the State will work tirelessly to make the system much better than it is today.

III. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: New York State Habitability and Safety Standards and Inspection Checklist

Habitability and Safety Standards

STANDARDS
1. <i>Structure and materials:</i> The structures must be structurally sound so as not to pose any threat to the health and safety of the occupants and so as to protect the residents from hazards.
2. <i>Access:</i> The housing must be accessible and capable of being utilized without unauthorized use of other private properties. Structures must provide alternate means of egress in case of fire.
3. <i>Space and security:</i> Each resident must be afforded adequate space and security for themselves and their belongings. Each resident must be provided with an acceptable place to sleep.
4. <i>Interior air quality:</i> Every room or space must be provided with natural or mechanical ventilation. Structures must be free of pollutants in the air at Levels that threaten the health of residents.
5. <i>Water Supply:</i> The water supply must be free from contamination.
6. <i>Sanitary Facilities:</i> Residents must have access to sufficient sanitary facilities that are in proper operating condition, may be used in privacy, and are adequate for personal cleanliness and the disposal of human waste.
7. <i>Thermal environment:</i> The housing must have adequate heating and/or cooling facilities in proper operating condition.
8. <i>Illumination and electricity:</i> The housing must have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and to support the health and safety of residents. Sufficient electrical sources must be provided to permit use of essential electrical appliances while assuring safety from fire.
9. <i>Food preparation and refuse disposal:</i> All food preparation areas must contain suitable space and equipment to store, prepare, and serve food in a sanitary manner.
10. <i>Sanitary condition:</i> The housing and any equipment must be maintained in sanitary condition.
<p>11. <i>Fire safety:</i> Both conditions below must be met to meet this standard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Each unit must include at least one battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detector, in proper working condition, on each occupied Level of the unit. Smoke detectors must be located, to the extent practicable, in a hallway adjacent to a bedroom. b. The public areas of all housing must be equipped with a sufficient number, but not less than one for each area, of battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detectors. Public areas include, but are not limited to, laundry rooms, day care centers, hallways, stairwells, and other common areas.
12. <i>Furniture:</i> All furniture is clean and in good working condition. Sleeping furniture must also be appropriate for the residents inhabiting the unit. For example, beds are available for all adults and cribs are available for infants.
13. <i>Case Management:</i> Does facility provide case management services? Are case files up to date?



Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

Habitability and Safety Standards for Temporary Housing Accommodations Inspection Checklist

Facility Name: _____
 Operator: _____
 Contact: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Owner: _____

Building Address: _____
 Shelter Type: _____ Certified Yes No
 Capacity: # of Beds _____ # of Units _____ # of Buildings: _____
 Population: _____ Targeted Services: _____
 Date(s) of Inspection: _____

Inspector(s): _____

Violation Severity Index	Breakdown of Violations by Severity	Corrective Action Required
Level 4- Life Threatening	Level 4=	
Level 3- Severe	Level 3=	
Level 2- Significant	Level 2=	
Level 1- Consequential	Level 1=	

STANDARD:	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
<p>I. Structure and materials: <i>The structures must be structurally sound so as not to pose any threat to the health and safety of the occupants and so as to protect the residents from hazards.</i></p>					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a facility has multiple buildings making up their program, a report will need to be completed for each separate building. List building 1, 2, 3, etc. after the facility name. 	
<p>A. Facade and Exterior Walls</p>						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A facade is generally one exterior side of a building, usually, but not always, the front. Pointing is the external part of mortar joints. It is the cement between the bricks.
1. Are there cracks in the walls or facade?						
2. Are there cracks in the foundation?						
3. Are the gutters intact?						
4. Is there adequate lighting?						
5. Are there any holes in the facade?						
6. Is there peeling paint?						
7. Is the pointing intact?						
8. Other:						

STANDARD:	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
<p>I. Structure and materials: The structures must be structurally sound so as not to pose any threat to the health and safety of the occupants and so as to protect the residents from hazards.</p>						
<p>B. Windows</p>						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Window Guards: fasten to the outside of the building over windows that can be opened. Usually on the 2nd floor and above. The guard will be able to open if the window opens onto a fire escape. Not required in all districts.
<p>1. Do the windows appear to be in alignment with the building?</p>						
<p>2. Do they have proper hardware?</p>						
<p>3. Where required, do the windows that open on the 2nd floor and above have window guards?</p>						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lintel is a structural horizontal block that spans the space or opening between two vertical supports. It is often found over portals, doors, windows, and fireplaces.
<p>4. Are there any broken windows?</p>						
<p>5. Do they need to be painted?</p>						
<p>6. Are the lintels intact?</p>						
<p>7. Other:</p>						
<p>C. Roof <i>(Only inspect if accessible and safe)</i></p>						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flat roof: These roofs usually have walkout access through a door or ladder up the side of the building. Look for pooled water on the roof.
<p>1. Does the chimney need repair?</p>						
<p>2. Is there proper drainage?</p>						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sloped roof: These roofs must be viewed from the street. Does the roof look bubbled or wavy? Are the shingles missing in spots or lifting up?
<p>3. Does the roof leak?</p>						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flashing, usually tin, sets around the chimney or sky lights to ward off water from seeping into the roof.
<p>4. Are there missing shingles or tiles?</p>						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A parapet is where the roof meets the walls of the building.
<p>5. Does the door to the roof close properly?</p>						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capping sets on top of the parapet and helps ward off water from seeping into the roof or walls.
<p>6. Does the door to the roof lock?</p>						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a roof is used as a fire exit and has a fire escape, the door should not be locked. It should have an alarm or security camera to alert staff that the door has been open.
<p>7. Is the parapet and capping intact?</p>						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the fire escape appear safe? Secured properly to the building? Not rusted out in areas?
<p>8. Are there holes in the roof surface?</p>						
<p>9. Are there skylights? Are they intact?</p>						
<p>10. Is the flashing intact?</p>						
<p>11. Is there security?</p>						
<p>12. Is there a working camera?</p>						
<p>13. Is there an alarm system?</p>						
<p>14. Is there a fire escape? Is it secure?</p>						
<p>15. Other:</p>						

STANDARD: <i>I. Structure and materials: The structures must be structurally sound so as not to pose any threat to the health and safety of the occupants and so as to protect the residents from hazards.</i>	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
D. Staircases						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand rails and stair risers can become loose and unsafe. If the stair case is metal, are there any large areas of rust or areas that have rusted through leaving holes in the metal? Nothing should ever be stored in a stairwell. All steps and landings should be free of all obstructions and debris.
1. Are they clean?						
2. Are there handrails?						
3. Are there loose stair risers (steps)?						
4. If carpeted, is it secure?						
5. Are they well lit?						
6. Are they rusted (metal staircases)						
7. Is the paint peeling, bubbling or chipping?						
8. Is there any mold, mildew or water stains?						
9. Are the staircases and landings free of all obstructions?						
10. Other:						
E. Mechanical						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most mechanical systems require regular inspections. The facility or building manager should be able to provide these inspections. Most inspections should be posted. HVAC: Heating, Ventilation and AC System. Can be all in one or separate units. Usually mounted on a flat roof or behind the building in a fenced in area. <i>Please put date of last inspection in the comment section.</i>
1. Does the elevator work?						
2. Does elevator have a current inspection?						
3. Are there surveillance monitors?						
4. Is there a working generator?						
5. Does generator have a current inspection?						
6. Is there a working HVAC system?						
7. Does HVAC system have a current inspection?						
8. Is there a boiler system?						
9. Does boiler work?						
10. Does boiler have a current inspection?						
11. Is the boiler room locked?						
12. Is the boiler room free of combustible storage?						
13. Other:						
STANDARD: Structure and Materials Standard Met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					Comments:	

STANDARD:	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
<p>II. Access: <i>The housing must be accessible and capable of being utilized without unauthorized use of other private properties. Structures must provide alternate means of egress in case of fire.</i></p>						
A. Grounds						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playgrounds: is the equipment safe and intact? Is the play area safe and clean? Is there adequate supervision of the children? This is for playgrounds on the property of the facility only.
1. Is there fencing? Is it safe?						
2. Is it free of obstructions, cracks and trip hazards?						
3. Is there a playground? Is it safe?						
4. Are the walkways safe and well lit?						
5. Is the parking area safe and well lit?						
6. Are exits onto public streets free from visibility obstructions?						
7. Are all building sides accessible to emergency equipment and easy evacuation?						
8. Other:						
B. Accessibility (ADA)						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADA Accessibility: Does the facility provide services for individuals with disabilities? Is there a ramp into the facility or can you walk in from ground level?
1. Is there a ramp into the facility?						
2. Is the ramp safe for use?						
3. Other:						
C. Main Entrance						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entrance doors should be able to keep people from the streets from wandering in. They can be equipped with electric locks that allow security staff to “buzz” people in. They should not be locked from the inside. If locked, they are to have emergency exit hardware called “Push bars”.
1. Do the doors open properly?						
2. Is the paint chipped or damaged?						
3. Are there adequate working knobs and hardware?						
4. Do the exterior doors swing outwards in the direction of egress?						
5. Do the doors lock from the outside?						
6. Do they have emergency push bars?						
7. Other:						
STANDARD: Access Standard Met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					Comments:	

STANDARD: III. Sanitary Facilities: Residents must have access to sufficient sanitary facilities that are in proper operating condition, may be used in privacy, and are adequate for personal cleanliness and the disposal of human waste.	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
A. Bathrooms (Communal)						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communal bathrooms are able to be used by all residents in the facility. Usually found in dorms or common areas in family facilities.
1. Do the doors close and lock properly?						
2. Are there working GFCI outlets?						
3. Is there an intact mirror?						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GFCI stands for Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter, and it means an outlet that can prevent electrical shock in wet locations such as bathrooms, kitchens and outdoor areas. A GFCI has two buttons: a test button and a reset button.
4. Is the paint peeling, bubbling or chipping?						
5. Are the sinks clean and working?						
6. Are the toilets or urinals working?						
7. Are the showers or tubs working?						
8. Any plumbing fixtures missing?						
9. Is there missing tiles or grout?						
10. Is bathroom maintained in a sanitary condition?						
11. Is there natural or mechanical ventilation?						
12. Is there any mold, mildew or water stains?						
13. Other:						
STANDARD: Sanitary Facilities Standard Met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					Comments:	
STANDARD: IV. Interior Air Quality: Every room or space must be provided with natural or mechanical ventilation.	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
A. Air Quality						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bathroom vents, kitchen range hoods and AC units should be clean and free of grease and dirt. Greasy vents will catch fire over a gas stove.
1. Does the ventilation or exhaust work?						
2. Are the dryers vented properly?						
3. Other:						

STANDARD: Interior Air Quality Standard Met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					Comments:	
STANDARD:	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
V. Interiors: Doorways, windows, ceilings, walls and floors must not have any serious defects such as severe bulging or leaning, large holes, loose surface materials, severe buckling, missing parts or other serious damage.						
A. Interior Walls						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excessive water stains are usually caused by a leak in the roof, wall or a ceiling or floor with a leaking pipe. Left unrepaired, they will lead to structural damage and black mold.
1. Do they have damage or holes?						
2. Is the paint peeling, bubbling or chipping?						
3. Are there outlets and switch plates?						
4. Are there water stains or damage?						
5. Other:						
B. Interior Windows						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All windows but especially bedroom windows should have blinds, shades or curtains for privacy. Some facilities will coat the inside of the windows with a film.
1. Is the paint peeling, bubbling or chipping?						
2. Are there screens in the windows that open? Do they fit? Are they ripped?						
3. Do they close and lock properly?						
4. Are there shades or coverings?						
5. Other:						
C. Interior Doors						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interior Access: The interior rooms must provide doors that are accessible and capable of being locked / unlocked from the inside. They should be capable of warding off drafts and unwanted vermin. Doors should close slowly as to not pinch fingers.
1. Do they close and lock properly?						
2. Are they missing hardware?						
3. Is the paint peeling, bubbling or chipping?						
4. Do they ward off drafts?						
5. Other:						
D. Floors						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rippled, warped and uneven floors are usually caused by water damage.
1. Are there any cracks, holes or trip hazards?						
2. Are the floors and carpets clean?						
3. Is there missing tiles or grout?						
4. Other:						

STANDARD: Interiors					Comments:	
Standard Met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
STANDARD:	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
VI. Sanitary Condition: <i>The housing and any equipment must be maintained in sanitary condition.</i>						
A. Appliances						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appliances should be clean and work properly. They should not be missing shelves and knobs. They should not be caked with grease or rotting food. If washers and dryers are supplied, the washers should not leak and the dryers should be vented to the outside of the building and free of lint buildup.
1. Are the stoves and refrigerators in good working condition?						
2. Do the stoves and refrigerators have all of their required shelves and knobs?						
3. Are the washer and dryers in working condition?						
4. Are dryer vents free of lint build up?						
5. Are the cabinets clean and intact?						
6. Are the microwaves in working condition?						
7. Do the stoves have working range hoods?						
8. Other:						
B. Interior Rooms						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vermin: wild mammals and birds that are believed to be harmful or that carry disease. e.g., rodents, feral cats and insects.
1. Are they clean?						
2. Are they free of vermin?						
3. Other:						
C. Interior Walls and Floors						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walls and floors should be clean and not have holes, mildew or water stains. Water stains indicate a leak.
1. Are they clean?						
2. Are rugs free of excessive stains?						
3. Is there any mold, mildew or water stains?						
4. Other:						
D. Interior Doors and Windows						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interior doors and windows should be able to close completely and lock if need be. They should not be dirty or have stains.
1. Are they clean?						
2. Is there any mold, mildew or water stains?						
3. Other:						

STANDARD: <i>VI. Sanitary Condition: The housing and any equipment must be maintained in sanitary condition.</i>	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
E. Cabinets:						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for leaking plumbing under the sinks. Is it causing damage or mold/mildew?
1. Are they clean?						
2. Is there any mold or mildew?						
3. Do they smell?						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under sinks is usually a good place to find evidence of vermin.
4. Any excessive water stains in the cabinets under the sinks?						
5. Other:						
F. Dorm Rooms						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dorm rooms should be clean and neat. They should provide adequate space and lighting for the residents.
1. Are they kept free of dirt and debris?						
2. Are the walls and ceilings clean?						
3. Are the window's sills free of obstructions?						
4. Is there adequate lighting?						
5. Is there adequate space?						
6. Is there storage for the resident's belongings?						
7. Are all exits / egress free from obstructions?						
8. Other						
G. Apartments						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the residents held accountable for the cleanliness of their space? Is it kept neat and clean or is it dirty? Does the family need help to clean and organize their belongings?
Unit / Apartment # _____						
1. Are they kept free of dirt and debris?						
2. Are the walls, floors and ceilings clean?						
3. Are the windows sills clean?						
4. Is there adequate lighting?						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the room well lit?
5. Is there adequate space?						
6. Are there signs of hoarding?						
7. Is the garbage maintained or overflowing?						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the front door and bathroom door close and lock properly?
8. Is there adequate space on the floor to enter and exit the apartment safely?						

STANDARD: <i>VI. Sanitary Condition: The housing and any equipment must be maintained in sanitary condition.</i>	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
G. Apartments cont.						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the stove, refrigerator, microwave work? Are they clean and have all of their required shelves and knobs?
9. Do windows have shades or blinds?						
10. Do the doors lock?						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the cabinets have adequate shelving, doors close and have all the required hardware?
11. Does the unit have adequate heat?						
12. Are there radiator covers?						
13. Do the pipes have insulation?						
14. Are there space heaters in the unit?						
Kitchen						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there range hoods over the stoves, are they clean and free from grease build up. Is the filter clean?
15. Are the appliances clean? Do they work?						
16. Are the cabinets in good shape?						
17. Are the range hoods clean?						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the toilet flush, and sink and tub drain completely? Are they missing hardware?
18. Is there food left out?						
Bathrooms						
19. Are the bathrooms kept clean?						
20. Does the sink, tub, toilet work?						
21. Are there any signs of mold or mildew?						
22. Other						
H. Staff Offices:						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pertinent Information: facilities should post a copy of the rules and regulations, certifications, inspection reports, schedules, menus, office hours, etc.
1. Are they kept clean?						
2. Is there adequate work space?						
3. Do files seem to be kept organized?						
4. Is personal information kept secure?						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The facility is to have the capability of receiving, sending and distributing all incoming and outgoing mail for the residents in the facility.
5. Is pertinent information posted?						
6. Is there a private space for confidential conversations?						
7. Is there incoming, outgoing and distribution of resident mail?						
8. Other						
STANDARD: Sanitary Condition Standard Met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					Comments:	

STANDARD: VII. Thermal Environment: <i>The housing must have adequate heating and/or cooling facilities in proper operating condition.</i>	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
A. Heating Elements / Radiators						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steam and hot water radiators and risers require insulation. Risers need to be at least 48in. off the floor. These radiators also require covers and should not have belongings stacked on them. • Electric heaters should have covers and not have dirty or debris on top of them. • Portable heaters are not allowed!
1. Do the heaters and radiators have covers?						
2. Do the pipes have insulation?						
3. Is there sufficient heat?						
4. Do the radiators leak?						
5. Are portable heaters being used?						
6. Other:						
B. Air Conditioning or Fans						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities do not have to provide air conditioning but if they do, they need to work correctly.
1. Does the facility provide AC units or fans?						
2. Do they work properly?						
3. Other:						
STANDARD: Thermal Environment Standard Met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					Comments:	
STANDARD: VIII. Water Supply: <i>The water supply must have an adequate flow and be clear and free of obvious debris.</i>	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
A. Water Supply						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure there is hot and cold water, that nothing is clogged and that the water looks clear.
1. Do all the water faucets work?						
2. Is there both hot and cold water?						
3. Do the toilets flush correctly?						
4. Do the tubs / showers clog?						
5. Does the water run clear from the faucets?						
6. Other:						
STANDARD: Water Supply Standard Met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					Comments:	

STANDARD: IX: Fire safety: Both conditions below must be met to meet this standard. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each unit must include at least one battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detector, in proper working condition, on each occupied level of the unit. Smoke detectors must be located, to the extent practicable, in a hallway adjacent to a bedroom. If the unit is occupied by hearing-impaired persons, smoke detectors must have an alarm system designed for hearing-impaired persons in each bedroom occupied by a hearing-impaired person. The public areas of all housing must be equipped with a sufficient number, but not less than one for each area, of battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detectors. Public areas include, but are not limited to, laundry rooms, day care centers, hallways, stairwells, and other common areas. 	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
A. Fire Safety						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smoke Detectors: Do they work when the button is pushed on them? Check to make sure the batteries have not been taken out of them.
1. Are there smoke detectors?						
2. Are the smoke detectors hardwired?						
3. Are the smoke detectors monitored at a fire panel?						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smoke detectors should be replaced once a year to be inspected for safety.
4. Are there carbon monoxide detectors outside all sleeping areas?						
5. Is there a sprinkler system?						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CO2 Detectors should be places outside of all sleeping areas in all facilities, units or apartment bedrooms when there is a gas stove, gas heating system or gas dryers being used.
6. Is sprinkler system partial or full?						
7. Is the system a wet or dry system?						
8. Is the main sprinkler valve accessible and secured open?						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sprinkler Heads: Make sure that sprinkler heads do not have paint or dirt/dust build up on them.
9. Are sprinkler heads clean?						
10. Are there extra sprinkler heads stored in the building?						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire Extinguishers: Are there fire extinguishers in all units, apartments, stairways, kitchens, etc.
11. Are there fire extinguishers on all floors and in common areas?						
12. Are the fire extinguishers inspected monthly by the facility?						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire drills should be performed on each shift (7-3) (3-11) (11-7) at least one day a month. In some districts, the local fire department is required to pull a drill.
13. Are the fire extinguishers expired?						
14. Are the fire extinguishers full? (In the green)						
15. Does the facility perform regular monthly						

fire drills?						
STANDARD: IX: Fire safety: Both conditions below must be met to meet this standard. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See full standard above 	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
16. Has the local fire department conducted a drill?						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pull stations should be on each floor by the exits as well as the front entrance and any other door on the first floor used as an emergency exit. In districts where it applies, the Evacuation Plan should indicate where everyone in the home or facility will be relocated to if the building is deemed unsafe. Evacuation routes: "You are Here" signs that show you where to exit the building from during an emergency. They should be posted in all rooms, hallways and units. Fire Guards: Shelters in NYC require the facilities to have fire guards. They are required to be certified by FDNY on how to evacuate a residential facility (F-24 certificate). If the facility has a monitoring panel, they are required to have guards with an F-80 certification which not only certifies them to evacuate the building but also to read and re-set the monitoring panel. Rest of State- the facility should have a training set up for staff on how to safely evacuate a building and for at least one staff on shift on how to use the fire panel. Fire Suppression System: Most adult shelters provide meals either by a catering company or they are cooked in a main kitchen. Only shelters with kitchens that have stoves are required to have a Fire Suppression System. Some people refer to them as Ansul Systems
17. Do they have pull stations at all exits?						
18. Is there a fire panel and do they have an outside monitoring company or is it connected directly to the local fire department?						
19. Is there a fire escape (2nd means of egress)						
20. If there is no fire escape, is there a 2nd staircase on the opposite side of the building?						
21. Does the facility have "In an Emergency, Do Not Use Elevator" signs posted on all floors by the elevator?						
22. Does the facility have exit signs that light up?						
23. Does the facility have emergency lighting?						
24. Does the facility have strobe lights to alert hearing impaired of a fire?						
25. Does the facility have Fire Safety Plans that have been approved by the local fire depart?						
26. Does the facility have an Evacuation and Disaster Plan that has been approved by the local fire department?						
27. Does the facility have evacuation routes posted?						
28. Does the facility have Fire Guards?						
29. If the facility has a kitchen where it prepares meals for residents, does it have a Fire Suppression System? (ansul system)						
30. Is there evidence of candle or incense use in rooms and dorms?						
31. Are portable heaters being used in rooms, dorms or offices?						
32. Other						

STANDARD: Fire Safety				Comments:		
Standard Met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
STANDARD: X. Illumination and Electricity: <i>The housing must have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and to support the health and safety of residents. Sufficient electrical sources must be provided to permit use of essential appliances while assuring safety from fire.</i>	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
A. Electrical						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for overloaded outlets, burnt or scorched outlets or cords. • Residential facilities are not supposed to use extension cords. • Plugging one power strip into another power strip is unsafe and can cause a fire. • Are there safety covers over outlets where there are small children?
1. Are there any hanging wires?						
2. Do all outlets have face plates?						
3. Do all lights turn on and off?						
4. Are there blown bulbs in exit areas?						
5. Do all lights have covers where needed?						
6. Do all kitchens and bathrooms have GFCI outlets near running water?						
7. Is there adequate lighting?						
8. Do all the outlets work and have safety covers if needed?						
9. Other:						
STANDARD: Illumination and Electricity				Comments:		
Standard Met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
STANDARD: XI. Furniture: All furniture is clean and in good working condition. Sleeping furniture must also be appropriate for the residents inhabiting the unit. For example, beds are available for all adults and cribs are available for infants.	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance

A. Furniture					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cribs should be provided for all children 2 years old and younger. 	
1. Are the beds and cribs in good condition?						
2. Are the dressers in good condition?						
STANDARD: XI. Furniture: All furniture is clean and in good working condition. Sleeping furniture must also be appropriate for the residents inhabiting the unit. For example, beds are available for all adults and cribs are available for infants.	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS: Definitions and Guidance	
3. Are the mattresses in good condition?					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there any evidence of bed bugs? Are beds bent or warped? Are storage lockers large enough to store a few days of clothes and a coat? 	
4. Are there enough beds for everyone?						
5. Are the tables and chairs in good condition?						
6. Are there enough dining chairs for everyone?						
7. If the facility provides couches for residents in common areas, are they in good condition?						
8. If the facility provides end tables or coffee tables for residents or in common areas, are they in good condition?						
9. Do they provide storage or lockers?						
10. Bunk beds: are they in good shape?						
11. Other:						
B. Linens / Personal Care						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the facility provide linens and personal care items to the families in need? For families with infants: Is there emergency formula, food and diapers?
1. Does the facility provide adequate personal care items?						
2. Blankets and Pillows?						
3. Sheets and Towels?						
4. Emergency Food?						
5. Personal Care Kits?						
6. Infant food, formula and diapers?						
7. Other:						
STANDARD: Furniture					Comments:	
Standard Met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						

STANDARD <i>XII. Space and Security: Except where the shelter is intended for day use only, the shelter must provide each program participant in the shelter with an acceptable place to sleep and adequate space and security for themselves and their belongings.</i>	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
A. Space						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All residents are to be provided space to store their belongings. Many facilities limit the amount of personal belongings in a facility. Some facilities have meals in shifts to allow for adequate space for everyone to eat. The facility should provide leisure space to individuals who do not have their own unit. The space should be furnished and large enough to support activities safely.
1. Does the individual have their own bed?						
2. Does the individual have space to store their belongings?						
3. In an adult facility, is there at least 3 feet between beds?						
4. If there is a dining room, is there enough seats for everyone to sit down and eat? Do they eat in shifts?						
5. Is there space for leisure activities?						
6. Other:						
B. Security						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security Guard: To serve as a security guard, the individual must have taken a security guard training class and carry a security guard license. Outside of New York City, many facilities have safety guards in place of security guards who monitor the shelter's daily activities. Incident Reports: Do they indicate there are many disputes or illegal activity? Do they require regular police intervention? On the overnight shift (11p-7a) there should be enough staff to help evacuate the building in an emergency. There should also be enough staff to allow for one staff to be at the desk while one staff does rounds in each building.
1. Does the facility have security guards with NYS certification?						
2. Is there a security plan for safety?						
3. Are there metal detectors or wands?						
4. Are there X-ray machines?						
5. Are there security cameras?						
6. Do cameras record (at least 2 weeks) and have playback capability?						
7. Do the cameras cover the inside and outside of the building?						
8. Are there blind spots in the camera coverage?						
9. Does the facility have a sign-in/sign-out log?						
10. Does the facility keep emergency contact information at the security desk?						
11. Does the facility perform hourly rounds and log them in a logbook?						
12. Does the facility keep a record of incident reports?						

13. Do the facility's incident reports indicate major problems?						
STANDARD <i>XII. Space and Security: Except where the shelter is intended for day use only, the shelter must provide each program participant in the shelter with an acceptable place to sleep and adequate space and security for themselves and their belongings.</i>	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
14. Does it appear the facility has adequate staff coverage?						
15. Can staff communicate with each other and with the residents in the case of an emergency? (walkie-talkie / bull horn, etc.)						
16. Other						
STANDARD: Space and Security Standard Met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					Comments:	
STANDARD <i>XIII. Food Preparation and Refuse Disposal: All food preparation areas must contain suitable space and equipment to store, prepare and serve food in a sanitary manner.</i>	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
A. Food Preparation and Storage						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities that do not have individual kitchens or supply meals should supply areas for individuals to heat up food. Refrigerators should be able to maintain a temperature at or below 47° degrees and 32° degrees for a freezer. Facility refrigerators should contain a thermometer that will display the temperature. In NYS all individuals responsible for the handling and storage of food to others in the community (facility) must have a current PPD on file.
1. Do all units, apartments and facilities have adequate refrigeration for food?						
2. Do all units, apartments and facilities have adequate storage space for food?						
3. Does the food appear to be stored properly?						
4. Is there adequate counter space to prepare and serve food?						
5. Are the storage areas and counter areas clean?						
6. Does all staff or residence responsible for						

handling food have a current PPD screen?						
7. Other:						
STANDARD: Space and Security Standard Met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					Comments:	
STANDARD <i>XIV. Case Management: Does the facility provide case management services?</i>	Applicable Y/N	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Severity Level	COMMENTS:	Definitions and Guidance
A. Case Management						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Independent Living Plan (ILP) is a compilation of goals developed in cooperation with the resident and designed to help the family or individual gain self-sufficiency and move to housing other than temporary housing. Most facilities do not have "Housing Plans" but they should be able to show that they have started the process of helping the resident find alternate housing from that of the shelter. Such as applications, visits to vacant apartments, applying for required identification to apply for housing, etc.
1. Are needs assessed w/in 24-hours?						
2. Are ILP's completed w/in 10 days?						
3. Are housing plans started w/in 10 days?						
4. Are plans reviewed bi-weekly?						
5. Are admissions and discharges up to date?						
6. Are resident rules and rights made available?						
7. Is there a complaint log?						
8. Is there a childcare program?						
9. Other						
STANDARD: Case Management Standard Met? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					Comments:	
Miscellaneous Findings						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most facilities have a designated smoking area outside of the facility. Does it appear they are using restricted areas to smoke in? Is there evidence of drug or alcohol use at the facility?
1. Are there any outstanding violations / inspections?						
2. State?						
3. Local?						
4. NYC Dept. of Buildings?						
5. FDNY or Local Fire Department?						
6. Is there evidence of smoking in restricted areas of facility?						
7. Is there evidence of drugs or alcohol use in the facility?						
8. Is there evidence of weapons in the facility?						
9. Other:						

Overall Comments: _____

APPENDIX B: Inspection Process and Protocol

Through a multiagency collaboration, headed by OTDA, over 170 inspectors from DHSES/OFPC, HCR, OGS, and OPWDD, were deployed throughout the State to conduct rigorous and comprehensive shelter inspections. OTDA held several trainings for those program staff, who would assist specialized physical plant inspectors during shelter inspections.

Inspector teams - which ranged from two to four inspectors depending on the size of the shelter - worked collaboratively to conduct inspections. If a shelter was found to have life-threatening deficiencies, an inspector team would revisit the shelter with the assistance of a structural engineer and/or mechanical engineer who had the expertise needed to determine whether the deficiencies required immediate remediation. Moreover, in cases where needed, once these deficiencies were corroborated by the additional engineer, OTDA contracted with a third-party contractor to confirm or reject the recommendations of the inspector team, and determined if units should be taken offline and/or families should be moved.

All inspection reports are reviewed by OTDA staff to ensure accuracy. Inspection reports with Level 2 and Level 3 violations are reviewed by an OTDA physical plant inspector, who conducted either a desk audit and/or physical plant inspection of the violation to confirm severity of the violations.

After determining the violations and the remediation required, OTDA will issue a report to the local social services district with details on the violations and remediation needed, and requiring correction within the time period relevant to the Levels of violations noted.

Definition of Severity Levels

The purpose of the in-depth inspection review was to establish a baseline of shelter conditions, develop a clear roadmap for mediation, and in the case of structural problems in particular, to develop prescriptive and enforceable corrective action plans. The severity Levels were defined as follows:

Satisfactory: A condition in which a building, building component or individual item performs sufficiently.

Unsatisfactory (Level 1): A condition in which a building, building component or individual item is functional but in need of minor repair - typically fixable without substantial expenditure.

Significant (Level 2): A condition in which a building, building component or individual item performs as designed, but needs repair or other action to meet habitability standards or make it structurally sound.

Severe (Level 3): A condition in which a building, building component or individual item needs major repair or other action to meet habitability standards in order to function, and without repair will likely jeopardize the safety of shelter residents.

SAMPLE REPORT: SHELTER NAME - SHELTER ADDRESS - SHELTER TYPE - CAPACITY			
Facility Violations			
ID	Question	Comment	Date of Inspection
Level 1 Violations - Facility Findings			
1	Are there cracks in the walls or facade?	Cracks were observed around the front door.	03/03/2016
4	Is there adequate lighting?	Cover to outdoor light broken.	03/03/2016
5	Are there any holes in the Facade?	Holes were observed around the front door.	03/03/2016
18	Does the chimney need repair?	The chimney needs repointing. Staff indicated there had been a leak recently.	03/03/2016
25	Are there holes in the roof surface?	Patch work was evident on the roof.	03/03/2016
26	Are there skylights? Are they intact?	The skylight had been patched.	03/03/2016
84	Are the sinks clean and working?	The sink on the first floor was leaking at the faucet and when water was turned on it was very difficult to turn it off. The knob was stripped.	03/03/2016
85	Are the toilets or urinals working?	In the 1st and 4th floor bathrooms, the toilet seat did not fit the size of the toilet.	03/03/2016
94	Does the ventilation or exhaust work?	No ventilation on 4th floor.	03/03/2016
107	Are there shades or coverings?	In many rooms, windows were covered in plastic to keep the draft out.	03/03/2016
108	Other - Interior Windows	Window sills were being used to store personal items.	03/03/2016
113	Do they ward off drafts?	Some residents complained of drafts and had insulated door frames with linens.	03/03/2016
114	Other - Interior Doors	The door to Unit 204 was damaged at the bottom and in need of repair.	03/03/2016
151	Do files seem to be kept organized?	Files organization needs improvement.	03/03/2016
205	Is there evidence of candle or incense use in rooms and dorms?	A candle was found in one room.	03/03/2016
213	Do all lights have covers where needed?	Some lights were missing covers.	03/03/2016
216	Do all the outlets work and have safety covers if needed?	A number of outlets in the units did not work.	03/03/2016
227	Do they provide storage or lockers?	Some units had lockers. Some units had no storage/dresser or locker.	03/03/2016
240	Does the individual have space to store their belongings?	Rooms were very small and did not allow for sufficient storage.	03/03/2016
257	Does the facility keep a record of incident reports?	Only a log of incidents was kept. No indication of follow up or resolution was available.	03/03/2016
260	Can staff communicate with each other and with the residents in the case of an emergency? (walkie-talkie / bull horn, etc.)	Staff has no way to communicate with residents in the event of an emergency besides knocking on doors.	03/03/2016
272	Are ILPs completed w/in 10 days?	Files were not comprehensive. Not all residents seemed to meet with staff regularly. The case manager was not present during the inspection, though front desk staff indicated she is usually on site.	03/03/2016
273	Are housing plans started w/in 10 days?	Files were not comprehensive.	03/03/2016
80	Do doors close and lock properly?	Many doors did not shut properly. Some residents had towels or cloth under/over the door to keep draft out. Especially on the 4th floor because the door to the roof was left open after City inspection last week.	03/03/2016
80	Do they close and lock properly? (Form 1 Q 39,50, 72)	Not all windows shut properly.	03/03/2016
25	Are there trash containers w/lids?	Trash in bags in front of the building. Photo to be emailed.	03/03/2016
41	Are the fixtures (GFI Outlets) intact?	Not present in bathrooms.	03/03/2016
58	Do they work?	A couple of rooms were cold and it was unclear if heat was working properly. Case manager's office was quite drafty and cold though radiator was working. Staff indicated complaints are usually about rooms being too hot.	03/03/2016
59	Is there sufficient heat?	Case manager's office was cold. There is a door leading to outside that is not flush to wall. Radiator does work. Most rooms were warm. One was cool but window was open.	03/03/2016
74	Is the paint peeling, bubbling or chipping?	One door, to Room 204 had bubbling/damage at the bottom of the door.	03/03/2016
98	Light Covers (where needed)	Some light covers were missing.	03/03/2016

Level 2 Violations - Facility Findings			
60	Are there any cracks, holes or trip hazards?	Floor outside third floor bathroom was soft and the floor was not even to the entrance to the bathroom.	03/03/2016
64	Are there outlets and switch plates?	Not all outlets in all rooms were working.	03/03/2016
10	Do the windows appear to be in alignment with the building?	Some windows did not appear to close properly.	03/03/2016
86	Are the showers or tubs working?	The showers on the 1st and 2nd floors were dripping. The shower on the 3rd floor had no shower head and did not appear to turn on.	03/03/2016
87	Any plumbing fixtures missing?	No shower head on 3rd floor bathroom.	03/03/2016
92	Other - Bathrooms (Communal)	The facility had one bathroom per floor (the building had four floors) with one shower, one sink and one toilet. Maintenance staff indicated that there was another bathroom on some floors that were closed off due to a leak problem.	03/22/2016
105	Are there screens in the windows that open? Do they fit? Are they ripped?	No screens were observed.	03/03/2016
160	Is there sufficient heat?	The case manager's office was cold. A door leading to the outside appeared to be causing a draft.	03/03/2016
209	Are there any hanging wires?	The 4th floor bathroom had a wire hanging off of a light fixture on the ceiling.	03/03/2016
244	Other - Space	The ability to enter and exit the dorm rooms safely was compromised as the units were very small.	03/03/2016
287	Is there evidence of drugs or alcohol use in the facility?	A marijuana odor was present in some areas of the building.	03/03/2016
Level 3 Violations - Facility Findings			
108	Fire Escapes (2nd egress)	No fire escape. Only appears to be one way out. Some rooms are so small there is only room to put beds right up against the window.	03/03/2016
22	Does the door to the roof close properly?	The roof door has been kept open since a city inspection several days ago. Staff were unable to close it.	03/09/2016
31	Is there a fire escape? Is it secure?	The building had no fire escape.	03/03/2016
54	Does boiler have a current inspection?	The last boiler inspection was unknown.	03/03/2016
76	Do the doors lock from the outside?	The door was unlocked when inspectors arrived and no one was at the front desk. Front desk staff person was down the hall with head on desk and said the lock had recently been broken. It was only after the inspectors arrived onsite that the door was locked.	03/03/2016
158	Do the heaters and radiators have covers?	No radiator covers were present.	03/03/2016
159	Do the pipes have insulation?	Pipes do not have insulation	03/03/2016
187	Are the fire extinguishers inspected monthly by the facility?	The extinguishers on each floor were last inspected in May 2015.	03/03/2016
200	Does the facility have Fire Safety Plans that have been approved by the local fire depart?	No evidence of a fire safety plan.	03/03/2016
207	Other - Fire Safety	One resident was using an electric frying pan.	03/03/2016
247	Is there a security plan for safety?	It was unknown if the facility had a security plan for safety.	03/03/2016

Apartments and Dorms All Levels			
Unit	Question	Comment	Date of Inspection
Level 1 Violations - Unit Findings			
202	Is there adequate space?	Insufficient space for family composition.	02/11/2016
Level 3 Violations - Unit Findings			
302	Does the unit have adequate heat?	This room was cold; the heat was not working and a window would not shut tightly.	02/11/2016

SAMPLE

APPENDIX C: Glossary of Terms

Shelter Type Terms	Definition
<u>Families with Children</u>	
<i>Certified Family Shelter</i> (i.e. Tier II):	This term refers to facilities that provide shelter and services to ten or more homeless families including, at a minimum, private rooms, access to three nutritional meals a day, supervision, assessment services, permanent housing preparation services, recreational services, information and referral services, health services, and child-care services. These shelters are required to submit operational plans that must be approved by the State of New York and undergo yearly inspections to ensure safety and quality of service provision, as well as take part in a recertification process every five years.
<i>Uncertified Family Shelter</i> (i.e. Tier II "Look Alike"):	According to DHS, a Tier II "Look Alike" functions like a Tier II facility except, unlike a Tier II facility, it is not certified by OTDA, usually because it lacks a recreational center and/or daycare facilities on-site.
<i>Hotel/Motel:</i>	This category refers to less structured housing used for small families - such as single parents with no more than two children. These facilities are not certified by the State of New York, and as their name implies are located in former (or current) commercial hotels and motels.
<i>Cluster Sites:</i>	This term refers to privately owned apartment buildings that are used as shelters to house homeless families. A cluster site shelter may be one or more apartments in one or multiple buildings, owned and/or operated by one landlord and/or provider. These units are not State-certified.
<u>Shelters for Adults</u>	
<i>Certified Single Adult:</i>	Shelters that generally house 20 or more single adult males or females. These shelters are certified by the State of New York and undergo yearly inspections to ensure safety and quality of service provision as well as take part in a recertification process every four years.
<i>Uncertified Single Adult:</i>	Shelters that house less than 20 single adult males or females. Some are larger than 19 but may be uncertified for a number of reasons, including not accepting State reimbursement, not having the services required of certified shelters, or not being open a twenty- four hour basis (or a lesser period, if the certificate is issued for a period of less than four years).
<i>Adult Family:</i>	This term refers to shelters used to house families that are made up of more than one adult over the age of 18. These families are often a mother/father and an adult child, or intimate partner relationships. These families are referred to facilities with apartment or unit style accommodations.

NEW YORK STATE SHELTER INSPECTION REPORT

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS



**Office of Temporary
and Disability Assistance**