

Honolulu Police Dept. & Dept. of Community Services Homeless Outreach and Navigation for Unsheltered (HONU)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS HONU?

- 1) What is HONU?
 - a. **HONU** stands for **Homeless Outreach and Navigation for Unsheltered (Persons)**
 - b. HONU is an area-based program that connects unsheltered persons to the kind of housing, shelter, or treatment program that best fits the needs of the individual.
 - c. HONU also invokes the image of the traveling Hawaiian turtle that helps to protect and connect people to resources.

- 2) Is HONU a tent city or safe zone?
 - a. No, HONU is not a tent city, encampment or a safe zone.
 - b. HONU is in alignment with the strategies of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness that emphasize safe, stable, and permanent housing as the key to ending homelessness.

- 3) What is the difference between a safe zone/tent city and HONU?
 - a. A safe zone or tent city is a semi-permanent area lacking shelter fit for human habitation, and without an exit or service strategy.
 - b. The HONU is a temporary (60 to 90 days) navigation center with services in a setting that is dignified for persons experiencing homelessness. There are rules and services set in place to assist those wanting to transition from homelessness to shelter, housing, and services.

- 4) Is HONU a long-term shelter?
 - a. No, HONU is a mobile navigation center designed to provide immediate triage services to persons experiencing homelessness and connecting them to services and shelter that are most appropriate for their needs.
 - b. It is temporary in nature, meant to be in a community between 60 to 90 days then move on to the next community.

- 5) What are the benefits to my community for having a HONU in it?
 - a. In the communities where HONU is implemented, HPD will actively enforce existing laws, rules, and regulations for use of public spaces within a two- to five-mile radius.
 - b. Through HONU, persons experiencing homelessness will have the opportunity to address their housing and shelter needs.
 - c. At HONU, various service providers may set up their own mobile case management offices to work with their clients within the community being served.

- 6) What is the capacity in the HONU?
 - a. 60 to 100 participants

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- 7) What happens if HONU reaches a maximum of 100 people?
 - a. The maximum occupancy per tent structure is 10 persons.
 - b. The City is working with existing providers to implement overnight check-in hours when and where shelter space is available to reduce the occupancy at HONU.

- 8) Will this attract more persons experiencing homelessness to the area?
 - a. No, for the 60 to 90 days that the HONU is implemented, Honolulu Police Department (HPD) and district patrols will actively outreach and enforce existing laws, rules and regulations for use of public spaces within a two- to five-mile radius.
 - b. For 30 days following the HONU, the district patrols will continue a heightened level of enforcement of existing laws, rules and regulations for use of public spaces as preventative measures.
 - c. Within the HONU budget, moneys have been set aside to work with community groups to re-activate the park areas for greater public and community uses, supporting continued activation of the area once HONU departs.

WHY HONU?

- 1) Why is HONU needed?
 - a. In the City and County of Honolulu, the most recent homeless point-in-time count estimated that there are over 2,400 homeless, unsheltered individuals on the streets each day.
 - b. Unsheltered individuals generate 9-1-1 calls, requiring an HPD officer to respond.
 - c. A simple report of nuisance crimes (e.g., blocking sidewalks, trespassing, panhandling) creates a high volume of interactions between the homeless population and HPD.
 - d. These interactions create an opportunity to offer services that may immediately take someone off the streets.

- 2) Why did HONU come about?
 - a. In 2018, the HPD Community Outreach Unit with its community partners conducted **Health Efficiency Long-Term Partnerships (HELP)** operations that assisted 189 people directly from the streets and into shelters.
 - b. HELP operations have become increasingly successful and shown the need for a Mobile Navigation Center to route people to existing shelters and into necessary services.

- 3) What is the difference from HELP and HONU?
 - a. HELP is a targeted outreach effort by HPD and service providers to assist unsheltered persons into shelter or provide resources and services, without the pressure of a uniformed officer.
 - b. HONU is a 24/7 navigation center that allows participants to bathe, have a meal, lay their heads to rest, receive services, and connect with resources and into a shelter. Provider services will be present at the HONU.
 - c. HONU is there to assist HELP operations to be more successful in shelter and housing placements by being a readily available 24/7 navigation center.

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WHERE IS HONU LOCATED?

- 1) Where will HONU be located?
 - a. Working together as a team, the HPD, Department of Community Services (DCS), Department of Parks and Recreation, City's ADA Compliance Officer, and Corporation Counsel reviewed park locations across O`ahu that allowed the hosting of a HONU site and met the following conditions, including, but not limited to:
 - i. Being underused or in a location that minimizes negative community impact,
 - ii. Providing ADA suitability,
 - iii. Offering proximity to bus transit for workers,
 - iv. Offering access to water and electricity for mobile or portable showers, sinks, restrooms, power for lighting, and program operations, and
 - v. Offering relatively level topography for site setup.
- 2) Why situate within a City park?
 - a. The benefits of utilizing a City park includes infrastructure, site control, and the City's existing laws allowing regulation in the area outside of the designated HONU site.
 - b. After the HONU vacates a park site, HPD will continue to utilize existing ordinances to enforce park rules and ensure that the area remains cleared for future park use.
 - c. Limited moneys within the HONU project budget allows the City to partner with community groups to make targeted investments to activate the park for greater general public use once the HONU moves on to the next location.

WHEN WILL HONU OPERATE?

- 1) When will HONU operate?
 - a. HONU will be a 24/7 operational navigation center that will be set up in select communities for a period between 60 to 90 days.
 - b. After the 60- to 90-day period, the HONU then relocates to a different site. As HONU moves, so do staff and service providers, bringing services to areas with limited offerings.
- 2) What will happen at HONU during the 60 to 90 days?
 - a. The tents will remain 60 to 90 days at each site. During that time, health care and social service partners based on-site will assist individuals move into transitional or permanent living arrangements elsewhere. If shelter space is not readily accessible or when appropriate, the HONU mobile navigation center serves as temporary overnight shelter until existing shelter services are available. Plainclothes officers will be on hand in the parks with additional patrols in nearby neighborhoods.
 - b. While there, on-site navigation staff will act as the bridge between officers and existing shelter services to streamline verification process and provide real time status on the availability of shelter and other types of housing and shelter offerings. HPD & DCS will offer robust social service partnerships including medical care, mental health counseling, substance abuse counseling, housing navigation, hygiene services, laundry services, and transportation to shelter.

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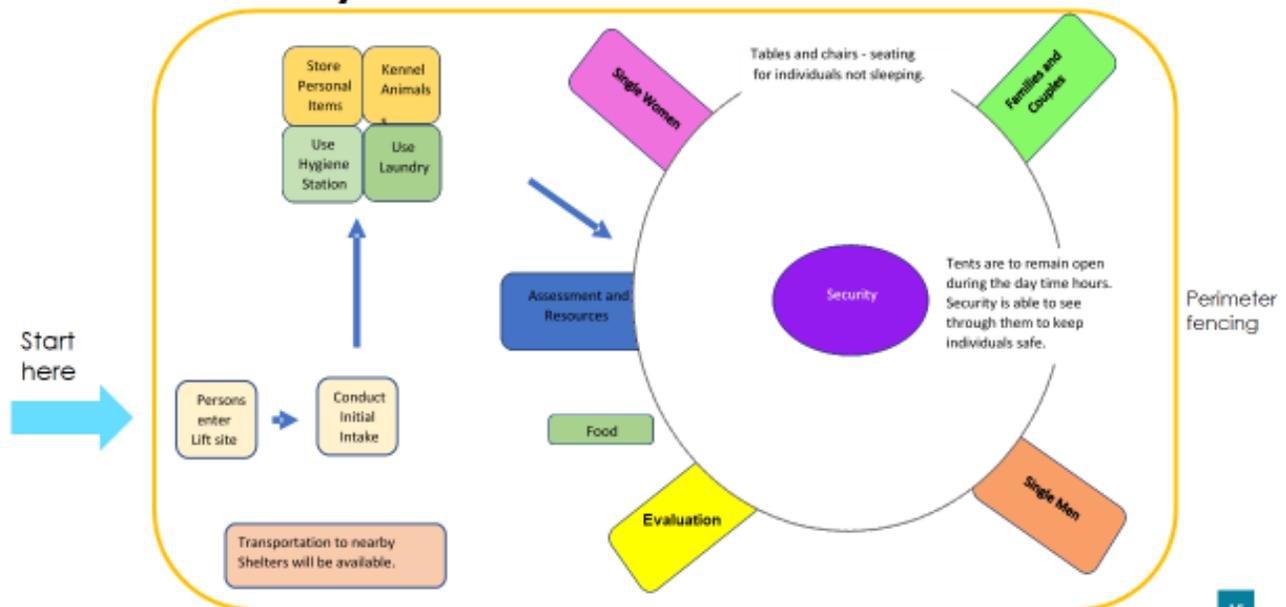
- c. HONU will also coordinate additional services: ID replacements (State ID Card, Hawai'i Driver's License, etc.), veterinary care for pets, and meals (for those that have accepted shelter). HONU also provides additional opportunities for data collection and will provide an intake point to which law enforcement (HPD and Sheriffs) can refer an individual.

HOW DOES HONU WORK?

- 1) How does HONU work?
 - a. Park regulations, such as park closure hours, will be suspended in a small designated area in a City park to facilitate the establishment of the HONU - mobile navigation center.
 - b. The designated area on park land would allow the HPD and its partners to establish a mobile navigation center on a temporary, short term basis and not be restricted by current park rules, such as permitting, closure times, and camping restrictions to provide services and case management to persons experiencing homelessness.
 - c. The HONU then functions as a service-oriented hub, where services and direct access to programs are provided by on-site case managers and housing specialists.
- 2) How will HONU operate?
 - a. At each selected site, HPD will set up inflatable tents, which are manufactured to house up to eight individuals or up to ten family members per tent (through the use of movable panels).
- 3) How is the site laid out?



HONU Site Layout



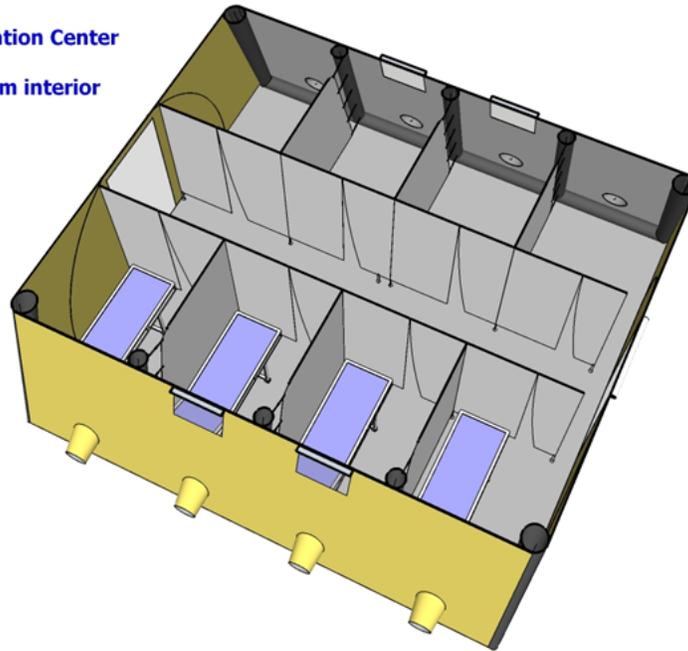
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4) How will the tents be set up for occupancy?

Honolulu Lift Mobile Navigation Center

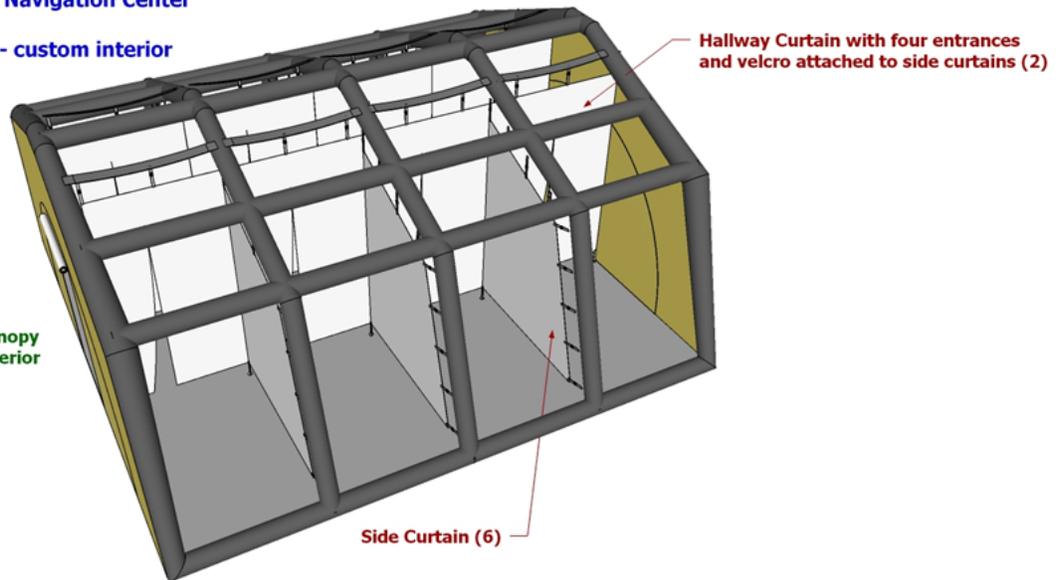
ZUMRO Model 400 - custom interior



Honolulu Lift Mobile Navigation Center

ZUMRO Model 400 - custom interior

shown without Canopy
for clarity of interior



Homeless Outreach and Navigation for Unsheltered

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHO OPERATES HONU?

- 1) Who operates HONU?
 - a. Funded by the State of Hawai`i as a three-year pilot project, HONU is co-managed by HPD and DCS, the two departments within the City and County of Honolulu that work with persons experiencing homelessness daily:
 - i. HPD will provide equipment support, location security, and enforcement of laws, and
 - ii. DCS will staff the mobile navigation site providing case management and housing specialist support.
 - b. In addition to the two departments, there will also be partnerships with provider outreach teams and shelters throughout O`ahu.
- 2) Will the HONU take walk-ins?
 - a. Yes. A Navigation Specialist will meet the person to initiate the assessment and interview process confirming they are willing to go into shelter or housing when it becomes available.
 - b. Behavior and willingness to participate will be the primary determining factors.
- 3) Will community members be able to refer someone in need to the HONU?
 - a. Community members should call 9-1-1 to request assistance.
- 4) Can providers refer or take their participants directly to the HONU?
 - a. Providers should work directly through **HELP Honolulu** as they are doing now.
- 5) Will there be available space for providers at the HONU to meet and assess participants?
 - a. Yes, there will be an assessment area for providers.
 - b. The intent is for the HONU to act as a community-based location of operations for service providers to meet and assist their clients in the areas the HONU is located for the 60- to 90-day duration it's there.
- 6) Is there a list of the services that will be available on-site?
 - a. Services will vary daily depending on partnering providers.
- 7) If existing shelters have a waitlist, "Can we drop off the clients that are on our waitlist to the HONU?"
 - a. No, the HONU is meant to act as a navigation center for all available shelter or housing vacancies and is not a holding facility for shelter's waitlist.
- 8) What if someone does not want to go to the HONU?
 - a. Persons experiencing homelessness have the option to refuse HONU services, but will not have the option to remain in areas off limits to the public.
 - b. HPD will follow through with enforcement of existing laws and regulations.

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- 9) Who will transport the participant to HONU?
 - a. As situations arise, HPD will assess an individual and invite them to HONU to transition from homelessness to the next available shelter or housing opportunity.
 - b. Upon acceptance of the invitation, transportation by HPD or a contracted agency will be provided to drop off participants at the HONU.
 - c. DCS will supplement the transportation to and from HONU through contracted services.

- 10) How much of their belongings can each participant bring into the HONU?
 - a. Similar to the requirements of shelters that individuals will be going to, each participant is allowed one bag of personal belongings and up to two pets.
 - b. If implementing an enforcement of the Stored Property Ordinance, the Department of Facility Maintenance will store belongings for up to 30 days, otherwise items may be discarded.

- 11) Are animals allowed at the HONU?
 - a. HONU will accept small animals (dogs, cats, rabbits, etc.) that are non-aggressive.
 - b. Please note that shelters only accept a total of two animals.

- 12) Will the HONU accept a participant on drugs?
 - a. The primary determining factor is behavior that will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
 - b. HPD will screen before participant enters the HONU and decide if the HONU is a fit for the individual or transport to a more appropriate venue.
 - c. Persons will not be able to use alcohol or illegal drugs at HONU.

- 13) Will people with severe mental illness be accepted? If not, do we have a procedure in place to offer them assistance?
 - a. The primary determining factor is behavior that will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
 - b. HPD will screen before participant enter the HONU and decide if the HONU is a fit for the individual or transport to a more appropriate venue.

- 14) Will participants have to stay in the HONU?
 - a. No, HONU participants are able to come and go for their needs, services, and appointments.
 - b. However, they will need to be back in the HONU by 10 p.m. weekdays and 11 p.m. weekends/holidays.
 - c. Persons not abiding by those rules may be asked to leave.

- 15) Will unaccompanied minors be allowed to stay overnight in the program?
 - a. HPD may drop off minors to the HONU only after all other options are exhausted.
 - b. The City will work with providers specializing in unaccompanied minors to find suitable housing options.

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- 16) Is there cause for concern that some homeless individuals may have a record or be prone to aggressive behaviors in an area that may include minors?
- No, the responding officers will make the assessment as to whether an individual is suitable for HONU services (e.g., not aggressive, not belligerent, cooperative, not intoxicated or under the influence, willing to accept shelter or housing as soon as offered).
 - There will also be security services and an on-site officer for overnight shifts.
 - Staff on hand will have direct communication with the police districts in which the HONU is situated.
 - The family and youth tent will be segregated from the other tents.
- 17) Who can a person call if they feel they are wrongfully asked to leave the HONU location?
- On-site operations will follow a Grievance Policy & Procedures established for HONU.
 - Persons will be asked to leave if they become uncooperative, belligerent, threatening or abusive towards staff or other guests, or refuse shelter or housing once it becomes available.
- 18) Will there be a limit on the number of times someone is allowed to pass through the program? What if someone goes into a shelter but leaves a week later and tries to come to HONU again the week after?
- If someone passes through HONU and accepts shelter or is asked to leave, they will be ineligible to utilize HONU again for 180 days. However, depending on the circumstance, on-site operations manager will make case-by-case decisions.
 - The reason for the waiting period is that a participant may not be ready for re-entry into another shelter.
- 19) Who can service providers call or email regarding HONU? Will there be a designated telephone number specifically for providers or outreach workers to call if they encounter someone who is willing to enter the HONU Program?
- Providers can email dimples.harris@honolulu.gov.
 - An on-site cell number will be provided once it becomes operational.
- 20) Will occupants within the HONU Program be counted as “sheltered” in the upcoming point-in-time count?
- The City will work with Partners in Care to clarify how persons within HONU at the time of the Point in Time Count for homelessness will be categorized before the count takes place in 2020.