



# Memorandum

**TO:** Satpal Sidhu, County Executive  
**FROM:** Charlene Ramont, Interim Director  
**RE:** Lutheran Community Services Northwest – Winter Shelter Lease Agreement  
**DATE:** SEPTEMBER 19, 2025

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Attached is a lease agreement between Whatcom County and Lutheran Community Services Northwest for your review and signature.

- **Background and Purpose**

This agreement outlines the requirements for leasing a facility intended to be utilized as Whatcom County's 2025-2026 winter shelter. Whatcom County will lease the approximately 6,000 square foot facility located at 925 N. Forest Street in Bellingham for five months, from November 1, 2025, through March 31, 2026. This facility is in an ideal location as it is close to downtown Bellingham, near a bus line, has viable heating sources, and is available for a short-term rental. The owners of the location have also been willing to accommodate this operation, which is not the case with the other locations we pursued. The primary function of the winter shelter is to serve as a life-saving intervention during dangerous weather conditions. This facility will provide space for up to 60 guests during severe weather.

- **Funding Amount and Source**

Total funding may not exceed \$66,455 for the duration of the lease. Funding for this agreement is provided by the Washington State Department of Commerce's Consolidated Homeless Grant. These funds are included in the 2025-2026 budgets. Council authorization is required per WCC 3.08.100 for all real property lease agreements.

- **Differences between Previous Contracts**

This is a new agreement; however, a lease agreement for the same space was executed with the same entity, Lutheran Community Services Northwest, for the 2024-2025 winter season. The County will again operate a winter shelter for the 2025-2026 season as there were no respondents to the RFP advertised for 2025-2026 winter shelter operators.

Please contact Ann Beck, Community Health and Human Services Manager at 360-778-6055 ([ABeck@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:ABeck@co.whatcom.wa.us)) if you have any questions.

Encl.

