



Newcomer Program Short-Term Sheltering

Denver City Council, Newcomer Support Work Group

Tuesday, June 4, 2024

12:00 – 1:00 pm

Sarah Plastino, Newcomer Program Director, DHS

Victoria Aguilar, Public Information Officer, DHS

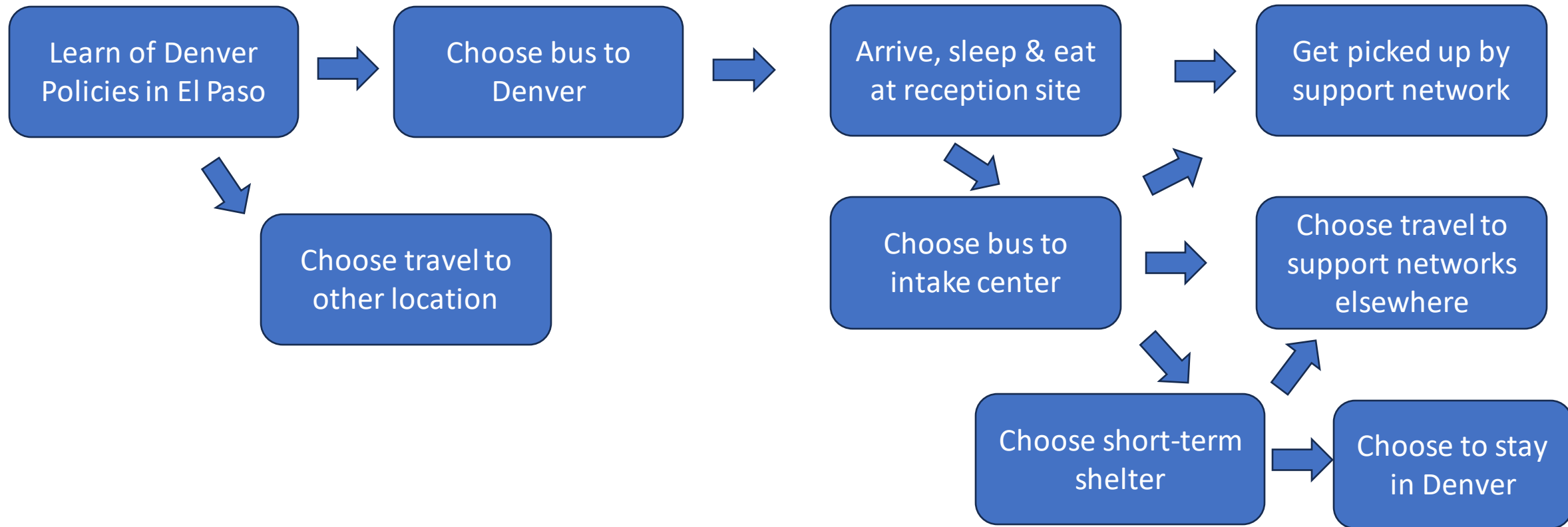
Presentation Agenda

1. Short-Term Sheltering Policy
2. Path of a newcomer through short-term sheltering
3. El Paso Operations
4. Reception & Intake
5. Short-Term Shelter
6. Case Navigation
7. Newcomer Program Manager announcement

Short-Term Sheltering Policy

- **Policy:** Denver receives newcomers safely and assists in reunification with support networks. Shelter is limited to a brief duration long enough to facilitate migrant decision-making and transition.
- **Intent:**
 - Encourage newcomers to reunify with support networks to establish stable living situations rooted in traditional family and friend networks
 - Reduce likelihood that newcomers are vulnerable to disruptions in basic needs if more long-term living arrangements exist elsewhere
 - Eliminate pull factors (such as long-term sheltering policy) to create a more predictable and sustainable number of newcomers arriving to Denver
 - Focus resources on improving the lives of Denver residents, old and new

A Newcomer's Path through Reception & Short-Term Shelter



Denver Operations in El Paso

- Goals of Denver's El Paso Operations:
 - Inform newcomers & stakeholders of Denver current sheltering policies
 - Assure dissemination of accurate information / combat misinformation so newcomers make more informed travel decisions
 - Build strong relationships with El Paso stakeholders, including shelter providers
 - Establish MOU/License Agreement with El Paso County to offer information on Denver inside of the Migrant Support Service Center
 - Learn best practices for sheltering and transit decompression strategies
- Staffing:
 - Two City of Denver staff on temporary reassignment in El Paso (DHS, DDPHE) April – May 2024
 - Planning for medium-term presence



Snapshot of a Day in El Paso

- Staff Denver operations inside of the El Paso Migrant Support Service Center
 - Includes establishing contact with migrants who have identified Denver as destination
- Rotate through several shelters and answer newcomer questions
- Meet with El Paso county officials to coordinate operations
- Daily debrief with Illinois Department of Human Service Caseworkers



Reception & Intake Center

Operations

- Bus arrives overnight from El Paso – newcomers offered lodging and breakfast (currently Quality Inn Zuni)
- After breakfast, bus offers to take newcomers to intake center
- At intake center, Vive navigators assist newcomers with plans
- Newcomers decide whether to be picked up, travel to reunite with support systems, or stay in short-term shelter
- Those who travel take bus to Union Station and receive navigation

Intake Center

- Currently located in Denver Human Services East (Steele Street)
 - Operations to move by Aug. 1, 2024
- Providers present:
 - City and County of Denver (CCD) emergency service workers – enter newcomer information into City system
 - Vive navigators – assist newcomers with making a plan, answer questions
 - Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) – provide vaccines & health navigation
 - Papagayo – resources, answer questions (State grant ends June 30, 2024)

Short-Term Shelter Policy

- Duration is up to 3 nights
- Operations are nimble by design
 - Swings in number of people in shelter
 - Two populations (singles & families)
 - Multiple uses for sheltering sites based on immediate needs
 - Flexibility to handle emergency situations
- Current location options:
 - Quality Inn Zuni (singles and families)
 - Denver Community Church (DCC) (families)
 - Comfort Inn Peoria (singles and families)
- Future location options:
 - Denver Community Church (DCC)
 - 7th Avenue Warehouse
 - Other site (to be determined)

Case Navigation

- Contract is with Vive (Vive Case Management Contract, DHS)
- Contract term March 1 to December 31, 2024
- Locations: reception, intake center, short-term shelter, Union Station
- Services:
 - Assist newcomers in making decisions about migrant journey
 - Assist newcomers in communicating with support networks
 - Answer questions related to Denver policies, logistics, and immigration cases
 - Assist with travel planning and navigating the journey
 - Triage immediate needs (medical care, family reunification, etc.)

Introducing Newcomer Program Manager: Anh Nguyen-Matthews



- Assuming leadership over DHS reception and short-term sheltering operations
- Managing operations, compliance, contracting, and staff supervision
- Building a program team through summer 2024
- Over 15 years of Program Management and Business Operations Experience
 - YMCA of Silicon Valley
 - University of Colorado Anschutz

Questions?