

In the Image of Christ, Inc. has been providing shelter services in Fort Pierce, Florida, in various forms (as needs necessitated) for over eight years. After much prayer, investigative study, and collaborative input from the St. Lucie County Fire District, Mustard Seed Ministries, the City of Fort Pierce, our local Fire Marshall, our local Florida State Representative, and the Fort Pierce Housing Authority, we are proud to announce our latest shelter project for the benefit of all in our community:

The Hands Up Emergency Shelter Program

This program has new supportive components that mark it as a (long-awaited) needed service that every growing city should have available for its citizens.

This shelter has two full-time shelter managers; along with trained volunteer support staff.

The Saint Lucie County Sheriff's Department has agreed to provide the latest in "rapid-response" background screenings for all shelter residents.

The "Hands Up" philosophy guiding this program means that this residence is temporary. Each resident is guided toward forward movement in their lives; whether it is vocational, educational, financial, legal, mental, emotional, and/or spiritual movement. Each situation is unique; but the 90-day maximum stay limitation allows for these shelter resources to be shared among current and future residents in an equitable fashion.

Future housing plans, along with attainable goals, are developed immediately between the shelter managers and the residents; with revisions as needed.

All shelter rules and regulations are posted and explained in detail to new residents by shelter managers. A copy of these rules and regulations (in contract form) are signed in agreement by new residents, including consequences/violation agreements.

Safety is priority. Staff and volunteers continually attend mandatory in-service trainings covering all shelter management skills, including health risks, cultural awareness, harassment scenarios and response, law enforcement involvements/support, and basic emergency management.

The following yearly budget is essential for full support of our Hands Up Emergency Shelter Program:

2 Full-time Employees @ \$15.00/hr. Plus 20% (payroll taxes/insurances) = \$74,880.00

Toiletries and Food @ \$5.00/day X 20 Residents (average) X 365 Days = \$36,500.00

Support Supplies @ \$250.00/month X 12months = \$3,000.00

Total Yearly Budget = \$114,380.00

This budget assumes minimal (or no) costs associated with facility locations (rental fees); including utility expenditures.

Once again, In the Image of Christ, Inc. is excited for this program; and is awed by how so many leaders in our community have come together with their ideas and support so that we can fulfill this much-needed service for our Fort Pierce community.