

# Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter



13000 Lee Highway in Fairfax, VA, 22030 – at the intersection of Lee Highway (Route 29) and Meadow Estates Drive

## **What was the schedule for constructing and opening the shelter?**

Construction began in spring 2006 and was completed in July 2007, with families moving into the shelter in late August 2007. The groundbreaking was on April 23, 2006.

## **How large is the shelter?**

The building is 16,931 square feet. The total site area is 5.66 acres, including 2.47 acres of trees (saved and to be planted). The site plan includes the future construction of transitional housing to accommodate six families.

## **Who designed and built the shelter?**

Fairfax County's Department of Public Works and Environmental Services oversaw the design and construction of the shelter. The architectural firm for the shelter was Wisniewski Blair & Associates. The building contractor was Brechbill & Helman Construction Company, Inc.

## **Who operates the shelter?**

Fairfax County's Department of Family Services manages the shelter and contracts with a nonprofit organization – Shelter House, Inc. – to conduct its day-to-day operations.

## **Who will live at the shelter?**

About 20 families will live at the Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter. Most of the families will be mothers with school-age children.

## **How are families admitted to the shelter?**

To be admitted to a Fairfax County shelter, the family first contacts the county's Department of Systems Management for Human Services, Coordinated Services Planning, (703-222-0880, TTY 703-603-7914). After finding out some basic information about the family's situation – where the family has been staying, what other resources they have for help and housing – the CSP social worker refers the family to the shelter most convenient to them for a more in-depth, face-to-face interview. If appropriate, the family is then placed on a waiting list and moves to the shelter when room becomes available.

## **What goes on at a family shelter?**

The shelter provides a safe, temporary home for families, where they can receive help to assess their needs and develop a plan to locate permanent housing as quickly as possible. The shelter is an integral part of the county's 10-year plan to end homelessness.

Families at the shelter abide by a daily schedule that includes wake-up times; regularly scheduled congregate meals; school, training and/or work activities; special groups (parenting, computers etc.); curfews; and bedtimes.

During the day, the adults are expected to go to work, if employed, or prepare for and seek employment. Children go to school or participate in child-care programs. A van and drivers are available to address residents' transportation needs. The shelter offers case management, training and other social services for the clients. Volunteers are an important resource to the shelter, serving as mentors and trainers, helping with meal preparation and coordinating donations.

## **Where will the children attend school?**

In accordance with federal law (the McKinney-Vento Act), homeless children residing in shelters have the right to continue attending their previous base school, or they may be enrolled in the shelter's neighborhood school. The shelter staff works closely with the Fairfax County Public Schools' Liaison for Homeless Students to coordinate school placement and transportation. The shelter is located in the area served by the following schools: Eagle View Elementary School; Lanier Middle School; and Fairfax High School.

## **How does the shelter look? Does it fit in with the neighborhood?**

The shelter was designed to fit in architecturally with the surrounding residential neighborhood. Lighting provides a secure environment but is not disruptive. A pedestrian trail connects the shelter with Stringfellow Road. The placement of the building on the site is environmentally sensitive, leaving many of the existing trees. The Katherine K. Hanley Shelter is the first homeless shelter in the country to receive a Green Globes rating for its sound energy and environmental design practices.

**For more information, please contact:**  
**Mike Finkle, Management Analyst – Homeless Services**  
**Children, Youth and Families Division**  
**Fairfax County Department of Family Services**  
**703-324-7127; TTY 703-222-9452**

**For information about volunteering at the**  
**Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter, please call**  
**the community coordinator at**  
**571-522-6800 TTY 703-988-0256**



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