



**DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
COMMUNITY CENTER**

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PRESS RELEASE

Daily Overnight Warming Center opens at MLK Community Center Tues. Jan. 16th; A Collaboration of Municipalities and Nonprofits

NEWPORT R.I. (January 9, 2024)

Beginning Tuesday, January 16th, an overnight warming center will be available nightly at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center. The Warming Center is a multi-agency collaboration.

For several months, an ad hoc center has been available; Transportation to the previously undisclosed site has been available from Newport and Middletown. The site can now be identified as St. John's Church in Newport. "For two months, we've been proud to host the overnight warming center when needed. I was part of a community safety meeting led by Newport Fire Chief Harp Donnelly and Middletown Fire Chief Jim Peplau about how to help people who were sleeping in the open every night. I decided that it was something we needed to do as a congregation," said Rev. Kevin Beasley, Rector of St. John's. "Offering the church's space directly ties to our mission of what Christ taught us to do."

The new warming center has been in the planning stages for months. The program is a collaboration between the [MLK Community Center](#), [Newport Mental Health](#), [RI Coalition to End Homelessness](#), [CODAC](#) along with the Fire Departments of the [City of Newport](#) and the [Town of Middletown](#). Funding from the State of Rhode Island Department of Housing is underwriting the project, with the City of Newport providing fiduciary management. The MLK Community Center is providing the space for the Warming Center at no charge. The Center is staffed by a collaboration of Newport Mental Health and CODAC mental health and substance abuse disorder professionals.

The warming center is not only for Newport and Middletown residents. Anyone in need of a warm place to sleep is welcome to use the Center. The Overnight Warming Center at the MLK Community Center will be open seven nights a week from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m, from January 16th through March 1st. After March 1st, the Overnight Warming Center will open as needed. Access to the Warming Center is at the Edward Street door of the MLK.

“Fr. Kevin and his congregation are community heroes. By offering the church hall until the MLK could host the program, St. John’s ensured people without a place to sleep weren’t outside in the cold,” said Heather Hole Strout, Executive Director of the MLK Community Center. “As we reopen fully after a year of construction, offering space for the warming center is exactly the kind of community resource we envisioned when we began our renovation.”

“We are very proud to be part of this collaboration. This goes to show what can be accomplished when partners sit down and get creative about solutions. Knowing there’s a place for people to sleep means we can all sleep a bit better this winter.”

**Emergency Overnight Warming Center
at the MLK Community Center**


NO ONE SHOULD BE LEFT OUT IN THE COLD

January 16, 2024 - March 1, 2024
7 nights a week from 7:00pm - 7:00am

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center
20 Dr. Marcus Wheatland Boulevard, Newport RI
Edward Street Entrance Only

At-risk residents are encouraged to seek shelter
from the cold at our Emergency Overnight Warming Center.

For transportation, please call the RIO Team at (401)846-1213 ext. 1



**Refugio de Emergencia para el Invierno
en el centro Martin Luther King**

NADIE DEBERÍA PASAR EL INVIERNO AFUERA

16 de Enero, 2024 - 1 de Marzo, 2024
7 noches a la semana de 7:00pm - 7:00am

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center
20 Dr. Marcus Wheatland Boulevard, Newport RI
Entrada por la calle Edward

Hacemos un llamado a las personas vulnerables durante las bajas
temperaturas a utilizar nuestro Refugio de Emergencia de Invierno

Para transportación contacte al equipo RIO al (401)846-1213 ext. 1



Presented in partnership by:



Fire Departments of the City of Newport and Town of Middletown

En coordinación con:



Fire Departments of the City of Newport and Town of Middletown

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Founded in 1922 and renamed after Dr. King in 1968, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center nourishes, educates, and supports Newport County, Rhode Island residents to improve their economic, social, and physical well-being. Celebrating 100 years of service in 2022, the MLK Community Center is an independent non-profit promoting health, fighting hunger, supporting families, educating kids, and engaging seniors. Last year, the MLK helped 6,232 people, the most in its history.

We know the Center’s full name is long. If you must shorten it, please refer to us as the “MLK Community Center,” the “MLK Center,” “the MLK,” or “the Center.” Kindly do not refer to us as “the King Center” as it confuses us with fellow Newport non-profit, the Edward King House Senior Center.