

REQUEST FOR INTEREST IN COLLABORATION

in Caring for Our Unhoused Neighbors

Summer 2026 Pilot | July 1 – September 30, 2026

42 Chenango Street | Binghamton, New York

Issued by: United Presbyterian Church of Binghamton

Letters of Interest requested by May 31, 2026, 4:00 PM ET.

A Shared Invitation

UPC invites faith-based organizations, community groups, businesses, and individuals to join us in welcoming our unhoused neighbors during the Summer 2026 Pilot. No contribution is too small, and no partner of good will is turned away.

Issuing Organization & Contact Information

United Presbyterian Church of Binghamton (UPC)

42 Chenango Street, Binghamton, New York 13901

Contact: Rev. Kimberly P. Chastain, Pastor

Email: pastor@upcbgm.org | Phone: 607-722-4219

Section 1: Background and Purpose

United Presbyterian Church of Binghamton (UPC), through its community ministry known as The UP Center, operates a facility at 42 Chenango Street in Binghamton, New York. The UP Center has a longstanding commitment to serving our vulnerable neighbors in the Greater Binghamton community and the surrounding Broome County region. In response to the ongoing need for emergency accommodation in our community, UPC will host a low-barrier, housing-focused emergency comfort center at this location during the Summer 2026 Pilot.

This document has two purposes. First, it describes the Scope of Services that will be delivered at the UPC Comfort Center from July 1, 2026 through September 30, 2026. Second, it extends a Request for Interest in Collaboration to organizations and individuals who may wish to partner with UPC and the selected Comfort Center Operator through employment, subcontracted services, in-kind contributions, or volunteer support.

How this works alongside the RFP. UPC is separately issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to select a lead Comfort Center Operator (a qualified nonprofit or public agency) to manage day-to-day operations. This Request for Interest in Collaboration is complementary: it invites partners whose contributions will enrich the pilot but who are not bidding to operate the Comfort Center. Partners identified through this process will be introduced to the selected Operator, who retains sole authority over staffing and program decisions.

UPC is committed to an inclusive, trauma-informed, and dignity-centered approach to emergency accommodation. Collaborators should demonstrate strong alignment with these values, evidence-based housing-focused practices, and meaningful community partnerships. Although UPC is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (USA), letters of interest will be considered regardless of religious belief or affiliation.

Section 2: Scope of Services

2.1 Operating Model

The UPC Comfort Center will provide overnight emergency accommodation for up to 50 people at 42 Chenango Street, Binghamton, NY, seven nights per week from July 1, 2026 through September 30, 2026. Guests are accommodated from 5:00 PM to 9:00 AM, with defined daily opening and closing procedures.

Staff are present from 5:00 PM to 10:00 AM, seven nights per week. The final hour (9:00–10:00 AM) is reserved for closing and cleanup after guests depart at 9:00 AM.

Anticipated guest hours: 5:00 PM – 9:00 AM. Staffed hours: 5:00 PM – 10:00 AM.

2.2 Core Services

The following services will be provided under the supervision of the selected Comfort Center Operator:

2.2.1 Intake and Assessment

- Low-barrier intake process accessible to all individuals regardless of sobriety, background, or documentation status, consistent with trauma-informed practice
- Initial assessment of client needs, including housing, health, behavioral health, and safety
- Assist clients in completing the NY-511 Coordinated Entry System (CES) assessment within the first three nights (72 hours) of their stay and submit completed assessments to CARES of NY (the lead agency for the Southern Tier Homeless Coalition / Continuum of Care). This places clients on the regional prioritization list for permanent housing.

2.2.2 Case Management

- Case management will be calibrated to the pilot's primary mission: allowing clients to sleep in a safe space
- Information about community resources, including mental health, substance use, employment, benefits, and legal services, will be provided as needed
- Housing-focused case management, including individualized housing stability plans with measurable goals, offered to all interested clients; additional daytime support available on-site as needed
- Regular documentation of client progress and housing outcomes

2.2.3 HMIS Participation

- Full participation in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) as required by the local CoC and applicable federal standards
- Timely and accurate data entry consistent with street outreach / emergency accommodation project types
- Compliance with all HMIS privacy and security requirements

2.2.4 Housing-Focused Services

- Active facilitation of exits to permanent or stable housing, including referrals to rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing pathways

2.2.5 Food Service

- Provision of meals and/or snacks commensurate with Comfort Center hours
- Food service supervised by a person with ServSafe certification, who will oversee food safety procedures
- Food service must meet minimum nutritional standards and accommodate dietary restrictions as practicable

2.2.6 Safety and Facility Management

- Staff will ensure a safe, supervised environment at all times during staffed hours, with at least two staff on duty throughout
- Compliance with applicable fire safety, building, and health codes
- First aid and NARCAN training for all direct-service staff prior to client contact

Section 3: Staffing Plan and Compensation

3.1 Anticipated Staffing Structure

The table below reflects potential staffing positions and compensation levels that the selected Comfort Center Operator might maintain during the contract period. These figures are provided for transparency to potential collaborators and to individuals who may be interested in employment. Letters of interest in employment will be forwarded to the Operator.

Position	# per Night	Hours	Hourly Rate	Quarterly Hrs	Quarterly Cost
Center Administrator	1	8 hrs/week	\$25.00	104	\$2,600
Lead Client Advisor	1	8 hrs/day (split)	\$28.00	736	\$20,608
Client Advisor	3	8–9 hrs/day	\$22.00	2,392	\$52,624
ESTIMATED TOTAL					\$75,832

Quarterly figures cover the firm pilot term of July 1 – September 30, 2026 (92 nights). The “# per Night” column shows staff on duty per night, not the number of people employed; see Section 3.2.

3.2 Potential Scheduling and Staffing

The following reflects the anticipated schedule and is subject to change once the Operator is selected.

- Guests are accommodated from 5:00 PM to 9:00 AM. Staff are present from 5:00 PM to 10:00 AM, seven nights per week, with the final hour reserved for closing and cleanup after guests depart. At least two staff are on duty at all times during the staffed window.
- The Center Administrator (approximately 8–10 hrs/week; ~0.25 FTE) is a coordination and oversight role. Additional administrative hours may be warranted.
- One Lead Client Advisor is on duty each night, working an 8-hour split shift — approximately 5:00–9:00 PM (opening) and 6:00–10:00 AM (closing).
- Three Client Advisors are on duty each night, across three shifts: 5:00 PM – 1:00 AM; 9:00 PM – 6:00 AM; and 1:00 AM – 10:00 AM.
- Because the Comfort Center operates seven nights per week, the Operator is expected to hire more staff than are on duty on any single night — approximately two Lead Client Advisors and five to six Client Advisors — so that coverage is maintained without any staff member working every night.

3.3 Notes on Staff Training

- All staff will complete training in trauma-informed care, de-escalation, and harm reduction prior to working with clients
- All staff will demonstrate cultural humility in their work with clients and colleagues
- HMIS training will be provided for designated data-entry staff
- Clear supervision and professional development practices will be provided for all Comfort Center staff
- Additional personnel training required by New York State and PCUSA will be provided

Section 4: Ways to Collaborate

UPC welcomes partnerships in many forms. The table below illustrates the range of contributions that can strengthen the Summer 2026 Pilot. This list is not exhaustive, and we are eager to hear creative proposals from partners about how your gifts might serve our neighbors.

Category	Examples of What We Need	Who Might Offer This
Volunteer Support	Greeters, registration assistants, evening hospitality, overnight awake companions (after training)	Faith-based organizations, civic groups, individual community members
Meals & Food	Evening meals, breakfast items, snacks, beverages; ServSafe-supervised preparation	Congregations, food pantries, local restaurants, catering businesses
In-Kind Supplies	Hygiene kits, socks and underwear, bedding, towels, laundry and cleaning supplies	Congregations, civic clubs, businesses, individual donors
Specialized Services	NARCAN training, first aid certification, interpretation, pastoral presence, mental-health first aid	Licensed professionals, faith leaders, trained community members
Transportation	Rides to and from the Comfort Center; transport to appointments	Congregations with volunteer driver programs
Financial Contribution	Designated gifts to support operations	Congregations, foundations, businesses, individuals
Employment	Paid staff positions (see Section 3)	Individuals seeking part-time or full-time work during the pilot

A note for faith-based partners. We particularly welcome expressions of interest from congregations of any tradition and faith-based nonprofits. Contributions might include organized meal rotations, supply drives, trained volunteer teams, or simply a standing weekly presence of hospitality. UPC and the selected Operator will work with you to ensure that collaboration respects the religious freedom of every client and the professional boundaries needed in a comfort center setting.

Section 5: Letter of Interest Requirements

5.1 Who Should Respond

We invite letters of interest from:

- Faith-based organizations and congregations (of any tradition) seeking to contribute volunteers, meals, supplies, or financial support
- Community organizations and civic groups interested in partnership or sponsorship
- Businesses interested in contributing goods, services, or sponsorship
- Individuals interested in volunteering, employment, or making donations
- Licensed professionals (medical, behavioral health, legal, interpretation, etc.) offering pro-bono or reduced-rate services

5.2 Letter of Interest Package

Letters of interest would preferably have the following components. Please include what is relevant to your contribution — not all sections apply to every respondent.

A. Cover Letter

- If from an organization, signed by an authorized organizational representative

- Affirms the organization's or individual's commitment to the Comfort Center's mission and values
- Describes the nature of the proposed collaboration (volunteer hours, meals, supplies, services, donations, employment, etc.)
- Identifies a primary point of contact

B. Organizational Overview (if applicable)

- Organizational history, mission, and core programs
- Description of current and prior emergency housing or homeless services experience, if any
- Organizational chart or leadership summary

C. HMIS Awareness (if applicable)

- Current awareness of the HMIS procedures in the CoC (Broome County)
- Recent HMIS data quality report or equivalent performance documentation, if available

D. Quality and Safety Certifications

Description of certifications (if any) your team or organization holds, such as:

- ServSafe certification
- First aid / CPR
- NARCAN administration training
- Staff safety protocols and de-escalation procedures
- Emergency procedures (fire, medical, behavioral-health crises)
- Foreign language fluency
- Safeguarding and child / vulnerable-adult protection policies
- Other relevant certifications or training

E. References

- Minimum of two (2) references whom UPC may contact. These can be representatives of funders, partner agencies, or government entities with direct knowledge of your work or, for individuals, employment or community references.

5.3 Submission Instructions

Letters of interest submitted by the deadline (May 31, 2026) will receive full consideration. UPC may also accept later submissions on a rolling basis to the extent that operational needs and capacity allow.

Submit one (1) electronic copy (PDF preferred) to:

United Presbyterian Church of Binghamton – UPC Comfort Center Collaboration

42 Chenango Street, Binghamton, NY 13901

Attn: Rev. Kimberly P. Chastain, Pastor | Email: pastor@upcbgm.org

Electronic submissions should have a file name formatted as: [Your Name or Org]_UPCCollaboration_[Date].pdf

Section 6: How UPC Will Respond

UPC will acknowledge receipt of every letter of interest. Because the selected Comfort Center Operator will integrate volunteer and in-kind contributions into day-to-day operations, UPC will share letters of interest with the Operator once it is selected. UPC and the Operator will follow up with each respondent to explore whether and how the proposed collaboration can move forward.

Respondents should understand that:

- All volunteers and in-kind service providers working directly with clients will be subject to the Operator's training, supervision, safeguarding, and background-check requirements.
- Client confidentiality and dignity are non-negotiable. Volunteers may not photograph, film, proselytize, or otherwise engage with clients in ways that compromise these values.
- UPC reserves the right to decline any offer of collaboration, at its discretion, where integration with the operational plan is not feasible.

Section 7: General Conditions

- This document does not commit UPC to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of letters of interest, or to procure or contract for services.
- All materials submitted in response to this request become the property of UPC.
- UPC reserves the right to waive minor irregularities in letters of interest.
- Respondents must disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest in the cover letter.
- Any misrepresentation in a letter of interest may result in disqualification.
- This document and any resulting agreements shall be governed by the laws of the State of New York.

Appendix A: Glossary of Key Terms

Term	Definition
CoC	Continuum of Care — the regional planning body for homeless services (Southern Tier / Broome County)
CES	Coordinated Entry System — a standardized, community-wide process for connecting people experiencing homelessness to appropriate housing and services
HMIS	Homeless Management Information System — a locally administered database that collects client-level data on homelessness
Low-Barrier	A model that removes common barriers to entry such as sobriety requirements, curfews, or ID requirements, to the extent feasible
OTDA	New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance — state agency overseeing emergency accommodation standards
PCUSA	Presbyterian Church (USA) — UPC's denominational affiliation, whose employment standards govern benefit requirements
Trauma-Informed	A service approach recognizing the widespread impact of trauma and integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices
UPC	United Presbyterian Church of Binghamton — the issuing organization for this document

Thank you for your interest in serving the Binghamton community through the UPC Comfort Center.

Questions? Contact: Rev. Kimberly P. Chastain, Pastor, UPC Binghamton | pastor@upcbgm.org | 607-722-4219