



## **ARIZONA FAITH NETWORK'S HEAT RELIEF PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

### **ABOUT ARIZONA FAITH NETWORK (AFN)**

The Arizona Faith Network is an interfaith organization building bridges across diverse Arizona communities to work for the common good. With a network of over 4,500 congregations, faith leaders, and community partners, AFN works to transform our communities through theological dialogue and collaborative action for social justice.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Extreme heat poses a severe threat to vulnerable communities in Arizona, necessitating robust support and relief efforts. AFN has been at the forefront of providing essential resources and assistance through its Heat Relief program. This brief overview outlines urgent regional coordination efforts and standardized practices that guide AFN's life-saving initiatives.

### **OUR WORK**

AFN bridges a crucial gap by offering life-saving heat relief services through cooling centers in houses of worship across Maricopa County. These centers provide a welcoming space for community members and their pets during the heat season (May - September), offering cooling facilities, water, healthy snacks, and access to wrap-around services with community partners, ensuring much-needed rest for those facing extreme temperatures.

These heat respite centers uniquely allow community members to come inside with their pets and sleep, providing vital support during months of scorching heat. Our cooling centers uphold non-discriminatory practices, welcoming all individuals regardless of age, race, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, or familial status. We also adhere to CDC guidelines during health emergencies. Proselytizing from any faith traditions is strictly prohibited to ensure a welcoming environment. Our staff is trained to administer naloxone for opioid overdoses and to handle mental health emergencies, ensuring the safety and well-being of every guest.

### **OUR OPERATIONS**

AFN provides trained staff and volunteers to help operate all heat relief sites we are in partnership with. Each site will always have two trained individuals on site: a Site Lead and Site Assistant(s). They coordinate activities, maintain cleanliness, monitor supplies, and communicate with AFN Community Resilience Managers. Together, they uphold AFN's values and provide a safe environment for community members seeking assistance at our centers.

AFN ensures our team members are comprehensively trained to effectively respond to emergencies. They possess expertise in mental health crisis intervention, including de-escalation and naloxone administration for opioid overdoses. Additionally, they're well-versed in local processes to address

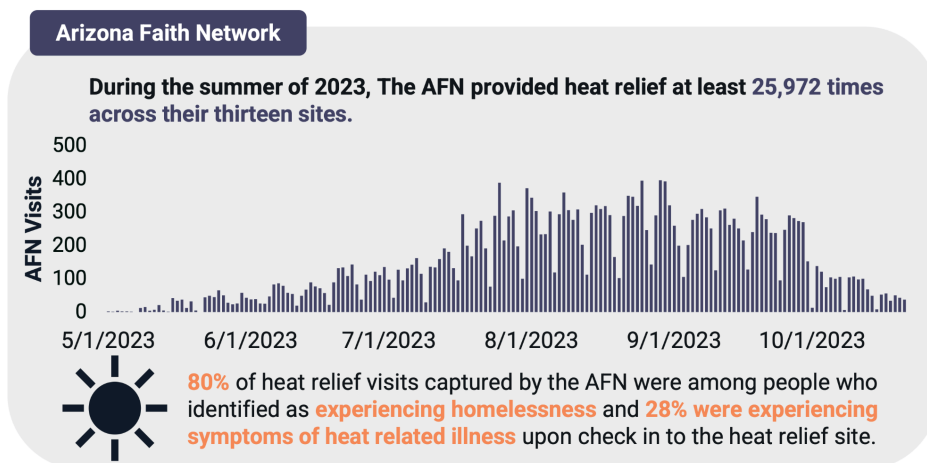
community-specific needs. Each heat relief site is staffed by two trained individuals: a Site Lead and Site Assistants. We recognize that each heat relief location may have unique needs, and we are flexible and adaptable to accommodate site-specific requirements. More information can be found on site operations in the below resources.

### FAITH COMMUNITY SITE PARTNERSHIP

We deeply value the support of our local faith communities and leaders, whose partnership is indispensable in this life-saving work. Each faith-based location plays a crucial role in saving hundreds of lives every season. AFN is committed to collaborating closely with each site, addressing their specific needs such as staffing, supplies, utility reimbursements, or any other requirements. We view this partnership as a sacred covenant, recognizing each site as a place of sanctity. Our commitment extends to ensuring our guests understand and honor this sacredness, treating each site with utmost respect and reverence. Your involvement is essential for the success of our community outreach efforts. Additionally, we will provide a facility rental agreement and certificate of insurance to cover this program. The funding for each center is determined through a collaborative effort involving the city, county, state, as well as private individuals and foundations associated with AFN. Please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns; we value open communication and collaboration.

### RESOURCES, DATA, AND INFORMATION

- [AFN Heat Relief Site Guide](#)
- [AFN Heat Respite Site Lead Job Description](#)
- [AFN Heat Respite Site Assistant Job Description](#)
- [Maricopa County Department of Public Health 2023 Heat Related Illness and Death Report](#)
- [2024 Arizona's Extreme Heat Preparedness Plan](#)
- [2024 AFN Heat Relief YouTube](#)
- [2023 AFN Heat Relief Check-in Data](#)



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