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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact Todd Carter, Director of Development
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MEDIA RELEASE

Re: Winter Seasonal Shelter Ending Soon, COVID-19 Protocol Updated.

Boone, NC – Hospitality House of Northwest North Carolina remains committed to the health, safety and welfare of the homeless population in our seven mountain county region. We have been engaged with local health departments, for nearly eight weeks, and continue to follow the lead and directives of those departments; as well as, Governor Roy Cooper as they come. It is important to note that no one here has tested positive for COVID-19.

At this time, each of our six housing programs, Winter Seasonal Shelter, Emergency Shelter, Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, Scattered Site Housing and Rapid Rehousing, are still operational and open to individuals or families experiencing homelessness in Northwest North Carolina.

However, in accordance with guidelines, Winter Seasonal Shelter will still end April 30th. This program is operated seasonally, six months of the year, November 1st to April 30th, providing shelter during winter months. Due to COVID-19 and stay-at-home orders, any person currently residing in our Winter Seasonal Shelter will have the option of moving to our Emergency Shelter Program in an overflow capacity. Going forward, individuals and families experiencing homelessness in the counties of Ashe, Wilkes, Avery, Watauga, Mitchell, Yancey and Alleghany will continue to have access to our services and may enter Emergency Shelter, if needed, in an overflow capacity, as long as space allows. Persons inquiring about housing availability should call (828) 264-1237 ext. 0

It is important to note that we have seen an increase in the number of homeless individuals traveling across North Carolina; as well as from out of state, seeking shelter, as other homeless providers have had to limit their services to those individuals already inside their facilities. The N.C. Homeless Management Information System and State Governance Committee continue to monitor available

services, across the state, on weekly calls, with Hospitality House executive director Tina B. Krause serving on the Executive Committee; as well as, the lead for the Northwest Continuum of Care (CoC). As previously announced, we are currently unable to offer housing services for individuals and families who are from outside our designated Northwest CoC service area, unless they are fleeing domestic violence, sexual assault or human trafficking. This was done in an effort to help protect the environment of our facility and the community as a whole; as well as, adherence to travel restrictions.

So far, we've been able to continue operating all housing, hunger relief and crisis assistance programs and most services; albeit with some modifications. Service coordinators are continuing to make home visits, taking every necessary precaution, to clients in our Permanent Supportive Housing, Scattered Site Housing and Rapid Rehousing programs in Watauga, Wilkes and Ashe counties.

Our Food Pantry, which has seen an increased demand of nearly forty-percent, remains open seven days a week from 12 p.m. - 4 p.m. as a drive-thru service. There are no limitations on county of residence. Our Community Kitchen remains open seven days a week serving breakfast, lunch and dinner in takeout containers to anyone who is hungry.

WeCAN, our crisis assistance and homeless prevention program, continues funding community members in need of rental assistance, prescription medication, heating fuel, utility assistance and vital records requests. Households needing assistance should email wecan@hosphouse.org or leave a message at (828) 264-1237 ext. 2

Hospitality House operates twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. As an agency operating a vital safety-net for thousands of people in need, we are committed to adapting; however necessary, to meet those needs throughout this pandemic. We remain steadfast in our mission, with dedicated staff, working round the clock to ensure that the Northwest North Carolina population living in homelessness, hunger and poverty receive all available resources that we are able to provide.

For the latest updates and ways to help, please visit HospHouse.org/covid19 and follow us on social media Facebook / Instagram: @hosphouse; Twitter @HospHouseNwnc.

To make a contribution visit HospHouse.org/donate or Venmo @hosphouse