

EDAR Expansion Information Kit



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EDAR's Mission

The mission of EDAR (Everyone Deserves A Roof) is to provide short-term, immediate shelter to homeless individuals and families. We distribute mobile shelter units through a network of partnerships in order to reduce the number of individuals sleeping in the open and to support their dignity and hope.

About EDAR

An EDAR is a four-wheeled unit, based on a mobile cart design that provides security for belongings, privacy and protection from the elements. During the day, the EDAR is a compact portable unit with sturdy wheels and waterproof protection. The steering is maneuverable and there is a brake and locking mechanism which ensures the unit will not move on its own.

At night, the EDAR opens up easily into “night mode” and provides a comfortable sleeping unit. Unfolding the unit allows it to lock in place as the flat metal base extends. The metal base has a removable mattress and fire resistant cover, providing tent-like shelter.

The unit is waterproof, windproof and helps protect from the elements. There is a window that provides light, ventilation and a view of the surrounding area. By refolding the unit into “day mode”, the EDAR quickly returns to its compact design and can be pushed around as a cart for use during the day.

The first sixty EDAR units were launched in the summer of 2008 in the Greater Los Angeles area. The purpose of the sixty unit distributions served as a testing phase so that we could evaluate the units in a multitude of ways – from design features to distribution strategies. We learned valuable lessons from this initial launch that aids us in our expansion efforts.



Each year, there are over 3 million homeless people in the United States. In this expansion kit, you will learn more about our method of distribution and our strategic expansion efforts. With the help of dedicated volunteers like you, EDAR is able to identify partners to distribute EDAR units so that we may expand to cities we currently do not serve. We appreciate the help of dedicated volunteers like you!

EDAR Distribution, Usage and Partnerships

EDAR partners with a network of philanthropic, governmental and homeless advocacy organizations to assist in the distribution of EDAR units. This allows us to identify EDAR candidates as well as to provide EDAR users with additional resources, including social services if they choose to utilize them. For individuals who are not affiliated with one of these organizations and would like an EDAR unit, EDAR will refer an individual to a distributing partner organization so that they may receive a unit through them.

Currently EDAR units are being used in a variety of modalities determined by both the needs of the distributing agency and the homeless clients. In all cases, we ask the distributing agency to collect feedback from the EDAR user and in many instances, the EDAR unit becomes a “first step” for those that are often reluctant to enter a traditional shelter system. By collecting feedback and offering additional social services, our distributing partners create a relationship with the EDAR users, increasing the chance of them transitioning into a more structured program offering transitional and eventually permanent housing options.

Here are a few examples of the current methods EDAR units are being used:

Mobile with an Agency Partnership

EDAR users receive their units through a partnership agency and the EDAR units are used in an urban or rural setting. Users push their EDAR units around during the day and at night sleep in the EDAR, elevated off the ground and protected from the elements. In some cases, our partners allow EDAR users to enter the agency grounds at night and sleep in a designated area such as a courtyard, parking lot or chapel. This provides the agency extra sleeping capacity and gives the homeless person a safer place.



Indoors as “The New Cot”

The EDAR units are being used as additional beds in shelters that are beyond maximum bed capacity and lack portable cots for homeless clients to sleep on each night. In these instances, the units are used indoors as alternatives to traditional cots. In this situation, EDAR units provide much more privacy than a cot. Oftentimes, a mother and child will use an EDAR together, providing a “camping” atmosphere for a child who has been displaced from their home.

EDAR Communities

EDAR communities are made up of 10-15 EDAR units, creating a dormitory effect on land provided by a local authority or private entity. Restroom and shower facilities are integrated into the community and EDAR works with local homeless agencies to provide additional social services to the residents of the community.

Frequently Asked Expansion Questions

How can I bring EDAR to my city?

EDAR is happy to establish new partnerships with homeless service agencies around the country. If you are an individual or a group of individuals interested in bringing EDAR to your city, there are certain steps that you can take with EDAR.

First, please contact us and let us know you are interested! We will work with you and/or your volunteer group or committee to reach out to local agencies in your city. In order to distribute EDARs, we must create partnerships with local homeless service agencies such as a shelter, church or food bank.

How do I start a volunteer committee?

Our volunteer committees are comprised of people with one main interest – to bring EDAR to their community. In some cases, they are made up by several people contacting our office and EDAR staff will link them together. Volunteer committees can be made up of a group of friends, local homeless advocates, staff members from shelters or members of a religious organization.



Why do you have partnerships?

These partner agencies are able to determine who will need the EDAR units most and they help us navigate each city's individual laws and regulations. The partnerships also allow for us to collect data about EDAR usage, allowing us to improve the functionality of our units. EDAR units often help homeless service agencies establish relationships with chronically homeless individuals that are reluctant to use their programs under other circumstances. EDAR staff will coordinate with you or your interest group and create a plan to reach out to agencies in your area.

What does an EDAR partnership require?

EDAR partnerships require a signed contract that will cover basic liability and asks that the partner shelter provide EDAR staff with regular feedback. It also requires each individual that is given an EDAR to sign an agreement that they will use the EDAR safely and for the intended purposes.

I know someone that needs an EDAR. How do I get one for them?

EDAR does not directly distribute EDAR units. All units must be distributed through partnership agencies. You can contact us to inquire whether we have any established partnerships in your community. If we do, we will direct you to our partner agency and they can determine whether the individual you know would be a suitable EDAR user. If there are no established partnerships in your community, EDAR will reach out to shelters that have a relationship with the individual in need of an EDAR and see if they would be interested in becoming a partnership agency.

How do I introduce my community to EDAR?

Once we have created a partnership with an agency in your community, it's time to introduce the EDAR unit to the rest of the community! EDAR staff will work with the distributing partners and volunteer committee in your community to create awareness about what the EDAR is and how it can help your community.

Can you ship an EDAR directly to me?

EDAR can only ship or deliver EDAR units to partner agencies. Individuals requesting an EDAR will be directed to a partner agency to determine if they are eligible to become EDAR users. We will not ship an EDAR to any individual. They must be shipped to and distributed through a partner agency only.

Additionally, we strive to keep overhead costs down to maximize your donated dollars therefore, unless absolutely necessary, we avoid shipping units individually and will often times ship to multiple cities in one shipment.



I work/volunteer for a homeless service provider and would like to bring EDAR to my community. How can I help?

Thank you for already taking a role to help the country's homeless problem. If you think that your organization might be a potential partner, please contact us. We will be happy to discuss how EDAR might fit into your current program and discuss with you the next steps. If there is someone in your organization that will need to approve bringing EDAR into your organization, please try to include them on them on the email and/or phone call.

How can EDAR units be incorporated into our agencies existing programs?

EDAR units are used in more ways than even we initially expected! Some EDAR units are being used outdoors, allowing homeless users mobility during the day. At night, some of our partners allow EDAR users to enter the agency grounds at night and sleep in a designated area such as a courtyard, parking lot or chapel. This provides the agency extra sleeping capacity and gives the homeless person a safer place.

EDAR units have also been used in addition to or replacing the traditional cot. This allows for more privacy and in many cases, mother and child will use an EDAR together, providing a "camping" atmosphere for a child who has been displaced from their home.

Why do homeless individuals use EDAR units? Aren't shelter beds more comfortable?

Absolutely! But many who are homeless are not comfortable living in shelters and many shelters offer only temporary accommodation. Plus, in many larger cities, the shelters are at or above maximum capacity and do not have the funds to pay for more shelters.

What security does EDAR offer to an individual?

Living rough on our streets is inherently dangerous. In "day mode", EDAR secures personal belongings by the use of locks. In "night mode", there are translucent windows that help each person remain aware of their surroundings. We work with our shelter partners to provide land on their property that will provide additional safety and storage.

Are EDARs hard for homeless individuals to operate?

We currently have EDAR users ranging from petite women to strong men and in a full spectrum of ages. When designing the EDAR units, we ensured that EDAR was stronger than the average supermarket cart already used by many homeless people. We developed wheels that are better than a supermarket cart's, being slightly larger and easier to steer in a consistent fashion. We have also included a brake and locking mechanism which ensures the unit will not move on its own.