

Protocol for Unaccompanied Minors Seeking Shelter or Other Assistance

This document outlines protocol for helping an unaccompanied minor on the street to access assistance within the District of Columbia.

To whom does this protocol apply?

This protocol applies to children between the ages of 12 and 17 who have left or been forced from their home and have no safe place to be.

- For children under the age of 12, please contact the DC Child and Family Services Agency Hotline at **202.671.7233** or the Metropolitan Police Department by calling 911. These agencies coordinate closely and either may be contacted for assistance.
- For Transition Age Youth (TAY) between the ages of 18 and 24, contact the District of Columbia Shelter Hotline at **202.399.7093**.

What number should I call?

When an unaccompanied minor between the ages of 12 and 17 needs help, the best number to call is the Safe Place Hotline, operated by Sasha Bruce Youthwork, at **202.547.7777**.

This hotline is operated out of Bruce House and staffed 24 hours a day.

It is important to note that Sasha Bruce works closely with District Government agencies, including the Department of Human Services, the Child and Family Services Agency, and the Metropolitan Police Department, to get young people home safely. However, we know young people may be intimidated if they are immediately referred to the government or picked up by police, so the District works closely with its nonprofit partners to make sure young people have a safe and welcoming place to go when they need help.

Where Should an Unaccompanied Minor Be Directed?

If a young person has access to transportation and would like to go on their own, he/she can be directed to the following locations:

- During the Day
 - Sasha Bruce Drop-in Center
 - 741 8th Street SE (Eastern Market Station on the orange and blue lines)
 - Monday – Friday, 8am until 6pm
 - 202.547.7777

- LAYC Drop-In Center (fully bilingual staff)

3045 15th NW (Columbia Heights Station on the green and yellow lines)

Monday – Friday, 9am – 6pm

202.768.7801

- Evening/Night:

- Bruce House

1022 Maryland Ave NE (10 blocks from Union Station on the red line; Bus lines X8, X2, D6, 90, and 92)

Open 24 hours a day

202.546.4900

Note: If a young person does not have access to transportation and calls the Safe Place Hotline, an outreach worker or cab (depending on the time of day and availability of staff) will be dispatched to bring the youth to safety.