

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU WANT TO HELP A PERSON:

- Get to know the people living on the streets in your area and treat them like any neighbor.
- Encourage/help them call public services like **211** and the **Clark County Housing Hotline: 360-695-9677**.
- Call the **community homelessness outreach team at: 360-831-0908, opt. 2 or 360-980-0040**. They can come help get them connected to services.
- Share the Council for the Homeless **Resource Guide:**
<https://www.councilforthehomeless.org/clark-county-resource-guide/>
- In the winter call the **Winter Shelter Housing Hotline: 360-695-9677**

KEEP IN MIND:

- Many organizations directly help people experiencing homelessness and work to increase affordable housing. One thing you can do as a business is find an organization that you want to support, and ask them what they need.
- Clark County's homeless service providers know how to help our homeless neighbors. It's what they are best at. The more you support them, the more they can help people get off the streets and into stable housing.
- Avoid perpetuating stereotypes, stigma and myths. People experiencing homelessness are not defined by their housing status. It's often temporary, and it's likely they've sought housing and/or shelter and there was none available.
- Advocate within your circle of influence to help make things better for our neighbors who are homeless. This will help our business community too.

 BE KIND  SPEAK UP  SHARE TIME  RENT or HIRE

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CLARK COUNTY, WA Business Toolkit on Homelessness

What's Inside:

✓ Do's & Don'ts ✓ Common Scenarios ✓ How to help

What's the best number to call?

How can I help?

What can I do?



THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:



Business Resource Guide: THE BASICS

Do

- Make eye contact and talk kindly to people who are without homes.
- Refer people to the Navigation Center on Grand Ave. & 4th Plain. 360-953-8107
Open 7 days a week, 7am-5pm.
- Call the community homelessness outreach team: 360-980-0040 or 360-831-0908, opt. 2.
- Get to know your Vancouver Neighborhood Police Officer (NPO)
<https://www.cityofvancouver.us/police/page/neighborhood-police-officers>
- If someone is being disruptive, homeless or not, try to de-escalate the situation if comfortable.
- If someone is threatening harm to self or others, acting recklessly or violently, or having delusions, call the SW WA Crisis Line: 800-626-8137. Or call 911 and ask for a mental health trained officer.
- Install good lighting around your building; lock or turn off exterior power outlets.
- Let people know your boundaries on your property. If people are doing something illegal and won't leave, call non-emergency police line: 311 or 911.
- Keep the area in front of the business clean and well maintained. Keeping your area clean encourages others to respect the area.

Do Not

- Assume people know your expectations.
- Offer food or money, unless you are equipped and willing to handle repeat requests.
- Permit anyone to camp on your property, unless you have developed a trusting relationship with them.
- Permit anyone to store shopping carts or personal belongings on your property.



Quick Connect: WHO TO CALL

- 🏠 **360-695-9677**: Clark County Housing Hotline
- 🏠 **360-831-0908, opt. 2 and 360-980-0040**: Community homelessness outreach team for when you want to help connect the person to resources.
- 🏠 **800.626.8137**: Mental Health Mobile Crisis Line for those who are highly symptomatic.
- 🏠 **360.314.5716 or 360.218.6611**: Homeless Youth Day Center/Outreach
- 🏠 **311** – For non-life threatening concerns.
- 🏠 **911** – For life threatening or safety concerns.

Here's what to do if:

Someone is sleeping/loitering at your front door:

- Odds are, this won't be a one-off interaction, so it's good to establish a friendly relationship. Introduce yourself. Ask for the person's name.
- Politely ask them to leave using sincere empathetic language that deflects the request from yourself to a third party (e.g. the property owner asks them to leave, even if that person is you). This reduces the power-dynamic, and will help in future interactions.
- Let them know where they can be, as opposed to only where they cannot be.
- If they are not cooperative, tell them you are going to call the police, *but would rather not*. Avoid confrontation and keep a safe distance if you feel threatened in any way. Call community homelessness outreach team first, then the non-emergency police line 311, and if they become disruptive or dangerous call 911.

Someone exhibiting disruptive mental health symptoms has walked into the business:

- If they purchase something, treat them like any other customer. This sets a great example for your employees and patrons. If they do not make a purchase, let them know this area is for customers, and politely ask them to leave, *only if you would do the same for a non-paying patron who is not homeless*.
- If they are symptomatic and disruptive: Ask them to leave clearly and politely. Your safety, and the safety of your patrons is your priority. If they remain in the facility call the mobile crisis line first, then the non-emergency police line 311. Based on the situation, you may want to call 911 if the situation feels dangerous.