



Tacoma Pierce County Coalition to End Homelessness

WORLD HOMELESS DAY EVENT



Tuesday, October 10, 4:30 pm

On October 12th 2022, the Tacoma City Council passed Second Amended Substitute Ordinance 28831 (the camping ban). The ordinance: "prohibits camping and the storage of personal belongings in a 10-block radius around temporary shelters in Tacoma as well as Aspen Court (a City-permitted emergency and transitional housing facility) and all public property within 200 feet of Tacoma's mapped rivers, waterways, creeks, streams, and shorelines."

on the anniversary of Tacoma's camping ban....

REALITY CHECK -- WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED?

The Price we ALL pay to enforce Camping Bans

Encampment sweeps are counterproductive, harmful, and DO NOT reduce homelessness. Resources directed toward making homelessness less visible would be better used to produce shelter options that actually reduce homelessness. Why are camping bans - and the sweeps used to enforce them - so harmful?

1. ***Sweeps undermine outreach efforts.*** The path to housing and financial stability is built on trust and follow-up. After a sweep it takes time to locate the person seeking services.
2. ***Public health impacts of sweeps*** go beyond the problem of providing consistent care for people with serious medical or behavioral conditions. Constant movement disrupts community, increases loss and damage of basic survival gear, and increases vulnerability to illness.
3. ***Street deaths.*** Unsheltered people live shorter lives (on average 30 fewer years) than housed people. Personal safety is lost, along with trust in service providers and public agencies during sweeps.
4. ***Forced migration in inclement weather.*** This compounds the harms inherent in the sweeps.
5. ***Risk of litigation against Tacoma.*** The ordinance effectively bans universal, unavoidable human survival conduct on most public land in the city. An unsheltered person at risk of hypothermia is in violation of the ordinance as soon as they wrap a blanket or tarp around themselves and lie down. The money spent to defend inhumane policies will be better spent on shelter creation.

See the flip side for better ways to spend our money. . .

Additional Resources

Tacoma Pierce County Coalition to End Homelessness (www.pchomeless.org): Includes links to local meetings and events and serves as an on-line hub for individuals, non-profit organizations, government agencies, faith communities, and community businesses working together to end homelessness.

Root Causes of Homelessness: University of Washington professor and author, Gregg Colburn, offers a compelling analysis of the root causes of homelessness in our region in this 8 minute video clip. See link on pchomeless.org website.

Issue Brief: (December, 2022). Impact of Encampment Sweeps on People Experiencing Homelessness. National Healthcare for the Homeless. (nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/NHCHC-encampment-sweeps-issue-brief-12-22.pdf)