

G.D 19-0144

2018 Homeless Snapshot

Thurston County funds an annual "Point-in-Time-Census" to capture how many individuals are homeless and when possible, how they came to be in that situation.



The January 2018 census identified 835 homeless persons, including 320 individuals, families, and unaccompanied youth without access to shelter of any kind. Stay connected to receive the 2019 data.



In November 2018, the City counted approximately 310 individuals sleeping outdoors or in tents in Downtown.

The annual Point-in-Time Census provides critical information to help identify response strategies, apply for funding, prioritize work efforts, and measure the impact of our community's response to homelessness.



Stay Connected



Sign up for our newsletter at olympiawa.gov/subscribe



Email us at homelessness@ci.olympia.wa.us



Visit us online at olympiawa.gov/homelessness



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Homelessness Response

Increasing homelessness in Olympia and throughout Thurston County is an issue of significant public concern. Like many cities across the country and particularly on the west coast, the City of Olympia is challenged to respond. In 2018, the City developed a new line of programs to address homeless related issues and their impacts, and hired its first Homeless Response Coordinator.

Regional and community partnerships are critical to developing an effective response to this crisis.

Home Fund

In 2018, voters approved a sales tax increase to fund building permanent supportive housing for the most vulnerable members of our community. It will be several years before we see completed projects, so in the interim the City is partnering with others to take more immediate action.



Homelessness Response
olympiawa.gov/homelessness



Immediate Actions

Supporting the Move to a 24/7 Shelter System

The City is providing funding to move two existing shelters to a 24/7 operation. In addition to providing overnight shelter, Community Youth Services (CYS) Rosie's Place will open its doors to youth during the day. The Salvation Army will expand their overnight shelter beds by upgrading their building to provide a safe, comfortable place during daytime hours.

Supporting a Vibrant Downtown

The City of Olympia is committed to our community's vision for a vibrant Downtown, which includes effective and compassionate ways to address the impact of homelessness.

Clean Team

Responsible for general upkeep, repair, painting, trash pickup and cleaning in public spaces in Downtown.

Crisis Response

A partnership initiated by the Police Department to provide free, confidential, voluntary crisis response assistance.

DT Ambassadors

A vital front line delivery system to help promote and ensure Downtown is a vibrant and attractive urban destination.

Familiar Faces

Two peer navigators who assist individuals with complex health and behavioral problems.

Secure Storage

A partnership to create storage facilities to keep personal belongings safe and dry, while minimizing sidewalk debris.

Walking Patrol

A highly visible and accessible 7-member team dedicated to serving, connecting with our Downtown community.

The Mitigation Site

- **As a first step** to manage the growing, unsustainable and immediate situation of Downtown encampments, a temporary sanctioned campsite was set up on a City-owned parking lot at Olympia and Franklin. This site will include basic hygiene services, orderly setup, safety protocols, a code of conduct and on-site host(s).
- **This is not a permanent end state.** This step will facilitate safety, public health, dignity, along with improved enforcement of camping and behaviors in the downtown core and other areas. The City is currently looking to establish a second mitigation site outside of Downtown for temporary and safe camping.



Fostering Emergency Housing Partnerships

- **Plum Street Village.** A new tiny home village has 40+ individuals onsite. The units are secure and private for individuals and couples without children. The site is equipped with a hygiene trailer and services tailored to the specific needs of the residents.
- **Emergency Housing Ordinance.** In 2018, the City Council adopted an emergency ordinance that allowed for the establishment of temporary emergency shelter site on faith-based, non-profit, or government property, subject to a permit.
- **Faith Community & City Tiny House Pilot Partnership.** The City is partnering with several faith-based communities to support the establishment of additional emergency housing villages on their properties.



Developing Strategies and a Plan

Beginning in March of 2019, the City will host a process to determine how we, as a community, will respond to long-term impacts of homelessness. This process will engage citizens, non-profits, private sector, and government agencies from throughout the region in a dialogue to identify together the most effective, impactful, and sustainable solutions to addressing homelessness and its impacts.

How to Get Involved

Sign up for our homelessness e-newsletter to get the most up-to-date information on what is happening related to homelessness, including how you can get involved in developing a long-term strategy. Go to olympiawa.gov/subscribe to sign up.