

**STREET OUTREACH  
SERVICES AND HOMELESS  
ENCAMPMENT RESPONSE**  
**OFFICE OF HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

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**LEXINGTON**



## Background and Overview of Street Outreach Services

- Street outreach services are mobile, community-based supports connecting individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness with essential resources (shelter and housing, healthcare).
  
- Street outreach:
  - Targets those least likely to seek assistance for themselves;
  - Focuses on building trust and rapport through consistent engagement;
  - Meets people where they are (streets, parks, vehicles, encampments);
  - Works to meet immediate needs (food, hygiene, other basic needs);
  - Aims to guide individuals toward stable, long-term solutions.
  
- Street outreach is a vital frontline service and the initial point-of-contact with the local response system for many unhoused individuals.



## Background and Overview of Street Outreach Services

- Hope Center Street Outreach Pilot (2016-2019)
  - Initial iteration within Fayette County
  - Funded at \$75,000/year
  - Focus on “first touch” service provision
  - Target of 40 unduplicated contacts per year
  
- Community Action Council Assertive Street Outreach (2019-2023)
  - Expanded model with increasing levels of service such as intensive case management
  - Funded at \$280,000/year
  - Target of 110 unduplicated contacts per year
  
- Expanded Pandemic Response
  - Community Action Council’s outreach team operated non-congregate, hotel-based shelter
  - LFUCG leveraged Coronavirus funding to expand outreach via Hope Center and Lexington Rescue Mission



## Background and Overview of Street Outreach Services

- Hope Center Progressive Street Outreach (2023-Current)
  - Expanded hours of operation and integrated clinical supports
  - Funded at \$316,640/year
  - Target of 60 unduplicated contacts monthly
  - Additional funds awarded in late 2025 to facilitate expansion with downtown focus
- Since August 1, 2023:
  - 809 unique contacts
  - Over 29% of persons exited to positive housing destinations
  - 32% of persons enrolled in intensive case management
  - 63% of persons exiting intensive case management moved to permanent housing
- Downtown outreach team to fully launch January 2026



## Increased Need for Outreach Services

- Increase in unsheltered homelessness
  - While the 2025 LexCount saw fewer unsheltered persons (n=67) than the previous year (n=82), rates remain above the average from the previous 10-year period.
  - As outlined in the 2025 Lexington Emergency Shelter Study, the local response system (1) has seen an increase in individuals with barriers to accessing shelter and (2) presently lacks year-round bed inventory to meet needs.
- Increased costs to address homeless encampments
  - Combined with shelter barriers and capacity, implementation of House Bill 5 has contributed to increased costs related to homeless encampment removals.
  - Average cost per removal:

○ FY23	\$1,510
○ FY24	\$1,850
○ FY25	\$2,979



## Encampment Coordinator Position

- To facilitate improved encampment response, the OHPI requested a dedicated position in FY26.
- Position filled in September 2025
- The Encampment Coordinator position has:
  - Allowed for greater oversight of street outreach services, identifying opportunities to improve processes and produce case-specific solutions.
  - Facilitated responses to more complex encampments—for example, those that include multiple properties.



## **Example: Russell Cave Road Encampment Removal**

- In October, OHPI was notified of an issue by a private property owner. That issue was found to span public property, multiple private properties, and railroad property.
- Response included OHPI, Environmental Services, Code Enforcement, Police, and Solid Waste.
- Encampment Coordinator was able to:
  - Reduce removal costs by facilitating removal of debris by Solid Waste as opposed to a contractor.
  - Recommend and facilitate landscaping to mitigate future activity.
  - Facilitate long-term plan for ongoing oversight.
  - Reduce burdens on private owners by coordinating a single, synchronized response.



## Example: Russell Cave Road Encampment Removal







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## Looking Ahead

- Hope Center Downtown Outreach Team to launch this month
  - Increases focus on downtown
  - Expands clinical supports
  - Adds part-time weekend coverage
- Current street outreach services are contracted through July 31, 2026. OHPI will be releasing an RFP later this year to re-bid services.
- OHPI will be able to utilize data and insight gained from the Encampment Coordinator as well as approximately 6 months of expanded outreach data to inform RFP and to identify recipient of funding.
- Mayor's Task Force on Homelessness is presently working to identify tangible recommendations for continued efforts to reduce homelessness locally.

# Questions?



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