



Homeless Encampment Response and Street Outreach Services

**Office of Homelessness Prevention and Intervention
February 25, 2025**





What Are Homeless Street Outreach Services?

- A mechanism for reaching those least likely to seek out assistance for themselves
- Reduces barriers by meeting people where they are—geographically, physically, and emotionally
- Works to address an individual's immediate, basic needs and facilitate connection to permanent housing for unsheltered persons





History: Hope Center Street Outreach Pilot (2016-2019)

- Initial iteration within Fayette County
- Funded at \$75,000/year
- Focused on outreach as a “first touch” service provider
 - Funded 1 Program Coordinator and 1 Peer Specialist
 - Targeted serving 40 unduplicated individuals/households
 - Facilitated access to emergency shelter, mainstream benefits, and assessment for permanent housing





History: Assertive Street Outreach & Intensive Case Management (2019-2023)

- After initial pilot, an RFP was issued for an expanded model increasing levels of service
- Funded at \$280,000/year
 - Funded 2 Intensive Case Management Team Coordinators with 2 Peer Support Specialists and .5 Clinician
 - Carried an active caseload in addition to making initial contacts to facilitate higher levels of service and outcomes
 - Targeted serving 110 individuals with outreach contacts and 30 individuals with intensive case management services per year





History: COVID-19 Pandemic

- Community Action Council's team operated non-congregate, hotel-based shelter for much of their term.
- LFUCG leveraged Coronavirus funding to expand outreach services, awarding funding to Hope Center and Lexington Rescue Mission.
- Additional teams assisted in facilitating general outreach activities and encampment response as the community struggled to meet increased need.





History: Progressive Street Outreach (2023-Current)

- The next iteration of outreach sought to expand hours of operation and integrate all services into a single team.
- Funded at \$300,000 in Year 1, \$316,640 in Year 2
 - Expanded outreach to operate two shifts (8 a.m. – 10 p.m., Monday-Friday) with ability to receive afterhours contacts and flex scheduling as needed
 - Funded 1 Program Coordinator, 1 Peer Support Specialist, 1 Housing Navigator, 1 Case Worker/SOAR Specialist and .5 Clinician. Added 2 Peer Mentors in Year 2.
 - Targeted 60 unduplicated contacts *monthly* with 40 intensive case management clients at any given time





Increasing Need for Outreach Services

- Increase in unsheltered homelessness
 - 2024 LexCount: 82 unsheltered persons (up from 38 in 2023)
 - Over 500 persons contacted by Hope Center's street outreach team in Year 1.
- The OHPI increasingly spends more time responding to encampments and other issues related to homelessness.
 - FY24: 28 encampment cleanups conducted at a cost of \$51,805 (average: \$1,850)
 - FY23: 25 cleanups at a total cost of \$39,276 (average: \$1,510)
- Effective July 15, 2024, House Bill 5 made public camping illegal.





A Path Forward

- To better address unsheltered homelessness, Lexington needs increased resources.
- The Office of Homelessness Prevention and Intervention currently holds 3 staff positions, fulfilling all duties of the Continuum of Care and overseeing local response to homeless encampments.
 - Louisville Metro Government maintains at least 10 positions to investigate and respond to encampments.
 - Louisville's Coalition for the Homeless (CoC Lead Agency) has over 20 staff members.





OHPI FY26 Requests

- OHPI proposes the addition of an Encampment Coordinator position in FY26. This position would:
 - Facilitate encampment response in compliance with LFUCG's Homeless Encampment Standard Operating Procedures
 - Coordinate the activities of contracted street outreach services
 - Collaborate with internal divisions to conduct camp removals

- Estimated costs: \$85,000/year (salary + fringe) for Encampment Coordinator
\$45,000 initial cost for fleet vehicle





Additional OHPI Recommendations

- Identify sustainable funding
 - Consider modifying Ordinance 103-2014 to create greater flexibility with Innovative and Sustainable Solutions Fund
- Explore continued expansion and innovative models
 - Ultimate goal of 24/7 outreach services
 - Consider best practice models effective in other communities such as homeless outreach teams within law enforcement or integration with paramedicine teams
- Expand interim housing options
 - Housing ends homelessness and basic needs must be met to achieve higher level goals



Questions?



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