

What should I do if I see an individual or a group of individuals that appear to be street homeless?

For the most immediate response, New Yorkers who see individuals they believe to be homeless and in need should contact 3-1-1 via phone or mobile app and request outreach assistance. You should call 911 if the individual appears to pose an immediate risk to themselves or others or there is criminal activity.

What happens when I call 311 to report a homeless New Yorker in need of assistance?

- Individual calls 311 and a Service Request (SR) is created
- SR is evaluated and assigned to a service provider or a partner Agency, like NYPD, as needed
- If assigned to a service provider, outreach team is dispatched within an hour of receiving the request
- Service provider outreach teams attempt to locate that individual and if found directly engage the individual, assess for safety and encourage them to accept services and transition off the streets.

How do outreach teams engage a homeless New Yorker in need of assistance?

Experienced outreach teams from not-for-profit service providers canvass the five boroughs 24/7/365 as part of our citywide effort to identify and engage individuals who may be homeless, encourage them to accept services, and ultimately help them transition off the streets. Additionally, DHS performs joint outreach operations with community stakeholders and Agency partners, including the NYPD, the Parks Department, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and the Department of Transportation to utilize each Agency's expertise, engage more New Yorkers, and offer more supports. In the past year, outreach teams helped 865 homeless New Yorkers off the streets citywide, thanks to new investments and a doubling of the size of those teams.

What services does DHS provide to street homeless individuals?

In addition to redoubling and enhancing proactive round-the-clock street outreach efforts, DHS operates facilities dedicated to serving street homeless New Yorkers—and is in the process of opening more. Drop-In Centers and Safe Havens are low-barrier programs specifically targeted toward homeless individuals who may be resistant to accepting other services, including traditional shelters. Both Drop-In Centers and Safe Havens are equipped with on-site services and staff who work closely with the clients to deepen those relationships, stabilize their lives, and encourage them to transition further off the streets, and ultimately into permanent housing. These facilities are often the first step towards bringing street homeless New Yorkers indoors.

- Drop-in Centers provide baseline services with the goal of meeting immediate needs for individuals, such as showers, meals, and clothing. They also have on-site case management services and provide an immediate option for individuals who want to transition off the streets
- Safe Havens are transitional housing options geared toward chronic street homeless individuals. Safe Havens only take referrals from street outreach teams, offer overnight beds, provide robust case management services, and have physical and program characteristics more suitable for helping street homeless New Yorkers stabilize their lives in an effort to move them into permanent housing

From December 2015 to February 2018, we will have opened a total of 763 additional beds across 26 sites, for an operating total of over 1,300 beds—and counting—more than doubling this City's capacity dedicated to serving street homeless New Yorkers as they get back on their feet.

What happens if someone declines help from the outreach team?

Accepting outreach efforts, including services that will help homeless New Yorkers transition indoors from the streets, is voluntary, and it can take months of persistent and compassionate engagement to successfully connect street homeless individuals with City services. We remain undeterred in our efforts to engage them, proactively offering assistance and services, until we make the connection that will help them transition off the streets. Our teams continue to reach out to these New Yorkers to offer services and help them come indoors.

What is the difference between an encampment, pop-up, and a hotspot?

- **Encampment:** An outdoor location with a fixed, visible structure where two or more individuals gather, often under bridges or in remote areas. When we clean encampments, we coordinate closely with City agencies, including NYPD and DSNY in all cases, as well as other relevant partner agencies when appropriate.
- **Pop-Up:** A pop-up location appears quickly and is usually temporary. It includes some level of debris such as carts, cardboard.
- **Hotspot:** An location where two or more homeless individuals are gathered without a structure

How does the City address physical conditions on the streets?

Our outreach teams coordinate closely with partner Agencies, including the NYPD and the Department of Sanitation, as well as property owners to address and clean any conditions whenever and wherever they may occur, consistent with the requirements of local law. At the same time, outreach teams encourage street homeless individuals to accept services and transition indoors.

Each clean-up occurs on a case-by-case basis, responsive to dynamic circumstances on the ground regarding the particular known homeless individual. Prior to every clean-up, all partner agencies work to carefully assess the details of a given condition or situation, including the physical location as well as the number and type of possessions. In cases where a client may be mobile and moving their belongings with them, a careful assessment must be performed each time a client moves, as conditions may have changed, potentially altering the service needs of the client and the clean-up plan.

Should I give money to panhandlers?

New Yorkers can most effectively take action to support New Yorkers experiencing homelessness by donating to the not-for-profit service providers that coordinate our persistent and compassionate outreach efforts across the five boroughs. DHS outreach teams are working to responsibly and compassionately develop more effective interventions for this population, including connecting these individuals, many of whom are not homeless, to appropriate City services.

How does the City know who is homeless and how to help?

Central to the HOME-STAT effort, these outreach teams continue to build the City's first-ever by-name list of individuals known to be homeless and residing on the streets, more effectively enabling the teams to directly and repeatedly engage New Yorkers in need where they are, continually offering supports and case management resources while developing the trust and relationships that will ultimately encourage these individuals to accept services and transition off of the streets. Outreach teams also actively engage individuals encountered on the streets to evaluate their living situations and determine whether they are homeless as well as what specific supports they may need.