

# ENCAMPMENT RESPONSE STRATEGY

**LIVING OUTSIDE IS DANGEROUS**



# Overview

The lack of low-barrier emergency shelter leads individuals to create or seek “shelter” in encampments, which promote trafficking, public health concerns, violence, costly clean up efforts, and more.

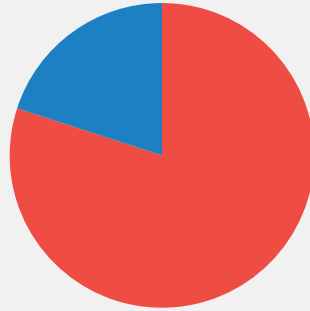
**Eliminating encampments is critical to ending homelessness.**

**Kansas City has the highest percentage of unsheltered chronically homeless individuals in the nation.**

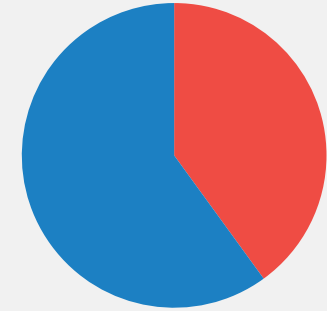
# Population



**61%** of chronically homeless individuals have experienced lifetime mental health problems.



**Over 80%** homeless individuals have experienced lifetime alcohol and/or drug problems.



**40%** of homeless transition aged youth (16-24) identify as LGBTQ.

# Encampment Response Strategy

OUS's encampment response strategy reflects the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) standards.

This strategy focuses on the **health, safety, and quality of life for all** individuals living unsheltered and the surrounding community.

# Encampment Prioritization Matrix

Determinant of Grievous Injury and/or Premature Fatality		Likelihood of Grievous Injury and/or Premature Fatality				
		Low	Minor	Moderate	High	Critical
Domain	Criteria Examples					
Health	Vulnerability of people living in the encampment					
Safety	Violence, drugs, fire, animals					
Environment	Type and amount of garbage and debris					
Location	Location of camp, number of people using the camp, structures, community and neighborhood involvement					

Encampments are prioritized based on the **highest risk for grievous injury and premature death** of people residing in the encampment and people living in the surrounding community.

# Intensive Coordinated Outreach and Engagement

Encampments with a high priority receive targeted intensive outreach and engagement to connect each person to the next step of their housing journey. Examples include:

- Documents (i.e., birth certificates, IDs)
- Assessment and Diversion
- Shelter
- Substance Treatment Services
- Legal Services
- Mental Health Enrollments
- Storage

# Clearance and Closure with Support

OUS partners with other City Departments and service providers to:

- 1) Identify alternative appropriate next steps for people residing in the encampment, and
- 2) Clear items and structures identified as waste once all encampment residents have vacated the area.



# Partners include (but are not limited to):

- ACT Team Peer Support
- Beehive
- Care Beyond the Boulevard
- Comprehensive Mental Health
- Crosslines Community Outreach
- Community Services League
- Government Phone Representatives
- Heartland Center for Behavioral Change
- Hope Faith
- Kansas City Police Department
- Lived Experience Advisory Committee
- Lotus Care House
- Office of Unhoused Solutions
- Parks Department
- Public Works Department
- Landbank
- Neighborhoods Department
- ReStart
- Shelter KC
- Swope
- University Health
- Veterans Affairs (VA)

**Each encampment has its own unique set of characteristics and challenges that influence the timeliness between process steps.**

# Guiding Principles

- **Person-Centered:** putting the individual at the center of their service needs
- **Housing Focused:** services delivered in a manner that is housing focused
- **Time Critical:** process is action-driven with a reasonably established timeline

## Identification and Prioritization

Step	Activities
<b>Site Inspection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete visual inventory of site.</li> <li>▪ Review data available associated with site/location including encampment prioritization matrix, myKC dataset, and parcel viewer</li> <li>▪ Identify community stakeholders (i.e., development district, community groups, neighborhood associations).</li> </ul>
<b>Site Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete site assessment using the Encampment Prioritization Matrix.</li> <li>▪ Identify City departments related to this location's needs.</li> <li>▪ Brief outreach teams engaged in area at Community Outreach Resource and Engagement (CORE) meeting.</li> </ul>
<b>Comprehensive Engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Outreach teams initiate engagement work with clients.</li> <li>▪ Service provider and City department partners are briefed.</li> </ul>
<b>Prioritized Encampments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Outreach teams initiate engagement work</li> <li>▪ Service providers and City departments are made aware of all high and critically prioritized encampments.</li> <li>▪ Identified Encampment for Closure</li> </ul>

## Prioritized Encampment

Step	Activities
<b>Closure Determination (2 Weeks Out)</b>	<p>Site is posted to reflect a 2-week closure date</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Designated staff communicate clearance and closure schedule with those staying at the encampment</li><li>▪ CORE informed</li><li>▪ Agencies and Partners informed</li><li>▪ City Departments informed</li><li>▪ Stakeholders informed</li></ul>
<b>Intensive Planning (1 Week Out)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Surveys are conducted on every person in the encampment to identify each unique need</li><li>▪ Outreach teams continue intensive engagement and identify housing pathways</li><li>▪ Ongoing planning with targeted Outreach partners.</li></ul>

## Closure Week

Step	Activities
<b><u>Monday</u></b> Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meeting with all parties involved in closure to coordinate final details for the week</li> </ul>
<b><u>Tuesday</u></b> Project Outreach Connect (Surge Event)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All service providers are invited to set up work stations at the encampment</li> <li>▪ Services provided on site</li> <li>▪ Encampment is cleared of structures and items identified as trash.</li> </ul>
<b><u>Wednesday</u></b> Post Surge Follow-Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agencies and outreach workers follow-up with services</li> </ul>
<b><u>Thursday</u></b> CLOSURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Official notice of closure is posted at the location.</li> <li>▪ Site is monitored by KCPD and outreach staff to maintain clearance.</li> </ul>
<b><u>Friday</u></b> Final Follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Outreach ensures there is nobody else needing worked with</li> <li>▪ City Departments finalize efforts to keep site cleared</li> <li>▪ Site is monitored by KCPD and outreach staff to maintain clearance.</li> </ul>

**The goal of Zero KC's Encampment Strategy is to promote health, safety, and quality of life for all, and quickly re-house unsheltered individuals.**