



Housing & Community Development

Office of Unhoused Solutions

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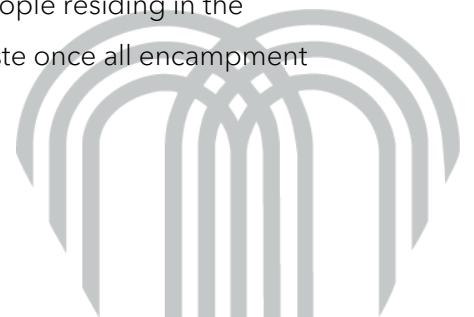
Date: November 7, 2023
From: Office of Unhoused Solutions
Subject: Encampment Response Strategy

Living outside is dangerous. People experiencing homelessness have a higher risk of grievous injury and premature death due to hazardous environments, violence, disease, and drug use. Since January 2023, Kansas City received over 1,700 reports of encampments – one or more people residing in a specific location over time. Aligned with the City’s strategic plan to end homelessness, Zero KC, the Office of Unhoused Solutions (OUS) developed a response strategy to address the needs of people living in encampments.

Encampment Response Strategy Overview

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. The Encampment Response Strategy includes:

- **Encampment Prioritization Matrix:** 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. The matrix assesses encampments in the following domains: location, environment, safety, and health.
- **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. People experiencing homelessness can still access resources and engage with outreach workers regardless of their encampment priority status.
- **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.



Encampment Response Process

The Office of Unhoused Solutions has created a process for the clearance and closure of encampments with support. Each encampment has its own unique set of characteristics and challenges that influence the timeliness between process steps. The process is guided by the following steps:

Site Inspection

- Complete visual inventory of site.
- Review reporting associated with site/location.
- Identify community stakeholders (i.e., development district, community groups, neighborhood associations).

Site Assessment

- Complete site assessment using the Encampment Prioritization Matrix.
- Identify City departments related to this location's needs.
- Brief outreach teams engaged in area at CORE meeting.

Comprehensive Engagement

- Outreach teams initiate engagement work with clients.
- Service provider and City department partners are briefed.

Encampment Response Intensive Planning

- Outreach teams continue intensive engagement and initiate client housing planning.
- Ongoing planning with targeted Outreach partners.
- Second briefing with CORE.
- Designated staff communicate encampment clearance and closure schedule with encampment inhabitants.

Project Outreach Connect

- Outreach teams finalize intensive engagement work.
- Encampment is cleared of structures and items identified as trash.
- Brief staff for elected officials on status.

Post Surge Follow-up

- Official notice of closure is posted at the location.
- Site is monitored by KCPD and outreach staff to maintain clearance.

