



**WHY KANSAS CITY NEEDS**

# **LOW BARRIER, EMERGENCY SHELTER**

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Addendum to 6/29/2022 presentation on Ordinance 220201 - Unhoused Solutions

# OVERVIEW

Emergency shelter and other crisis housing (shelters, interim housing, motel vouchers) play a critical role in our system's response to homelessness.

Emergency shelters will always be necessary as there will be always be people dislodged from housing who will need temporary accommodation.

# OVERVIEW

If every person regardless of circumstance needs a bed to sleep in, then every community needs some form of **LOW-BARRIER SHELTER**, especially when people are living in encampments, on the street or other places not meant for human habitation.

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WHY KANSAS CITY NEEDS LOW BARRIER, EMERGENCY SHELTER



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.**

# “HIGH BARRIER SHELTERS” ACCOMMODATE SOME, NOT ALL

## High Barrier Shelters:

- operate as “enforcement first” programs that center “policy over person”
- prioritize the highest functioning (least vulnerable)
- are not part of the “continuum of care”
- are not required to report data
- do not permit those who have SPMI
- exclude individuals with SUD



# “HIGH BARRIER” ” LEAD INDIVIDUALS TO SEEK SHELTER OUTSIDE

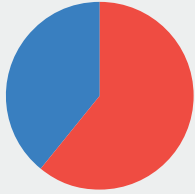
- admission being dependent on chapel or class attendance
- mandatory program participation
- strict curfews (without exception)
- rigid rules and requirements class attendance
- Sexual identity/presenting gender
- background & credit checks
- income requirements and verification
- criminal records
- sobriety (breathalyzers and drug screens)
- forced labor participation
- mental illness
- strict curfews (without exception)

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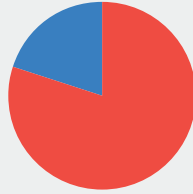


# POPULATION



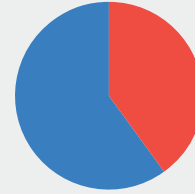
**61%**

of chronically homeless individuals have experienced lifetime mental health problems



**>80%**

Over 80% have experienced lifetime alcohol and/or drug problems



**40%**

of transition aged youth (16-24) identify as LGBTQ

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The current high barrier shelter system leaves a portion of the population to seek shelter outside.

**Low Barrier shelter fills that gap.**

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# Low Barrier Doesn't Mean No Rules.

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# LOW BARRIER Shelter

- Focuses on respect in behaviour, not punishment for actions
- Understands trauma, and utilizes a trauma-informed approach
- Uses restrictions and barring sparingly, and connects people to alternative resources
- Does not impose values and beliefs on residents
- Serves and accepts people without judgment
- Treats belongings respectfully
- Encourages access to basic needs like hygiene with dignity
- Integrates housing and community
- Makes decisions in collaboration with residents
- Actively engages with guests, encourages housing and promotes hope

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**If Kansas City had a low barrier, emergency shelter, encampments and other outside shelters could be eliminated.**

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