



CAMP HOPE Operations Plan 2018

“Transform Yakima Together” (TYT) will help reduce the incidence of homelessness through various initiatives that will fulfill our homeless population’s immediate and critical needs, while at the same time working to empower our homeless population with the tools that they need to navigate their way back to a healthy and productive life and become self-sufficient via the Strength’s Based-Relationship Service Model.

Camp Hope, our managed encampment behind the old Kmart building, will provide unsheltered individuals with a safe, accommodating, and well-managed facility will create relief for downtown businesses, public works, law enforcement as well as public spaces such as sidewalks so that these places may be used for their intended purposes.

Overview

TYT will provide coordination of a shelter, meals and basic needs assistance to homeless adults and their pets beginning on or about March 15, 2018, depending on weather.

The temporary encampment will be managed by TYT staff and will host up to 100 guests each night. The encampment will operate 24 hours a day. Based on lessons learned from the of the tent city and on the experience of the TYT staff, the encampment will be managed in a very different manner than last year’s tent city. For example, individuals be required to register each evening to stay in the encampment – meaning that it won’t just be open for anyone to come at any time. There will be a maximum occupancy established that shall not be exceeded and the entrance will be controlled by security and individuals will need to check in when they come and go. Check-in hours will be between 3pm and 6pm, with variances allowed for those who work or have other verifiable appointments.

The plan calls for large dormitory style tents to be used, rather than individual tents. This will keep the clutter that was experienced last summer to a minimum as well as allow for monitoring of resident activity. The tents may be upgraded to buildings if funding allows. The camp will have separate areas for male and female guests along with storage facilities for the guests’ belongings. An appropriate number of gender specific staff will monitor both the male and female spaces so as not to create a situation where genders are mixed both in clients and in staff. A camp manager will be on site at all times while the camp is open.

In addition, each person wishing to stay at the encampment will be asked to sign a Good Neighbor Agreement which will outline expectations for behavior and consequences if

expectations are not met. Each resident will be expected to provide volunteer service at the encampment to help keep it clean and tidy, depending on circumstances and capability.

Facilities

The Camp facilities will include 4 dormitory barracks (tents or buildings); two for each gender that will house up to 20 people each. In addition to the barracks, we will have up to 10 “dry” tiny homes for individuals or couples to live in. These tiny homes will be built on skids and can be moved when a placement on a church property opens up where it can be hooked up to plumbing. We will also hope, depending on funding, to have a day center with cooking facilities and additional restrooms.

We currently have portable toilets and hand washing stations on site. We plan to upgrade to “park like” toilet and shower facilities that are plumbed to city utilities, depending on funding. We will also have shower and laundry facilities, mail, phone, and Internet access, and safe storage for personal items and kenneling of pets. We will contract with the City for garbage collection service.

Staffing

The current staffing model for Camp Hope consists of the following staffing levels:

- 1 – Director
- 5 – Full-Time Shelter Monitors
- 1- Part-Time Care Manager
- 2 – Part-Time Shelter Monitors
- 3 – Interns
- 14- Trustees

Our staff will have an onsite supervisor at all times who has direct experience with the homeless population, is a certified peer counselor, and who has established relationships with the shelter guests. He is supported by five full-time staff and five part-time staff or interns. In addition, the staff are supported by an ever-growing group of dedicated volunteers.

A part-time professional case manager will administer our mental health referral support system. TYT is committed to working with other organizations on getting folks into housing and providing the support they need as they work toward self-sufficiency. We will have round-the-clock staff and designated-monitored outdoor spaces to ensure no disruption to the businesses and activities in the surrounding area.

As part of their stay with us, our guests will participate in grounds-keeping and other work as they develop pride and ownership in the work we are doing. Our intern and trustee programs give formerly or currently homeless a combination of classroom and on the job training in a Low-Barrier Homeless Shelter or Transitional Housing Facility that can offer experience and prepare them for the marketplace.

Programs & Services

Transportation

TYT maintains two vehicles to provide limited transportation services for the camp residents. The bus schedule will pick the clients up in the morning and take them to the transit center and then return for them in the evening.

Education Center:

Camp Hope maintains an education center that offers guests of Camp HOPE access to several educational resources. Guests are given the opportunity to enhance their knowledge in:

- GED Preparation
- Reading
- Writing
- Math
- Financial Management
- Coping Skills
- Grief Management
- Computer Literacy Courses
- Resume Writing Courses
- Job Interview Skills
- Religious Studies (Voluntary)

The education center also provides an opportunity for individual mentoring / tutoring for guests of the camp. Guests also have access to the computers to be able to search for jobs, housing and to connect with family members.

A volunteer coordinator and a team volunteers who have a level of expertise in various subject matters staff the education center.

Accountability Partner Program

The Transform Yakima Together Accountability Partner Program is a program all guests of a TYT facility are immediately enrolled in. The program helps ensure the guest feels welcome, connected and is given access to resources to assist them in achieving permanent housing, medical, psychiatric and addiction services in an efficient manner.

Upon entering a TYT facility, the homeless person is taken thru a mandatory intake process. Upon completion of the intake process

- Within 48 hours of the initial intake, our on-site Care Manager provides that guest with assessment review.
- The Care Manager will identify any barriers which the person has identified (No Identification, Transportation etc.) and refer that person on to the Accountability Partner Team.
- The team is made up of facility staffs who are assigned a maximum of 8 guests to assist them in following their accountability plan.
- The team member and the guest will have a weekly meeting to review their progress on the accountability plan.
- The facility director also reviews the accountability plan and meets with the guest weekly to ensure they are being provided resources and assistance in a timely manner.

It is our belief by having multiple staff members responsible for assisting the guest we accomplish a system that does not allow a guest to feel unconnected to service providers, have a sense of community and not fall thru any possible gaps in services.

Homeless Outreach Team (HOT)

Though not funded through our grant funding, as able, TYT will provide a Homeless Outreach Team or HOT. HOT will respond as requested to areas within Yakima County as staffing and funding allows.

HOT will act as a response team to the Yakima County Community. HOT will respond with specially trained volunteers to calls placed by the community, city or other service providers for homeless who may be congregating, or unaware of the services they can access.

- Our goal is to provide the community with an immediate response.
- Provide relief off of emergency service providers having to deal with non-criminal nuisance complaints. HOT will provide safe transportation for the client to sheltering / encampment / service providers.
- Provide our homeless population with a trained person immediately aware of resources directly effecting their immediate needs.
- Treating Homeless Population with dignity & respect.

Through a 24-hour hotline, community outreach, and a partnership with The Downtown Business Association, we will provide business owners an alternative to calling 911 when issues arise. This will greatly decrease pressure on the Yakima Police Department in responding to nuisance calls as well as reducing the fiscal impact on the Police Department for such calls.

We are committed to a close and creative partnership with local law enforcement. Over the past months, we have conferred on shelter safety practices, intake of certain nuisance offenders, accessing future funding for programs aimed at reducing unnecessary police calls and associated public safety costs, and the need for closer coordination between the police and social services. Our HOT Team will be working closely with local law enforcement to address and mitigate public impact of the homeless in the immediate neighborhood surrounding the proposed sites.

Policies and Procedures

A Low-Barrier Shelter is a model of service delivery that provides for the basic needs of street dependent people in order to get them off the streets. It prioritizes the provision of shelter and basic needs FIRST so that street dependent people can more easily access other services next (i.e. housing programs, substance use treatment programs, mental health support programs). In practice, this means individuals will be encouraged to participate in available programs but not required.

- Sobriety will not be required, however, there will be no drug or alcohol use on the premises.
- Each person that comes to the shelter will have a formal intake and registration interview with a trained staff member but will not be denied service without valid ID.
- Couples will be able to stay together.
- There will be secure storage space for personal items.
- Service animals and companion pets will be accommodated

- Homeless (HUD Definition)
- Age 18 or older
- Ambulatory and not requiring hospital or nursing home care
- Agree to be nonviolent
- Agree not to use or sell drugs or illegal substances on the premises
- Agree to treat other clients, staff and the property with respect
- Agree to obey fire and other safety regulations

We will accept new residents on a first-come first-serve basis. However, if someone shows up late at night looking for a place to stay, the tent city will offer them a bed for the night in their large army tent, as long as they pass the initial screening. All residents must pass a police background check for convictions of sex offenses.

Rules of Conduct

Residents must agree to follow the 5 community standards of behavior:

- No violence toward yourself or others
- No illegal substances or alcohol or paraphernalia on the premises or within a two-block radius
- No stealing
- Everyone contributes to the upkeep and welfare of the village and works to become a productive member of the community which includes ten hours of community service per week
- No disruptive behavior of any kind that disturbs the general peace and welfare of the village

The rules are enforced on a “one-strike-and-you’re-out basis” and all residents agree when they move in to leave voluntarily if found in violation of these rules. There is no time-limit to any member’s stay as long as they are able to follow the community standards of behavior.

Responsibilities of residents include:

- Attending the weekly mandatory community meeting
- Actively participate in community cleaning every week as mandated by the Department of Health.
- Serving two security shifts

There are varying lengths of bans from the community for violating the rules. There are also three “elected arbitrators” (selected by the Director with community input) who are responsible to work with campers who don’t follow the rules.

The tent-coordinator is the spokesperson for the tent and liaison with the encampment director. Other “elected” leaders take turns at the intake desk and share responsibility of orienting new members. There is also a donations coordinator, who is a resident responsible for logging and distributing donations equitably. The encampment director must approve all donations prior to them being accepted. Donations will only be accepted at an agreed upon date / time which will be clearly posted.

Term of stay

There will be no specified time limit on guest stays. Arbitrary time limits have proven to be a barrier to sheltering the “hardest to house” population, as they time-out, get discouraged and are unable to re-enter the shelter for a period.

The premise of “shelter first” housing is that through creating a safe environment we can help guests meet their basic needs and become more stable, easing the process into housing and other services.

General security & safety

Risks to clients, staff, volunteers, neighbors and property owners are of equal concern to us -- and we will continually evaluate and systematically address issues of risk. Concerns linking crime and safety risks with the homeless population have been expressed in the past. During the early phase of the homeless tent encampment, strong safety concerns were repeatedly aired at public meetings whenever relocation of the camp was planned.

Our intent is to address these concerns have abated through productive community dialogue, partnership and responsive agency practice. Through our “Good Neighbor” policy and practices we work to mitigate the off-site impact of the shelter. We will establish and enforce a 500-foot buffer zone around the site, within which there would be no alcohol, drugs or abusive language allowed. We will enforce this through deploying our HOT teams to patrol the area as well as providing a 24-hour hotline for neighbors to call when issues arise.

Outside services & Community Partners

The Shelter is filling a clearly identified gap in services for unsheltered adults in Yakima. Cities with the most success in ending homelessness subscribe to a continuum of care network that begins with low-barrier emergency shelter and ends with affordable home ownership. In order for us to move people through homelessness we must provide an entry point to gain maximum access to supportive services such as mental health support (on site), chemical dependency and substance abuse programs, housing programs and many more. Under our agency umbrella we will operate in close coordination with Community Health Centers and Faith Based Organizations to move people into their successful rapid-rehousing program. Getting people in the door is the key for moving people through stages of recovery.

Partners

TYT will be establishing a comprehensive community network of providers whereby these partnering agencies will be provided secure access to shared clients. We have an agreement with Sunrise Outreach to provide lunches on weekdays as well as some administrative services. We are working with various churches in the area to provide transportation to and from the encampment, Day Center, the Mission, and other critical services. Various churches also help provide the evening meal on a regular basis. We will work with Yakima Neighborhood Health and other private providers for case management services as well as other medical, dental, mental health, and substance abuse treatment. Comprehensive Mental Health provides services for the mentally ill. Entrust Community Services provides workplace training and support programs for camp residents. Other providers are sought out and connected with our clients as needed.