



Summary of 19 Strategies for Communities to Address Encampments Humanely and Effectively

Across the country, communities are seeking to address both the needs of people living in encampments and public concerns about encampments. Many want swift action—but the reality is that affordable housing and shelter are often unavailable, and lasting solutions take time. While encampments can be informal communities where people lean on each other for survival and support, their conditions expose the people living in them to deadly risks of hunger, disease, extreme weather, and violence. In some places, it is a crime to sleep, sit, or carry out other daily activities in public. Laws that criminalize homelessness are not effective but instead create barriers to housing and support and lead to harmful consequences.

To solve homelessness, communities must use evidence-based strategies to collaboratively, equitably, and humanely address the housing and service needs of people without homes—even when housing is not available. When an encampment is prioritized for closure, the process must be implemented in a humane and trauma-informed way, and the goal must be to connect every person to housing and services to help them overcome and avoid future experiences of homelessness.

USICH’s *19 Strategies for Communities to Address Encampments Humanely and Effectively* serves as an update and expansion of the *7 Principles for Addressing Encampments* published in 2022. They are based on the framework of [All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness](#). To read the full guidance, visit usich.gov/encampments.

EQUITY	CRISIS RESPONSE
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage Encampment Residents in Efforts to Develop Solutions 2. Address Unique Needs of People With Chronic and Acute Health Conditions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Address Basic Needs and Provide Health Care 11. Conduct Comprehensive, Coordinated, and Ongoing Housing-Focused Outreach 12. Provide Storage
COLLABORATION	HOUSING & SUPPORT
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Establish a Cross-Agency, Multi-Sector Response 4. Empower Outreach Teams and Health Providers to Lead the Effort 5. Prioritize Closure Based on Health and Safety Factors 6. Engage Neighboring Residents and Businesses 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Ensure Access to Housing and Services 14. Ensure Interim Strategies Promote Dignity, Respect, and Pathways to Permanent Housing 15. Develop Pathways to Permanent Housing and Support 16. Ensure Encampments Are Closed Humanely
DATA & EVIDENCE	PREVENTION
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Collect and Share Qualitative and Quantitative Data 8. Track Shelter and Housing Availability 9. Track Status of People Housed and Yet to Be Housed 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Expand Affordable Housing 18. Interrupt Pipelines Into Homelessness 19. Build and Strengthen Safety Nets

Read the full guidance at usich.gov/encampments

Addressing encampments effectively and humanely is not easy, but there are alternatives to criminalization. For help implementing the 19 strategies, [contact your U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness \(USICH\) Senior Regional Advisor](#).