



Media Update

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Emergency Temporary Aid and Shelter Program Update for the Week of May 22-26

Background:

- On May 2, 2017 the Tacoma City Council passed an ordinance directing City Manager Elizabeth Pauli to create an Emergency Temporary Aid and Shelter Program.
- The program includes three-phases to address the public health and safety concerns resulting from growing concentrations of people living in encampments in Tacoma.
 - This program will provide **temporary** options to address the immediate public health emergency created by encampments.
- Phase 1 – Mitigation to reduce the impacts of homelessness on the people living in encampments and on people, businesses and property owners around encampments began with increased enforcement of predatory crimes and other illegal activities on May 8, 2017 by the Tacoma Police Department.
- On May 9, 2017, the Tacoma City Council passed an ordinance declaring a state of public health emergency.
- A state of public health emergency would allow the City to exercise its local authority to suspend certain regulations to execute the emergency management plan to address homeless encampments.
- The City defines “public health emergency” in regards to encampments as unsanitary living conditions created by a lack of access to toilets, handwashing stations, potable water and other basic human health amenities.
- On May 18, 2017 the first Rapid Resource Pop-up was established at Portland Ave and E. 18th Street on City property adjacent to an existing encampment **with a duration of up to six weeks**.
 - The Pop-up provides: portable toilets, handwashing stations, drinking water and 24-hour daily site security as well as outreach services.

Week Accomplishments:

- People experiencing homelessness at Portland Ave. and 18th Street have had access to basic human amenities since the first Rapid Resource Pop-up was established on May, 18.
- City staff met and is working with community service providers who have volunteered to establish a service and outreach plan that will include domestic violence services, sex trafficking services, mental health services, needle exchange and homeless outreach.

Quotes:

“The City has set up our first pop-up mitigation site for people experiencing homelessness and it is in high demand,” Tacoma Mayor Marilyn Strickland said. “This highlights the need to meet people where they are by providing basic health and sanitation amenities as we work to transition folks to more stable housing.”

Future Emergency Temporary Aid and Shelter Program updates will be released on Fridays at 10 a.m. This update and past updates are available online at cityoftacoma.org/homelessupdates.