



HOMELESS OUTREACH SERVICES TEAM



Homeless Outreach Services Team
Homeless Initiative, Initial Involvement & Collaborations



HOMELESS INITIATIVE

- The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department has been involved in the creation of the Homeless Initiative (HI) from the onset.
 - LASD was part of a group that created and coordinated 47 strategies to address homelessness, approved by the Board of Supervisors.
- The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department is the County lead on two of the HI Strategies
 - First Responder Training
 - LASD Homeless policy
 - LASD is also the co-lead of four additional strategies relating to custody, the primary one being Jail In-reach.



Statistics

(The U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2018
Annual Homeless Assessment Report, December 2018)

- December 2018, 552,830 people were homeless in the United States.
- 71% of homeless people are over the age of 24 in the United States.
- 9% were between 18 and 24 years of age in the United States.
- 20% were under 18 in the United States.

Statistics

(The U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2018
Annual Homeless Assessment Report, December 2018)

- California accounted for 47% of the nation's unsheltered homeless population in 2018.
- Approximately 129,972 people are homeless in California.
- Approximately 89,543 people are unsheltered homeless, which is the highest percentage nation wide.



Statistics

(The U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2018
Annual Homeless Assessment Report, December 2018)

- Approximately 56,342 families, 33% are homeless in the United States.
- **Approximately 20,964 families are homeless in California.**
- In Los Angeles County, there's approximately 7,876 homeless families.
- **Approximately 37,878 homeless are veterans in the United States.**
- California has approximately 10,836 homeless veterans.



Statistics

(2018 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count, LAHSA)

- Persons with HIV/ AIDS 740.
- Domestic Violence experience 3,076.
- Mentally ill 12,748
- Chronically Homeless Individuals 13,559.
- Homeless Veterans fell 19% across Los Angeles County to 3,886.
- Substance Abuse, 7,117.



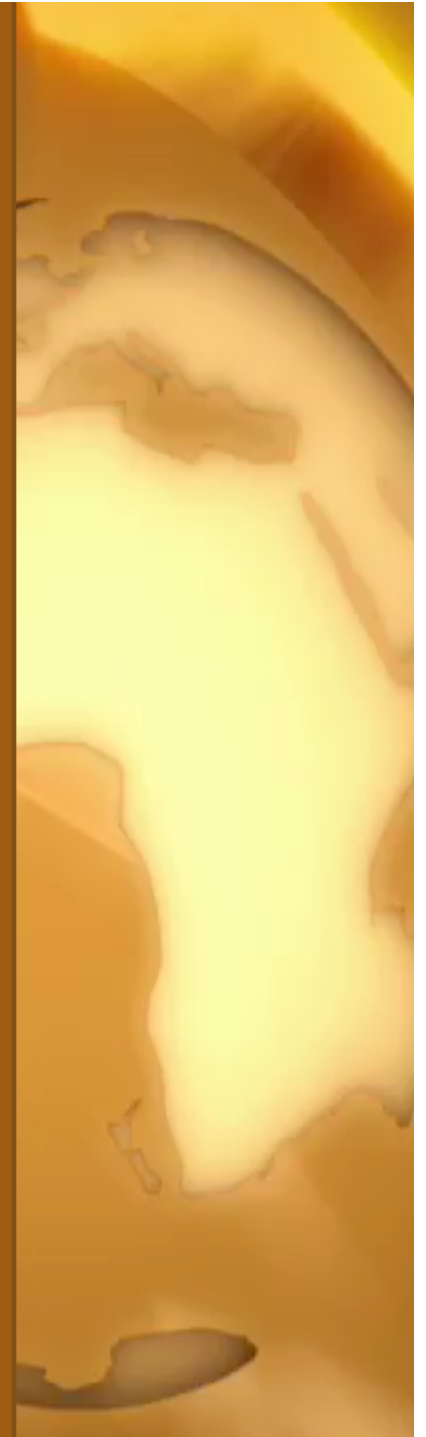
Understanding the Homeless Population



Who is a homeless person?

Three Stages of Homelessness

- Transitional
 - Episodic
 - Chronic





Realities

- “Homelessness isn’t a crime.”



- Homeless populations/areas:

Incorporate many types of people.



- With many unique circumstances.

- Require more than one approach to address.





Realities



- Homeless issues affect “quality of life” issues for individuals and communities.
- Addressing homeless populations/areas can monopolize field units time and efforts.
- Current procedures were agreed upon by the CEO’s office and the Board of Supervisors to seek more effective solutions.
- Protocol operations differ from routine actions in involvement, considerations, and timeframe.



Definition



For the purposes of this protocol, a “Significant Homeless Encampment” is a location involving five or more homeless persons where one of more of the following conditions exist:

- Homeless individuals routinely gather
- Homeless individuals have established residency
- Homeless individuals have constructed forms of shelter and/or dwellings
- Homeless individuals are collecting or storing personal, abandoned or other type of property



Homeless Encampment Protocol

- IDENTIFICATION
- ASSESSMENT
- OUTREACH
- POSTING
- CLEAN UP



Purpose of Protocol

- Since the implementation of the Sheriff's Department homeless protocol (06-29-12), there have been no lawsuits filed against the department regarding homeless encampments.
- Other agencies have had federal injunctions barring them and sanitation officers from seizing and destroying homeless people's property without sufficient notice.



Encampment Posting



- Community Partnerships Bureau and local patrol stations coordinate patrol checks and operations to address any residual population to ensure the area is secure and clear.



- The Homeless Services Team facilitates posting at site to advise inhabitants of upcoming date.



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LASD FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING

Program began December 8, 2016; in 2 years over 1,550 deputies and sergeants have been trained.



Training Modules

There are 6 modules of instruction, all of which are supported by a scenario-based video where discussion follows:

- **Understanding the Homeless Population – Who can be homeless (veterans, elderly, LGBT, physically disabled, suffer from substance abuse/mental illness)**
- **Three Stages of Homelessness – transitional, episodic, chronic**



Training Modules

- **Approach & Contact** – best practices and available resources for interacting with those who suffer from a mental illness & are homeless
- **Enforcement & Collaboration** – What is the best approach, Be the collaborative bridge, familiarize yourself with available resources



Training Modules

- **Leveraging Available Resources – recognize that homelessness is a serious problem, no quick fix, officer's responsibility regarding property rights of those who are experiencing homelessness, Los Angeles County Homeless Encampment Protocol**
- **Legal Considerations & Potential Liabilities – always be guided by the civil rights of others and the law, homelessness is not a crime, service providers are the best solution**



De-Escalation Techniques

SAFETY COMES FIRST!!!!

SLOW IT DOWN: Time is on our side (most of the time)

- **Command Presence may be misinterpreted (may put individual on the defensive)**
- **Going hands on to de-escalate may trigger “Fight or Flight” due to fear of being hurt**
- **“Taking Control vs Gaining Control” can escalate situation depending on interpretation**



De-Escalation Techniques

- Preparing for the Use of Force may send mixed message and can create confusion, paranoia or fear (backup-show of force)
- Presence/Visibility: Reduce personnel so individual does not feel cornered, maintain a degree of space. Crowding may heighten paranoia/fear (back up-show of force)
- One Person Speaks: Limit the stimuli the person has to focus on. Speak in simple, short sentences (give time to answer/respond)



De-Escalation Techniques

- **Rapport:** Use person's first name, introduce yourself, reassure them
- **Focus:** slow down pace. Keep oriented to "now." Redirect, if needed.
- **Vocal Pattern:** If person speaking loudly/agitated, lower your voice/tempo so they can match yours.



De-Escalation Techniques

- **Oriented x 4:** Ask about person, place, time and situation
- **Predictability:** If possible and safe to do so, let individual know what you are going to do before you do it.
- **Crowding/Position:** Try to maintain a safe degree of space, try not to crowd/corner



De-Escalation Techniques

- **Reduce External Stimuli:** Decrease unnecessary distractions (radios, loud pets, family...)
- **Remain Separate from Internal Stimuli:** Do not get pulled into their experience
- **Resisting vs. Difficulty Hearing/Understanding**



De-Escalation Techniques

- Assess for Language/Culture Barriers
 - Verify language/whether individual can hear you.
 - Consider cultural factors; this can appear as if they are resisting.
- Do not take it personal
- Do not speak in condescending manner
- Use of deception/do not lie



The Dangers of Homeless Encampments



Chronic Homeless

- Several homeless persons have grown accustomed to being homeless, thus taking measures to preserve their living situation
- Measures include:
 - Constructing camouflaged or clandestine dwellings
 - Improvised traps
 - Guard Dogs



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