

Appendix 5: Homeless Encampment Best Practices

Yuba County is a member of the Yuba-Sutter CA-524 Continuum of Care (CoC), managed by the Sutter Yuba Homeless Consortium (the Consortium). The Consortium coordinates with Yuba and Sutter Counties, cities in the Yuba-Sutter region, nonprofit organizations, healthcare providers, public safety agencies, and housing partners to prioritize the health and safety of both residents and unsheltered individuals.

The Consortium organizes publicly available monthly stakeholder engagement meetings with representatives of partners and agencies to facilitate cross-agency coordination, information sharing, and collaborating planning of encampment resolutions, housing, and supportive services. Feedback gathered from these meetings are incorporated into the Consortium's periodic planning documents and reports that identify the CoC's priorities and goals, including the 2023-2026 Local Homeless Action Plan.

Yuba County and its partners utilize a housing first and harm reduction approach when engaging encampment residents. The Consortium operates the Coordinated Entry System (CES), which serves as the region's centralized system for assessing, tracking, and connecting unsheltered individuals with appropriate supportive services. Outreach for CES is supported through two primary outreach teams. The Harmony Health Street Medicine team directly visits encampment locations to provide clinical care, behavioral health services, case management, and referrals to housing resources. The Homeless Engagement and Resolution Team (HEaRT), operated through Sutter Yuba Behavioral Health in partnership with county Health and Human Services departments, conducts field-based outreach and works to connect individuals not yet participating in CES with supportive services and medical care. Outreach efforts emphasize relationship building, voluntary engagement, and individualized service planning to support long-term housing stability. These are conducted prior to and during encampment resolution activities.

During outreach and encampment resolution activities, outreach teams coordinate with law enforcement and code enforcement personnel to provide referrals to supportive services and housing resources. Chapter 7.55 of the Yuba County Ordinance Code establishes procedures for the storage and retrieval of personal property removed from prohibited encampment areas and governs the removal of hazardous materials to protect public health and safety. Following encampment resolution activities, Yuba County works to prevent re-encampment through site cleanup and hazard mitigation.

The County coordinates with CES service providers to ensure individuals displaced from encampments continue to receive connections to shelter, supportive services, and permanent housing resources. Emergency shelter providers offer low-barrier access to shelter and supportive services. Staff are trained in crisis intervention, conflict resolution, LEAP training, trauma-informed care, and harm reduction practices to support service engagement rather than criminalization. Additionally, the Regional Housing Authority (RHA) is a critical partner in creating pathways to permanent housing through the administration of Housing Choice Vouchers, Emergency Housing Vouchers, and other supportive housing opportunities. Yuba County and the Consortium continue to align federal, state, and local funding sources to support the expansion of affordable and permanent supportive housing opportunities for unsheltered individuals.

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Certification and Authorization:

Signature of Authorized Representative

Date