# Emergency Housing Ordinance Summary

Last updated June 30, 2018

olympiawa.gov/homelessness

## What is the Emergency Housing Ordinance?

A land use regulation that allows faith based, non-profit and government organizations to site emergency housing facilities on their property.

## Why the City Took This Action

The annual 2018 Point-in-Time Homeless Census found at least 320 people sleeping unsheltered in unmanaged conditions Downtown and in other parts of the city and county. The City routinely conducts an early morning count of people sleeping on the street in downtown, which finds 130 people on average living unsheltered within the core of Downtown.

The public has asked the City to take actions to address the issue of growing homelessness in our community. The recently passed Home Fund (sales tax levy) will help provide permanent supportive housing for the most vulnerable. However, it will be a few years before those funds will result in a completed project. Providing emergency housing in the meantime will help individuals experiencing homelessness as well as help to ensure a safe and inviting community for everyone. The City is looking to establish its own sanctioned temporary housing facilities, however it's going to also take action by others to effectively respond. This emergency housing ordinance allows for that.

## ▶ Criteria & Requirements

- Faith based organizations, not-for-profits and governmental entities may submit a permit application to the City of Olympia to host an emergency housing facility on their site
- This applies citywide (City of Olympia)
- Up to 40 residents are allowed, which may include adults or families with children
- Housing may include temporary tents or small structures. Structures may not be permanent

## ▶ Permit Duration & Public Notice Process

- **Permit duration** is 180 days, which may be extended an additional 185 days upon proof of no criminal violations. These temporary permits are administratively approved
  - Permits for a duration longer than 1 year may be approved upon submittal of a conditional use permit application to be approved by the Olympia Hearing Examiner following a public hearing
- **A public information meeting notice** distributed at least two weeks prior to permit issuance; notice mailed to neighbors within 300' 10 days in advance of meeting; yellow notice sign onsite
- **The City may revoke** a permit upon determination of any violation

## ▶ Site, Location & Screening

- The property must be sufficient in size to accommodate the proposed number of dwellings and necessary on-site facilities, such as potable water, toilets, hand washing stations, trash and recycling, personal property storage, and parking
- Facilities may not be located within 1,000 ft of another facility approved under this ordinance
- Facilities shall be located within a ¼ mile of a bus stop with 7 day/week service, or else the permit application must demonstrate ability for residents to obtain access to transportation
- Facilities should ideally be located in areas where there is easy access to services and affordable food, either by walking or by using public transit
- A minimum 6' screening from adjacent right of way required

## ▶ Security Requirements

- An on-duty manager must be present at all times
- An operations and security plan must be submitted with application
- A Code of Conduct for living at the facility must be submitted with application
- Prohibited:
  - Possession or use of illegal drugs onsite
  - Violence or abuse of any kind
  - Open flames
  - Trespassing on private property in surrounding neighborhood
  - Littering on site or in surrounding neighborhood
  - Noise or music in excess of noise limits in 18.40.080
- The host agency has flexibility to place additional restrictions on the facility
- A record log of residents who stay overnight shall be kept for at least 6 months
- Site managers will obtain verifiable identification of residents, sex offender and warrant status

## ▶ For More Information

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