

Encampment Pilot FAQ

Coordinated Assistance and Resources for Encampments (CARE) Pilot Program

As the challenging issue of homelessness continues in the District, and around the country, Mayor Bowser and her leadership team have constructed a plan of action to provide some of the District's most vulnerable residents with the opportunity to participate in intensive onsite case management and behavioral health/substance use support while they relocate from unsuitable living conditions into viable and affordable housing options.

The intensive case management, behavioral health/substance use support, and expedited affordable housing options are available for individuals who were residing in the identified encampments as of August 23, 2021. These individuals were recorded on By-Name Lists compiled by DHS contracted outreach teams. This list was compiled from several months of site canvassing and outreach engagement. While individuals seeking support following the By Name List cap date will not be eligible to receive the more immediate housing and intensive case management services, they are strongly encouraged to establish and/or continue a service relationship with the contacted outreach provider assigned to their service area. Establishing and maintaining this connection will allow individuals to receive case management services, receive assistance with document readiness, and access support navigating the District's coordinated housing process as resources continue to become available.

Site #1: NoMa (L/M St. Underpasses)

- Encampments on the L and M Street sidewalks between 1st and 2nd Streets NE block the free flow of pedestrian traffic creating a public safety hazard for pedestrians and encampment residents alike.
- The M and L St. underpasses are major pedestrian thoroughfares leading to and from busy commercial and residential centers and a high-volume metro station. Clear pedestrian access to the metro entrance and the sidewalks are necessary for public safety. Blocking pedestrian passage and access can cause pedestrians and/or encampment residents to enter the roadway at great risk of injury to themselves and passing motorists.
- Through intensive case management support, we will be working with each resident on M and L St. to relocate to safer housing options prior to September 27, 2021. Because of the heightened risk to pedestrians and encampment residents from blocking sidewalks on these major thoroughfares, after the cleanup on September 27, encamping of any kind will not be permitted at these locations on the L and M Street sidewalks between 1st and 2nd Streets NE.

Site #2: Park at New Jersey Ave and O Street NW

- The encampments residing at this site have endured in the midst of various public health and safety risk factors which have had a negative impact on encamped and neighboring residents alike.
- Through intensive case management support, this program will be working with each eligible resident of this site with the goal of relocating them to safer permanent housing options prior to November 4, 2021.
- Due to the scheduled plans for restorative construction and renovations by the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), this site will be closed to all residents while work is completed.

- Construction fencing will be erected on November 4 after the CARE Pilot Program services and housing navigation engagements have been completed.

Site #3: 20th/21st and E St. NW

- Very similar to the other program sites, the various scattered encampments at this site have also exhibited various public health and safety risk factors which have had a negative impact on encamped and neighboring residents. The growing rodent population concentrated on these grounds pose a major threat to the safety of the encamped residents, and is intensified by the continued collection of mass food items, refuse, and other belongings. In addition, the falling risk of large tree branches which may cause vital harm to the residents below while residing in their tents has also been cited as an increased safety risk during recent months. The above stated factors will grow increasingly detrimental as the winter months approach.
- Through intensive case management support, this program will be working with each eligible resident of this site with the goal of relocating them to safer permanent housing options. There are ongoing conversations with the National Park Service (NPS) who owns much of this land on whether or not residents will be allowed to stay encamped at this location after November 2021.

Frequently Asked Questions

Which encamped residents are eligible for the CARE Program intensive service engagements?

The following services are available only to individuals identified on the By-Name List as of 8/23/2021

- Daily intensive case management engagement and service coordination
- Daily support with document readiness and navigating housing resources
- Intensive onsite behavioral health/substance use support and clinical engagement
- Expediated access to affordable housing options and unit viewing/matching
- Expedited unit inspection and lease-up process
- Connection to permanent housing subsidy options as applicable following the initial lease-up (i.e. Permanent Supportive Housing, Target Affordable Housing, Rapid Re-housing, etc.)

Which services are available to residents who are NOT eligible for the CARE Program?

The following services are available to individuals NOT identified on the By-Name List as of 8/23/2021

- SPDAT Assessment engagement
- General case management/outreach engagement on a weekly or as requested basis
- General behavioral health/substance use support upon request or mandated due to a crisis
- Support with document readiness and navigating housing resources as available

Why were these encampment sites selected for this pilot program?

DMHHS monitors all encampments for health and safety risks and the potential effects on the residents of the District. Each encampment is different, and not all health and safety risks are the same. After an extensive evaluation of the various encampment sites throughout the District, it was determined that these three locations are amongst the largest encampment sites in the District and also demonstrated

Encampment Pilot FAQ

the highest levels of resident vulnerability and community impact. Citywide outreach teams have been working with residents of all three locations for a year or more to help mitigate the health and safety concerns that were present; however, these concerns persist and continue to have a negative impact on the intended usage of these areas and cite numerous public health and safety concerns daily.

Why is this happening now?

The District's various outreach teams and providers have been working with residents of these sites for several years to help mitigate the health and safety concerns present; however, concerns persist and continue to compromise resident's ability to safely traverse through these major thoroughfares, or engage with the park sites in the intended manner. These risks have only become more pressing as residents return to in-person work/commuting, and pedestrian volume continues to increase. Lastly, it is a major goal of this initiative to house these residents prior to the negative impacts of the approaching hypothermia season.

How will residents be informed that the "no encamping" ordinance will be enforced?

In addition to daily verbal reminders from outreach staff, signs will be placed in visible locations reminding all residents that these areas will need to remain clear of encamping at all times following the program's conclusion of site engagement and housing navigation efforts. Items left on site will be subject to immediate removal and disposal.

Can you guarantee each person will be moved into housing before the cleanup/site closure dates?

Outreach staff will be working closely with each resident to offer them intensive case management and connection to housing resources. However, these services are voluntary, and the District cannot force anyone to accept these services. The District is confident in contracted provider's ability to connect those residents who are willing to participate in this program with housing resources prior to the closure dates.

What types of housing services are being offered to residents?

Dedicated outreach professionals are working with each eligible individual on a plan for housing that will work best for their unique situation and level of stability. Currently, a housing navigation list of more than 200 available units from across the city will be utilized for resident consideration and matching.

What will happen if someone chooses to camp in these locations after the executed dates of cleanups/closure?

These locations will continue to be monitored and if items are left in these areas, they must be relocated immediately. If they are unwilling to move an Immediate Disposition cleanup may take place per the current protocol.

If residents refuse services and housing navigation, will they still have to relocate from the site?

Program engagement is a voluntary choice. Therefore, if a resident refuses engagement and services, they will still be mandated to relocate from the site to a safer location with decreased health and safety risk factors present. Continued outreach and service connected engagement will still be offered and attempted on a consistent monthly basis with these residents.

Are there plans for this to take place at other locations?

Each encampment site is different, and health and safety risks are unique. Each site will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, and services rendered as applicable and available.