



## **City of Portland Street Services Coordination Center Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the Street Services Coordination Center?**

- While significant progress has been made to improve coordination through the creation of the Homelessness and Urban Camping Impact Reduction Program, the Navigation Team, and a large expansion of shelter options; many first responders still struggle to access shelter bed capacity and coordinate removals with genuine offers of alternative services or places for people to relocate.
- Thus, the Street Services Coordination Center (SSCC) is a collaboration of City of Portland and Multnomah County agencies with the purpose of providing streamlined services to those living outside. SSCC engages in outreach to unsheltered individuals, encampments, and vehicles through a coordinated command structure. The SSCC's primary focus is individuals living in high impact encampments (see Council Ordinance 190478), and individuals living in RVs and vehicles.
- The SSCC coordinates both the connection of unsheltered individuals to shelter and other services and supports coordination of encampment cleanings and removals. As available and based upon eligibility, the program provides access to congregate shelter, safe rest villages, or hotel rooms and immediate transportation to those locations.

### **How does this structure differ from the current structure?**

- This structure will have many positive impacts:
  - The goal is to send an outreach worker to provide initial engagement with a person experiencing homelessness. They will provide available shelter alternatives first, before any other actions are taken. Engagement could include offering available locations at congregate shelters, Safe Rest Villages (once they open), designated RV safe parking sites, and other alternatives.
  - For agencies involved in public space management or as a first responder trying to find alternative locations for unhoused Portlanders to go, this structure will ensure one point of contact for them to find access to available services.

### **If this was proposed as part of the Fall Budget Monitoring Process, why is it being implemented as an emergency ordinance now?**

- This emergency ordinance is focused on creating better access to services for those living unsheltered and in their vehicles. The Mayor, Commissioner Ryan and many Portlanders agree that the homelessness crisis in Portland is a critical emergency that requires immediate attention. Mayor Wheeler is issuing this emergency ordinance because he feels that it is no longer acceptable to wait several months for various agencies to reach unanimous agreement and sign memorandums of agreement outlining steps to move forward. Portland's homelessness situation is an emergency and needs to be treated as such. People experiencing

houselessness cannot wait any longer for assistance. People living unsheltered need services now.

**What is the timeline for the Street Services Coordination Center to be activated? Is this ready to be implemented now?**

- This is an emergency declaration, which means that the Street Services Coordination Center can and will be implemented immediately after the emergency declaration is put into effect. This is an organizational structure and further operational details will be realized in the coming months. This emergency declaration gives the authority to Mike Myers and Nate Takara to begin engaging the various agencies in coordination efforts.

**If this is an emergency declaration, does that mean this restructuring is temporary? And if so, what will happen when the declaration expires?**

- Emergency declarations must be renewed every two weeks, per City code. We anticipate this structure becoming more permanent with Council approval.

**What is the total amount of new funding being allocated for this restructuring, and where is that funding coming from?**

- The City of Portland and Multnomah County came to an agreement on [a package](#) that included the funding for the Street Services Coordination Center staffing, additional navigation teams and additional services.

**Are any agencies losing allocated funds due to this new structure?**

- No, the Street Services Coordination Center is being funded with money allocated during the 2021 Fall Budget Monitoring Process. All agencies will keep their existing funding for the foreseeable future.

**Will reporting for campsites be different? Who does the public contact about campsites?**

- No, the process for reporting campsites will not change. The City's Homelessness and Urban Camping Impact Reduction Program will continue to respond to campsite reports. Anyone who wants to report concerns about a campsite should visit [PDX reporter](#) or call the City's Information and Referral team at 311.

**Wasn't the Joint Office of Homeless Services established to serve as the lead coordinator in homelessness efforts? Why isn't JOHS overseeing all homelessness related programs?**

- The goal of the SSCC is to coordinate first responders and property management agencies within the City of Portland with the human services agencies of Multnomah County to provide better service to unhoused Portlanders. This structure is designed for everyone to be better partners and have streamlined communication and coordination. The JOHS does oversee the human services aspect of this structure.

**When will the public be able to see tangible outcomes of success? How will we know if this model is working and when can we expect to see those results?**

- First and foremost, the Incident Commander is going to work with the relevant agencies to determine metrics of success. There are a few different metrics we are using to measure success, which we will continue to utilize:
  - Total number of people placed into a shelter
  - Total number of engagements with people experiencing homelessness
  - Total number of referrals to different service types
  - Total number of encampment resolutions
  - Quarterly tent and car counts to determine geographic need

**What if someone doesn't want to go to a shelter?**

- Although we will make shelter referrals, the decision to go to a shelter is 100% voluntary. No one will be forced to go to a shelter. Outreach providers will work with individuals on a case-by-case basis to identify which resources would be most helpful to them.

**Only 100 beds are being held for this purpose - what if more than 100 people need a shelter bed?**

- Multnomah County and the City of Portland have agreed to allocate resources as needed and as available.

**Who were all the stakeholders involved in this restructuring?**

- This has been a continued and collaborative effort between the Mayor's office, Commissioner Ryan's office and the County Chair's office. The Office of Management and Finance, Community Safety Division, and Joint Office of Homeless Services have provided key recommendations on structure and policy. All City Council offices and impacted bureaus have been briefed and had an opportunity to propose feedback. And now that we have a structure in place there will be an opportunity for service providers and community members, especially unhoused Portlanders, to provide feedback for implementation.

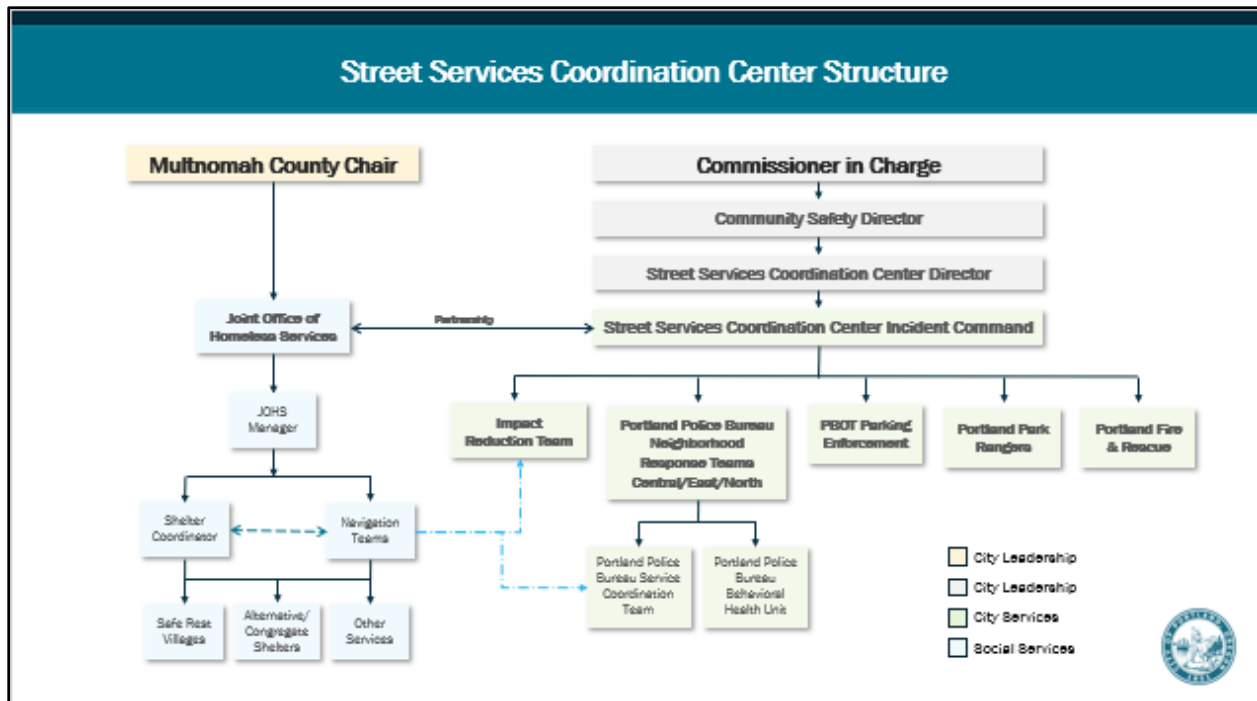
**Is there a way for the public to track this program's progress? Will there be a website or social media account for more information?**

- The Street Services Coordination Center webpage will be coming soon.

The best way to stay apprised of general City of Portland announcements is to visit the following social media accounts: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#).

**Who oversees the Street Services Coordination Center?**

- A new Street Services Coordination Center Director will be appointed under the new incident command structure, who will report to the Community Safety Director.



#### When will recruitment begin for open positions?

- Some positions have already been filled and recruitment for open positions will begin as soon as possible.

#### Will there be public information about which camps have been posted and/or removed?

- Information about which campsites have been posted and/or removed is publicly available online through the Homelessness and Urban Camping Impact Reduction Program's weekly [campsite reports](#). You can also request to have these reports emailed to you by signing up [HERE](#).

#### How do we choose which camps the program visits first? Is there going to be a prioritization system?

- The Impact Reduction Program's campsite assessments begin when someone reports a concern. The work crew engages with people at the site, offers resources, picks up garbage identified by campers and conducts an assessment based on pre-established criteria:
  - Proximity to high traffic corridors
  - Conspicuous drug use or paraphernalia
  - Impact on neighborhood livability
  - Proximity to school, park with playground or private residence
  - Environmental impact
  - Restricts access by Americans with Disabilities Act standards
  - Posted no-trespassing
  - Size of camp
  - Reported violence or crime
  - Blocking public access

- Restricts maintenance

Based on the assessment, sites that pose the highest risk to health and safety are scheduled for removal. The City posts legal notices to inform people their campsite will be removed sometime between 72 hours and 10 days. When campsites are removed, personal property is stored for at least 30 days. People are encouraged to call and schedule a time to pick up their items.

**Will this increase the number of camp removals of people experiencing houselessness?**

- That is not the direction or goal of this restructure.

**What should someone do if they witness a sick person who is living on the street?**

- If anyone sees a life-threatening emergency, they should call 911. If someone experiencing houselessness appears to need non-emergency medical attention, they should contact the Portland Street Response.

**If police respond to an emergency situation involving someone experiencing houselessness, do they notify the Street Services Coordination Center?**

- No. The Street Services Coordination Center is not meant to take over for first responders, but to give them additional tools. For example, first responders could make a request to the SSCC to see if there are any immediately available shelter beds to which they could provide someone transportation.

**Where are we putting people's belongings after they are collected from a campsite removal?**

- Personal belongings collected from campsites will be stored at a city storage facility for at least 30 days. Property left for longer than 30 days will be destroyed or donated. If someone wants to arrange pickup, they should call 503-387-1336 with the date, location and a description of items collected Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or Saturday, 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Please note that the city does not publicize the location of the storage facility for personal privacy reasons.

**Are there restrictions on what kinds of items the City stores?**

- Yes, the City is legally required to store specific items. The City's [mandatory storage policy](#) is available online, as well as a list of [items that cannot be stored](#).

**Are warming fires still allowed at camps, and how will the Street Services Coordination Center respond to them?**

- The SSCC will be following current Fire Bureau protocols. This could change depending on Fire Chief direction and request.

**What do I do if people experiencing houselessness return to an area that was cleaned?**

- Being homeless is not a crime, and the City does not prohibit camping on public property. The City mitigates the impact that camping has on public property by picking up trash, biohazards and personal property to reduce health and safety risks for the entire community. We do not prevent people from returning to sites that have been cleaned. However, if sites become unsafe again, people are encouraged to report it.

DRAFT