

The Palm Beach County Continuum of Care is a membership planning and oversight body for the Palm Beach County region.

There are a number of complex factors contributing to the homelessness epidemic.

The limited availability of affordable housing significantly contributes to homelessness as well as availability of financial assistance, mental health services and drug treatment programs.

## CONTACT US:

833-HHA-WILL  
833-273-9455

[TheHomelessPlan.org](http://TheHomelessPlan.org)



Palm Beach County  
Board of County Commissioners



## QUICK CONNECT:

General Program & Services:  
**833-CSD-WILL**

Homeless Prevention & Resources:  
**833-HHA-WILL**

SMART Landlord Program  
**833-CSD-WILL**

Palm Beach County Victim Services:  
**561-355-2418**

Domestic Assault: Hotline:  
**866-891-7273**

Homeless Youth Resources:  
**561-689-0035**

**911:** Emergency Line

**988:** Suicide Prevention & Crisis Hotline:

# COMMUNITY & BUSINESS Guide on Homelessness

## WHAT'S INSIDE:

- Do's & Don't's
- Who to Call
- Your Property
- How to Help



**It is important to understand that people experiencing homelessness are members of our community and should be extended the same level of consideration as any other person. Avoid applying stereotypes, stigmas and myths. People should not be defined by their housing status.**

## THINGS YOU SHOULD DO

- Make eye contact and treat people with respect.
- If a person experiencing homelessness wants to make a purchase, treat them as you would any other customer.
- Establish an amicable relationship and ask their name.
- If someone is being disruptive, homeless or not, try to de-escalate the situation if you are comfortable doing so.
- Politely ask unwanted persons to leave.
- Set boundaries, communicate with them, and stick to them.
- If someone is interfering with your ability to do business and will not leave, are involved in illegal activity, or they are threatening harm to themselves or others, please call **911**.
- Get to know your Palm Beach County HOT team (Homeless Outreach Team) and your Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office HIT (Homeless Intervention Team).

## THINGS YOU SHOULD NOT DO

- Assume people know your expectations.
- Offer food or money unless you are equipped and willing to repeat requests.
- Permit anyone to camp or store personal belongings on your property unless you have developed a relationship with them and want to continue access.

## ON YOUR PROPERTY

- Install motion sensitive security lights.
- Install security cameras and signs indicating the area is under surveillance.
- Keep storage areas and gates locked.
- Empty trash bins often to avoid spillage of waste onto the ground and sidewalks.
- Keep the area in front of your business clean. Doing this will encourage others to respect the space.



## HELPFUL TIPS

### Someone is sleeping or loitering at your front door:

- Odds are this won't be a one time interaction, so it's good to establish a friendly relationship. Introduce yourself, ask for the person's name.
- Politely ask them to leave using sincere, empathetic language.
- Let them know where they can be, as opposed to only where they cannot be.
- Connect them to the Palm Beach County HOT and Team for services.

Use the online referral form to connect to a case manager:

<https://secure.pbc.gov/csdhomelessreporter>



### Someone exhibiting disruptive behavior or mental health symptoms has walked into the business:

- Ask them to leave clearly and politely.
- Your safety and the safety of your patrons is your priority. If they remain inside, call the nonemergency PBSO line, **561-655-3400**.
- \*Based on the situation, you may want to call **911** if the situation feels dangerous.
- Always try to remain calm when handling situations with people in crisis, regardless of their housing status.



## WAYS TO HELP

- Lend a helping hand.
- Sponsor or participate in drives to assist with collecting blankets, clothing, hygiene, sunscreen, bug repellent and other local needs.
- Volunteer with one of your local service provider agencies.
- Support a local agency or program with donations, monetary or in kind.
- Hire a person with lived experience of homelessness.
- Rent your rental properties to someone who is experiencing homelessness.
- Educate others and advocate for people experiencing homelessness.

Enroll in the Smart Landlord Program. Our team of housing specialists are always looking for landlords who are interested in renting their vacant units.

More info can be found at [TheHomelessPlan.org](http://TheHomelessPlan.org)

