



Tacoma Pierce County Coalition to End Homelessness

<https://pchomeless.org/> - info@pchomeless.org

Quarantine & Isolation Request for People Experiencing Homelessness

September 17, 2021

Background

All types of emergency shelters, day centers, Safe Parking Network sites, and encampments encounter guests who are COVID positive or COVID exposed and who require either isolation or quarantine. In some cases, these are families with children; in others people who are screened out for sex offender status, behavioral health, or who self select out for a variety of reasons. Among these reasons are: fear of government, active substance use, not wanting to leave their family group, afraid to leave their belongings.

Providers work hard to follow CDC Guidance and rely on the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department to help them meet all available guidance and regulations.

The current TPCHD response of four hotel rooms through St. Vincent de Paul for quarantine and 20 beds in adult family homes does not meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness nor of the providers who try to assist them.

TPCHD tells us that from the end of July, 131 people experiencing homelessness were referred for screening but only 47 people were placed. 84 people were not placed. That means they went back into the community potentially spreading the virus and putting themselves and others at greater risk.

We want TPCHD policy to explicitly state: **No COVID positive person experiencing homelessness should ever be discharged to the street.**

Request:

1. At least one low barrier Isolation and Quarantine site suited for people experiencing homelessness who are either screened out as ineligible or otherwise do not accept adult family home beds.
2. 24/7 Shelter COVID line answered by a person with knowledge and authority to respond to individual shelter needs and questions. Shelter staff turn over and new shelters are coming on-line. Safe Parking Site hosts are volunteers.
3. 24/7 screening and placement of COVID positive guests.
4. 24/7 access to transportation to and from the placement sites.
5. Frequent on-site vaccination clinics with vaccines provided to all unvaccinated guests who test negative. Rather than canceling vaccine clinics in an outbreak, work with shelters to figure out who can be vaccinated. Some shelters have rapid tests.
6. A TPCHD directive to hospitals, medical facilities, and other institutions that they cannot discharge COVID positive people experiencing homelessness to the street.
7. Pre-authorization for shelters to use hotels for isolation and/or quarantine and be reimbursed by TPCHD.