

Homelessness in Vancouver: What you should know

Homelessness is a reality for thousands of individuals in Vancouver. The 2018 homeless count found that 2,181 residents are facing homelessness in the city. Lack of access to housing and the right supports may also contribute to issues with mental health and addiction.

With so many people experiencing homelessness, you might feel powerless and unable to do anything. However, there are many small steps you can take to offer support. First and most importantly is to check in with the person you are concerned about in a safe manner to see if they want help, from there you can use the resources below to assist.

How you can help

If you're concerned about someone who is experiencing homelessness

You can contact a Homelessness Services Outreach Team. These teams link people to available social, health and housing services and provides assistance in a non-judgmental, supportive way.

You can get in touch with the following outreach teams in your neighbourhood:

Carnegie Outreach: 604-655-3318
Atira Women's Resource Society: 604-331-1407
The Watari Research Association: 604-254-6995
Coast Foundation Society: 604-562-3221

To report an encampment on private property, call the non-emergency police line, **604-717-3321**. If you'd like to report an encampment on public property, call **3-1-1**.

If you're worried that someone is at risk of an overdose

For information on addiction services and supports, the Vancouver Coastal Health Overdose Outreach team can help. Call the number below to make a referral.

PHONE: 604-360-2874

If someone is overdosing call 9-1-1 immediately.

For more information on harm reduction, including where to find Naloxone kits and training, visit www.towardtheheart.com

If you're concerned about someone's mental health

Vancouver Coastal Health's Access & Assessment Centre (AAC) provides intervention to individuals with mental health concerns. In an emergency - if someone's health, safety or property is in jeopardy - call **9-1-1**. For all other situations, please call the AAC.

PHONE: 604-675-3700

If you need information on community, social, and government services

You can call **2-1-1** for free information and referral to a huge range of services, from information on shelter locations, to addiction services, to free meals services. The line, which is run by bc211, a Vancouver-based nonprofit organization, operates 24/7.

PHONE: 2-1-1
WEBSITE: bc211.ca

If you find a used needle in a public space and you're not sure what to do

The Portland Hotel Society's Mobile Needle Exchange collects needles from all around the city. You can contact the hotline below to report a needle or syringe.

PHONE: 604-657-6561
EMAIL: needlevan@phs.ca

If you're not sure whether to call 9-1-1

9-1-1 is for police, fire or medical emergencies when immediate action is required: someone's health, safety or property is in jeopardy or a crime is in progress.

604-717-3321 should be used for all non-emergency police situations, where an immediate response or dispatch of the police IS NOT required.

Be an advocate

Contact your local municipal, provincial and/or federal representative to show your support for investments into services that support people experiencing homelessness.

For anything else

Connect with us on the go 24 hours a day, 7 days a week using the VanConnect app which you can download through our website. Just search 'VanConnect' in your browser. You can also call **3-1-1**.