

What **You** Can Do To Help Solve Homelessness

If you were inspired by today's Housing Voter Forum, here are 20 different ideas for taking action as part of the community working on homelessness.



Learn

- 1. Share Stories:** Watch, listen to and stories about homelessness.
Some examples:
 - American Refugees: Four short animated films created by Seattle U's Film and Family Homelessness Project.
 - StoryCorps Finding Our Way: Conversations between people who've experienced homelessness and those who work to assist them.
 - Home -- Lost and Found: Personal stories of homelessness told live with The Moth.
- 2. Dive Into the Data:** Read the annual Point in Time Count in King County report, produced by All Home.
- 3. Read a Good Book!** The Seattle Public Library can recommend books on homelessness and poverty.
- 4. Sign Up for Action Alerts:** Join an email list with our partners Resolution to End Homelessness, Tech 4 Housing, Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness, Washington Low Income Housing Alliance, or Housing Development Consortium to learn about how to speak up, current events, and other advocacy opportunities.
- 5. Think About Root Causes:** Recognize the underlying causes in our systems that lead to homelessness, such as high housing costs, racism and a steady decline in federal funding over decades.



Speak Up

- 1. Talk About It:** Talk to your friends, family, colleagues, and other community members about homelessness – especially if you have personal experience with it. You can be a powerful voice for change.
- 2. Reach Out:** Write Letters to the Editor about the kind of change you want to see. Try writing an op-ed opinion piece.
- 3. Register to Vote:** Find out how from the League of Women Voters. Then **vote** for candidates who support affordable housing and homelessness solutions. Primary ballots are due by Tuesday, Aug. 6!
- 4. Talk with Lawmakers:** Join the annual Housing and Homelessness Advocacy Day in Olympia; speak with your representatives about affordable housing. On a local level, attend council hearings and contact your lawmakers via email or in writing.
- 5. Use Social Media:** Find and follow advocates on Twitter, Facebook, and more to find and share news and ideas on how to help.



Help the Helpers

- 1. Host a Supply or a Clothing Drive:** Organizations always need new socks, underwear, hygiene supplies (especially deodorant, razors, diapers, sunscreen, African-American hair products, tampons), new or gently used clothes in all sizes, and shoes. Organizations like the Seattle-King County Coalition on Homelessness and YWCA Seattle | King | Snohomish collect school supplies.
- 2. Give Your Time:** Volunteer! You could help host a birthday party, meal, or community block party; give haircuts and massages; create videos and write stories; build a website; serve on an event committee; tutor and mentor; and find many other ways to use your talents and education. Organizations like United Way of King County can connect you to opportunities.
- 3. Give Your Money:** Consider donating money to nonprofit organizations that are helping people to exit homelessness. They play a crucial role in helping our community solve the issue.
- 4. Support Your Local Schools:** Make sure your school has appointed a Homeless Education Liaison to connect children to the services they're legally guaranteed. Contact the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, or read the helpful brochure created by Seattle-King County Coalition on Homelessness.
- 5. Take Care of the Caregivers:** Recognize that those working day-to-day with people who are homeless usually do excellent work with very limited resources and in stressful conditions.



Directly Support People Who Are Homeless

- 1. Buy Real Change (cash or Venmo):** Vendors across the regions sell the award-winning Real Change newspaper, a voice for low-income and homeless people which provides immediate employment for vendors and engages the community with social-justice journalism.
- 2. Take The Pledge:** If you own a business that has amenities that people experiencing homelessness could use -- such as a restroom, excess food, or water - - take "The Pledge" through Be:Seattle's website. seattlepledge.com.
- 3. Are You a Homeowner?** Volunteer to host an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) through the BLOCK Project. Visit the-block-project.org/get-involved.
- 4. Rent or Hire:** People who have experienced homelessness face unique challenges in finding housing and jobs. Consider employing people who have experienced homelessness. Offer affordable rent to people with imperfect rental histories.
- 5. Just Say Hello:** Treat people who are experiencing homelessness with respect. Visit facinghomelessness.org to learn more about humanizing homelessness.