

## **Camp Hope News update – Nov. 16**

### **Necessities being brought into Camp Hope**

As work continues to close Camp Hope, residents there continue to feel the effects of the early winter in Spokane. After relying on water from a nearby neighbor (which was jeopardized by cold temperatures), the state has hired a water service to bring potable water into Camp Hope for use to ensure public health and safety. Currently, 800 gallons of water are being delivered twice a week, every fourth day.

With the winter season has come cold temperatures, snow and freeze/thaw conditions, which have created slippery surfaces for the residents and muddy conditions. Gravel will be brought into the site to provide traction not only to residents but to the service providers on site who continue to provide assistance and services as we continue to work to transition Camp Hope residents to safer shelter/permanent housing.

### **DSHS, DOL and DOH services continue**

Fellow state agencies continue their work at Camp Hope to provide assistance and support to help the residents transition into housing, obtain assistance and seek employment – all important to breaking the cycle of homelessness and closing the encampment. Those experiencing homelessness often cite the lack of identification as a barrier to finding housing and employment.

The Department of Social and Health Services [Mobile Community Services Office](#) truck assisted 23 people at Camp Hope last week, for a total of 146 people assisted since their work began at the encampment. DSHS staff issued EBT cards for food and cash assistance, updated residents' existing benefits accounts, and enrolled or connected residents in other assistance programs and services. DSHS will continue to provide services on Wednesdays in the resource tent at Camp Hope.

The state departments of Health and Licensing also have been working at Camp Hope, with DOL on site last week. To date DOH has issued 106 birth certificates to Camp Hope residents and DOL has issued 290 identification cards.

### **Additional services and outreach continue**

In addition to state agencies, a number of local service providers, non-profits, faith groups and volunteers continue their work at Camp Hope, providing services, food, clothing and other assistance while we work to close the encampment.

### **Housing key to continuing to stabilize and close the encampment**

Work to close the encampment continues, but the timeline is contingent on the availability of multiple safe, secure housing options for hundreds of people. There are not enough of these options available in the city or county at this time. Camp Hope residents are regularly offered the city's Trent Resource and Assistance Center shelter,

and some have moved there, but the majority have issues or concerns about that setting, including some who say local law enforcement's previous discussions of arresting people is a concern. Assessments and work identifying all housing needs and available options continues at the encampment.

While it is the most visible evidence of homelessness in Spokane, Camp Hope is not the totality of the challenge facing the community. The city of Spokane counted 1,757 people experiencing homelessness throughout Spokane County on a single night in February, with 823 individuals living outside. To supplement the important but imperfect point in time count data, Washington state maintains a nationally recognized system for cross-matching homeless data from multiple assistance systems, including food assistance, Temporary Aid to Needy Families and Medicaid. This more comprehensive data shows over 5,200 people in Spokane County experiencing homelessness (living in shelter or living unsheltered) at a point in time.

### **Hotline for East Central residents/businesses**

A 24/7 hotline – 509-666-9902 – for East Central businesses and neighborhood residents will be answered by Camp Hope staff, who can respond to the neighborhood concerns.

### **Sign-up for future email updates**

If you would like to receive regular communication about what's happening at Camp Hope, please sign up for our email listserv:

[https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WADOT/subscriber/new?topic\\_id=WADOT\\_706](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WADOT/subscriber/new?topic_id=WADOT_706)  
All updates are online at: <https://wsdot.wa.gov/about/accountability/camp-hope-news-update>

### **Camp Hope and the State Right of Way Safety Initiative**

As part of continued work to close the Camp Hope encampment, WSDOT and its state, local and nonprofit partners continue to make visible progress stabilizing Camp Hope as part of the state [Right of Way Safety Initiative](#).

This joint effort includes work from WSDOT, the state Department of Commerce, the Washington State Patrol and on-the-ground resource provider Empire Health Foundation (working under a contract with Commerce) and other partners, who are all working toward the shared community goal of closing the encampment.