

## **Camp Hope News update – Nov. 9**

### **Camp Hope census complete, camp is closed to any new individuals**

The final steps to solidify the encampment census continued last week, including ensuring agreements were signed and badges issued to encampment residents who were offsite seeking treatment, working, etc., during badging the week before. People already living on the site were required to sign the rules and good neighbors' agreement and then can receive the Camp Hope badge used to control access, enforce curfew and respond to anyone not following the Camp Hope rules. Badges have been issued to 465 people at Camp Hope, meaning all have signed the rules agreements. New residents are not being allowed into the site.

### **Housing options becoming available as part of the plan to close the encampment**

Timeline for closing the encampment 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.

The Department of Commerce provided funding to Catholic Charities of Eastern Washington to convert a 100-person hotel that will open in December. The Trent Shelter is regularly offered to residents but isn't yet set up with the wraparound services needed by many residents. Commerce homelessness officials currently estimate about 50 people will choose that option and also estimate approximately 50 people will be able to find housing options on their own.

This means there are approximately 265 additional beds needed to meet the statutory requirements established by the Legislature to offer each individual a place to live that is "meaningfully better than their current living situation."

These estimates will be refined and updated as work continues to document the needs of the people living at Camp Hope.

A variety of available housing options is ideal for moving a large encampment because of mental health, domestic violence security, privacy and other concerns that prevent some residents from functioning in a congregate shelter. Experience has shown without some variety among the housing options provided, not everyone will stay at a congregate shelter and instead will relocate in another outdoor location.

Commerce and its partners continue exploring additional housing and shelter options, including: temporary rent assistance in private market units, leasing of hotel rooms, tiny homes, temporary shelters that could provide some level of privacy and federal housing vouchers dedicated to people who are unsheltered.

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.

### **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. 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 123 people at Camp Hope last week. Staff issued 76 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 departments of Health and Licensing also were back at Camp Hope. To date DOH has issued 106 birth certificates to Camp Hope residents and DOL has issued 267 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.

### **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.