

Facts about urban camping/emergency shelter

1. This summer, Missoula residents have seen an increase in people looking for shelter in the urban area. Some people will stay at the Poverello Center, Missoula's year-round, independent homeless shelter, and some will find stable housing. Others are attempting to shelter in tents and vehicles, sometimes in public places. There is not enough indoor shelter for all.
2. Missoula's Emergency Winter Shelter closed for the season on April 10. The shelter slept an average of 116 people a night through the winter, serving as a lifesaver for many people. Overnight, these Missoulians had nowhere else to go.
3. The Temporary Safe Outdoor Space regularly houses around 35 residents, with an ongoing waitlist of over 100 neighbors.
4. There is no one type of person needing shelter and help. In 2022, shelters in Montana served 7,619 people, 27% of whom had a chronic health condition or disability. 20% had a mental health disorder, 10% had a disorder related to substance use, 10% were veterans, 10% were seniors, 4% were fleeing domestic violence. The Poverello Center serves on average 2,000 of the 7,600 houseless people, or 29%.
5. Shelter services are seeing an even greater demand across the state, primarily because of rising housing costs. Low vacancy rates, lack of affordable housing, rental prices outpacing wages, and lack of mental health services – are all major contributing factors to the increased demand for houseless services.
6. Our community cannot lose sight of the long-term goal of developing housing options and accompanying supportive services that make it possible for neighbors to exit houselessness or avoid houselessness altogether and attain stable housing within our community. However, the current moment demands more shelter **right now** and we need to be responsive to that need.
7. The City of Missoula and dozens of community partners work together every day to provide shelter, food, and one-on-one support to neighbors who are living without a house, both unsheltered and sheltered. Over 40 community partners participate in the Missoula Coordinated Entry System, providing housing support and prioritizing limited resources, such as housing vouchers, for our most vulnerable neighbors.
8. If you're concerned about people looking for shelter in the urban area, consider contributing to the Housing Solutions Fund, which provides gap funding to prevent neighbors from losing their housing and rapidly resolve their situation when they do. [You can donate here](#) and select "**Housing Solutions Fund**" under "*my donation is for*".