

Maine Statewide Homeless Council Position Against Sanctioned Encampments 10/10/2023

It is the position of the Statewide Homeless Council (SHC) that all people deserve housing and if that is not readily available, all people deserve proper and decent shelter while they seek permanent housing.

All people deserve to stay indoors.

The solution to the growing number of unsheltered people in Maine is to create an improved continuum of housing and shelter options in partnership with health care. This requires a collaboration of federal, state, municipal, and private efforts. The SHC opposes the concept that living outdoors is an acceptable solution; we insist there be enough housing for the population, enough shelter beds to meet emergency needs, and that shelter and housing support services our community provides are low-barrier, accessible, and evidenced-based.

The SHC opposes sweeps of encampments unless every person there has been fully supported in securing housing or shelter. To sweep an encampment prior to effectively providing alternatives is not a best practice.

The SHC believes there is no substitute for safe and decent housing in Maine. The SHC insists we have all people in Maine live indoors.