

# Resource Manual For Religious Institutions Hosting Vehicle Camping



Revised 5/15/2020

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
Purpose of the Resource Manual.....	1
Religious Institution Responsibility and Liability.....	1
Benton County Vehicle Camping Code Information.....	3
Considerations before Choosing to Host Vehicle Camping.....	5
Considerations for Choosing where to Locate Vehicle Camping on your Property.....	6
Environmental Health Informational Guidance for Vehicle Camping at Religious Institutions.....	7
Benton County Rural Fire District Contacts .....	8
Resources on Housing and Assistance for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness .....	9
Service Providers.....	9
Reports and Plans.....	11
Sample of Vehicle Camping Screening Tool.....	12
Samples of Vehicle Camping Agreement between Hosts & Campers.....	13
Sample Camp Host Position Description .....	15
Neighborhood Outreach Strategies.....	17
Considerations for a Community Meeting.....	19
Outreach Materials.....	21
Tips for Neighborhood Outreach .....	21
Tracking Outreach Efforts .....	22

## Introduction

Benton County Commissioners enacted an emergency ordinance on May 5, 2020 to allow vehicle camping for up to three vehicles at religious institutions in Benton County unincorporated areas. Oregon State Law permits local jurisdictions to adopt this type of code.<sup>1</sup> This emergency ordinance will be in effect from May 5, 2020 through July 4, 2020. The County Commissioners are also pursuing adopting an intermediate ordinance that would take effect July 5, 2020 and end December 31, 2021. The interim ordinance will allow for more public outreach and feedback before adopting a permanent ordinance that would last for a longer period of time.

Religious institutions in Benton County unincorporated areas can invite up to three vehicles onto their property to provide a safe place for individuals to sleep in their vehicles and shelter in place. Religious institutions will need to provide a minimum amount of hygiene access and other requirements listed in the Code Information Section on page 3.

### Purpose of the Resource Manual

The purpose of the resource manual is to educate religious organizations and interested community members about what is and is not allowed under this new code. This manual will also help prepare interested religious organizations to host vehicle camping and to talk about hosting vehicle camping with others in their neighborhoods.

The intent is to assist and enable religious institutions to host vehicle camping and conduct community outreach in a way that actively engages community members in different aspects of the process, increases transparency, strengthens relationships, and builds trust and collaboration among advocates, neighbors, and the broader community.

This resource manual is provided as a courtesy by the County and is not intended to impose any additional requirements on religious institutions beyond what is required in the code.

### Religious Institution Responsibility and Liability

Religious institutions assume all responsibility and liability for hosting vehicle camping. The organization, supervision, and maintenance of a vehicle camping location is solely the responsibility of the religious institution, and not Benton County. Religious institutions deciding to host vehicle camping do so at their own risk and expense. The religious institution or property owner will be solely responsible for removing unwanted vehicles or occupants; Benton County shall play no role in removal of persons or vehicles who are not permitted to be on the property.

Vehicle camping at religious institutions is not funded or sponsored by the County. All costs associated with hosting vehicle camping are the responsibility of the property owner. These costs may include, but are not limited to, sanitizing, providing toilet facilities, trash receptacles,

---

<sup>1</sup> ORS 203.082

supervision of the guests, ensuring state and county COVID-19 health and safety protocols are met and clean-up of the area.

The County may only explain the minimum requirements for a registered vehicle camping location, and cannot offer any legal advice for property owners interested in hosting vehicle camping. The County strongly recommends that anyone interested in hosting vehicle camping undertake their own research on the subject, inquire about their liability insurance coverage, and obtain the advice of their own attorney before deciding to host vehicle camping.

In the event vehicles are abandoned on religious institution property, removal disposal of the vehicles is the sole responsibility of the vehicle owner of religious institution.

## Benton County Vehicle Camping Code Information

The full Code allowing vehicle camping at religious institutions is located on the Benton County Code website.<sup>2</sup>

To host vehicle camping at a religious institution, the religious institution must be located within unincorporated Benton County, outside the city limits of the incorporated cities in Benton County (Philomath, Corvallis, Adair Village, Monroe, and north Albany).

The following requirements must be met by religious institutions wishing to host vehicle camping.

### Registration:

- Religious institutions shall register with the Benton County Community Development Department prior to establishing overnight camping in vehicles and shall submit a site plan and any other documentation required by the department's adopted procedures for ensuring compliance with the code.
- The registration will require the religious organization to state: 1) how many vehicles they plan to host (up to three vehicles), 2) where on their property those vehicles will be located, and 3) the host site has the required hygiene access outlined in the code.
- Register here: <https://www.co.benton.or.us/cd/page/vehicle-camping-religious-institutions>
- "Vehicle" includes a licensed and operable automobile, camper, travel trailer or recreational vehicle. "Vehicle" also includes a rigid-walled, readily transportable temporary sleeping unit exempt from building code and consistent with minimum guidelines issued by the Benton County Community Development Director. A church, synagogue or other religious institution shall be responsible for ensuring vehicles meet and adhere to the minimum guidelines.

### Site Requirements:

- Religious institution shall provide campers with access to onsite sanitary facilities, including, at a minimum, toilet, hand washing, and trash disposal facilities.
- The camping occurs on the same property as the religious institution's facility or an adjacent property that the religious institution owns or leases and has land use approval for religious institutional uses. In the case of leased land, the church shall provide the County with written authorization from the property owner to establish vehicle camping.

### Religious Institution Responsibilities:

- No payment of fee, rent, or other monetary charge shall be required of campers. This provision does not prevent the religious institution from accepting donations.

---

<sup>2</sup> BCC Ch. 40. County Code available here: <https://www.co.benton.or.us/cd/page/vehicle-camping-religious-institutions>

- The religious institution may select which individuals to allow to camp on the institution's property, and may revoke this permission at any time and for any reason.
- Vehicles and all associated outside facilities (such as toilet, trash disposal, storage unit) shall be located at least 12 feet from all property lines, road right-of-way or access easements, and each vehicle shall be located at least 12 feet from other vehicles and from associated outside facilities.
- All items and materials must be stored in vehicles or in separate storage unit, other than items designed and intended for outdoor use (e.g., bike and bike cart) which shall be screened from adjacent properties and public rights-of-way.

Limitations:

- Up to three vehicles are allowed at a religious institution for vehicle camping.
- Benton County may intervene and limit the number of individuals on a property if the activity on the premises constitutes a nuisance or other threat to public health, safety, or welfare. Otherwise, the number of people is not limited by this ordinance.
- Upon expiration or revocation of this ordinance, all vehicle camping on registered sites shall cease. Authorization of vehicle camping on a site does not establish a land use or a vested right to continue the activity if and when this code is modified.
- Nothing in this code creates any duty on the part of the County, its employees, or its agents to ensure the protection of persons or property with regard to overnight sleeping in vehicles.

## Considerations before Choosing to Host Vehicle Camping

It is important to consider hosting individuals, couples, and families experiencing homelessness as guests in a vehicle on your property. How you design your site and guest/host interface is ultimately up to you. Being a successful host site depends on you developing a host/guest interface plan. You should clearly communicate this plan to any potential guests. Give the new guests a copy of the host plan. Be sure they understand, agree to, and sign the designated plan. This protects a host site and provides a means of accountability if problems do arise.

### **Considerations in developing your Host/Guest Interface plan:**

(You do *not* need to provide the County with answers to these questions.)

1. What is your motivation for becoming a host site? What do you have to offer as a Host?
2. Do you have the capacity and skills to actively manage relations with guests, relations between guests and neighbors, relations with law enforcement and service providers? If necessary, will you be able to ask or require a guest to leave? Do you have a process for this? Do you have an agreement and set of expectations that you will share with guests at the outset so everyone shares a common understanding?
3. Do you have any experience with disadvantaged populations? How will your organization interact with guests?
4. How many vehicles will you start with? How many people total can you accommodate? What is your policy regarding guests of guests?
5. How long will you want guests to be able to stay at your site?
6. How will you provide the required access to toilets, hand washing, and trash disposal? Do you need to rent portable restrooms and portable hand washing stations? Do you have the financial resources to provide these facilities on an ongoing basis 24/7?
7. Will your site provide electricity? How will guests have access to potable water?
8. Will your guests have access to your religious institution's facilities? If so, when? Who will be there to oversee use during these times? What are the limitations (i.e., kitchen, shower, internet/computer access, telephone, etc.)? What are the guidelines for use of these amenities? Who will ensure facilities are used responsibly?
9. Will you offer your guests an opportunity to get involved with your organization? How will residents plug in to host site activities?
10. Who will be tasked with being the 24/7 direct contact person for the guests? For community members?
11. A designated person to act as the onsite camp host could provide the needed onsite supervision and assistance to guests. Is there someone in your current staff or volunteer base that could serve as onsite camp host (refer to Sample Camp Host Job Description on page 15)? Periodic check-ins may help your guests feel supported. During check-ins you

can review host agreements, check on guest needs, and check on the tidiness and cleanliness of the host space.

12. Selecting the right guest(s) to host is an important consideration.
13. Will you offer to connect your guests with local service providers who can provide case management, enrollment in health care, connections to resources, etc.?
14. Connection with the local fire district regarding smoking and open flames on the property is an important step.

## Considerations for Choosing where to Locate Vehicle Camping on your Property

Many factors and needs influence the identification and operation of a potential host site. First and foremost, public safety and health factors should be considered. For example, Emergency Responders must be able to access the camping site in the event of an emergency. In addition, BCC Chapter 40 requires that vehicles and all associated outside facilities (such as toilet, trash disposal, storage unit) shall be located at least 12 feet from all property lines, road right-of-way or access easements, and each vehicle shall be located at least 12 feet from other vehicles and from associated outside facilities.

Trucks must be able to access the site to service the portable restrooms, hand washing stations, and trash bins. Although religious institutions are allowed to host up to three vehicles, that number may need to be reduced if the site does not have space or capacity to serve that many guests.

The religious institution must be within Benton County limits and outside the city limits of Corvallis, Philomath, Monroe, Adair Village, and north Albany. If you need help determining if you are an eligible site, please contact:

### **Benton County Community Development Department – Code Compliance Program**

Phone: (541) 766-0178, email: [CodeCompliance@co.benton.or.us](mailto:CodeCompliance@co.benton.or.us)

360 SW Avery Avenue Corvallis, OR 97333-1139 [www.co.benton.or.us/cd/](http://www.co.benton.or.us/cd/)

Things to consider when evaluating where to locate guest vehicles on your property:

- Is the site suitable for vehicle camping? Is the site flat or sloped? Grassy or graveled? Does it have seasonal wetness or dryness? Is there surrounding vegetation or elements that may add to or detract from its privacy?
- Have you consulted with your local Rural Fire Protection District for recommendations and guidelines?



- Access onto and off of the property need to be considered for guests who may have mobility issues and for emergency vehicles and personnel.
- The site must have road accessibility for trucks to service the portable restrooms, hand washing stations, and trash collection bins.
- Proximity to schools and to houses or residential areas must be considered.
- The availability of water or power should be considered.
- Sites should be in proximity to bus lines or public transportation.
- Vehicle camping must not be on wetlands or land that is environmentally sensitive.

## Environmental Health Informational Guidance for Vehicle Camping at Religious Institutions

1. **Potable Water:** Water used for handwashing and drinking purposes must meet minimum water quality standards. For questions regarding water quality consult with Benton County Environmental Health at 541-766-6841 regarding bacterial testing.
2. **Portable Toilets:** For every 20 persons<sup>3</sup>, provide a minimum of one portable toilet that meet American with Disability Act (ADA) standards.
3. **Portable Handwashing Station:** Provide a minimum of one portable handwashing station per 15 persons. Handwashing station must be equipped with soap, paper towels and one covered waste receptacle. If handwashing stations are not provided by a commercial company, gray water must be disposed of in a sanitary sewer or septic system.
4. **Showering/Bathing Facilities:** If provided, clean and disinfect showers or bathing facilities after every use.
5. **Septic Systems:** To prevent a septic system failure, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality requires an authorization review for any increase in usage such as showering or wastewater. Contact Benton County Environmental Health at 541-766-6841.
6. **Food Service:** If food service is provided, it must be done in consultation with Benton County Environmental Health at 541-766-6841.
7. **Micro-shelters:** Must be cleaned and disinfected between occupants using current Centers of Disease Control (CDC) guidance on Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
8. **Physical Distancing:** Adhere to current State and County orders and guidance on physical distancing.

---

<sup>3</sup>CDC: Environmental Health Disaster Sheltering Assessment Guide  
[https://emergency.cdc.gov/shelterassessment/pdf/Shelter\\_Assessment\\_instruct\\_508.pdf](https://emergency.cdc.gov/shelterassessment/pdf/Shelter_Assessment_instruct_508.pdf)

## Benton County Rural Fire District Contacts

<p><b>Adair RFPD</b>          Chief Chuck Harris          Dennis Haney          Phone: 541-745-7212          Email: <a href="mailto:adair@adair-rural-fire.com">adair@adair-rural-fire.com</a> &amp;  <a href="mailto:haneydp@proaxis.com">haneydp@proaxis.com</a></p>	<p><b>Monroe RFPD</b>          Rick Smith          Phone: 541- 847-5170          Email: <a href="mailto:rsmith@monroefiredept.org">rsmith@monroefiredept.org</a></p>
<p><b>Albany FD</b>          Lora Ratcliff (Deputy Fire Marshall)          Phone: 541-917-7703          Email: <a href="mailto:lora.ratcliff@cityofalbany.net">lora.ratcliff@cityofalbany.net</a></p>	<p><b>North Albany RFPD</b> (see Albany FD)</p>
<p><b>Alesea RFPD</b>          George Foster          Phone 541-487-8701          Email: <a href="mailto:alseafire@peak.org">alseafire@peak.org</a></p>	<p><b>Oregon State Fire Marshal</b>          Jonathon Jones 503-934-0042          Kristina Deschaine 541-726-2572          Email: <a href="mailto:jonathon.jones@state.or.us">jonathon.jones@state.or.us</a></p>
<p><b>Blodgett-Summit RFPD</b>          David Feinberg          Phone: 541-456-4406          Email: <a href="mailto:bldgttdave@aol.com">bldgttdave@aol.com</a></p>	<p><b>Philomath RFPD</b>          Richard Saalsaa          Phone: 541-929-0030          Email: <a href="mailto:rich.saalsaa@philomathfire.com">rich.saalsaa@philomathfire.com</a></p>
<p><b>Corvallis RFPD</b> (Corvallis FD)          Jeff Prechel 766-6903          Phone: 541-766-6970          Email: <a href="mailto:Jeffrey.prechel@corvallisoregon.gov">Jeffrey.prechel@corvallisoregon.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Outside an agency service area,          contact the Oregon State Fire Marshal.</b></p>
<p><b>Hoskins-Kings Valley RFPD</b>          Adam Ryan          Phone and Fax: 541- 737-6605          Email: <a href="mailto:adamdryan@gmail.com">adamdryan@gmail.com</a></p>	

## Resources on Housing and Assistance for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness

To help religious institutions successfully host vehicle camping, this section lists community resources in Benton County. Below are some resources for education on the topic and for connecting individuals with service providers.



### [Service Providers](#)

Many service providers and government entities provide resources for individuals experiencing homelessness.

#### **Alsea Food Bank / Jeni's Place**

The Alsea Food Bank is located at 18595 Highway 34.

Hours: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Tuesdays & Wednesdays

Call (541) 487-4442

#### **Alsea Valley Gleaners**

The Alsea Valley Gleaners serve the Alsea Valley community by gathering food and other items then distributing them to the local families in need. View their website for more information:

<https://alseavalleygleaners.org/>

#### **Coastal Range Food Bank, Inc.**

At the Coastal Range Food Bank individuals shop in a country store atmosphere for groceries or they can shop for the individual. They are located at 11661 Nashville Rd in Blodgett.

Hours: 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Saturdays & Sundays

Call (541) 456-2141 or email: [crfb@casco.net](mailto:crfb@casco.net)

#### **Monroe Gleaners and South Benton Food Pantry**

The South Benton Food Pantry is co-located with the Gleaners at the Methodist Church in Monroe. Visit their website for location, hours, and contact info:

<https://southbentonfoodpantry.org/>

#### **Philomath Community Services**

The mission of Philomath Community Services is to provide social services to meet the needs of families and individuals in Philomath and western Benton County. They strive to serve all clients with dignity and respect. One building houses their five programs. Currently, PCS focuses on programs that provide food, garden education, clothing, select daily living items, fire wood, and

seasonal gift baskets to those local individuals and families who need these services the most. Their website lists location and hours: <https://www.philomathcommunityservices.org/outreach-programs/gleaners/>

### **Community Services Consortium (CSC)**

CSC is the community action agency for Linn, Benton, and Lincoln counties with programs to assist with housing, utility assistance, weatherization, food, and workforce and education. They also publish a resource guide that lists other local service providers.

CSC's main help page: <https://communityservices.us/get-help/>

CSC has a concise brochure with contact information for local service providers: <https://communityservices.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/help-card-linn-benton-042220.pdf>

CSC has a comprehensive resource guide that describes in detail all the local service providers and which services each of them offer: <https://communityservices.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/resources-guide-english-042220.pdf>

CSC keeps an up-to-date list of available shelter beds in Benton County: <https://communityservices.us/housing/>

### **Community Health Center (CHC) of Benton and Linn Counties**

CHCs offer team-based care that includes primary care, behavioral health, chronic disease management, and health screenings.

Alsea Clinic: <https://www.bentonlinnhealthcenters.org/alsea-health-center/>

Monroe Clinic: <https://www.bentonlinnhealthcenters.org/monroe-health-center/>

The Benton County Health Navigation Program is also available to help enroll individuals in Oregon Health Plan insurance. Details about coverage and contact information are available on the website: <https://www.bentonlinnhealthcenters.org/affordable-care/enrollment-assistance/>

### **SafePlace**

SafePlace is a collaborative effort of the First Congregational United Church of Christ, and several local agencies providing screening, support, and case management for individuals hosted by religious organizations near Corvallis. Contact information is available on their website: <https://corvallisucc.org/safe-camp/>

### **Strengthening Rural Families**

Strengthening Rural Families serves rural areas of Benton County with programs in Philomath, Alsea, Monroe, and their surrounding areas. Their website describes programs available in these areas: <https://www.ruralfamilies.org/>

Strengthening Rural Families uses a collaborative approach to promote the health and well-being of individuals and families in rural communities through education, advocacy, coalition building and community connections. They partner with local organizations, offer resources, support rural communities and provide programming through two initiatives – rural parenting and rural health. Locally-based community coordinators are in each of the primary areas served who help facilitate community events and outreach.

### [Reports and Plans](#)

Benton County and the City of Corvallis have jointly assembled the HOPE Advisory Board to address issues surrounding homelessness, services, and affordable housing. Many resource documents are listed at the bottom of the HOPE webpage: <https://www.co.benton.or.us/health/page/housing-and-homelessness>

# Sample of Vehicle Camping Screening Tool

(Modify this template to fit your institution's needs)

Name of Applicant: _____ DOB: _____
Name of Applicant: _____ DOB: _____
Phone number of Applicant: _____
Referral source: _____
Referral contact information: _____

## Criminal History

Does the Applicant have any of the following criminal charges?

- Sexual Offense
- Person-to-person
- Recent or active criminal charges
- Other

## Case Management Needs

- Basic Needs
- Health Care
- Food
- OHP/Health Insurance
- Housing
- Other

Agency Responsible for Case Management: \_\_\_\_\_

## Code of Conduct and House Rules

- The guest has signed Code of Conduct and House Rules for residing

# Samples of Vehicle Camping Agreement between Hosts & Campers

## Sample Code of Conduct

(Modify this template to fit your institution's needs)

[Name of Religious Institution] is participating as a Host to assist individuals, couples, and/or families in housing transitions by providing a safe environment for temporary shelter. By signing this form, the Participating Host agrees to provide the following:

1. Space to place one or up to three vehicles for camping on the Host's property
2. Dumpster space for a reasonable amount of personal trash
3. Access to potable water
4. Porta-toilet services

By initialing the following items and signing this form, I, as a Guest, signify that I understand and agree to each of them:

- \_\_\_\_\_ I have read and understand the Program Guidelines
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will keep the site and the surrounding area clean, neat, and presentable to the public at all times. I will not store items outside of the vehicle.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will be respectful of neighbors and keep noise at acceptable levels. Quiet hours are 10:00 pm to 8:00 am daily.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will not participate in illegal activities including but not limited to theft, violence, intimidation, illegal drug use, etc.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will not have open flames inside or around my vehicle. No smoking or vaping allowed in the vehicle or on the property.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I know where a fire extinguisher is located and how to use it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will respect the belongings and property of the Host, all other Guests, and surrounding neighborhood.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I agree to attend a weekly check-in with the Host.

I understand that being a Guest is a temporary situation and is provided to support my transition into a more permanent housing opportunity while creating a safe environment to all Guests and the surrounding community. A pattern of behavior that is disruptive or failure to comply with this code of conduct will result in my removal from the Host property. I understand that this site is the property of the Host and I do not have tenancy rights and must leave if instructed to do so. This agreement is in effect for up to 60 days from date of signature.

_____	_____	_____
Host Representative	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Guest Participant	Date	Signature

## Sample Policy Agreement

(Modify this template to fit your institution's needs)

I will adhere to the following rules and policies while participating in the Vehicle Camping Program at [location]. I will:

1. No visitors allowed.
2. Treat [staff, volunteers, employees, etc.] with respect.
3. Maintain the vehicle and surrounding area in a clean and tidy manner (e.g., nothing stored outside of or on top of the vehicle)
4. Refrain from asking for money, goods, or services from [staff, volunteers, employees, etc.].
5. Remember that I am at someone's church and will respect their beliefs.
6. Refrain from physical, verbal, or emotional abuse toward any man, woman, or child. Any person convicted, under investigation, or suspected of sexual offenses is not allowed to vehicle camp on the property.
7. Not engage in confrontational behavior while on or near the property.
8. Illegal drugs and alcohol are strictly prohibited. If suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, I will agree to submit to a drug test upon request.
9. Not smoke or vape on the property.
10. Not have open flames inside or around the vehicle. I know where the fire extinguisher is and how to use it.
11. Not bring weapons of any kind onto property.

I understand that violation of these rules may result in a written warning, suspension of services, or immediate termination of services. I further understand that if I am asked to leave and do not do so or become disruptive, I will be subject to arrest for criminal trespass.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Host Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Guest Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature



## Sample Camp Host Position Description

### **Camp Host**

The Camp Host will be responsible for day-to-day management of the vehicle camping program on [Institution Name]'s property.

### **Job Summary**

This position is responsible for overseeing the vehicle campsite on a day-to-day basis, with emphasis on working with individuals to adhere to camp code of conduct and provide basic assistance to individuals staying at the campsite, mainly helping them to maintain or establish connections with needed services. The Camp Host will also work closely with the institution leadership, institution staff, as well as service providers and volunteers who are assisting individuals.

### **Background and Abilities:**

Applicants must have a strong interest in human services or working with challenged populations, specifically those who have been homeless. We are seeking someone who is a self-starting problem-solver, but also has a proven ability to be a successful team player as this position provides key support to the case management process. This is a very rewarding and challenging position for someone who loves to help people. However, the candidate must also demonstrate an ability to establish healthy boundaries, show flexibility and compassion while being firm, and can hold themselves and others accountable. Possessing a calm demeanor, with a basic ability to resolve conflict and communicate effectively is desired.

### **Duties Include:**

#### **Camp Operations**

- Serves as point person for day-to-day management of Safe Camp, including coordinating repairs, supplies.
- Responds to inquiries about camp placement, manages waitlist.
- Responds to safety concerns in a timely manner. Also serves as the point person for law enforcement and EMT services.
- Facilitates weekly meetings with residents, in cooperation with leadership.
- Assists clients in settling in and completing the move-in process, including coordinating move-in, assessing and assisting in obtaining basic needs as necessary such as appropriate tents, sleeping bags, coordinating trips to the foodbank, etc.
- Provides life skills coaching to residents, helping them learn skills for independent, successful living. These skills could include teaching clean-up, basic cooking skills, and organizational skills as needed.
- Encourages residents to fulfill their housing and stability goals (Service Plan) by working with case managers and agency staff.

- Coordinates chore assignments and works with residents to complete chores and maintenance of the camp environment.
- Assists in mediation of conflicts within the camp between residents.
- Completes tent/micro-shelter checks to ensure residents have what they need, are maintaining their living spaces, and do not have prohibited items in their camp or shelter.
- Assists eligible clients needing transportation assistance based on medical or relocation needs; arranges transportation through bus-line and contact family members, friends, churches for assistance.
- Completes daily logs ensuring all information is accurate and up-to-date; maintains confidentiality of client information. Maintains daily “office hours” at camp office.

**Other Duties:**

- Assists in filing, completing reports and compiling other records for project reporting as needed.
- Works with volunteers to help coordinate camp project work.

**Work Environment**

Work is performed primarily outdoors with some time spent indoors and at partner agency offices.

## Neighborhood Outreach Strategies

Outreach efforts come in many forms and what may work well for one group, may not for another group. Which efforts you use will depend on where you are in the process, who is involved in your religious organization, and if your religious organization is associated with other community groups or neighborhoods.

The table below is to help you consider what strategies will work best for you considering your specific context.



**COVID-19 EMERGENCY:** Consider adapting your outreach strategies by hosting virtual meetings vs in person, making phone calls or emailing vs going door-to-door, and utilizing social media and newsletters to communicate with community members. If you choose to meet in person, consider meeting outside with a group no larger than 10 people, maintain 6 feet of physical distance, wear a mask, and stay home if you or someone in your household is sick.

	Description	Timing	Considerations
<b>Living room meetings</b>	Have a meeting with neighbors at home. These can be one-on-one or small groups.	Use as a tool to build your team at the beginning of the process and to brainstorm and strategize.	Bring materials such as current site pictures, news blast sign-up sheets, maps, and flyers.
<b>Organize Tours</b>	Organize a group tour of a current site.	Anytime during the outreach phase.	Organize a tour for your task and outreach teams, or your Neighborhood Association Board and members. Groups may also want to coordinate or offer rides to make it easier for people to participate.
<b>Presenting to other groups</b>	Reach out to other community groups to see if you can get 20 minutes to talk about what you are trying to do. Other groups may include non-profit boards, local business groups, neighborhood associations, or service organizations.	Anytime during the outreach phase. This may be a good way to get others to join your task team or be a voice of support for your work.	Create a presentation that can be used by any member of the team. Creating visuals is a good way to keep people interested. Make sure to have news blast sign-up sheets and informational flyers, handouts, or brochures.
<b>Community Meeting</b>	Organize your own community meeting.	Anytime during the outreach phase. If you are early on in the process, consider framing the meeting more broadly as ways to reduce homelessness. If you are considering a particular site, having a skilled	Give yourself enough time to plan the meeting. Review the Outreach Tools and the Considerations for Community Meetings sheet below. Make sure to have news blast sign-up sheets and informational flyers, handouts, or brochures.

		facilitator to lead the meeting may be beneficial.	
<b>Social media posts</b>	Use various social media tools to garner support, encourage participation, and publicize any meetings. You can also encourage partner organizations to post info to their websites or social media feeds.	Anytime during the outreach phase. Use it in the beginning to grow the task team and during the project to keep the community informed and engaged.	There are many different tools available, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Use visuals, post often and encourage everyone you know to share what you have posted. There are many sites online that offer ideas about making your social media campaign effective.
<b>Newsletter Item</b>	Provide a write-up on your efforts for publication in a neighborhood association newsletter or for other organizations that may be willing to include it in their newsletters.	Throughout the outreach phase.	Several Neighborhood Associations produce newsletters.
<b>Meeting with nearby stakeholders</b>	Meet with businesses and other stakeholders near a site being considered.	Once a site has been identified and registered with Benton County.	Make sure to schedule enough time and set an agenda. You may want to bring materials such as flyers or maps. In order to avoid overwhelming a stakeholder, it is a good idea to not bring more than two or three of your group members to the meeting.
<b>Door-to-door</b>	Knock on doors to speak with neighbors and businesses within 500 feet of the identified site.	Once a site has been identified and registered with Benton County.	Canvassers should go in pairs and ideally are residents of the neighborhood. It is also beneficial for the potential operators to participate. Bring flyers about the program and a postcard with information specific to your group, the site under consideration, and future opportunities to comment.

## Considerations for a Community Meeting

Community meetings are an effective way to educate and engage community members and surrounding neighborhoods. They should be structured in a way that is efficient but that also creates ample space for all voices to be heard.



**COVID-19 EMERGENCY:** Consider adapting your outreach strategies by hosting virtual instead of an in person meeting.

Here are a few considerations for planning and hosting a community meeting.

1. Allow enough preparation time.
  - a. Give yourself as much time as possible to prepare for and advertise the meeting, at least a month is recommended.
  - b. Preparation includes finding a venue, creating an agenda, publicizing the meeting, getting copies of informational materials, and contacting potential speakers.
    - i. Potential speakers may include representatives from nonprofits currently operating vehicle camping, neighbors, others experienced with vehicle camping, involved community members, and other entities that serve the unhoused population.
2. Identify the purpose of the meeting.
  - a. Think about where your religious organization is in the process of registering as a vehicle camping location.
    - i. If you are early on in the process, use a community meeting to build support and awareness by framing it broadly as a discussion on homelessness reduction efforts supported by the County.
    - ii. If you have already registered as a host religious organization with the County, frame the meeting to be more informative and conversational about the service you are providing and the potential for having a site in the nearby neighborhood. Having a skilled facilitator to help lead the meeting may be beneficial in order to make sure that space is given for all people to be heard and that a respectful and productive meeting environment is maintained.
  - b. Be clear and up-front about whether you are exploring the possibility of establishing camping at your site and want community input on that question, or whether your institution has already decided to offer camping and are looking for input on how to reduce any concerns among neighbors.
3. Create an agenda for the meeting.
  - a. Be realistic about how much time each agenda item will take.
  - b. If you have speakers, make sure they are aware of how much time they have.
  - c. Leave enough time for questions.

- d. Keep the meeting on track and respect participants' time.
- 4. Give an opportunity for introductions depending on the size of attendance and purpose of the meeting.
  - a. Discussion based meetings should always start with introductions.
- 5. Do not use jargon specific to homelessness issues or programs.
  - a. Begin meetings by explaining the homelessness issue in Benton County and the program or programs you are interested in discussing or pursuing.
- 6. Do not dictate the outcome of the meeting.
  - a. Homelessness intervention can be a contentious issue. Make sure community members feel heard when they voice a concern. Even if you do not agree with what someone says, thank them for their time and willingness to participate.
  - b. As these conversations can be very difficult, it may also be helpful for meeting organizers to participate in a training on how to have difficult conversations, to have experienced organizations at the meeting to help answer questions, or to have a skilled facilitator facilitate the meeting.
- 7. Provide comment cards that allow for attendees to participate if they are uncomfortable speaking in the group.
- 8. Bring flyers, maps, and news blast sign-ups with you.

## Outreach Materials

This section provides examples of outreach materials that may be used to engage the community on this topic.

### Tips for Neighborhood Outreach

**COVID-19 EMERGENCY:** Consider adapting your outreach strategies by using email, calling on the phone, or posting on social media instead of going door-to-door.

- Go in pairs and use a tracking sheet to take notes and track where you have been.
- Have potential operators as well as people who live in the area participate if possible, creating a situation where neighbors can talk to neighbors.
- Look to the Benton County Community Development website and the County FAQ provided upon registration for other potential questions that may be asked.
- If no one answers the door, leave a flyer.
- If someone wants to talk, it is good to give them the space to do so and listen to their concerns. If someone does not want to talk, that is fine too. Just let them know there is a number on the flyer they can call if they have questions or concerns later. Sometimes it also just helps to remind people that you are a volunteer who cares about this issue because \_\_\_\_.
- Some may get off topic and discuss broader or separate issues all together. You may find it helpful to say something like, “I hear you. While we care about all issues that affect [the neighborhood or the community], we are community members who are working more specifically on this effort right now. On that other topic, you may want to talk to [your neighborhood association, Benton County, etc.]”
- Refrain from getting into an argument with someone. If a conversation becomes unproductive or argumentative, just leave it.
- Have a contact or response prepared for how someone may become involved.
- Leave any residence or business where you are or become concerned for your safety.









