



Homelessness and Business in the Tri-Cities

Why should the business community invest in solutions to homelessness?

It is difficult to get an exact number of people who are homeless in the Tri-Cities at any given time, as the number fluctuates. However, it is clear that the number of homeless persons in the Tri-Cities has increased since 2014.

Hope For Freedom outreach workers estimated in the fall of 2014 that there were 64 homeless persons in the Tri-Cities, by the late fall of 2015 this number had increased to over 100 persons, many of them the “hard to house” who have been on the street for an extended period of time.

Reports¹ on homelessness estimate the annual cost to the public system for a homeless person with severe addictions and mental illness can be in excess of \$55,000. The cost of housing and supports for the same person is estimated to be only \$37,000.

The savings, province-wide, could be \$211 million annually.

Loitering, obstructing pedestrian traffic, discouraging potential customers, and the loss of a sense of community can have real costs to businesses. Neither customers nor employees will frequent areas with questionable public safety.²

You have a vested interest in the Tri Cities and what happens here matters!

Are there any emergency shelters in the Tri-Cities for homeless persons?

Emergency shelter and housing for persons homeless in the Tri-Cities is available at the Coquitlam shelter & transitional housing facility at 3030 Gordon Ave., Coquitlam. The facility, operated by RainCity Housing, includes 30 emergency shelter beds, 30 transitional housing suites and 30 extreme weather beds in a dormitory setting during periods of severe winter weather. For more information, visit www.tricityshomelessness.ca/services/shelter.

What is being done to meet the needs of homeless persons in the Tri-Cities?

Shelter

Emergency shelter is available at the Coquitlam shelter & transitional housing facility, 3030 Gordon Ave, Coquitlam. The shelter program provides an opportunity for homeless persons to be connected with services and resources currently available in the Tri-Cities and beyond.

Outreach Services

The [Hope For Freedom Society](http://www.hffs.ca) (HFFS) operates a program of outreach to persons homeless or at risk of homelessness in the Tri-Cities under contract to BC Housing. Two outreach workers seek out homeless persons where they live, establishing contact, developing rapport and connecting them with available resources and services when they are ready. HFFS also operates a Homeless Resource Centre with shower facilities, counselling and job search support. Contact: Lisa Batista at 604-830-1528.

¹ Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health and Addictions, Feb. 2008

² Wilder Research at www.wilderresearch.org

The [SHARE Food Bank](#) depot at Trinity United Church, 2211 Prairie Ave, Port Coquitlam which operates Wednesdays from 12 – 2 PM provides assistance to homeless persons who attend the food bank. Contact: Joyce Lissimore, 604-612-0778 or lissimore@telus.net

Other Services

For information on food, clothing, laundry and shower services available to homeless persons in the Tri-Cities, visit www.tricityshomelessness.ca/services

As a business leader, YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Educate yourself and your employees. Visit www.tricityshomelessness.ca for the most current information on homelessness in the Tri-Cities and the actions being taken to end it.

Be part of the larger coalition. Attend the Tri Cities Homelessness & Housing Task Group meetings. Get involved in implementing solutions to homelessness. Work with the Task Group to identify a specific project to address.

Consider hiring someone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness. Be aware that homelessness might be an issue that your employees or their families are facing.

Support outreach to homeless persons and non profits who serve the homeless population.

Encourage your employees to volunteer at the Coquitlam shelter or other services for homeless persons.

Contribute your ideas, energy and leadership to those working to address the issue.

Use your influence and champion the need to address homelessness in the Tri Cities. Encourage those in your business network to work on implementing solutions to homelessness.

Recognize that changes in an employees' personal hygiene, work habits, attitudes towards others, or increased tardiness and sick days may be indicators of an addiction. Awareness of these indicators and sensitivity to the impact on their families may open a door for help.

Speak up – let our municipal, provincial and federal politicians know that homelessness is unacceptable.

For further information on how you can help, visit www.tricityshomelessness.ca/how-you-can-help