

Dear City of Lawrence:

Beginning January 1, 2017, the Homeless Outreach Program granted by The City of Lawrence is operating with only 2 outreach workers as a direct result of city cuts to funding. As the outreach team served a total of 429 clients, 233 of who were new in the 2016 year, which is consistent with years past, for the 2017 year each outreach worker can expect a case load of over 200 individuals. This will negatively affect the quality of services provided to the homeless population of Lawrence. Downturns in services can also be expected to result in higher ER and emergency service utilization, greater contact with police by those experiencing homelessness, and poses a possible increase in safety issues for those who are homeless and the greater Lawrence community as the availability of shelter and assistance with medical and other health related issues will be less available. Camping will possibly increase also posing a possible increase in sanitary issues for the community at large. The availability of affordable housing is an essential aspect of addressing the problem of homelessness and severe poverty in any community, but so too is a robust and adequately supported network of services to assist those who are homeless and experiencing severe poverty in accessing the necessary resources.

Sincerely,

Mathew Faulk

Homeless Outreach Team leader

City Outreach Quarterly Report

2016	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
(Reports dues 10 th of January, April, July, October)				X

Individuals Served this Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
New Individuals this Quarter	87	44	38	25
New Families w/Children this Quarter	9	16	10	1
Individuals Carried Over	105	67	78	78
Families Carried Over	11	6	13	7
Total Clients seen this Quarter	212	133	139	111

Demographics this Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Mental Illness	101	75	93	75
Substance Abuse	52	47	52	56
Dual MI/SA	38	32	37	42
Veteran	6	9	5	6

Housing Status this Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Unsheltered	23	16	20	18
Emergency Shelter	38	24	26	25
Precariously Housed	24	24	61	16
Housed	49	54	41	35
Unknown	36	5	5	10
Evictions this Quarter Despite Efforts	1	6	5	7

Additional Information	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Approved for Disability this Quarter	1	1	1	1
Employed this Quarter	5	12	6	8
Chronically Homeless	79	24	42	38
Individuals Housed this Quarter	11	23	19	22
Families Housed this Quarter	1	5	1	1
Households Avoiding Eviction	7	4	7	2

2016 has proven to be a year of transition for the Homeless Outreach Team. The year started with the senior worker leaving to take another position, and the team spent two months with only two workers. In April, the team hired Katrina Fabac to replace Brad Cook. However, as a direct result of the 2017 city cuts to social services, and specifically a \$30,000 cut to the Homeless Outreach Team, the Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center was forced to eliminate another position from the team, permanently reducing the team to only 2 workers for the 2017 year. The team leader Sharon Zehr also left to take a

City Outreach Quarterly Report

new position. Because the Bert Nash Center is experiencing difficulty filling the team lead position, which would also oversee the hospital discharge team, Bert Nash administration elected to create a lead Case manager position to lead the team in the interim. Mathew Faulk, the senior member on the Homeless Outreach team applied and was promoted to the lead position.

On paper, the city cites the team budget being reduced by \$10,000 for the 2017 year. It should be noted, however, that the 2016 budget reductions proposed in 2015 were overcome by extra city funds provided to the Homeless Outreach Team through WRAP program funds granted to the Bert Nash Center. Because extra WRAP funds earmarked for Homeless Outreach were not provided in the 2017 budget, the cuts to the program's 2017 budget actually amount to a \$30,000 reduction from the 2016 budget.

Nationally, the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness in a given year ranges from 1 to 3 million, depending on the year, the accuracy of counting methods etc. If the City of Lawrence, KS lies within the national average, with a population around 100,000, between 300 and 1,000 people will experience homelessness a year in the municipality. The city has reduced the number of outreach workers from 4 to 2 workers serving a population potentially ranging between 300 and 1,000 homeless individuals a year. The Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center does retain a federal PATH outreach worker on the Homeless Outreach Team; however, PATH workers are restricted to only serving homeless individuals who qualify as Severely and Persistently Mentally Ill (SPMI) or Severely Mentally Ill (SMI).

Despite such a year of change, the Homeless Outreach Team exceeded its goals for housing in helping to house 75 individuals and 8 families for the year. Since the team is limited to approximately \$9,000 in total flex funding to spend on clients served, the team continues to rely heavily on other agencies to locate funds for housing assistance. In the team's efforts to coordinate with other agencies to procure housing dollars, it is specifically noted that funds for housing assistance are inordinately low in an environment of exceeding need. Rental rates and screening practices by landlords and property managers also present large barriers to housing for the homeless population in the City of Lawrence, KS.

At the end of 2016, the number of people within the City of Lawrence who qualify as chronically homeless remains high, with a total of 38 served in the final quarter. The number of families served was low compared to past quarters. But the number of individuals needing homeless services remains high. The team served a total of 227 new homeless clients for the year.

The homeless outreach team also applied for grant funds through the Balance of State, as HUD announced new program funds were available for the first time in several years for the state of Kansas. There were a total of 6 new program applications through the balance of state. The CoC reported, however, that HUD only granted one new program, which was a relatively small coordinated reentry program grant ranging between \$20,000 and \$30,000. All other new program applications were not awarded. Permanent and supportive housing for homeless individuals and families remains a dire need, especially in communities such as Lawrence, that have high rental rates per capita, and high competition for employment. High rent rates combined with low employment opportunities for people from

City Outreach Quarterly Report

disadvantaged backgrounds and low service funding have created an environment of exceeding difficulty for the homeless and other severely poor populations in Lawrence and Douglas County, KS.