

City of Tempe COVID-19 response for individuals experiencing homelessness

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, accessible hygiene options for individuals experiencing homelessness have been significantly reduced. In response, the City of Tempe and Tempe Union High School District have collaborated to establish a temporary shower program at the city-owned McClintock High School pool facility.

Why are there fewer places now for individuals experiencing homelessness to shower?

Due to the pandemic, two locations that offer regular weekly showers have temporarily paused their programs.

In addition, some individuals utilize gym memberships for the purpose of using shower facilities. Due to the governor's proclamation, these individuals have lost this option as gyms are currently considered non-essential businesses and closed.

In some cases, individuals have gone 30 days without access to a shower because of these closures.

When will the city's shower program begin and how long will it last?

The shower program begins April 24 and will be in place at least for six weeks.

When will people be at the school?

Showers will be made available 9 a.m. – noon each Friday. Individuals will use one entry/exit point and district personnel will unlock/lock the facility.

Will city staff be onsite?

Yes. Tempe police and the city's homeless outreach specialists will be onsite at all times to ensure that individuals are receiving services and then leaving the campus.

Will the facilities be cleaned?

Yes, city staff will ensure that facilities are cleaned each Friday.

How will people get to the shower program?

We anticipate that most individuals will walk or take public transit as they typically do with regular shower programs in the community.

Why is the city providing this service?

The City of Tempe's Human Services Department provides services to individuals experiencing homelessness through our HOPE homeless outreach program. As a leader in the region serving

the homeless population, we are committed to helping individuals and families end their homelessness with connections to housing and social services.

During the pandemic, we have continued to serve the homeless community without interruption and are working to meet unique needs such as providing showers, installing portable handwashing stations and locating temporary shelter for elderly and other at-risk individuals.

Will city staff be talking with people about services, including housing options, at the shower program?

Yes. Our homeless outreach specialists will take the opportunity to engage individuals about available housing and social services.

Who can I contact with additional questions?

Nichole Stevens at Nichole_stevens@tempe.gov and Sean McDonald at smcdonald@tempeunion.org