



Ventura County Action Guide

“People don’t want to be homeless. It happens to anybody. A lot of people think homeless people don’t want a home. They want to put homeless people in one category... I would shake that.” – Daniel, *formerly homeless*



1) Be Informed

Understand Our Challenge: Our community is facing a homeless crisis that has been made worse by a housing crisis. Rent costs have continued to rise significantly with very few affordable rentals.

Understand Our Solution: Build new affordable and supportive housing for our homeless neighbors so we can end homelessness in Ventura County. Permanent supportive housing provides long term stability with the supportive services needed for those experiencing chronic homelessness. In addition, homelessness prevention is essential to help low-income households retain housing when in crisis.

Understand Our Responsibility: To end homelessness in our community, we all need to work together. Your support and action are needed to end homelessness in Ventura County!

2) Get Involved

Offer Kindness and Respect: Introduce yourself, smile, make eye contact and engage in a brief and friendly conversation. Saying hello can help restore and affirm the dignity for someone experiencing homelessness – and our entire community.

Share Resources and Information: Get familiar with local resources and agencies such as shelters or food banks. Ask if they are getting help with housing or services and provide information about organizations that can assist them.

Interface 2-1-1 staff are trained to assess and refer people to resources over the phone 24/7. The 2-1-1 staff are also connected to the Ventura County Continuum of Care (CoC) Coordinated Entry System (CES) for referrals to supportive housing and shelters. Call 2-1-1 or text your zip code to 898211.

Talk to Your Neighbors: Some people worry about what will happen if new affordable and supportive housing is built in their community. Help educate through individual conversations, neighborhood meetings or at other community events.

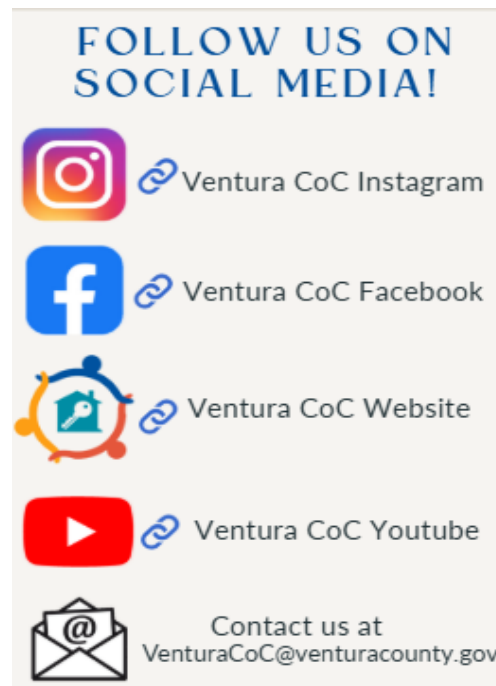
Did you know? Providing supportive housing is one of the most cost-effective ways to address homelessness, especially for those who are disabled and need services. Ventura County’s Coordinated Entry System (CES) is used to assess and prioritize the most vulnerable for housing.

3) Be Engaged

Be Aware: Join advocacy networks and subscribe to e-news from the following organizations to stay involved in the discussion about homelessness and affordable housing:

- Ventura County Continuum of Care (VC CoC) Alliance: www.venturacoc.org;
- National Alliance to End Homelessness: www.endhomelessness.org;
- Ventura County Housing Trust Fund (VCHTF): www.vchousingtrustfund.org
- Ventura County HOME: www.vchome.org;
- California Housing Partnership: www.chpc.net;
- United State Interagency Council on Homelessness: www.usich.gov;

Be Social: Spread the word, participate online, share information and inspire others.



Accurate information is essential to increase understanding of those experiencing homelessness in our community. You can raise awareness and correct misconceptions about homelessness and supportive housing in Ventura County.

4) Take Action

Participate in your local Point In Time Homeless Count: Many jurisdictions conduct critical Point In Time (PIT) Counts in late January each year to help secure state and federal funding.

Donate your time: Shelters or food banks need help with preparing and serving meals, cleaning, sorting and/or delivering donations.

Donate Your Talents: Offer specialized skills such as job counseling, legal aid, medical services, administrative support or computer training at local community centers or shelters.

Contact your local homeless services organizations to find out how you can help or sign up for volunteer opportunities at www.VolunteerVenturaCounty.org.

Be An Advocate: Ask local, state and federal officials to support policies that increase affordable housing and protect federal funding from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Make your voice heard!

5) Donate

Our local shelters and supportive housing partners need your support!

Casa Pacifica: www.casapacifica.org

Coalition for Family Harmony: thecoalition.org

The City Center: www.thecitycenter.org

Gabriel's House Oxnard: www.gabriels-house.org

Gold Coast Veterans Foundation: www.gcvf.org

Harbor House: www.harborhouseto.org

Help of Ojai: www.helpofojai.org

HOPE the Mission: hopethemission.org/thrive/

Interface Children & Family Services: www.icfs.org

Many Mansions: www.manymansions.org

Mercy House Living Centers: www.mercyhouse.net

MESA Transitional Housing: www.mesafarm.org

National Health Foundation: www.nhfca.org

Peoples' Self-Help Housing: www.pshhc.org

Salvation Army: www.ventura.salvationarmy.org

Samaritan Center: www.samaritancentersimivalley.org

Spirit of Santa Paula: www.spiritofsantapaula.org

Turning Point Foundation: www.tpf-vc.org

United Way of Ventura County www.vcunitedway.org

VC Rescue Mission: www.vcrescuemission.org

Donate Needed Items: Contact local shelters to ask for specific needs, which often include hygiene products, seasonal clothing, furniture for those transitioning to housing, and household goods.

Strategic Giving: Set up financial contributions to reputable organizations allow them to fund long-term solutions like permanent supportive housing and supportive services.

Fundraising: Organize or participate at local events like walk-a-thons, yard sales, or events to raise awareness and funds for youth or family services.