

Concerns about the Healthy Streets Operation Center (HSOC)

Coalition on Homelessness Human Rights Workgroup

Local Homeless Coordinating Board Meeting 10/1



Coalition on Homelessness

Overview

- The Healthy Street Operations Center(HSOC) has been developed to better coordinate the many city agencies involved in addressing homelessness and unhealthy street behaviors
- HSOC is structured as a unified command with representatives of City departments all in one room which direct, plan, and coordinate responses to street behaviors and homelessness
- HSOC was activated on Tuesday, January 16th, 2018.
- HSOC is an expansion of coordinated efforts that began in San Francisco's Mission District.

Why Resolve Large encampments?

PROBLEM

1. Higher levels of substance abuse and communicable disease in large encampments.
2. Increase in public health and public safety concerns in and around the encampment.
3. Public outrage impacts City's ability to address homelessness.
4. Previous attempts to address encampments failed and led to lawsuits, reducing confidence in the city.

GOAL

1. Assist as many people as possible by connecting them to shelter, services and housing.
2. Address quality of life issues for housed and unhoused individuals.
3. Change culture on streets to permanently eliminate large, long term encampments
4. Focus on effectiveness, legality and compassion while not redirecting entire service delivery system.

Commitment to Community Engagement

June 7, 2018

Operational Recommendations for HSOC Policy Group

1. Community Information Session (AT-83)

HSOC Liaison develop a proposal for hosting community information sessions in Summer 2018. Develop “HSOC Playbook” before hosting Community Meetings.

Recommendation

Use existing meetings to discuss HSOC. Regular updates will be provided at the SFPD Homelessness Advisory meetings or to Local Homeless Coordinating Board. Consolidated talking points will be provided to all participating departments to support public information at all existing community meetings.

Our Concerns

HSOC is not adequately meeting its primary goal of assisting homeless persons and “meeting the needs of each person in the encampment and assisting them to end their homelessness” (USICH, 2015).

- *HSOC is led by the SFPD and DPW rather than HSH and DPH*
- *Criminalization of homelessness and human rights violations against those on the streets have increased since its initiation.*
- *Inadequate Services are Inadequately Offered. Navigation Centers have been reformatted from serving homeless people to serving sweeps and the interests of the housed.*

HSOC is not meeting its objectives of community engagement.

- *Decisions about street homelessness have become more opaque from service providers and advocates.*

HSOC is disregarding and contradicting proven best practices laid out by the US Interagency Council on Homelessness.

- *HSOC’s handling of street homelessness lacks intensive and persistent outreach, low-barrier pathways to services and shelters, access to medical services, and documenting outcomes.*

1.

HSOC is not adequately meeting its primary goal of assisting homeless persons and “meeting the needs of each person in the encampment and assisting them to end their homelessness.”

HSOC is led by the SFPD and DPW rather than HSH and DPH and leads with enforcement and street cleaning rather than outreach.

AGENCY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **SF Department of HSH-** Outreach, engagement, and placement of homeless individuals
- **SFDPH-** Outreach, harm reduction strategies, syringe cleanup and engagement, and health treatment homeless and housed individuals requiring care in street settings.
- **SFPD-** Engagement and enforcement (as a last resort) to respond to criminal issues.

- **SF Public Works-** Cleaning and implementation of environmental design changes.
- **SF Controller's Office-** Provides performance tracking of the Healthy Streets Operation center.
- **SF 3-1-1-** Provides non-emergency intake of homeless-related issues from the public
- **SF DEM-** Provides operational and logistical support for HSOC.



DEPARTMENT OF
HOMELESSNESS AND
SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

San Francisco
Department of Public Health



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Healthy Streets Operations Center
FAQ (Revise 07/03/2018)

- 4. Who is in charge of the Healthy Streets Operations Center? Who does the Healthy Streets Operations Center report to?**
 - a. The incident commander is Commander David Lazar from the San Francisco Police Department. As the incident commander, Lazar is responsible for coordinating the efforts of each of the agencies responsible for addressing homelessness and unhealthy street behavior in San Francisco. The Healthy Streets Operations Center reports to the Mayor of San Francisco.

Source: HSOC Public Messaging Appendix B

HSOC Encampment Response Presentation

- San Francisco has anywhere from 4,000 – 5,000 unsheltered people on any given day
- There are estimated <400 tents San Francisco. So the vast majority of people are not using tents.
- 311 is receiving ~1,200-1,400 encampment requests a week, once duplicates are removed it is 100-150 requests a day.
- We need clarity on roles and goals of our responses to create efficient and effective use of our resources.
- Ideally, every encampment/unsheltered person would be a mini-resolution led with social service placement. HSH and DPH do not have the current capacity to respond to the volume of requests so SFPD and Public Works will be lead.

HSOC is led by the SFPD and DPW rather than HSH and DPH and leads with enforcement and street cleaning rather than outreach.



Photograph from San Francisco Chronicle's on HSOC

Leading with criminalization if capacity of outreach, shelter, or assistance is lacking.

Tents/Structures: Our goal is no tents or structures in the City. Public Work and SFPD will not clear tents from areas where there is an Encampment Resolution Team effort in progress (currently Merlin, next will likely be 33 Gough). However, Public Works and SFPD can clear areas rapidly when there is not a designated resolution in progress, especially in the encampments we have already cleared (see attached). HSH will assist in these efforts when we have the capacity to do so, if not Public Works and SFPD will still proceed to clear the area. These efforts will be communicated to our HSOC representatives so they can coordinate as needed.

June 15, 2018 email from Jeff Kositsky to Muhammad Nuru, Chief Scott, Jason Elliott, and Naomi Kelly on HSOC Process.

Obtained through Sunshine act Request.

Review HSOC process

HSOC – Extended Hours and Days

- SFPD has their Special Homeless Officers clearing encampments 6am to 11pm / 7 Days
- They will be calling to the Radio Room for debris
- The SFPD Shift Sergeant will call the Swing Supervisor for special needs.
 - We are to respond and assist with their requests
- The number at HSOC is 415-558-2723

We will have radio room dispatchers at HSOC starting Wednesday, 8/8

- Call Channel 1 for HSOC assistance
- 7 days / 7am to 11pm

We need to stay very diligent and proactive in addressing tents

- Take them down as you see them, and/or coordinate with HotSpot
- Resolved sites need to stay Tent Free Zones
- Keep reporting issues with SFPD

Email from Peter Lau, DPW, on HSOC Process to DPW workers (Aug 8, 2018). Obtained through Sunshine Act Request

Note: No mention of HSH, DPH, services, adequate time and notice, or housing/shelter plan for homeless



SFPD Tenderloin  · 7/25/18



Tenderloin Homeless Outreach Officers worked with [@sfpublicworks](#) today in the TL offering services and making the sidewalks safer for the community we serve.



Inadequate Services are Inadequately Offered

- The primary shelter offered is extremely temporary, often 1-7 days. Most navigation center beds now have time limit of 30 days. All shelter offered to those on the streets is at the expense of those on the shelter waitlist who wait an average of 4-6 weeks for a 90 day bed and the 100+ people who typically are denied a shelter bed and sleep in chairs nightly.
- Most shelter offered require people to abandon their pets and property: Surrendering the survival gear necessary to exist on the streets that they will most likely be returning to.
- Those suffering from mental health problems or drug addiction could have their conditions exacerbated by residing in congregate settings, even in navigation centers as shown in the city's own reports.
- Success rate is very low. In the April camp resolutions in the Mission an HSH memo stated only 8 people accepted the 7-day shelter offer among 100 tents, which comprised at least 150 people. about 5%. While navigation center acceptance is much higher (65%), the vast majority being asked to move by DPW and SFPD are not offered this (HSH response to Coalition Analysis May, 2018).

Criminalization of homelessness and human rights violations against those on the streets have increased since HSOC's initiation.

2.

HSOC is not meeting its objectives of
community engagement.

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- Police Commission requested SFPD to work with Coalition and community partners on reforming 311 and 911 triage, no effort has been made.
- An SFPD community homeless advisory board was created in September of 2017. HSOC opened without any discussion or even mention to the advisory board. 30% of the advisory board meetings have been cancelled by the SFPD, and another 10% have been rescheduled by the SFPD without community input.
- SFPD is not tracking and sharing relevant data. COH has requested citation data for quality of life offenses affecting homeless individuals and have been told such data is not tracked.

Service providers have played no meaningful role in the development of this new policy approach, which has the primary stated aim of assisting those on the streets.

City's encampment sweeps intensify, even hitting homeless waiting outside Glide Memorial for food



On July 31, homeless people saw their tents and belongings swept from the sidewalks in front of Glide church and across the street, as some waited for a free meal. (Mike Koozmin/2015 S.F. Examiner)

By Joe Fitzgerald Rodriguez on August 9, 2018 1:00 am

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3.

HSOC is contradicting Federal best
practice guidelines to resolving
encampments



Effective Strategies and Approaches for Encampment Resolutions

1. Preparation and Adequate Time for Planning and Implementation for a camp resolution
2. Collaboration across Sectors and Systems, **including** service providers and community organizations.
3. Performance of intensive and Persistent Outreach and Engagement to connect people with coordinated assessment systems, resources, and housing options

From USICH guidelines on resolving encampments, August, 2015.

Recommendations

Follow federal guidelines to:

- Work with community partners and service providers with implementation of HSOC's homelessness policies.
- Shift command and resources so that HSH and DPH are in leadership positions, are first responders in all encampment removals, and have more staff than DPW
- Remove SFPD from HSOC

Recommendations

- Provide adequate time and preparation for every camp removal, not only the few classified as “resolutions” (>5% of removals).
- Follow DPW and SFPD protocols of handling property of unhoused.
- Follow 9th Circuit Court ruling that nobody should be cited or arrested unless **adequate and appropriate** shelter or housing is available without denying others who are trying to access these resources.
- Remove the DPW/SFPD barricades which are used to prevent re-encampment
- Halt the use of 647e’s

Thank You