

MEDFORD IS ATTEMPTING TO CHANGE THE CURRENT PROHIBITED CAMPING ORDINANCE (5.257)

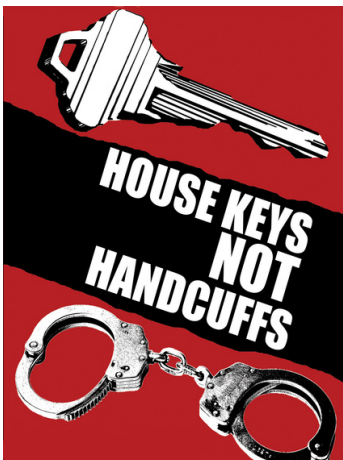
If passed by City Council, Medford's new "Prohibited Camping, Lying, and Sleeping" ordinance would:

- Make it illegal for people to use a tent, even during the winter.
- Make it illegal for people just to lie down or sleep in a variety of public spaces, including fields, underneath roadways and bridges, or near railroad tracks.
- Make it illegal for people to "organize or operate" encampments.
- Impose excessive penalties, including up to 6 months in jail and a \$1,000 fine for using a tent or sleeping in public.



What effect will these changes have on the unhoused community?

- ★ Further criminalize poverty and keep people poor
- ★ Increase the risk of exposure related injuries and deaths
- ★ Break trust and boost fear; making services harder to access



The truth about homelessness in Medford

>>According to the 2019 Point in Time Count, there were 712 unhoused communities members in Jackson county. We know these numbers have drastically increased due wildfires and the economic impact of COVID-19.

>>People are unhoused due to unemployment, the housing crisis and inadequate shelter options, a lack of adequate services for mental health and addiction, and other factors. Ordinances prioritizing criminalization distract from real solutions – it makes the problems worse, not better.

>>Unhoused communities have had recent civil rights wins through cases such as Boise v. Martin. The National Homelessness Law Center advised Medford that this proposed ordinance will make Medford vulnerable to class action lawsuits.

>>Proponents of this ordinance are using fire safety as an excuse for further criminalization. Everyone in Medford is concerned about wildfires – but fire safety should be considered separately from laws that criminalize people for using a tent, lying down, or sleeping.

>>A recent independent survey of 40 unsheltered individuals in Medford showed that, if they lose the ability to sleep in a tent:

- 92% would lose their ability to stay safe in extreme weather
- 74% would lose their ability to access employment and/or employment support
- 77% would lose their sense of community and belonging
- 87% say it would negatively impact their emotional and mental health

TAKE ACTION!

Individuals, organizations, and businesses are encouraged to circulate this information amongst friends, clients, and employees.

We encourage you to take a public stand against this ordinance. (1) Sign our petition and/or (2) submit public testimony stating your opposition to City Council by sending emailed testimony with your name and city of residence to council@cityofmedford.org by **April 1st, 2020**. State clearly that you are submitting public testimony.



SIGN THE PETITION

<https://tinyurl.com/MedfordPetition>