

# Sweeps Street Outreach



**Initial outreach result sheet....7 Cities, 112 forms tabulated.... Nov. 20, 2024**

There are several trends showing up already!! Experience tells us when the percentages start out this high they usually don't change all that much as the number of outreaches grow, but we'll see....

**89% or 100** out of 112 people reported being swept in the last 30 days

**61% no advance notice**, when notice given 30% of the time it was 24 hours

**68% of the time belongings thrown away**, when it was stored only 2 persons got it back in good condition

**57% of the time sweep conducted by local police** – Service Provider was next highest at 50%

**67% of people given stay away orders**, 85% of people ended up in the street after the sweep

**82% of people offered NO services** – of those offered services 77% were unsuccessful referrals (far away most common service was shelter 7%)

**91% unable to access legal assistance**

**90% felt targeted for being poor, 45% identified as “disabled”**

## Top 3 answers to open ended questions:

Question 7 -- Reason given for sweep

#1 – No reason -----14

Cleaning -----8

Scheduled sweep/No camping----- 7

Question 25 --- what our focus should be

#1 ---- Advocacy/fight sweeps ----11

People need housing ----- 9

KYR/Legal support -----4

Question 26 ---- What people should know

#1 ----- Traumatizing/devastating ---- 8

Cops Very Aggressive ----- 4

No Where to go -----4



If your group wants to join this outreach effort contact us at [wrap@wrpahome.org](mailto:wrap@wrpahome.org)



## What are sweeps?

- The forced disbanding of homeless communities and removal of homeless individuals from an area.
- The threat of force, arrest, citation, and/or destruction of property to coerce homeless communities to disband.
- The theft or destruction of property, including vehicles.
- *Or any combination of the above*

Sweeps fracture communities, displace people, and damage physical and mental health. They regularly result in the loss of life-preserving shelter and medication, trauma for those being removed, and tickets, citations, and/or convictions that act as additional barriers to housing stability. These sweeps are conducted by governments with no plan to house or adequately shelter displaced residents, and sweeps siphon public funds away from effective, long term solutions to homelessness.

## What are anti-homeless laws?

Public and private agencies often use anti-homeless laws as their legal basis for conducting sweeps. Anti-homeless laws criminalize the types of life-sustaining activities that homeless people have no choice but to undertake in public. These laws spread across the nation shortly after cuts to the federal affordable housing budget in the early 1980's led to mass homelessness across the nation. Of 187 cities measured by the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty in 2019:

- 57% prohibit camping in particular public places, and 37% prohibit camping in public citywide.
- 39% prohibit sleeping in particular public places, and 21% prohibit sleeping in public city- wide.
- 55% prohibit sitting and lying down in public.
- 60% prohibit loitering, loafing, and vagrancy in particular public places, and 35% prohibit loitering, loafing, and vagrancy citywide.
- 50% of cities restricting living in vehicles.

Rather than simply having one “vagrancy ordinance,” cities now pass dozens of laws, which in their totality, effectively reinstate vagrancy laws that were struck down as unconstitutional. In a survey of 1,657 people in 17 cities throughout 8 states, 74% did not know a place that is safe and legal to sleep outside.