



PANHANDLING IN BELLEVUE: GIVE CHANGE THAT MATTERS

What is panhandling?

The term “panhandling” traditionally refers to asking for money in a public space. Courts have ruled that it is protected (under the First Amendment) as free speech.

Panhandling is not illegal unless the individual is blocking or harassing you in some fashion.

If you witness or experience aggressive panhandling, call 911 and provide a brief description of the individual and their location.

What is the City of Bellevue doing to address panhandling?

It is important to note that many studies have found that only a small percentage of homeless people panhandle and only a small percentage of those who panhandle are homeless. Those who panhandle target locations where there are a lot of pedestrians and motorists. As a result, the average daily income from panhandling varies by area—\$50-\$60 a day in “good areas of Seattle”.

The City of Bellevue continues to work with the community, other agency stakeholders (such as the Washington State Department of Transportation) and human service organizations to strategically address the complicated issues surrounding panhandling and homelessness.

For more information, visit BellevueWA.gov/panhandling

How can I help?

Many people give money to people with signs on the street because they want to help someone who appears to be struggling. However, offering cash provides only a very short-term intervention for one individual who may or may not be homeless. Instead of giving money, please consider donating your time or money to a local human services organization. Consider these options instead:

- ◆ Offer a care kit, food item, and/or water.
- ◆ Donating and/or volunteering with local organizations that focus on getting people off the street.

What to put in a care kit

- ◆ Socks
- ◆ Snacks & water
 - Granola bars, dried fruit or other light weight, non-perishable food.
- ◆ Hygiene items
 - Anti-bacterial lotion, moist wipes, small soaps and shampoos, lip balm, toothpaste, toothbrush, comb, razor, shaving cream and deodorant.
- ◆ Encouragement!
 - Take some time to learn their names and listen to their story.

- **Bellevue Human Services Fund**
 - 425-452-6452
 - Send your donation to:
P.O. Box 90012
Bellevue, WA 98009
- **Congregations for the Homeless**
 - 425-289-4044
 - volunteer@cfhomeless.org
- **The Sophia Way**
 - 425-463-6285, Ext. 102
 - volunteer@sophiaway.org
- **Friends of Youth**
 - 425-869-6490, Ext. 309
 - volunteer@friendsofyouth.org
- **Catholic Community Services**
 - 425-213-1963
 - ccskingcountyinfo@ccsww.org
- **Hopelink Emergency Services & Food Bank**
 - 425-869-6066
 - volunteerwithus@hopelink.org
- **Renewal Food Bank**
 - 425-736-8132
 - director@RenewalFoodBank.com
- **All Home**
 - allhome@allhomekc.org



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