



HOMELESSNESS IN CITY OF PARRAMATTA

City of Parramatta Local Government Area (LGA) is home to a number of people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Ensuring access to safe, suitable and affordable housing is a basic requirement for all individuals. Supporting people with lived experience of homelessness and working to minimise the risk of homelessness fosters a more socially sustainable city and improves the well-being of our entire community, including residents, businesses and visitors.

What causes homelessness?

Homelessness is a complex issue. There are numerous drivers, causes and triggers of homelessness or homelessness risk. Some factors are related to socio-economic or political factors, while others are specific to an individual or household's personal experience.

Factors and/or triggers contributing to homelessness include but are not limited to:

- Poverty or financial difficulty
- Unemployment and/or unstable income
- Insecurity of tenure
- A critical shortage of affordable housing
- Eligibility of some groups to access basic services
- Sexual abuse and assault
- Domestic and family violence
- Family breakdown
- Social isolation
- Mental illness
- Addiction such as gambling

What is Council's role in addressing homelessness?

Council is responsible for maintaining public amenity and promoting the use of public space for the whole community.

Our Public Space Liaison Officer is focused on working collaboratively and compassionately with the service sector to connect people experiencing homelessness to relevant supports, and to negotiate solutions where safety or public amenity may be impacted by homelessness.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



If I come into contact with a person sleeping rough, how should I act?

If you come into contact with a person who is sleeping rough, i.e. someone without conventional accommodation, be kind and respect their space and privacy. Give them a smile. Homelessness can be an isolating experience, so small gestures and friendly interactions can remind individuals that they are valued members of our community.

Why aren't people who are sleeping rough being moved on?

All people have a right to be in public places. People will not be harassed or moved on from public places unless there is a threat to public safety, their own personal safety, or if they are causing a disturbance that constitutes a breach of the peace.

Why do I see so many people sleeping rough in our local area?

Individuals who are sleeping rough often seek out a safe place with access to services. The presence of people sleeping rough suggests that people can access the support and connections they need in our local area and maintain their personal safety.

What can I do if I have a concern about the welfare of someone who may be sleeping rough?

Note: In cases of emergency please contact Ambulance Services on 000.

If you are concerned about an individual, you can notify Council's Customer Contact Centre on **(02) 9806 5050** or via email **council@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au**.

If your concern regards a specific person or space, please ensure that you have as much detail as possible regarding location etc. ready to share with Customer Contact Centre staff.

Our Public Space Liaison Officer will attend or contact an appropriate local service provider to respond.

What can I do if public amenity or safety is impacted by persons rough sleeping and/or their belongings?

Note: In cases of unlawful activity or immediate threats to public safety please contact Police Services on 000.

If you are concerned about a potential threat to public safety or amenity related to persons sleeping rough and/or their belongings, you can notify Council's Customer Contact Centre on **(02) 9806 5050** or via email **council@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au**.

If your concern regards a specific person or space, please ensure that you have as much detail as possible regarding location etc. ready to share with Customer Contact Centre staff.

Our Public Space Liaison Officer will attend or contact an appropriate local service provider to respond.

What can I do if I have a concern related to rough sleeping on private property?

If your concern relates to the use of private land, Council may have limited capacity to assist.

In the case of trespassing, we recommend contacting Police Services on 000 for emergencies or 131 444 (for non emergencies).

What homelessness resources does Council make available?

Council provides the community with access to resources regarding homelessness in our LGA:

- Council's 2019 Homelessness Policy, which identifies Council's approach to addressing homelessness in the City of Parramatta.
- Parramatta Assistance Card, which provides contact details for a range of relevant services, including emergency relief, legal information, medical services and accommodation.

Links to these documents can be found on Council's website: **cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/homelessness**