

## Homeless Campsite Calls

**Caller** - “I need to report illegal camping activity”

**Me** – “Ok, I can definitely help you file a report. Are these individuals living in vehicles or outdoors?”

**Caller** - “They are in tents/outdoors” (During COVID, the PBOT Vehicle Inspection Team is not taking “Abandoned Vehicle” reports as they were prior to COVID so if someone is living in a vehicle take a homeless campsite report as well.)

**Me** – “What is location of the campsite? Can you give me a nearby address?”

I’m going to pull that up on a map so I can pinpoint the location for the campsite.

While I’m doing that can you tell me how long they’ve been at that location? (I have a pen and paper and jot this all down as I find callers are less likely to escalate if I’m quicker with taking the report and the overall process is quicker if I finish the report after ending the call if necessary)

How many people are at the location? Any animals, children or people that appear medically fragile? (If there are no people put CLEAN UP ONLY in the first field prior to the Location information.)

How many tents/structures?

Have you or anyone you know had any interpersonal contact with the individuals? (This can give you the information you need for the middle/bottom section of the report)

Any other concerns about behavior such as intoxication/drug use or any illegal activities? (Again this will get you information for the middle/bottom section of the report)

Ok I have what I need to get this report to the staff that will respond and I will get this over to them right away.

I find most times this wraps up the call. If they want to know more about next steps I tell them...

**Me** – “This report goes to the Homelessness and Urban Camping Impact Reduction Program team who will respond to the location. They triage all of the reports (approximately a thousand each week) and send out a response. The initial response involves dispatching a crew to make contact with the campers, assess the site and cleanup what they can. This sometimes gets the campers to move. Once the initial crew reports back, the team determines a further response, prioritizing based on the conditions of the camp and its inhabitants and the impact on the surrounding community. A further response normally involves outreach with social services partners and posting the site if necessary. If this outreach is unsuccessful additional partner resources including law enforcement can be brought in to assist. At this time the HUCIRP Program has a significant backlog due to the fact that for the first 6 months of the COVID event they were unable to move campers due to guidance from Public Health Official so unfortunately I really can’t give you a timeframe for their response as they are busy responding to sites as quickly as they can and are under increased requirements for outreach and notification before moving sites.

Often times callers will indicate they have reported the site prior and nothing has happened. I then encourage them to reach out to the Homelessness and Urban Camping Impact Reduction Program team for more information about their plans for the particular location. I encourage contact by email at [reportpdx@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:reportpdx@portlandoregon.gov) explaining that they are out in the field a lot so difficult to reach them by phone but that they monitor and respond quickly to emails sent to this address. If they really prefer to talk to someone I give them Katie and Jonny’s phone numbers and transfer the call to one of them.

If they are upset about the City’s response to the Homeless Camping issue then I suggest they contact the Mayor’s Office as the Mayor is in the lead on establishing these policies for dealing with homeless camping in the City. Comment Line – 503-823-4127, Front Desk – 503-823-4120