



The Tri-Cities Homelessness Landscape

How many homeless persons are there in the Tri-Cities?

It is difficult to get an exact number of people who are homeless in the Tri-Cities at any given time, but there is no doubt that the number has increased over time.

In 2002, the total number of homeless persons enumerated in the Tri-Cities was 13. This number increased to 38 in 2005 and to 94 in 2008 during the formal homeless count in March. However, it is recognized that this is an undercount of the actual numbers. First, it is difficult to enumerate homeless persons who are “couch-surfing” with a friend or relative, and second it became obvious during the 2008 count (which was more rigorous than the previous counts) that some homeless persons will avoid being enumerated.

The outreach work performed by the Hope For Freedom Society provides a more accurate estimation of the number of homeless in the Tri-Cities as it is based on day-to-day contact with homeless persons. The most recent estimate provided by Hope For Freedom is 213 persons homeless in the Tri-Cities at the end of March 2008.

Are there currently any emergency shelter spaces in the Tri-Cities for homeless persons?

There are currently no permanent shelter spaces in the Tri-Cities.

Winter 2007/08 saw the inaugural opening of the Tri-Cities [Cold Wet Weather Mat Program](#) from Dec 1 – Mar 31. The program provided overnight shelter in one of five community churches that took turns hosting people who were homeless. A total of 135 individuals used the shelter service during the first season. During the 2008/09 season (Nov 1- Mar 31), 223 individuals used the Cold Wet Weather Mat Program. Over these 2 seasons, a total of 63 clients left the street to go into detoxification, a recovery facility or found their own housing. Funding has been granted to continue this program over the next 2 fall/winter seasons.

During periods of cold and snowy weather, an [Extreme Weather Response](#) shelter operates at Trinity United Church to augment the capacity of the Cold Wet Weather Mat Program.

What is being done to meet the needs of homeless persons in the Tri-Cities?

During the months of operation, the Cold Wet Weather Mat Program provides a warm place to sleep overnight, with an evening meal prior and a breakfast and bag lunch the following morning. Through contact with Hope For Freedom outreach workers, the program provides an opportunity for homeless persons to be connected with services and resources currently available in the Tri-Cities and beyond.

Planning is currently underway for a 24 hour/day, full service permanent emergency shelter and transitional housing facility on City-owned land at 3030 Gordon Ave. in Coquitlam. This facility will have 24 – 36 shelter beds and 25 transitional housing units.

Outreach Services

The [Hope For Freedom Society](#) (HFFS) operates a program of outreach to persons homeless or at risk of homelessness in the Tri-Cities under contract to BC Housing. Three outreach workers, including a psychiatric street nurse, seek out homeless persons where they live, establishing contact, developing rapport and connecting them with available resources and services when they are ready. HFFS also operates a resource centre with limited shower facilities, counselling and job search support. Contact: Lisa Batista at 604-830-1528.

The [SHARE Food Bank](#) depot at Trinity United Church, 2211 Prairie Ave, Port Coquitlam which operates Wednesdays from 12 – 2 PM provides assistance to homeless persons who attend the food bank. Contact: Joyce Lissimore, 604-612-0778 or lissimore@telus.net

Meal and Clothing Programs

Northside Foursquare Church - Grace campus
2606 Kingsway Avenue , Port Coquitlam
A hot meal is provided on Fridays, 6 – 7 PM to all in need.
Clothing, shoes and food is available on Tuesdays and Saturdays, 1 - 2:30 PM
Contact: Linda Rubidoux 604-942-7711 or lrubidoux@northsidechurch.ca

Trinity United Church
2211 Prairie Ave. Port Coquitlam
Soup Kitchen – on Wednesdays, 12 – 2 PM
Contact Bernie Poitras, 604-941-2408
Clothing, shoes and food is available on Wednesdays, 12 noon – 2 PM
Contact: Joyce Lissimore, 604-612-0778 or lissimore@telus.net

A Warm Place for Women
Kinsman Centre at Aggie Park (Shaughnessy and Lougheed) in Port Coquitlam.
A monthly social evening for women in need, hosted by Soroptimist International of the Tri-Cities.
Contact: Darlene McCann Darlene_mccann@telus.net or Chari Grant davidg1@uniserve.com.

Laundry and Shower

SHARE Food Bank - 2615 Clarke St. Port Moody (rear of building)
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM. Shower time restricted to 20 minutes. All toiletries and soap provided.
Contact: 604-931-2451

Volunteer Opportunities

If you are interested in volunteering your time with programs that are providing for the needs of homeless persons:

Visit www.tricityshomelessness.ca/howtohelp

Contact Community Volunteer Connections: www.volunteerconnections.net

Call the Society for Community Development 604.777.2394 or e-mail infoscd@telus.net or visit www.societyforcommunitydevelopment.com

For information on making a financial donation:

Visit www.tricityshomelessness.ca/howtohelp/Making+a+Financial+Donation

www.tricityshomelessness.ca

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