

Court requires Costa Mesa to create emergency shelter beds

- The City of Costa Mesa has been a county leader in finding creative solutions to help individuals experiencing homelessness, while at the same time appropriately conducting enforcement efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of residents, business owners and visitors.
- The City provides support and resources to aide Costa Mesa's homeless population through the city's Network for Homeless Solutions, which housed nearly 300 people in five years and reconnected more than 120 individuals with family and loved ones outside of Costa Mesa.
- And while the City and community of Costa Mesa is committed to doing its fair share, a federal court has now established a new expectation that each agency in this lawsuit (Anaheim, Orange, Costa Mesa, Santa Ana and the County of Orange) contributes emergency shelter beds.
- In the future, the court indicated that other and/or all cities in Orange County may be expected to do the same.
- To avoid further litigation, satisfy the court and allow Costa Mesa to enforce its laws, the city will need to provide emergency shelter beds equal to 60% of the last official count of unsheltered homeless in the city, which was 103 individuals. 60% of 103 equals 62 beds.
- Costa Mesa has already begun working on a solution and recently approved an application from College Hospital, a longtime and respected provider of mental health and medical treatment in the community, to create 12 new emergency beds at the hospital to treat those who are in

mental health crisis.

- With the availability of these beds, our law enforcement officers and firefighters will be able to quickly refer people they encounter on the streets who are a threat to themselves or the community to this emergency unit. This will result in fewer individuals with mental health issues on Costa Mesa streets, which will make the community safer.
- The availability of this emergency unit reduces the number of beds needed in Costa Mesa from 62 to 50.
- Finding 50 emergency shelter beds in Costa Mesa or by partnering with surrounding cities is going to take a tremendous amount of civic engagement and support by elected leaders and the greater Costa Mesa community as the city's goal will be to ensure any impacts are minimized. Costa Mesa city staff is in the early stages of working with the Network for Homeless Solutions and other non profits as it seeks to fulfill the court's request and balance that with the wider Costa Mesa community input and feedback.
- Costa Mesa continues to have its outreach team, more than 100 volunteers and over 50 social service providers and agencies make daily contact with 60 to 80 people each week (more than 3,000 a year) and assist park rangers, police officers and residents who encounter homeless individuals seeking assistance.
- The city partners with the Lighthouse Church of the Nazarene, which serves as a homeless service center and inclement weather shelter for extremely vulnerable individuals, as well as Trellis and The Crossing Church to provide a check-in center with 63 bins to safely store materials for homeless individuals and keep it out of public streets and parks.

- For more information on the city's efforts and to provide feedback contact Public Information Officer Tony Dodero at 714-754-5288 or via email at citynews@costamesaca.gov.