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Issue of the Week: Homelessness-Transiency
October 27, 2023

What is the issue?

Unhoused individuals often present physical, psychological and economic challenges for the business community. The problem is most acute among those that resist efforts for rehabilitation – transients – though it can be difficult to distinguish between populations without first addressing homelessness.

Why is it important to business?

The Chamber supports the concept of 'housing first', whereby scarce resources are focused upon the rapid re-housing of transitional and episodic individuals and families supplemented by supportive services that effectively address the triggering conditions. This approach not only seeks to benefit the person and/or family, but also minimize the significant functional and financial impacts to schools, police, fire, correctional system, and healthcare providers that too often serve as default service providers. The Chamber further supports initiatives to address underlying conditions, then prepare and train individuals to re-enter the work force. [Where We Stand 2023]

How does it affect business?

As a group, the business community is a significant source of tax and fee receipts utilized by default service providers. Receipts that could otherwise be directed toward basic services. Specific businesses and activity centers may be adversely and directly impacted by disruptive behavior and activities of individuals in need of personal assistance and housing.

Business's Role: Housing and medical care are the first steps to reclaiming the agency of homeless individuals. Establishing programs that allow these individuals opportunity and skills development to re-enter the workforce provides, not only, fiscal relief to local government, but a path to expanding the pool of job candidates.