

Dear Newport Beach City Council,

As high school students in Newport Beach, CA, we urge our city officials to end the criminalization of our unhoused neighbors. The criminalization of unhoused people is a widespread issue across the United States, where laws and policies disproportionately target individuals experiencing houselessness. And at least 71 are unsheltered and living on our streets in the city of Newport Beach according to the 2024 Homeless Count.

Criminalization of unhoused people is cruel. It punishes them for poverty and lacking housing. It results in incarceration and destruction of their property. It makes it harder for them to secure employment and housing. Channeling resources towards punitive measures is an economic burden for Newport Beach's taxpayers, is ineffective at tackling the core issue of houselessness, and diverts from real solutions, especially permanent housing.

Here in Newport Beach, laws like sections 10.14.020 and 10.08.010 of the Newport Beach Municipal Code (NBMC) directly target and criminalize unhoused people, making their survival even harder. We need legislation that protects, rather than punishes, members of our community. We demand the repeal of CMC sections 10.14.020 and 10.08.010.

We also urge you to support passage of state and federal laws to protect our unhoused neighbors from punitive local laws and policies that effectively criminalize their houselessness. If there are state and federal laws against criminalization, then surrounding cities can't aggressively criminalize and force their unhoused people into Newport Beach.

It's not just about decriminalizing houselessness—it's about humanizing our approach to this crisis and ensuring human rights are maintained regardless of housing status. It is a moral and societal obligation for the City of Newport Beach to implement constructive and compassionate solutions that focus on keeping people in their homes, preserving existing affordable housing, and helping already unhoused people get into housing this is permanent, stable, affordable, and meets all the criteria of their human right to housing.

Please, stand with us in demanding justice and fairness for our unhoused neighbors. We have signed this petition to show our support for the repeal of NBMC 10.14.020 and 10.08.010 and the passing of passing of state and federal laws prohibiting criminalization of unhouse people.

Sincerely,

_____	_____	_____
Print Name	Signature	Zip Code
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Codes:

**10.14.020 Camping in Prohibited Public Places.**

- A. No person shall camp in a prohibited public place.
- B. No person shall leave camp facilities in a prohibited public place.
- C. No person shall start, build, or use a fire in a prohibited public place for any purpose including, but not limited to, warming or cooking, unless authorized or permitted to do so by formal action of the City Council, the written consent of the City Manager, or the provisions of this Code.
- D. No person shall encamp in a prohibited public place, except in places designated for such purposes and with specific permission from the City to do so. Law enforcement officers shall not issue a criminal or administrative citation to enforce a violation of this subsection (D) if there is no available shelter.
- E. The City Council may, by resolution, establish one or more specified camping areas. Such camping areas, if any, may be located in prohibited public places, except that such camping areas shall not be located within public parks. (Ord. 2023-11 § 2, 2023)

**10.08.010 Sitting, Lying, or Sleeping or Storing, Using, or Maintaining or Placing Personal Property in the Public Rights-of-Way.**

A. No person shall obstruct a public right-of-way by sitting, lying, or sleeping, or by storing, using, maintaining, or placing personal property:

1. In a manner that obstructs or impedes passage, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended from time to time;
2. Within ten (10) feet of any operational or utilizable driveway or loading dock;
3. Within ten (10) feet of any fire hydrant, fire plug, or other Fire Department connection;
4. In a manner that obstructs or unreasonably interferes with the use of the public right-of-way for any activity for which the City has issued a permit;
5. Within ten (10) feet of a public restroom;
6. Within ten (10) feet of an operational and utilizable entrance or exit to any building, establishment, retail store, restaurant, office building or other place into which the public is invited; or
7. Within five hundred (500) feet of a college, school, day care center, or cancer treatment center.

B. No person shall obstruct any portion of any public right-of-way open to use by motor vehicles, or any portion of a bike lane, bike path, or other public right-of-way open to use by bicycles, by sitting, lying, or sleeping, or by storing, using, maintaining, or placing personal property, anywhere within the bike lane, bike path, or other public right-of-way open to use by bicycles.

**C. No person shall sit, lie, or sleep or place, store or leave unattended personal property on a public parkway or public median.** This section does not prohibit sitting on the seat of a bench placed upon a sidewalk with the approval of the City or on land not owned by the City. (Ord. 2023-11 § 1, 2023)

### **71 houseless people in Newport Beach**

Source: Point In Time Count <https://patch.com/california/newportbeach/homelessness-newport-beach-decline-report-says>

### **Newport Beach Police Department (NBPD)**

Past research/outreach to people

Corona Del Mar – Newport Beach

<https://ktla.com/news/local-news/newport-beach-cracks-down-on-homelessness-strengthen-anti-camping-law/#:~:text=In%202023%2C%20city%20officials%20passed,clothes%20or%20bathe%20and%20more.>

- Joe Stapleton, Newport Beach Mayor
- According to the [latest Orange County homeless count](#), there are 71 homeless people living in Newport Beach
  - o According to the Point in Time Count report, Newport Beach's numbers decreased from the previous count, from 96 individuals in 2022 to 71 in 2024
- In 2023, city officials passed a law that prohibited a variety of activities related to homelessness including banning overnight camping on public property when shelter beds were available, sleeping in public bathrooms, sidewalks or public areas, using public water fountains or sinks to clean clothes or bathe and more.
- The amendments would also increase the number of homeless liaison police officers from one to four.

City Council Website – What action they are taking regarding homelessness

<https://www.newportbeachca.gov/trending/community-issues/homelessness/city-action>

Newport Beach – Addressing Homelessness through Coordinated Approach

<https://www.newportbeachca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/71656/637874358938770000>

- Newport Beach partners with City Net, a social service agency that specializes in homeless outreach and service coordination. City Net employees are on duty in Newport Beach five days a week, and available on-call to meet with individuals experiencing homelessness, develop relationships and assess their needs
- City Net website: <https://www.citynet.org/>

**CALL:**

## Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter

- Newport seems to be pushing lots of their houseless population into this shelter.
- I am doing research on local laws that criminalize houselessness, do you know of any in your area?
- Do you know why Newport beach and Costa mesa collaborated on building this shelter, and why Newport didn't build one for themselves
- I left a phone message at Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter (714) 836-7188 x211

## CONTACT:

Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento

- What do they know about Newport beach specifically
- (714) 834-3220
- [Vicente.Sarmiento@ocgov.com](mailto:Vicente.Sarmiento@ocgov.com)

## CONTACT:

Eve Garrow, a policy analyst at the ACLU who tracks homelessness legislation throughout Southern California

- I left her a phone message.
  - o Emailed Noah (he cited Eve in his article <https://voiceofoc.org/2024/07/what-does-the-future-of-homeless-camping-enforcement-in-orange-county-look-like/>)
- Connected with Eve on Twitter

Dear Noah,

My name is Caroline Andrews, and I work with Human Rights Watch as a Student Task Force Assistant. The Student Task Force is a youth leadership-training program that unites students and educators around the country and empowers them to advocate for critical human rights issues. Currently, we are implementing a campaign focused on protecting housing insecure youth, inspired by a recent [Human Rights Watch report](#) on houselessness in Los Angeles.

I recently read your article '*What Does the Future of Homeless Camping Enforcement In Orange County Look Like?*', and was wondering if you could help get me in touch with Eve Garrow. As part of our campaign, we are developing petitions to demand an end to the sweeps of unhoused communities, and I believe Eve's expertise would be invaluable to our work.

If you are able to provide me with Eve's contact information, I would greatly appreciate it, as I would like to reach out to discuss her research further.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to hearing from you

Looking for 2 main things:

- Data on homelessness

- If there is local legislation that directly criminalizes homelessness

List of mayors:

[https://hrworg.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/teams/STF/\\_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BA4F1C69A-D77F-4648-ADA5-031728485682%7D&file=List%20of%20Mayors.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true](https://hrworg.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/teams/STF/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BA4F1C69A-D77F-4648-ADA5-031728485682%7D&file=List%20of%20Mayors.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true)