

Homelessness

The League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara supports government and community programs and policies to assist individuals and families experiencing homelessness or about to become homeless in meeting their basic human needs.

Position History:

1986, Updated June 2019

***Support** of a government-funded county-wide collaborative.* The magnitude and diversity of the needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness require education and active participation at every level of government along with the private sector in Santa Barbara County.

***Support** of appropriate solutions with adequate financing, to respond to both short-term and long-term needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness.* Permanent supportive housing should be the goal for those who are homeless in Santa Barbara County.

Strategies that should be developed to achieve that goal include:

“Housing First” policy that provides, without prerequisites, temporary, transitional or other initial housing for persons who are homeless.

Provision of supportive services, including effective case management, advocacy, and treatment for mental health and substance abuse as needed to help those who are homeless succeed in obtaining and maintaining housing.

A county-wide system with clearly identified goals and measurable results to optimize cooperation, data sharing, and resource development among governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations with the overarching goal to end existing homelessness and prevent future homelessness.

Repeal by local jurisdictions of policies, practices, regulations, and laws that criminalize, penalize, or permit the harassment of homeless persons for engaging in necessary life activities in public spaces (i.e., sleeping, standing, etc.).

Provision of facilities to meet the needs of those who are homeless for personal hygiene, storage, and trash removal, as well as safe spaces for tents, cars, or recreational vehicles used for sleeping.

Emphasis on affordable housing, including supportive housing and subsidized rentals.

Establishment of written standards for homeless services that utilize evidence-based interventions. (2019)

Issues:

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