

Fox Cities Housing Coalition Criminalization Policy

The Fox Cities Housing Coalition is committed to ensuring all community members have decent, safe and affordable housing.

In cases where community members are struggling to obtain housing and experiencing an episode of homelessness, the Fox Cities Housing Coalition will advocate to ensure those community members are not being persecuted because of their current situation.

The Fox Cities Housing Coalition Criminalization of Homelessness policy is in effect to maintain compliance with Wisconsin Balance of State Continuum of Care requirements. As such the Wisconsin Balance of State Continuum of Care addresses the requirement for a local policy as, “to ensure agencies receiving funding (state and/or federal) to end homelessness are not promoting criminalizing homelessness policy priorities, ordinances, regulations, rules or laws.” Furthermore, “Agencies and staff acting on behalf of an agency shall not support the criminalization of homelessness, including but not limited to the prohibitions on: camping in public, sleeping in public, begging in public, loitering, loafing, and vagrancy, sitting or lying down in public, sleeping in a vehicle, or food sharing.”

The Fox Cities Housing Coalition and associated members agree to educate outside agencies on the struggles of homelessness rather than promote criminalization of the above prohibitions. In helping others learn the struggles one faces if they are experiencing an episode of homelessness, the coalition and member agencies will also educate on the additional barriers that occur when someone is cited for one of the above prohibitions.

Additionally, the Fox Cities Housing Coalition and its associated members will invite outside agencies to coalition meetings to further communicate the importance of utilizing a community approach when addressing homelessness. Inclusivity at coalition meetings allows for an additional space to educate agencies on the available resources to those experiencing homelessness and creative solution to avoid criminalizing homelessness.