



Legislation Text

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RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE COMMUNITY'S SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS.

BY COUNCILORS SIPRESS AND RUSS:

WHEREAS, out of a belief in human dignity and human rights, the Duluth city council holds that no person should suffer unnecessarily from cold or hunger, be deprived of shelter or the basic rights incident to shelter or be subject to unfair discrimination based on his or her housing status; and

WHEREAS, the Duluth city council believes that no person's rights, privileges, or access to public services should be denied or abridged solely because of his or her housing status; and

WHEREAS, Duluth prides itself on the willingness of its citizens to actively care for one another in times of need, through both formal service agencies and informal acts of kindness and solidarity; and

WHEREAS, public policies that have the effect of criminalizing homelessness are inconsistent with Duluth's community values.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Duluth city council maintains that every person, regardless of housing status, should be able to:

- (a) Use, rest and move freely in public spaces, including but not limited to public sidewalks, public parks, public land, public transportation, and public buildings;
- (b) Rest, sleep, and protect oneself from the elements in a discrete and non-obstructive manner on public land if no appropriate shelter options exist;
- (c) Rest, sleep, or use for the purposes of shelter a motor vehicle provided that it is legally parked on public property;
- (d) Access public restrooms when needed and access facilities necessary to keep oneself clean;
- (e) Receive equal treatment by all municipal agencies;
- (f) Be free from discrimination in employment or housing due to his or her lack of permanent mailing address, or his or her mailing address being that of a shelter or social service provider;
- (g) Receive medical care without prejudice including mental health care;
- (h) Be protected against disclosure of his or her personal records without appropriate legal authority;
- (i) Have a reasonable expectation of privacy in the personal property within his or her dwelling to the same extent a person has in a permanent residence;
- (j) Have the choice to refuse emergency shelter; and
- (k) Perform voluntary acts of compassionate assistance including but not limited to the right to give food or water to others, and the right to eat, share, and accept food and water in public spaces.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Duluth city council commits itself to working cooperatively with the Duluth city administration and with community stakeholders, including individuals experiencing homelessness and organizations that provide services to those experiencing homelessness, to identify, develop, and implement public policies to ensure that the above listed may be exercised by all residents of Duluth, regardless of housing status.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: This resolution articulates the city council's support for individuals experiencing homelessness and their right to equal treatment under the law.