



PANHANDLERS

What You Need to Know.

Have Compassion and Understanding

Individuals who are on the streets asking for money every day are not bad people – most are folks with incredible challenges who need help. Recent studies have shown people with mental illness and physical disabilities engage in the highest percentage of panhandling. Start from a place of compassion when thinking about or interacting with those on the streets.

Be Kind

Many times the most important thing you can give someone panhandling on the streets is a kind disposition and a smile. Look them in the eyes and acknowledge them as a human being.

Giving Money to Panhandlers

The first rule is to NOT give money. We strongly suggest donations be made to one of the many organizations that are working to house people or provide other services (see **Community Resources Available** below). You may direct donations to the agencies that are on the front lines such as the United Way, St. Vincent DePaul, The Agape House, Brian's Angels, Meals for Neighbors, and Salvation Army. Panhandlers can be arrested if they are aggressive or are on private property and won't leave when asked to. People are encouraged to call the police non-emergency number at 860-584-3011 to report aggressive panhandlers. It is important for people and business owners to be willing to make a statement and an official complaint. Businesses should also post their property for "No Loitering" or "No Trespassing" and be willing to prosecute. The Police Department also has a letter template on their website for businesses to use as well, giving the police authority to enforce the law on their property.

Community Resources Available

Many panhandlers may not be interested in these options, but your knowledge of them will empower you to direct people to sources that can help provide their most basic needs.

If you know people who are experiencing homelessness:

City of Bristol Community Services – 51 High Street | 860-314-4690, x5111

The United Way Help Line – 211

The Agape House – 43 School Street | 860-261-5733

St. Vincent DePaul – 19 Jacobs Street | 860-589-9098

The Salvation Army – 19 Stearns Street | 860-583-4651

Meals for Neighbors at Zion Lutheran Church – 27 Judd Street | 860-589-7744

CMHA Mobile Crisis Hotline – 860-224-3331

For those who are experiencing substance misuse:

C.O.B.R.A. – City of Bristol Recovery Alliance – A community partnership aimed at reducing barriers to treatment for those wishing to recover from substance misuse. This alliance affords Bristol police officers the opportunity, with their discretion, to offer treatment instead of arrest for minor issues like trespassing or possession. Community members who would like treatment for their substance misuse can also walk into the Bristol Police Department or Bristol Health's Emergency Department and request help at any time. **For more information on counseling and recovery options, contact Lisa Coates, LCSW at 860-583-5858 or lcoates@bristolhospital.org.**

Community Resources – Continued

Local Substance Recovery Resources:

NAR-ANON Bridge Community Church | (860) 302-4894 | 43 School Street | Thurs: 7:30pm

Bristol Hospital Counseling Center | (860) 583-5858 | 420 North Main Street

CT Community for Addiction Recovery (CCAR) | CCAR.us | 1-866-205-9770 or 860-244-CCAR (2227)

Wheeler Family Health & Wellness Center | (888) 793-3500 | 10 North Main Street

Free opioid education and family support group. Wed: 6-7pm Medication-assisted treatment, recovery supports
Outpatient addiction treatment, complete health care

Community Health Center | (860) 585-5000 | 395 North Main Street

Root Center for Advanced Recovery | (860) 589-6433 | 1098 Farmington Avenue

Outpatient Medication Assisted Treatment for Opioid Dependence Methadone Maintenance. Intakes 6:30-9:30am
Need picture ID, Social Security Card, Proof of Mail Intensive Outpatient Groups for MAT Patients and any
Substance Abuse issue. Intakes 10:30am.

Greater Hartford Harm Reduction Coalition, Inc. | (860) 250-4146 | 1229 Albany Avenue, Hartford, CT

Weekly support groups, health screenings, counseling and navigation, overdose prevention trainings, Naloxone
distribution, harm reduction counseling, care coordination, syringe exchange (including safe disposal) and education
about drug treatment.

United Way | Dial 2-1-1 for social services assistance.



City of Bristol

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www.bristolct.gov | bristolallheart.com