

PANHANDLING: GIVE CHANGE THAT LASTS

1 What is panhandling?

Panhandling is broadly understood as asking for money in a public space. Panhandling may look like someone holding up a sign asking for help or approaching someone in a public space to ask for money or other support.

Many people assume that panhandlers are homeless and that people who are homeless panhandle. The reality is that panhandling is more complex than this. There are many reasons why people may ask others for money.

LexEndHomelessness is a network of community organizations and human service providers working together to tackle these reasons.

2 How should I handle being asked for spare change?

If you choose to give someone money, what that money gets spent on is no longer in your control. Giving spare change rarely helps an individual's long-term situation. Giving cash directly to a person does not connect them to counseling, housing, food, or other resources needed for stability.

3 Consider these options instead:

1. Offer water, non-perishable food items, socks, hygiene items, or bus passes.
2. Download and pass out our Lexington Resource card. The card includes numbers for our Street Outreach teams who are the frontline for helping people who are unsheltered.
3. Volunteer or donate to a local organization that works to get people stabilized.
4. Donate to the LexEndHomelessness Fund. LexEnd Homelessness distributes funds based on identified priorities and needs in the community. Money donated to the LexEndHomelessness fund can also be earmarked to be given to a specific cause or organization.

If you encounter someone interested in being connected with services, contact the street outreach team at Community Action Council **(859-233-4600)**. Street outreach is the primary mechanism for connecting unsheltered persons with housing and other resources.

If you see or experience aggressive panhandling, contact local law enforcement at **(859) 258-3600**. Medical emergencies should be directed to 911.

To learn more ways you can help, view our online [Advocacy Tips](#), join the [Continuum of Care](#), or follow us on social media [@lexendhomelessness](#).