

LEGAL INFORMATION

- It is not illegal to be unsheltered; it is a right.
- There is no ordinance concerning panhandling or “flying a sign.”
- No one can block entry or exit routes from a business.
- At the owner’s request, officers will ask a person to leave the property. If they refuse, they may be charged with trespassing.
- If someone is drinking alcohol on public property, they can be charged with an open container violation.
- “Disorderly Conduct” is a misdemeanor. Officers will relocate people but are unlikely to arrest them.

LOCAL HELPING AGENCIES

<b>Good Samaritan Ministries</b> Street outreach & assistance, housing navigation 406-442-0780	<b>PureView Health Center</b> Medical, dental, behavior health and case management 406-457-0000
<b>Our Place</b> Peer support groups, daytime programs 406-389-0223	<b>Family Promise</b> Family housing, prevention, diversion 406-465-9467
<b>God’s Love Shelter</b> Meals, housing for men and women/children 406-442-7000	<b>Helena Food Share</b> Regular groceries and emergency food packs 406-443-3663
<b>Friendship Center</b> Domestic violence and sexual assault, shelter 406-442-6800	<b>Salvation Army</b> Addiction services food pantry, housing 406-442-8244

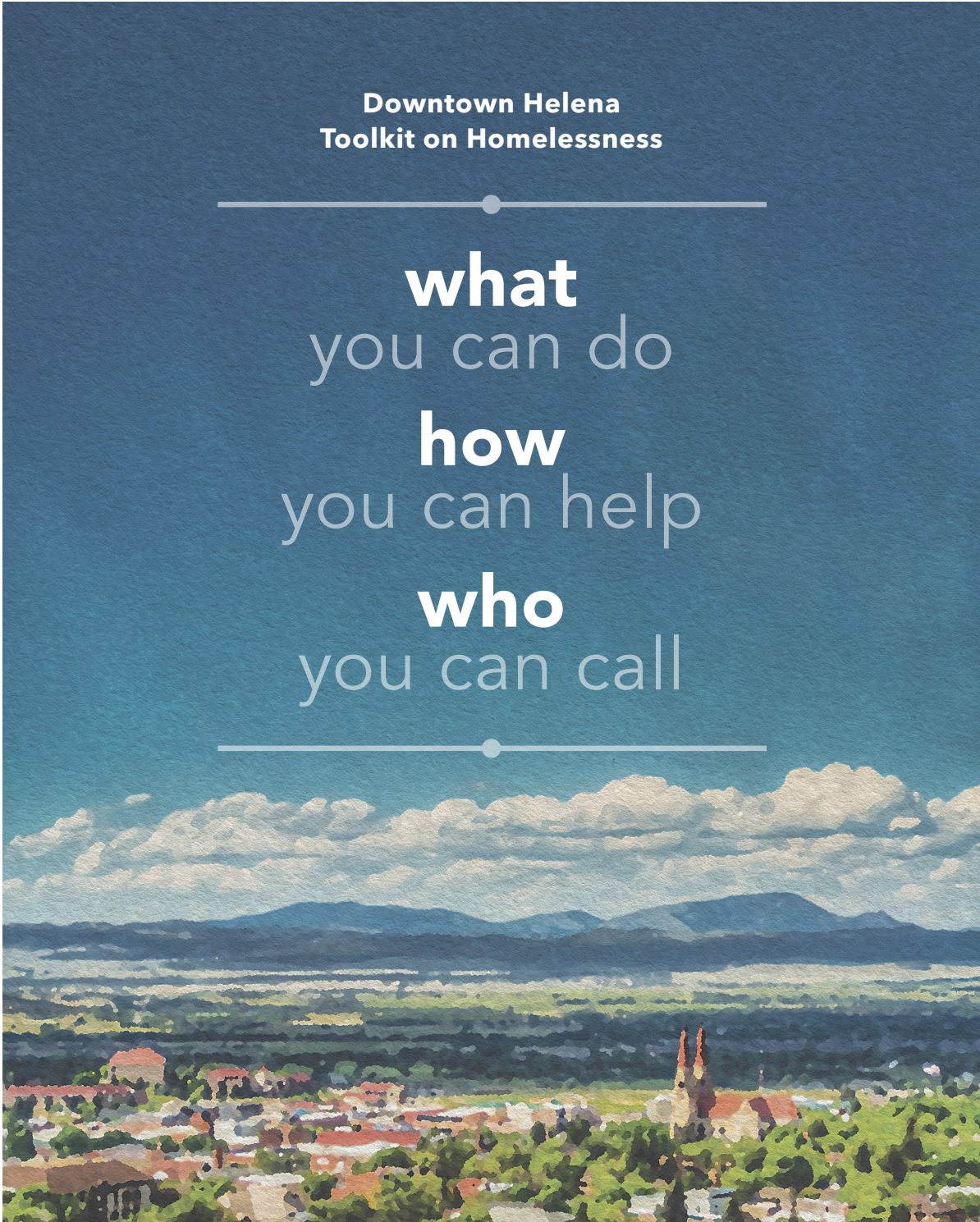
<b>Aware</b> Mental health care 406-449-3120	<b>Helena Indian Alliance</b> Case management, medical and addiction services 406-449-5796
<b>Volunteers of America</b> Veteran housing and support 406-996-1212	<b>Many Rivers Whole Health</b> Mental health care, case management 406-443-7151

FOR MORE INFO

Contact Jeff Buscher at United Way: 406-442-4360, jeff@unitedwaylca.org



On the front: digital enhancement from original photo by Kevin League





HELENA CARES - ALWAYS TREAT OUR NEIGHBORS WITH RESPECT!

Be courteous, prepared, and informed:

- Get to know your unsheltered neighbors by name.
- Talk with them even when they are not presenting a problem.
- Communicate with neighboring businesses, agencies, and police.
- Install security lights and cameras and secure electrical outlets.
- Know the helping agencies and consider supporting them.

What NOT to do:

- Do not offer food or money.
- Do not allow overnight stays.
- Do not allow storage of shopping carts or belongings on your property.
- Do not escalate a situation.  
De-escalate with kindness.

**Tip:** Set a bathroom use policy and apply it consistently, whether a person appears to be homeless or not.

Shower to Empower

Showers are provided by St. Paul’s United Methodist Church, Tuesdays, 9 am – noon.  
Contact through United Way: 406-442-4360.



If you are struggling with a person,

call Good Samaritan Ministries staff, 24/7:

- Mark Nay, Street Outreach: 406-558-9946
- Ara Babcock, Assistant Coordinator: 406-880-5895
- Theresa Ortega (backup), Executive Director: 406-410-1172

PROBLEM LEVEL	If a person:	You should:	Call?
ZERO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appears to be homeless or looks dirty or smells bad.</li><li>• Comes into your store and doesn’t buy anything.</li><li>• Hangs around outside but isn’t in the way.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Engage them.</li><li>• Treat them like any customer.</li><li>• If they ask, and if you can accommodate their request, allow them to use the restroom. Other restrooms: library, city/county, portable at Constitution Park.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• None, unless you need help.</li></ul>
ONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stays in your store or on your property longer than you want them to.</li><li>• Exhibits signs of mental illness but is nondisruptive and nonthreatening.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Treat them like any other customer.</li><li>• Ask their name if you don’t know it.</li><li>• Politely ask them to leave, using empathetic language.</li><li>• Suggest somewhere they can go instead.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good Samaritan staff: Mark: <b>406-558-9946</b> Ara: <b>406-880-5895</b></li></ul>
TWO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Refuses to leave or is nonresponsive.</li><li>• Is somewhat disruptive, but non-threatening.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tell them you want to help and you are going to call someone.</li><li>• Ask if there is someone they want you to call.</li><li>• Tell them who you are going to call.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Call the person they want you to call, or</li><li>• Good Samaritan staff: Mark: <b>406-558-9946</b> Ara: <b>406-880-5895</b></li></ul>
THREE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Refuses to leave, and you can’t find help other than law enforcement.</li><li>• Blocks your doorway or the sidewalk.</li><li>• Exhibits disruptive or aggressive signs of mental illness.</li><li>• Appears agitated but not physically threatening.</li><li>• Urinates or defecates in public.</li><li>• Drinks alcohol or uses other illegal drugs in public.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Remain kind and calm.</li><li>• Tell them you would rather not, but you are going to call the police.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Helena Police Non-Emergency <b>406-457-8866, Option 1</b></li></ul>
FOUR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Breaks the law.</li><li>• Directly threatens or makes you scared for your physical safety.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to de-escalate, using a calm voice.</li><li>• Disengage if necessary.</li><li>• Get yourself in a safe place.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>911</b></li></ul>