

Park and Recreation Professionals and Our Role Addressing Homelessness

About Our Speakers

- Kevin M. Kirwin is currently the Director of Parks and Recreation Department with the City of Miami. Prior to joining the City of Miami, he various positions with the Miami-Dade County, Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department. Kevin served with the United States Marine Corps in both the Enlisted ranks and as an Officer of Marines. He earned a Master's degree in Public Administration from Florida International University and a Bachelor's degree in History from the University of Delaware. He serves as a board member with several agencies. Kevin is a Certified Park and Recreation Executive and Professional. When Kevin is not working you will find him sailing, cycling or practicing Bikram Yoga.
- Phil Thornburg is the Director of the City of Fort Lauderdale Parks and Recreation Department and has been with Fort Lauderdale for 18 years. Prior to Fort Lauderdale worked for City of Kansas City, Missouri Parks and Recreation for 14 years. Phil graduated from Kansas State University with a degree in Parks and Rec Admin and received his Masters in Public Administration from University of Missouri.



Learning Objectives

- **Identify current challenges parks face with homelessness**
- **Define at risk population and characteristics and resources available to prevent homelessness**
- **Discuss staff engagement tactics to raise awareness, tolerance, and increase access to homeless programs/services**
- **Listen to Strategies and Tactics that YOU are using to address homelessness on Parks**

Pottinger Settlement Agreement and Revised Agreement

- Sexual Predators – no protection under Pottinger
- In addition to beds, allow mats (greater than three inches thick)
- Expand shelter territory from “city and one mile outside city” to “county-wide” (with homeless person’s consent)
- Imminent threat of physical injury exception – if observed, police officer must warn homeless person to stop, and may arrest if there is a refusal, regardless of available shelter

NO LONGER PROTECTED UNDER POTTINGER



NO - Fires in parks



NO - 100% Obstructing sidewalks (no lying perpendicular or requiring others to walk onto the street) After warning



NO - Littering (within 300 feet of a trash receptacle)



NO - Temporary structures in parks



NO - Lewd conduct



NO - Public nudity

- o Done intentionally and in plain view – immediately arrestable
- o Never permitted for a call of nature, if there is an open public restroom (within a ¼ mile - 1,320 feet) – immediately arrestable



Why Us?

Why Parks Professionals

- To Improve the Public's Perception of Our Parks
- We Know People
- Relevance – Be Part of the Solution
- Fight Intolerance and Apathy
- To be Humane

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Current Challenges Park Face with Homelessness

- Illicit Drug/Alcohol Use
- Fires and Vandalism
- Public Health Issues
- Community Nuisance
- Lewd Conduct
- Cause Park Obstruction
- Erect Hazardous Temporary Structures
- Damage and Destroy Natural Areas/Archeological Sites



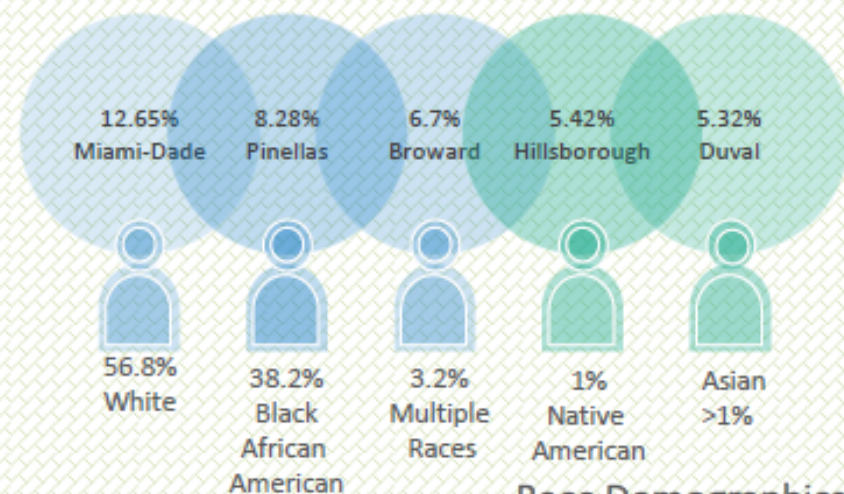
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State of Florida Homeless Characteristics | Florida Council on Homelessness

Total Homelessness (Population)



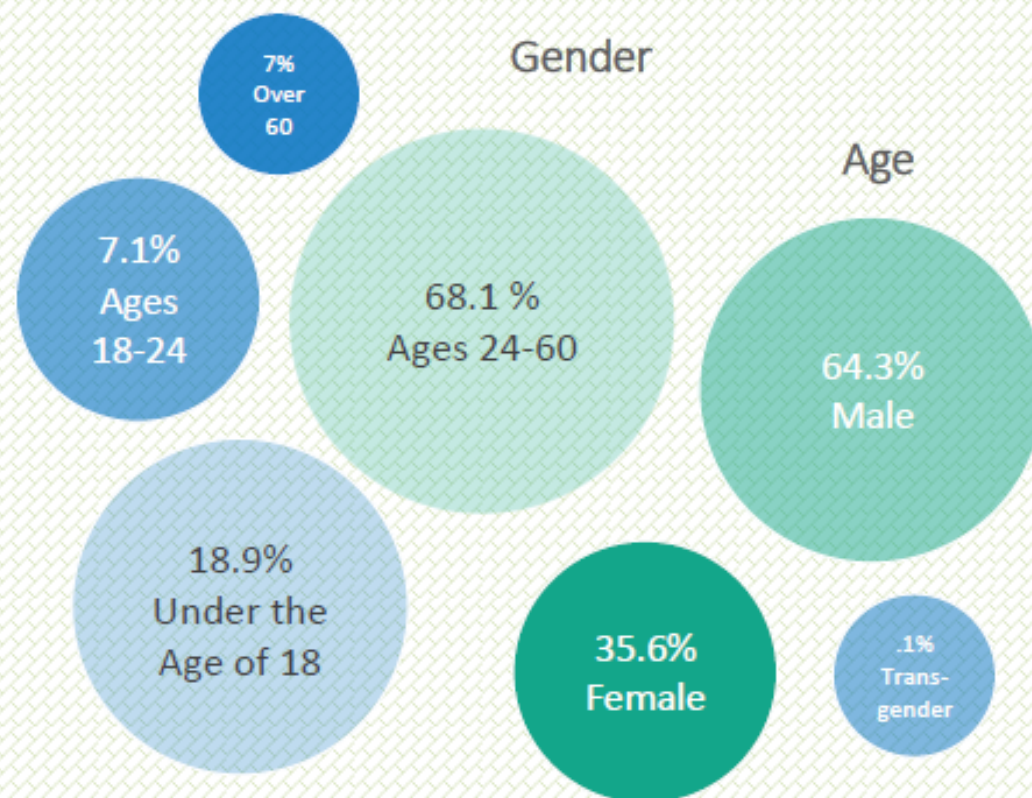
Homelessness Breakdown by top 5 Counties (Population)



Race Demographics

Point in Time (PIT) count – HUD requires Continuums of Care (CoCs) to count the number of people experiencing homelessness in the geographic area that they serve through the Point in Time (PIT) count on a given day. 27 local Continuum of Care planning agencies have reported the makeup of the homeless population in Florida.

Gender



Cause of Homelessness

Type of Cause	2016 Number	2016 Percentage	2015 Percentage
Employment/Financial	8,393	44.5%	41.5%
Medical Disability	4,111	21.8%	17.5%
Family Problems	3,306	17.5%	19.6%
Forced to Relocate	2,714	14.5%	19.6%
Recent Immigration	109	0.6%	1%
Natural Disaster	212	1.1%	0.8%

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Family and Youth Service Bureau Study (National) Reasons for Homelessness in Youth



51.2%

Asked to leave by a parent or caregiver



24.7%

Unable to find a job



23.8%

Physically abused or beaten or caretaker
drug and alcohol abuse



29.5%

Return home

On Average

23.4
Months
Homeless

First become
Homeless at
age
15

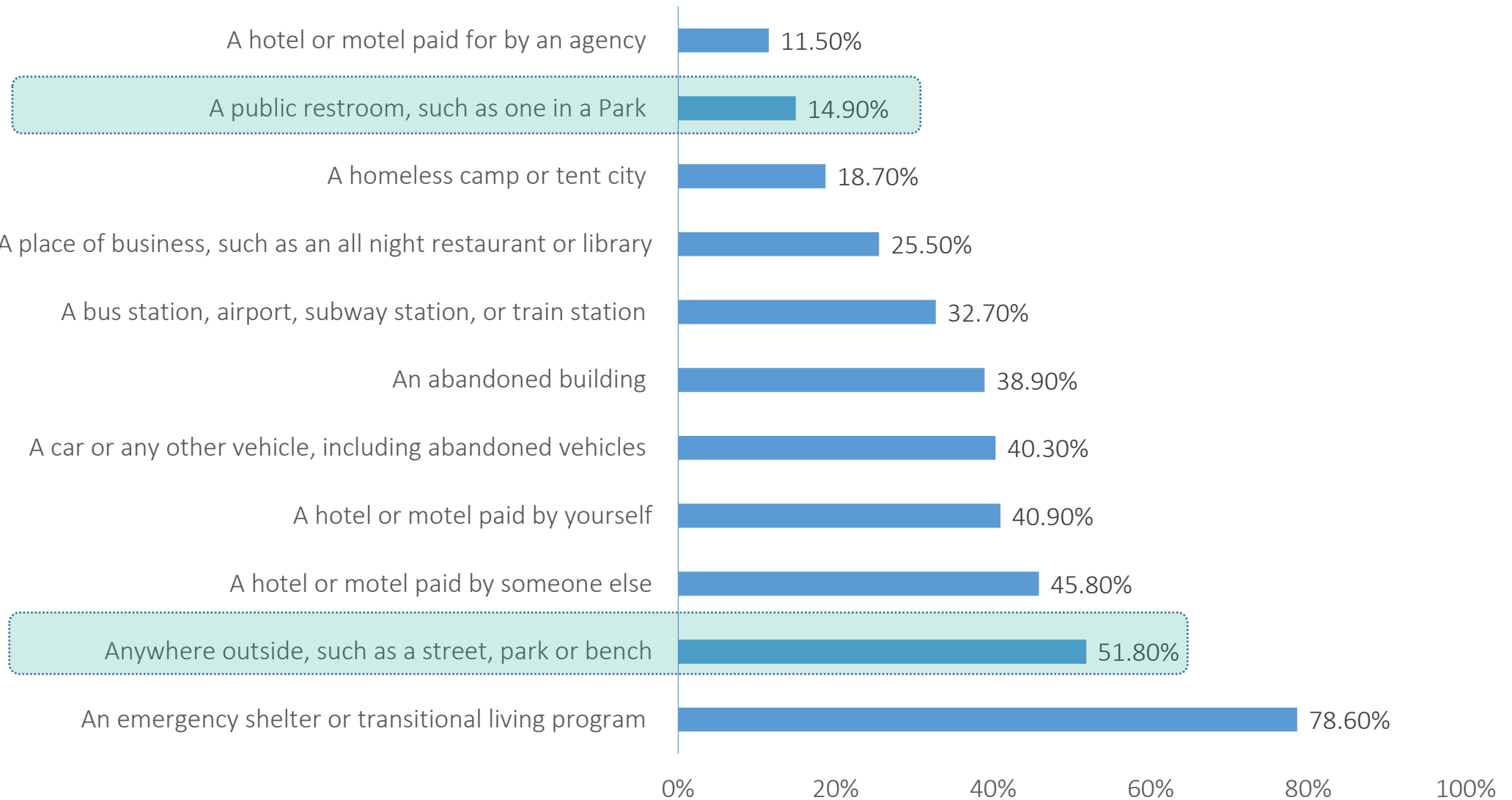
Street Outreach Program Study administered by FYSB | April 2016.

Participants in the study were sampled from 11 different sites: Austin, TX; Boston, MA; Chicago, IL; Minneapolis, MN; New York City, NY; Omaha, NE; Port St. Lucie, FL; San Diego, CA; Seattle, WA; Tucson, AZ; and Washington, DC. The study aimed to understand homelessness in youth, in total, 656 interviews were conducted.



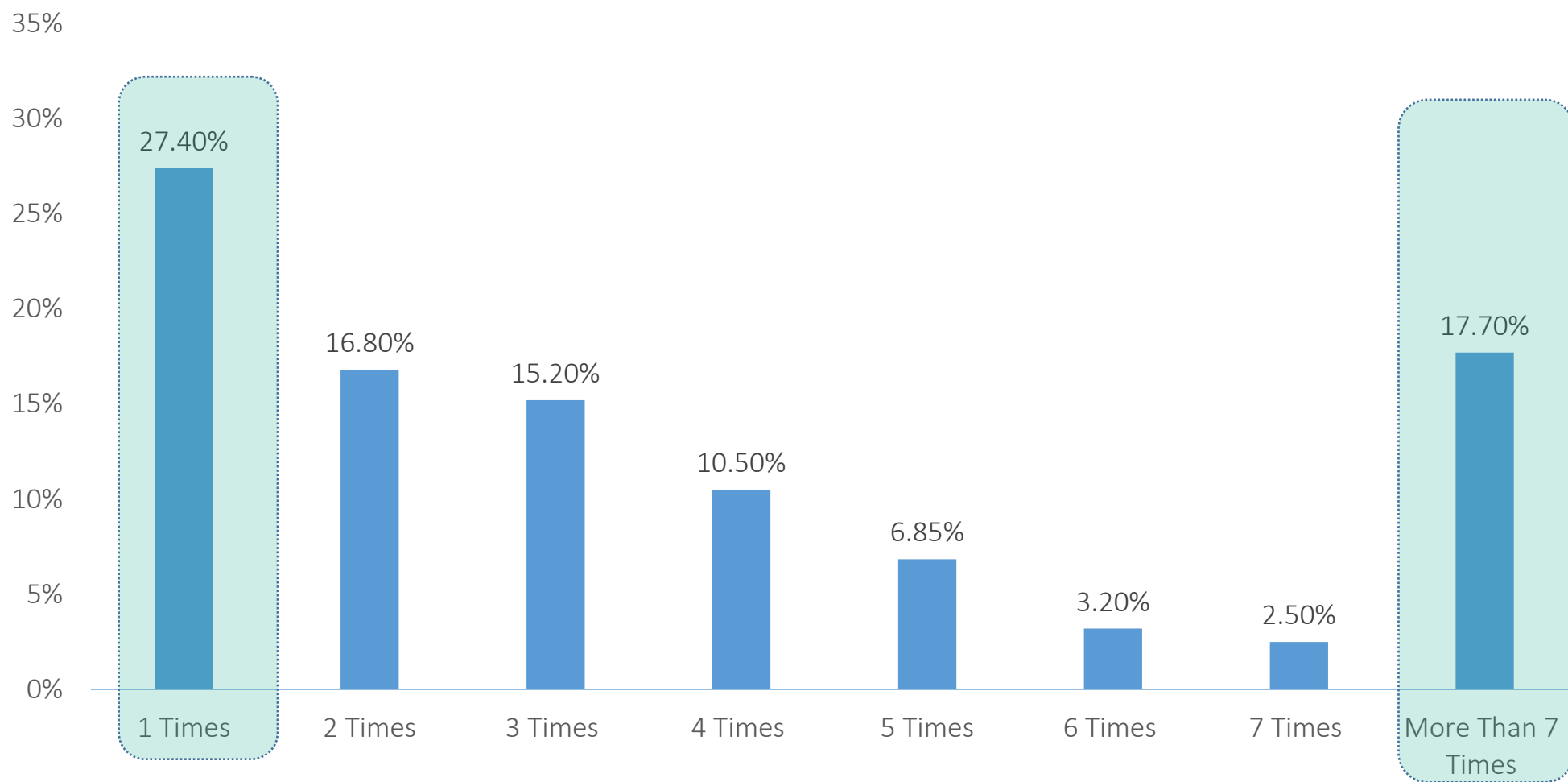
Youth Homelessness | Connection to Parks

% of participants who have slept the following locations:





Number of Times Youth Become Homeless



How Do We Become Part of The Solution

- Zero Tolerance for Apathy and Acceptance from our Folks
- Shift Our Culture to Action and Compassion
- Collaborate with Partners – Social Services Agencies, Police, Health Care Providers, Veterans Agencies
- Develop Policies and Procedures to Show Staff How to Engage Our Homeless
- Train Staff the Whys and Hows of Homelessness – from the Professionals
- Position Our Agencies as a Relevant Part of the Solution



How do Park Professionals Become Part of the Solution

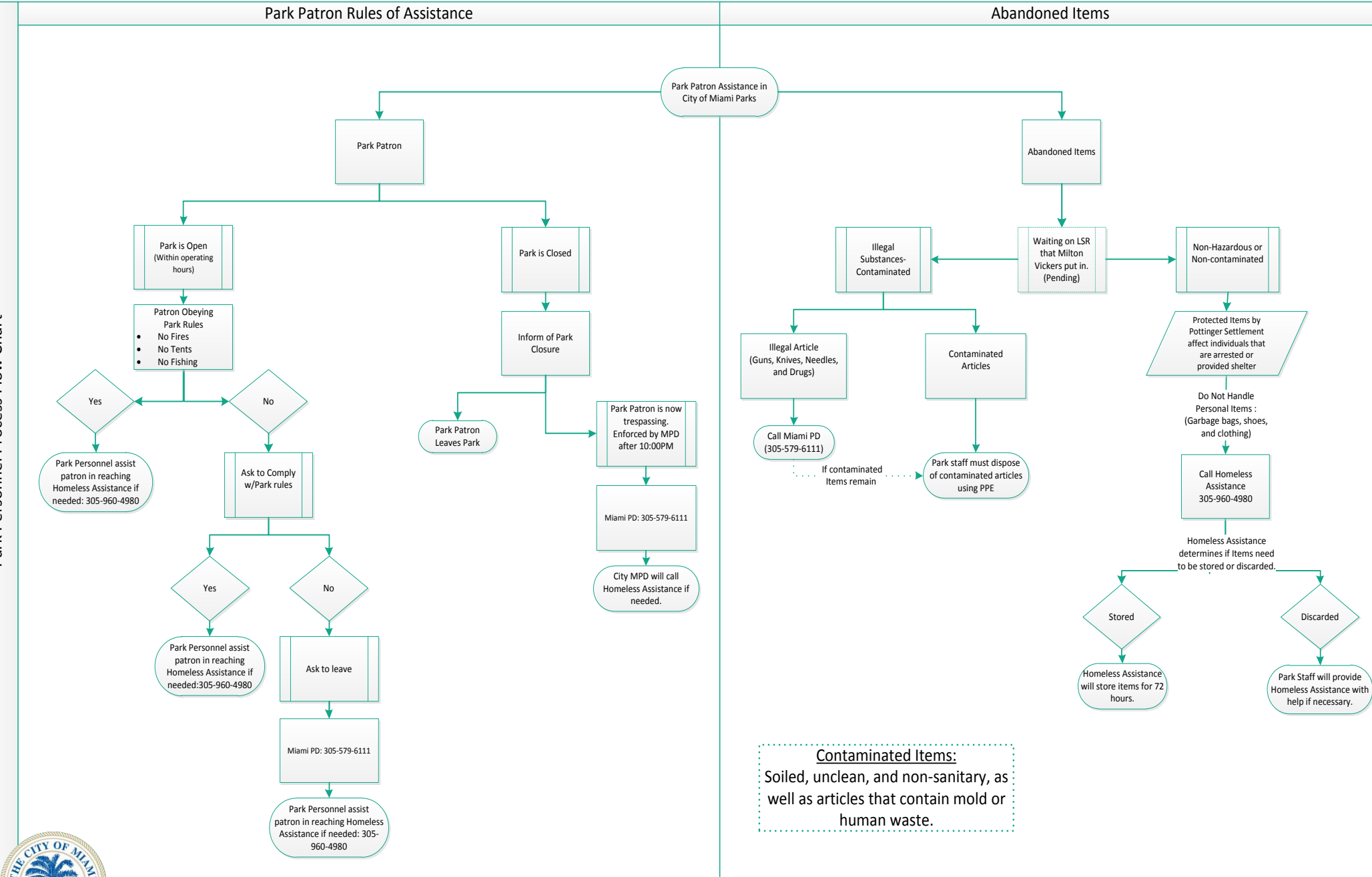




Engagement Tactics - Homeless Assistance Process Flowchart

*Remember: People need and deserve help, though they may not always want it.

Park Personnel Process Flow Chart





What is Your Agency Doing?

