



The Voice Indianapolis

August 2015

SPONSORED BY: THE CREATIVE CHANGE PROJECT

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome!

By: Us

Welcome to the Voice, a newsletter by the homeless voices of our community.

Welcome back to another issue of "The Voice." Like always, if you have missed any of our pervious issues click the following link to our website and find them there (www.creativechangeproject.com). On the Home page of our website you will see a designated box for the newsletters, click, and you are there.

The purpose of this newsletter is to raise awareness and educate the general public on real homeless issues and the truth about living homeless.

Our hope is that we can persuade readers to facilitate or attend a Cultural Competency Presentation which will profoundly change the way you view homelessness.

We hope you enjoy our work!

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IN THE NEWS!

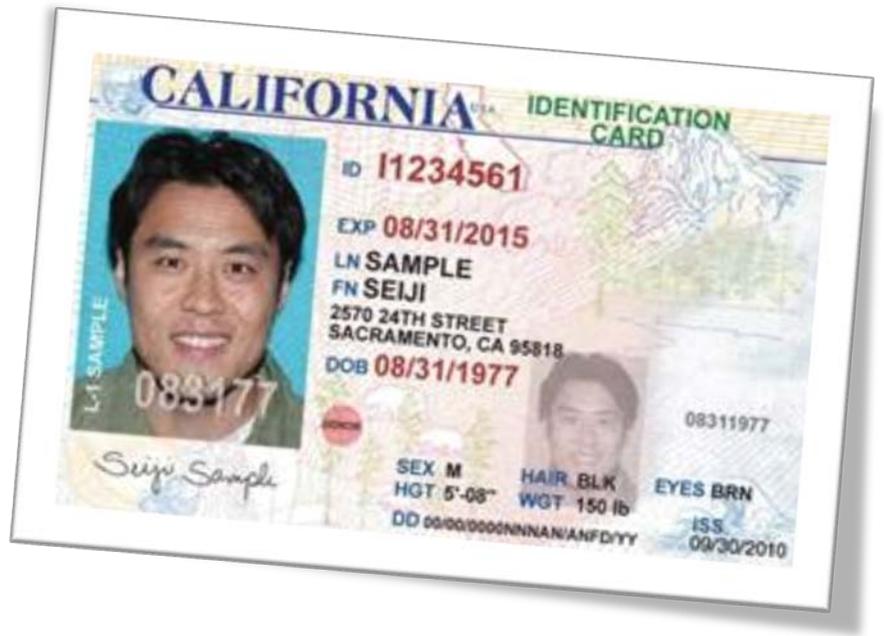
New California Law gives free IDs to Homeless people so they can access Housing, School.....

Huffington Post
By: Eleanor Goldberg
July 22, 2015

The thing that often stands in the way of a homeless person and housing is just a state-issued identification. But a new law in California is making sure that its residents are no longer stranded on the streets because of that issue.

In order for a homeless person to do something as simple as apply for a job, enroll in public school or access homeless shelters and food stamps, they need to provide official identification. But those IDs often get lost or stolen and homeless people lack the funds and resources to obtain new driver's licenses or birth certificates.

"If you're living on the street it's very difficult to keep ahold and keep your documents safe," Janet Kelly, a senior attorney at the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii, told Hawaii News Now.



But a new California law, which went into effect this month, is making the process of obtaining identification much easier by requiring state recorders to hand them out for free, the Sacramento Bee reported.

David Gomez, who has been homeless for five months, felt particularly heartened by the new law.

Gomez has three kids and each birth certificate would've previously cost her \$28. The DMV charges \$26 for a new ID card and \$8 for certain people living on low-income salaries.

Those were expenses Gomez simply couldn't afford before on her monthly \$785 public assistance checks, according to the Sacramento Bee.

Now, that she can get those IDs for free, she'll be able to transition her children from a local charity school to public school and move out from friends' houses and into their own place.

The bill was inspired by Kelly Thomas, a homeless man who lived on the streets of Fullerton, California, and had schizophrenia, according to KCET. Thomas was beaten by three police officers in 2011 and died five days later.

"We are making sure they have IDs to access the services to get back on feet -- either social services or mental health services," Assembly-member Sharon Quirk-Silva told KCET. "This is a simple step. Let's just get these IDs in their hands."

California's government officials have stepped in where nonprofits often have to pick up the slack in other states.

In Central Florida, for example, IDignity -- a group formed by five churches -- helps homeless people navigate the bureaucratic process of obtaining identification.

Since 2008, the organization has held monthly events to help clients in need and typically serves about 225 people each time. The demand is so great that IDignity often has to turn people away, according to the group's website.

In Hawaii, Waikiki Health and Legal Aid Society typically pitch in to help homeless people gather the documents they need so that they can move on with their lives.

But while homeless shelters, and other programs, require identification so that they can perform background checks and other safety measures, advocates say that the system is flawed and inherently preclusive.

"We've created a system that keeps the barriers up for people. It's not an easy system to access," Joy Rucker, director for community services at Waikiki Health, told Hawaii

News Now. "If people don't have a place to live and all their stuff organized -- it's a nightmare. It's just a nightmare."



IN THE NEWS





**2340 E. 10th Street, Indianapolis, IN
46201 (317) 957-2200**

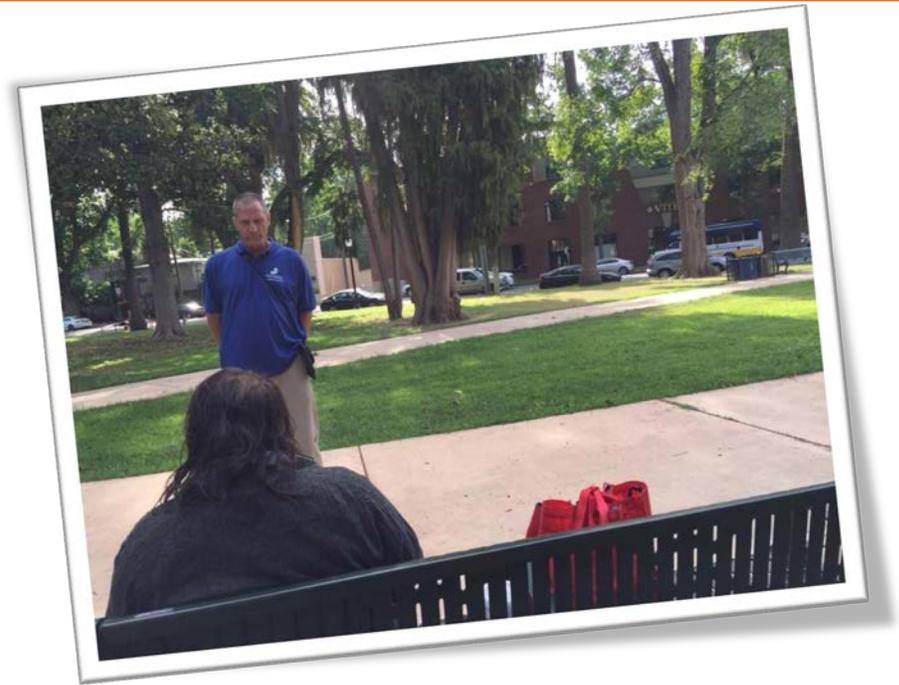


*A Very Special
"Thank You!"*

Since 1968, HealthNet has improved the health status of Indianapolis' inner-city neighborhoods by making quality health services accessible to everyone. From its beginnings in a converted bank building staffed by one physician, HealthNet has grown to a citywide organization with 19 locations and 620 employees. It is Indiana's largest Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC).

Through its network of eight community-based, comprehensive primary care health centers, six dental clinics, one OB/GYN care center, a pediatric/adolescent care center, a maternal-fetal medicine center, nine school-based clinics, and support services, HealthNet annually provides affordable health care to more than 58,801 individuals - most of whom live at or below the federal poverty level. In 2013, the centers accounted for over 259,841 patient visits.

For more information follow the link below:
<http://www.indyhealthnet.org/>



Did you know?

By: Erika D. Smith

HOMELESS FACTS

80%

Eighty percent (80%) of our homeless population suffer from mental health issues.

60%

Sixty percent (60%) of the homeless population have jobs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact us for a Cultural Competence Presentation.



Did you know that “Outreach Navigators” placed on the streets, track and then connect homeless people with the services they need?

He looked and smelled like the kind of guy most people would want to avoid.

Slumped over on a bench at Marshall Park, sleeping soundly as the sun was just starting to creep across the Wednesday sky, he clearly was high. Or maybe just drunk. His clothes tattered and dirty. His possessions in two red cloth bags beside him.

For those of us with homes and stable lives, it might be easy to write off this guy as less than human. To walk by and pretend he doesn't exist.

But not David Elliott.

He's one of about a dozen homeless services “navigators” who, as part of a larger outreach effort led by Sacramento Steps Forward, spend five days a week talking to people just like that guy on the bench. You'll see them in their blue shirts.

The navigators exist as a bridge, identifying and then connecting homeless people with the services they desperately need but often

don't get. The program isn't new, but it has grown recently to cover not only downtown and midtown, but the rest of the city and unincorporated county.

Permanent housing is, of course, the goal. But the navigators start with the immediate barriers, such as ensuring homeless people have ID cards and access to mental health care. A Neighborhood Connect meeting Saturday at Trinity Cathedral Church is a one-stop shop for that.

Along the way, the navigators build relationships.

They learn who has a substance abuse problem, who just got out of jail or a hospital. They figure out where people scavenge for recycling to make a few bucks. And they defuse conflicts, gently breaking up rowdy camps before the cops do, and talking down residents frustrated with homeless people relieving themselves in their neighborhoods.

It's a tough job. But it's a service that's sorely needed in neighborhoods where tensions between the



homeless and residents and business owners often run high.

It's good that we have people like Elliott, who on Wednesday patiently roused Tom.

"Hi," he said, waiting for a few grunts to pass. "How long have you been homeless?"

It took a few minutes, but Tom opened up. Then, surprisingly, he wouldn't shut up, prattling on for 45 minutes about everything from the cheapest burgers to the kindness of strangers.

"Does \$1 and a cigarette make a difference?" Tom said. "Yes, it does."

"Saying hello can make a difference," Elliott agreed.

A while later, as we walked away, Elliott fished more fliers out of his pocket for the Neighborhood Connect meeting. Tom took one, although he didn't seem excited about showing up.

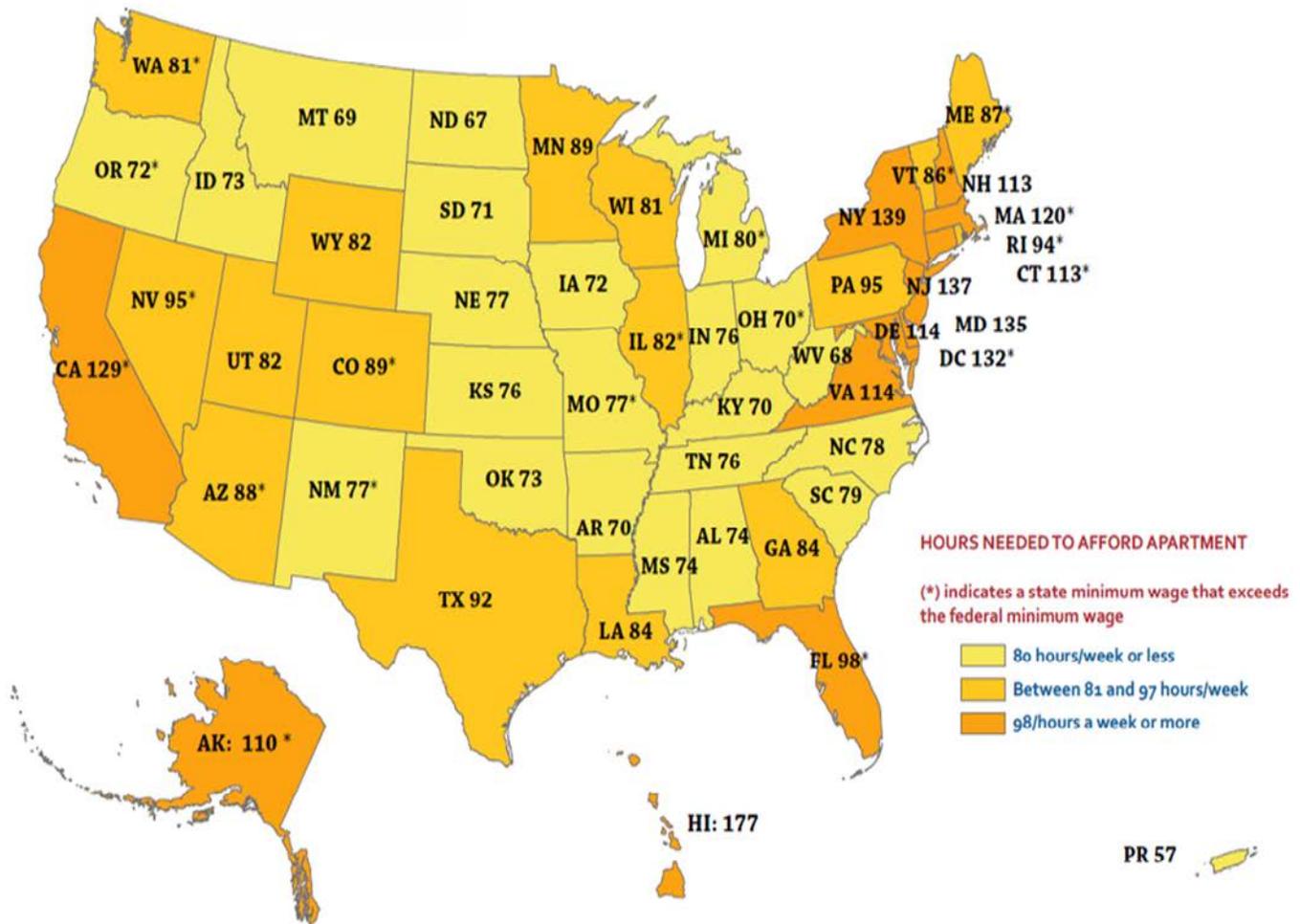
"Sometimes all people need is an ear," the navigator said. "And sometimes that's all we can do."

CHARTING THE WAY:

Source: Below

2013 HOURS AT MINIMUM WAGE NEEDED TO AFFORD RENT

NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION // OUT OF REACH 2013



Homeless Experience – Alumni

By: Sara Flores

My Homeless Experience

I never knew how much I appreciated walls until I was without them for a weekend. My walls, to be exact. I never thought about the increased vulnerability that comes with not having a place to call your own. I never encountered the dilemma of not knowing when my next meal would come, until I had to depend on people outside of my family to provide for my nourishment. When people ask me “how was your homeless experience ‘thing’?” I reply: interesting. To be more descriptive, it was uncomfortable yet easy, distressing yet liberating, shocking yet incredibly boring at the same time.

I do not say uncomfortable for the obvious reasons you may be assuming (lack of amenities such as water, AC, or a bed) but because I was surrounded by individuals who did not have these things to go home to on Sunday.

It was distressing to be visited by a total of six men between 2:20am-3:35am Sunday morning. One, clearly homeless; 5, most likely shelter-inhabiting (their claim to a home being questionable, depending on one’s definition) due to their appearance and lack of stuff in their possession. They came in succession between that short period of time. Perhaps to check out the new white girls in the alleyway? This is the most innocent of possible motives, and I will leave the rest to your imagination.

It was shocking to hear of boys, girls, and women who must engage in survival sex once they find themselves homeless, in order to be “safe” on the streets. It was shocking to hear Maurice say that he has never met a woman who is homeless, who has not been either mentally challenged or suffered from some form of substance abuse. It was shocking to hear that this was not his experience with homeless men.

On the flipside, it was easy. I had no responsibilities that weekend. I did not make any decisions, did not have to choose a place to sleep, eat, or go to the restroom. I did not have to worry about my agenda for the day, who I needed to call, text back, or meet up with. I did not have to go to work, or class, or to the grocery store. All I had to do was follow the leader.

It was liberating because I did not feel restrained by any social norms, or assumptions of how a “nice, professional, educated young lady” should act. I climbed a tree for the first time, with a 12-year old (who was the best weekend companion, I might add). I wore absolutely no makeup, not did I tend to my hair or attire. I ate too many carbs, and enjoyed every bite. I people watched unashamedly, searching for their thoughts of this girl, me, communicated by some gesture or altered tone of voice as they passed me by.



Finally, it was boring. As a person who is always on the go (did I mention my agenda?), sitting around, walking around, and passing time is not something I am good at. It was challenging to keep the weekend in perspective, and accept that not every waking moment needs to be spent doing something productive (and that word itself is subjective, relative, and contextual). Beyond that, it was important for me to experience this sensation of boredom. It must be the same that many individuals who are truly homeless must experience at times when they are stuck in limbo, dependent on an external force, not working in their favor, in order to get things done (transportation, weather, money, the system).

As I deliberated on how to properly reflect on my experience, I could not come up with anything that perfectly described my weekend. There are no such words. Even if there were, these hypothetical words would only pertain to my experience. Would I do this again? Probably. Did I feel safe? Safer than during many other points of my life. Would I recommend this to others? Absolutely.

If you glean nothing else from these paragraphs, please remember this. I can give you a glimpse of my own picture, but I cannot give you your own. This picture is worth your while to obtain, and I encourage you to go create it—if for no other reason than to tell others of the uncomfortable yet easy, distressing yet liberating, shocking yet incredibly boring weekend you spent “Walking a Mile in My Shoes.”

Sponsored by: The Creative Change Project



**NEED
HEALTH
INSURANCE?**

**WEDNESDAY'S @
CENTRAL LIBRARY
10:30a – 1:30p**

**NO Income?
NO Address?
NO JOB?**

NO PROBLEM

FREE COVERAGE

Are you homeless? We can help!

WHERE: Central Library (Lobby Area 2nd floor)

WHEN: Wednesday's

TIME: 10:30a – 1:30p

No Health Insurance?

HIP2.0

HEALTHY INDIANA PLAN™
HEALTH COVERAGE • PEACE OF MIND

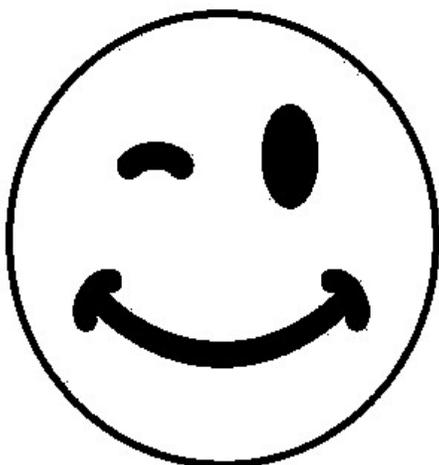
A Plan You Can Afford!

Homeless Graphic Art



Check out our Facebook page to see more: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Creative-Change-Project/303593586466151>

a bit of Humor....





how to help the
HOMELESS



What do you really know about Homelessness?



PRESENTATION

September 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			



SATURDAY



September 26, 2015

BridgeWay Community Church

12945 Parkside Drive

Fishers, IN 46038



<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cultural-competency-presentation-tickets-17084718854>



**Child Care
AVAILABLE**



The **HOMELESS** EXPERIENCE



DATE: Friday, September 11, 2015

TIME: 4pm Friday (Begin) – 2pm Sunday (End)

LOCATION: Downtown Indianapolis



Have you ever wondered what it's really like to be homeless and live out on the streets? Come see firsthand the situations that homeless individuals face daily by "Walking a Mile in my Shoes." This new program will allow you to:

1. Engage with the homeless of our community
2. Meet those who serve the homeless community
3. Acquire knowledge regarding the growing crisis of homelessness and
4. Become aware of the public's attitudes towards people who are homeless

Space is limited, so visit our website to sign up for this rare experience. A general itinerary is listed on our website for preview.
<http://indy26aug.wix.com/indyhbr#!form/c6rr>



About Camps: Homeless encampments often reflect the lack of adequate housing or shelter in the community. Research indicates that in addition to the simple lack of available beds, the shelter system often does not meet the needs of homeless individuals, especially over the longer term. For example, inability to accommodate couples; requiring families to separate; safety concerns; restrictions on storing belongings; and opening and closing times that conflict with work schedules can deter individuals and families from shelters. In some instances, tent cities can offer individuals and family’s autonomy, community, security, and privacy in places where shelters have not been able to create such environments. (nlchp)`

The
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CreativeChangeProject.com



The Creative Change Project

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