



Foundation Communities Guide to Assisting Unhoused/Low-income Clients

We sent out a survey to the Prosper Center staff that measured familiarity with local resources, confidence in assisting unhoused people, and ways to make FC more accessible. [Click here to view the results](#)

Table of Contents:

[Camping Ban](#)

[Access to Necessities](#)

[Foundation Communities Housing](#)

[Housing for Unhoused Clients](#)

[Emergency Shelter](#)

[Employment/Jobs](#)

[Identification/Document Retrieval](#)

[Transportation](#)

[Accessible Email Address](#)

[Wifi & Phone Access](#)

[Mailing Address](#)

[De-Escalation](#)

[SNAP Benefits - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance\(Food Stamps\)](#)

[MAP – \(Medical Access Program\)](#)

Online Resource Info:

[Austin Resource Guide](#) by Street Forum Mutual Aid

[Find Help](#)

[ConnectATX](#)

[211 Texas](#)

Services offered by Foundation Communities

- Benefits assistance and ability to change password on Yourtexasbenefits.com
- Free tax prep by IRS-certified preparers
- College prep and assistance
- Health coverage assistance and connection with HAAM
- Housing application for FC complexes (waitlist opens and closes)
- Financial coaching to help with credit and planning
- Various assistance offered to FC residents: food pantries, ESL classes, childcare, rent and utility assistance once/12 months, after-school summer learning programs, rent reporting, case management, fitness classes, career help, attorney access

Camping Ban

In May of 2021, Austin voters supported a proposition to criminalize homelessness in parts of Central and Downtown Austin through a ban on sitting, lying, and camping. The proposition passed with 58% support. Since then, the city has frequently swept encampments in and around Central Austin, especially near Downtown and around UT's campus.

The city's website states that *"The HEAL Initiative (Housing-focused Encampment Assistance Link) is intended to compassionately close the most unsafe encampments in our city by offering people experiencing homelessness a direct pathway to crisis shelter and opportunities to attain stable housing."* However, there are not enough shelter beds available even with this initiative. Additionally, coordinated entry to long-term housing can take over 1 year (and there is no promise of housing).

A violation of the camping ban can result in a class C misdemeanor up to \$500 in fines. Sweeps of encampments are common and force the removal of belongings and people from an area. Many people's tents and necessities are thrown away into large garbage containers. Sweeps can displace unhoused people and pets who do not have other "safe" options for sleeping and make it more difficult to maintain a path towards employment/housing.

Access to Necessities

People who are unhoused or face housing insecurity (such as folks who sleep on couches of friends/family), confront a variety of accessibility barriers. It is a misconception that if an individual does X or Y, they will gain access to a certain necessity like food or shelter. Systems exist to help people, but they often enforce impossible requirements that become major barriers.

Here are some of the necessities that are not always accessible for people who are unhoused/housing insecure:

- **Food and water** (Food pantries under the Central TX Food Bank often limit how many times people can get assistance monthly. People cannot always store these foods if they lack refrigeration. Food can be accessed at some social service hubs, but people must arrive on time, have transportation, and there can be mobility barriers for folks with disabilities.)
- **Safe shelter** (Shelter should be safe from elements and people. There is limited space in Austin shelters which usually open doors to specific populations ie. single men, women with children, youth, asylum seekers, etc. Not everyone will fit in a category of people that a shelter serves, and beds are always limited. For those who use tents as a shelter, there is a risk of city sweeps, which can mean the removal of all belongings from a campsite and the loss of shelter.)
- **Electricity and outlets** (People are often kicked out of businesses if they don't pay, so they cannot use outlets to charge devices. Public outlets near encampments are sometimes even turned off to prevent usage. Mobile power banks can be expensive.)
- **Transportation** (Even with the new CapMetro free fare program for unhoused people, [info in guide](#), buses do not go to everywhere people need to go for necessities or employment. Public transit can be inaccessible for folks with disabilities and Metro Access is not always easy to qualify for.)
- **Storage and refrigeration** (Theft and loss of items is common when people lack storage, which leads to the loss of vital documents and an inability to qualify for certain assistance) (Refrigeration is needed to keep food fresh and medicine like insulin at the right temperature)
- **Movement** (Leaving one's tent or belongings often puts them at a high risk of theft. This prevents people from leaving during the day to obtain goods or complete tasks. People lose their bags with vital documents and other necessities on the daily. They lose their phone needed to reach case workers and family. Also, they can lose their "reserved" spot for camping, which could be crucial to keep if it was a safer spot or if there is bad weather and they stay under a stoop.)

- **Medical Care** (While some people have MAP – the Medical Access Program – or are covered by Medicaid, many people struggle with access to proper medical care. Health issues go unchecked during periods of homelessness and barriers to medical care. Narcan (overdose reversal) and other harm reduction supplies are not provided very widely in the city.)
- **Technology** (Many people get devices stolen or cannot afford to pay for phone service. The government offered free service and a phone through the Affordable Connectivity Program, but it recently ended due to funding in February. Libraries have computers but hours are not 24/7. Not everyone has computer skills or a place to learn them. Email access can be permanently lost if someone's phone and number are lost. Communication with friends/family/case workers becomes limited due to these factors.)
- **Mailing address** (There are several social service hubs in Austin that provide their mailing room as an address for any unhoused person. These hubs are widely used on benefits applications and IDs. Transportation back to these addresses can be a barrier and people often can't get their HHSC letters in time to meet deadlines.)
- **Identification & Vital Document Retrieval** (Without ID, SSN card, etc., people often cannot qualify to work. Obtaining vital documents can be easier with access to technology and photos of lost items, but many unhoused people lack this access. It can be a very confusing process to get replacements, and few social service hubs offer hands-on assistance for this. There is almost always a risk of losing ID or getting it stolen with other belongings.)
- **Case Management** (There is a misconception that case managers can be assigned to just anyone, but non-profits with case management rarely have this capacity. Case managers may be reserved for someone facing a mental health crisis, someone seeking asylum, a survivor of abuse, unhoused youth, etc. Beyond more specific groups of people, usually someone cannot just get a case manager unless they are pulled for a housing placement.)
- **Hygiene, Showers, Bathrooms** (Austin lacks public showers and only a few social service hubs offer showering stations on certain days/hours. Public bathrooms are around the city but not always where people stay, and sometimes the city locks the bathrooms. People are often kicked out of businesses if they don't pay and cannot use those bathrooms. Hygiene supplies may be accessed at various service hubs but often in small travel sizes. People who menstruate cannot always get sanitary products.)
- **Sleep** (Folks who sleep outside or in an unsafe place often lack sufficient sleep. They may face extreme physical discomfort when sleeping on the ground and may confront bad weather. Loud sounds in the city and the fear of people who could be around their place of sleeping can make it impossible to sleep through

the night. Hunger and lack of food/water can have the same impact. Many people have chronic pain and discomfort related to their health that makes sleeping in uncomfortable places even less possible.)

- **Clothing** (Free clothing that meets the needs and sizes of people can be difficult to find in Austin. Winter gear like coats and blankets are crucial but not easy to get. Clothing can easily get wet or dirty when living outside. Campsite sweeps by the city can mean the loss of someone's clothing and belongings.)
-

Foundation Communities Housing

Applying for FC Housing

[Click for FC Housing page](#)

1. Select “ [View Our Austin Communities](#)” or “ [View Our North Texas Communities](#)”
2. For Family apartments, contact each property for availability.
3. For Studios for Single Adults, check out our [Waitlist Information Page](#).
4. For general housing information, contact FC's Housing Navigator at 512-610-4010
For additional assistance, you may call 512-447-2026.

Requirements:

[Click here for tenant requirements](#)

Application fee: \$40

- Denials/rejection of applicants will be sent within 7 days of completion. Denied applicants must wait one year before reapplying.

Tenant must:

- Be 18 years or older (unless Federal/State regulations provide for a variance)
- SSN or ITIN, or FC will conduct a criminal history search
- Have a current rental history that shows prompt rental payment (no more than three late payments in one year) and no unpaid sums
- Tenants with any convictions may be considered depending on level of conviction and years since their conviction (see link above)

Income:

- Section 8 vouchers are accepted
- Family support cannot exceed 25% of the total household income to qualify and must be verified.
- Co-signers will not be accepted.

- Monthly income cannot exceed the maximum allowable income as determined by Federal and governmental regulation in effect for a particular community.

If you are NOT receiving any regular government assistance to help pay your rent, then you must have earned income, disability income, and/or retirement income of at least the following amounts:

- Non Section 8 Applicant(s): Gross monthly income must be at least 2.5 times the monthly rental amount
- Applicants that receive disability income, retirement income, SSI or SSDI: The household must meet at least 2X the monthly rental amount.

If you are receiving regular government assistance to help pay your rent, such as Section 8, then you must have verifiable income of at least the following amounts:

- Applicants(s) that have earned income: Must have verifiable household income that is at least \$800 for 1 person household; \$900 per month for a 2 person household; \$1,000 for 3 or more person household.
- Applicants that receive disability income, retirement income, SSI or SSDI: Must have verifiable income greater than \$500 that need not be earned.

Housing for Unhoused Clients

Coordinated Entry System (CE)

The Coordinated Entry System network of dozens of organizations across Austin and Travis County who coordinate services to create a community-wide Homelessness Response System (HRS). There are several components to the system, such as the Coordinated Housing Assessment, outreach, health collaborations, and referrals to local programs.

Coordinated Housing Assessment

What is it?

The first step to getting permanent/temporary housing is a Coordinated Housing Assessment. This is a 21-question assessment that gauges clients' vulnerability to decide who to prioritize for housing as it becomes available. The assessment assigns a numerical score to people based on how they answer each question. After completion, it often takes anywhere from six months to over a year to be called with a housing opportunity depending on one's score. This assessment allows people to apply for 20 housing programs within CE.

Housing and assistance is not guaranteed by completing the assessment, but it is a necessary first step. People experiencing homelessness can retake the assessment

every 6 months to report changes. If their contact information changes before then, it is crucial to tell a case worker or an organization that provides assessments.

This number is not always representative of individuals' true vulnerability even if it aims to be this. Encourage clients who will take this assessment to be honest about their situation and vulnerability. It is common that people feel unable to share sensitive information about their challenges to case workers they are not close with.

[Click here](#) to see ECHO's info page on Coordinated Entry

Where to take the assessment:

[Click here](#) for locations and hotlines that provide the Coordinated Housing Assessment in Austin.

For families, people with mobility issues, survivors of domestic violence, etc. it can be helpful to recommend Sunrise Homeless Navigation Center's hotline. People can take the assessment over the phone and avoid taking the trip to a physical location.

Hotline: 512-522-1097 Monday-Friday: 9AM-1PM

Apply for housing voucher/affordable housing: [info sheet here](#)

[Is the Section 8 Voucher Waitlist open?](#)

[Affordable Housing Online Search Tool \(AHOST\)](#)

[Guide to Affordable Housing](#)

[Resource list for supportive housing](#)

[Housing/Eviction Legal Aid Resources](#)

Facebook Group: [Austin Housing, Subleases, Rooms and Roommates](#)


Emergency Shelter

Most times it is difficult to find emergency housing for folks, especially on Sundays (most shelters only answer phones M-F). Consider if your client fits into any certain group, as there may be shelters that exist specifically for their experience.

Austin Shelters

Check the "shelter" section in the [Austin Resource Guide](#) for a list of shelters and info.

- If someone is in need of emergency shelter, you can try to call around asking about occupancy and suggest they show up at the shelter if applicable (check guide)
- Staying at 24/7 businesses is another option if shelter and camping is not accessible or preferred. Some people stay on the buses for warmth/AC as long as possible throughout the night.

 **HEAT - Cooling Centers:** City of Austin [page on resources](#) (to be updated) or [click here](#)

- Libraries [hours found here](#)
- Recreation centers [hours found here](#)
- Lobbies of Travis County Community Centers open M-F 8-5pm, [see here](#)

 **COLD - Warming Centers/Cold Weather Shelter:**

[Click here and find the Cold Weather resource section for more info.](#)

The city will activate Cold Weather Shelters if the forecast is predicted to be: 32 degrees or colder overnight, 35 degrees, with rain/wet, or 35 degrees, with wind chill of 32 or colder. Call 512-305-ICEE (4233) to check for activation status. It's decided daily at 9AM.

How to Register for Cold Weather Shelters (if activated): Go to the [One Texas Center](#) (DACC) at 505 Barton Springs Rd., Austin, TX 78704, from 6-8PM on the night of activation. CapMetro buses will not require a bus pass/fee if you are going to a warming center or to the OTC to register on a day of activation. They will bus those registered to shelters in the city.

Info on the Cold Weather Shelters: Meals are provided. Pets are allowed, if they are not aggressive, able to be around others, have a leash, and can sleep with the owner. If a pet needs a crate for the evening, at the Cold Weather Shelter, individuals should let staff know at the One Texas Center when registering. Women/Couples will be able to be at the same Cold Weather Shelter, but in a separate area, as capacity allows. Shelters may restrict how long people leave the shelter for if they want to come back that night. In the morning, people are bussed and dropped off in the city.

Warming Centers (daytime only, not overnight):

[Click here for a map of all Austin warming centers](#)

Employment / Jobs

Proving Identity/Right to Work:

Job seeker must provide a document from List A, or if they cannot, they must provide one from List B and one from List C

Major barriers to finding employment include access to technology, transportation, basic necessities, as well as barriers to obtain ID, residency, etc.

List A:

- Valid U.S. passport book or U.S. passport card.
- Valid permanent resident card (green card) or alien registration receipt card (Form I-551).
- Valid foreign passport that contains a temporary I-551 stamp or temporary I-551 printed notation on a machine-readable immigrant visa.
- Current employment authorization document that contains a photograph (Form I-766).

List B:

- Driver's license
- Government-issued photo ID
- School-issued photo ID
- U.S. military card or draft record
- Military dependent ID card
- Native American tribal document
- Driver's license issued by a Canadian government authority
- U.S. Coast Guard Merchant Mariner (MM) document card

List C:

- Social Security card
- Original birth certificate or certified copy
- Consular report of birth abroad or U.S. Department of State certification of birth abroad
- Native American tribal document
- ID card for use by resident citizen
- Employment authorization document issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Job Searching

[Austin Resource Guide](https://austin.craigslist.org/) See Employment section
<https://austin.craigslist.org/>

[Indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com)
[ZipRecruiter.com](https://www.ziprecruiter.com)
[SimplyHired.com](https://www.simplyhired.com)

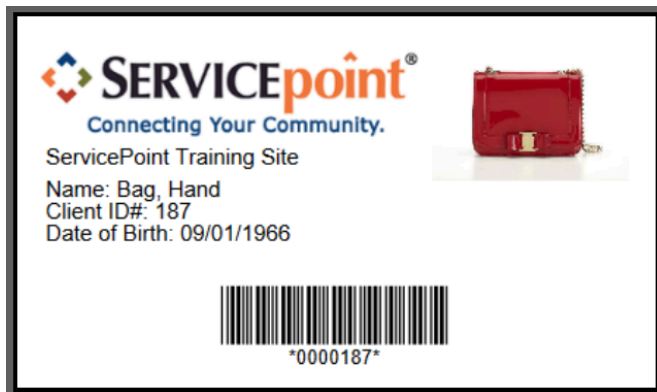
Identification/Document Retrieval

TX ID/License + SSN card OR birth certificate = Work Authorization

People can obtain these documents at a govt./state agency or find help through various hubs.

Service Point ID

This is a temporary ID many unhoused people have, and can get printed at any hub that does case management/uses HMIS (Ex: Sunrise Navigation, Trinity Center). This ID helps reduce some barriers and is used on housing applications, benefits applications, shelters, and more, but it does not act as work authorization. It is not the same as an official ID, but it could help you get ID replaced.



Texas ID

If you have a photo of your previous TX ID, [replace online](#) for \$11

Texas Department of Public Safety

- North: 6121 N Lamar Blvd, Austin, TX 78752, (512-424-2076)
- South: 6425 IH 35, Frontage Rd. #180, Austin, TX 78744. (512-444-5241)
- Northwest: 13730 Research Blvd, Austin, TX 78750. (512-424-2600)

Sunrise Navigation Center, 4430 Menchaca Rd, Monday-Friday: 9AM-1PM

Get a notarized affidavit at the Hub Table, get a ServicePT ID, then bring those two to the South DPS location with \$16.

You may have to wait a long time at the DPS to be taken as a walk-in. Or [make an appointment](#) (could be months out).

Fee for Texas ID: \$16

Vouchers for fee: Go to Downtown Austin Community Court or Trinity Center

Social Security Card

📍 **Social Security Administration Offices** (800-772-1213)

- North: 1029 Camino La Costa, Austin, TX 78752
- South: 5508 Hwy 290 W, Bldg B, Austin, TX 78735; (both 9AM-4PM M-F)

Bring the following to one of the offices above:

- Completed [Application for new SS Card, Docs from this page](#)
- * Unhoused people can bring their [application](#), a [ServicePT ID or Govt. ID](#), and a [MAP card](#) if they cannot bring other documents.

Birth Certificate

📍 **Go in person or mail [application](#) to the vital records office:**

1100 W. 49th St. Austin, TX 78756; MON-FRI 8AM–5PM

Replacement: \$22

TX ID/License is sufficient identity proof, [here is a list](#) of other accepted forms.

Go here for help with vital documents and fees:

- **Trinity Center**, 304 E 7th St; 8:30AM-1PM (Tues) & 9:30AM-1PM (Wed)
Come early
- **The Charlie Center**, 12675 Research Blvd (based @ Mosaic Church)
10AM-1PM Wednesday-Thursday

Other Vital Documents (death, marriage, divorce records): [Applications here](#)

Warrants/fines stopping ID retrieval? [click here](#)

Transportation

CapMetro has a program for unhoused individuals that provides a [free 2-year bus pass tap card](#) to people. [More info on this program here.](#)

Without this program, people would have to spend money on expensive bus passes (31-day passes are over \$40).

Previously, CapMetro had 1-day, 7-day, 30-day (etc) plastic card passes that they gave to organizations for free prior to the new program. These passes are swiped in buses and machines for swipe cards will be removed in the future from all buses, making them unusable. Tap cards will be the new system. This is why getting a 2-year tap card is very important.

Bus pass provider list in English: [click here](#)

Bus pass provider list in Spanish: [click here](#)

Eligibility for free 2-year bus pass:

- Are currently experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity within the CapMetro Service Area
- Are registered within HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) and are receiving services through a provider

How to get a pass:

- Go to any provider listed and either show a ServicePoint ID. They will look you up and assign a card to your name.
- If you are not already in HMIS, most of the organizations can take your photo and information to add you to the system.
- NOTE: Some organizations listed lack access to HMIS such as the CapMetro Store. You must bring a physical ServicePoint ID to these places because they cannot look people up in HMIS.
- **Go back to any organization on the list to replace your pass if it is lost/stolen.**

Important: Do NOT buy these passes from other people, it is a scam. Each pass is assigned to one person's name. If you buy a pass from someone, they will likely replace their pass and yours (that is in their name) will be deactivated.

Accessible Email Address

Most email services, such as Google/Yahoo, require authentication from users when they login to a new device. Unhoused people have technology lost and stolen frequently and often jump between devices to keep contact with friends, relatives, and case workers. If they sign into their Gmail on a library computer or a friend's phone, it will

prompt them to enter a code sent to their phone number. If they no longer have that phone, there is usually no other way to access that email again.

This makes it sometimes impossible for caseworkers to maintain contact with unhoused clients. It can prevent people from being reached if housing becomes available for them.

Accessible email option:

If you meet someone with an unstable technology situation or an email that they can only sometimes access, use this info:

Create a **Proton Mail** email to avoid double authentication requirements. Remember your username and password to access your Proton Mail email from any device.

[Click here to create a Proton Mail email](#)

Wifi & Phone Access

Public phones:

- Sunrise Navigation Center: 9-1PM M-F (4430 Menchaca Rd, Austin, TX 78745)
- Trinity Center: 9:30AM-1PM, M-F (500 E 7th St, Austin, TX 78702)

Free Wifi and computer use:

- Austin libraries: [click here for locations/hours](#)
 - Trinity Center: 9:30AM-1PM, M-F (500 E 7th St, Austin, TX 78702)
-

Mailing Address

There are several social service hubs in Austin that provide their mailing room as an address for any unhoused person. These hubs are widely used on benefits applications and IDs. No registration is required.

- **Sunrise Navigation Center:** 9-1PM M-F (4430 Menchaca Rd, Austin, TX 78745)
- **Trinity Center:** 9:30AM-1PM, M-F (500 E 7th St, Austin, TX 78702)

- **Downtown Austin Community Court:** M-F 8AM-5PM (505 Barton Springs Rd, Austin, TX 78704, First floor)
 - **Street Youth Ministry:** For ages up to 28 who are unhoused/at risk (2008 Justin Lane Building B, Austin TX 78757)
-

De-Escalation

De-escalation is an important skill to learn and does not apply to any one community. According to a staff survey, most employees have little to no experience assisting unhoused community members. There is a stigma that surrounds unhoused people and a misconception that they will be dangerous, mean, on drugs, mentally ill, etc. These misconceptions further the divide between housed and unhoused people, and make it more difficult for people to get the help they may need. It can also cause people to call 911 on people, which can be extremely harmful.

Every person who walks through our doors is coming to solve some form of issue they face. This doesn't mean we can immediately assist them or even give an appointment for the near future. Their problem may be multifaceted and beyond what FC can help with. Some people may just want AC, to use the bathroom, or ask for directions to the food pantry.

To be an organization that is accessible and accommodative to everyone, we must understand the natural stress that can exist in someone walking through our doors. Not everyone will act predictably or in a "normal" way that others do. Regardless of our ability to assist with their specific issue, it is our duty to be open, compassionate, and respectful. It is important to see each person as another person just like ourselves, and to speak to them with that regard.

De-escalation is important and is a crucial alternative to calling the police. Since 2015, 20% of [people shot and killed by police](#) had a mental illness crisis. While it may be difficult to imagine this outcome, it can happen anywhere and any time, especially when we call 911. **De-escalation should ALWAYS be our first approach.**

Reasons that people could become escalated:

- They cannot be helped or their problem cannot be tended to
- They feel overwhelmed/overstimulated
- They are confused but are not getting answers
- They are in a time crunch or on a lunch break
- Sense of belonging/safety

- Physical/emotional needs
- Past trauma/experiences
- Mental and emotional state
- Hunger or access to nutrition
- Stress about what they came to get help with
- History of being ignored by professionals/case workers
- Negative experience with another community member or staff member

What can escalation look like?

- Heavy breathing
- Rapid or unpredictable body movements
- Withdrawn socially
- Refusal to listen or comply
- Overwhelming sadness, anxiety, distress
- Shouting, increasingly loud voice, destruction of any kind

Pointers to consider during de-escalation:

- Be empathetic and non-judgmental
- Respect personal space and be aware of your body language
- Keep a calm tone and avoid overreacting
- Avoid overly logical/complicated language
- Focus on the thoughts behind the feelings
- Understand your role - Are you fit to help de-escalate in this specific case?
- Set boundaries if needed or move to a more private area if it is helpful

To get a better understanding of de-escalation, [watch this video](#).

[Read this](#) to learn more about a social worker's approach to de-escalation.

De-escalation How-To:

Level 1 - Prevention

Level 2 - De-escalation/Mediation

Level 3 - Action/Communication Focused on Safety

L1: Prevention

Before escalation occurs, we have the chance to respond thoughtfully and anticipate one's feelings of distress. This is done through self awareness, observation, and by assessing the needs of others.

- What behaviors or feelings can you observe in a person?
- Can you perceive anything that is threatening their sense of safety or belonging?

- How could you help them feel more at ease and understood by others?

L2: De-escalation and Mediation

De-escalating requires skilled, active listening and thoughtful communication. It is crucial to remember “Low and Slow” and apply this to your tone, speed of speaking, and how you position your body relative to those who are in an escalated state.

Use the acronym OARS:

- Open-ended questions
- Affirming
- Reflective listening (repeat what you are hearing/understanding)
- Summarize what you gather from their words

Let's think more on the steps of skilled listening:

1. Tune in to your anxiety level and ask yourself “How am I feeling, and what thoughts am I imposing on this situation?”
 - a. Are your feelings interfering with your communication skills, and are you the best person around to help with this specific person?
2. Acknowledge the other person's feelings, such as their anxiety or anger. Consider if there is potential for any violence as you move forward. This potential may be there, but it does NOT mean you should overreact, leave the person, or call 911.
3. Convey calmness, confidence, and a willingness to help. Get on their level and let them know that you are there for them. Be sincere and adapt to the situation.
 - a. Understand that people may say or do unpredictable things that you want to react to. Be slow and intentional with your words and actions.

L3: Action and Communication Focused on Safety

Someone in an escalated state may be thinking differently from you due to various factors (see reasons for escalation). This can mean that your logical way of thinking likely means little to them. In level 3, try to reach an understanding with the person on what they need moving forward.

Avoid:

- Using logic or language that lacks empathy
- Talking loud or quickly at someone
- Quick movements or body language that looks down on someone

Instead, try to:

- Repeat yourself using simple, direct statements
- Ask brief questions to gauge what can help the person moving forward
 - What can you or they do to possibly resolve this?

If someone remains in an escalated state or is not receptive to the interaction:

- Is there anyone who they'd be willing to talk with aside from you?
- Could they call a friend or family member?
- Do they need water, coffee, or is their blood-sugar low? How can you help?

Remember: It is okay to ask someone to leave the building if they are not responding to any attempt of communication or de-escalation AND are putting anyone/anything at risk of harm. If they are attempting to physically hurt people or property, you may tell them to leave for the day.

SNAP Benefits - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (Food Stamps)

SNAP is a federally funded program that helps low-income families buy nutritious food from local food stores.

Apply: YourTexasBenefits.com

Print out: [SNAP/Medicaid Application \(PDF\)](#)

Get Help in Person:

[Austin Resource Guide](#) See Benefits Assistance section

Foundation Communities [Prosper Center Benefits Assistance](#):

Go online or call to make an appt 737-249-6394

- North: 5900 Airport Blvd, Austin, TX 78752, Bus Routes: 7, 337, 350
- South: 2900 S I-35 Frontage Rd, Austin, TX 78704, Bus Route: 300

SNAP Offices: (Warn people of a possible long wait time)

- 5451 North IH 35, Suite D, Austin, TX 78723, 8AM-5PM, (512-929-7330)
- 7701 Metropolis Dr Bldg. 12 #100, Austin, TX 78744

Social Services Organizations for Unhoused People (offers other relevant services too):

- Sunrise Navigation Center 9-1PM M-F (4430 Menchaca Rd)
- Central Texas Food Bank (call for appt: 855-366-3401)
- Street Forum 9-11AM SUN (422 Guadalupe St)

Filling out SNAP application (for an unhoused person)

- Write “**Homeless**” in Home Address section, and put their Mailing Address in the mailing address line
 - Mailing address: Use one they have good access to (maybe a family member), or a local resource hub’s mail office: Sunrise Navigation Center 4430 Menchaca Rd, Austin, TX 78745 Downtown Austin Community Court 505 Barton Springs Rd, Austin, TX 78704 Trinity Center 304 E. 7th St, Austin, TX 78703
 - They do not need to apply for a mailing address at these places; it will come to their mailroom with the client’s name on it
- Photo of any identification they have (state ID, license, Service Point ID)



This is an example of a Service Point ID!

- Unhoused people can get a physical copy of their ServicePT ID at common service hubs, such as Sunrise Navigation Center or Trinity Center. Many shelters also have the ability to print them as well. They are created and stored in the Homeless Management Information System, HMIS, which most social service orgs have access to.

Info:

Work Requirements (After Approved):

- Registering for work;
- Not voluntarily quitting a job or reducing hours;
- Taking a job if offered; and
- Participating in employment and training programs, if assigned by the state.
- If homeless in TX: these requirements do not apply

Failure to comply with these requirements can result in disqualification from the program.

To Order a New Food Stamp Card:

1. Call 1-800-777-7328

2. Press 1 for English, 2 for Español
3. Press 2 for help with Lonestar Card
4. It will ask for your card number, don't enter, WAIT
5. Press 2 if your card is LOST
6. Press 1 to "cancel your card" for representative
7. Say "Card is LOST" not "stolen"
8. They will need the address listed on SNAP case;
 - a. If address changed, call 211 to report change
 - b. Wait 24 hours, call this # again

To Check Food Stamp Schedule:

9. Call 1-800-777-7328
10. Press 1 for English, 2 for Español
11. Press 2 for help with Lonestar Card
12. Enter your card number
13. Press 3 to hear your payment schedule

Password Issues/Status Check Instructions

Our Benefits Assistance team can meet with clients who need a password change. This must be done in person. They can schedule online or by phone.

Guide for changing password/checking status:

- Call 211
- 1 for English, 2 for Español
- 2 for State Benefits
- 1 for Apply or Get Status
- 1 for know SSN (enter SSN)
 - Press 1 for correct
 - Enter DOB: MM/DD/YYYY
 - Hear info on case status
- For password issues/report a change to case, WAIT
- Press 3 to Report a Change
- 7 for Another Question
 - 2 for status of application
 - 4 → Takes you to a representative

Check account information of existing card

- Call 1-800-777-7328
- 1 for English, 2 for Español
- Enter your card #

- 2 for account information
 - Listen for prompts
-

MAP – (Medical Access Program)

For people not eligible for or enrolled in Medicaid or Medicare, and do not have private insurance - this is a Travis County program, not federal. They must reside in Travis county and plan to stay here.

MAP Info Guide: [see here](#)

MAP copay guide: [see here](#)

Call 512-978-8130: MAP Hotline Mon-Fri

- Questions about MAP
- Check status of application (Can check status after at least 10 days)
- Change information

Applying for MAP for Unhoused People:

MAP Application: <https://ola.veritysource.com/austin>

How to fill out: Enter basic info, do not fill out expenses, put “homeless” in home address and put basic Austin address or where they sleep, put actual mailing address in mailing address section, do not add “personal representative” ([GUIDE HERE](#))

Submit Documents if Unhoused: Photo of ID (TX license or Service Point ID), [Zero-Income Statement](#)

Renewal: You must [renew](#) your Austin MAP insurance **30 days before** your plan expires. Otherwise, reapply.

Lost Card: [info here](#)

- Calling for a Replacement: **512-978-8130 (M-F, 8am-5pm)**
 - Need: Name, DOB, SSN, and mailing address (current mailing address, but ALSO what mailing address they may have listed on their application if it could have changed)
 - It could be possible that their MAP card is expired – in this case, reapply them online with the info you already have
 - Card will be sent to them in about 1-2 weeks

What can MAP recipients get? primary care, dental, pharmacy, behavioral health, physical therapy, urgent care, hospital, post-acute care (more [see here](#))
MAP and MAP Basic have different benefits.

Who is eligible:

- Low income (at or below 100% of poverty level)
*applying will not affect path to green card

Proof to speed up process:

- Photo ID: TX license, Service Point ID, passport
- [Zero-Income Statement](#)

Extra:

- U.S. citizenship/residency proof: birth certificate, passport, legal permanent resident card
- Proof of any approved/denied/pending health care benefits
- Household income: paystubs, SS benefits letter, unemployment benefits letter, etc.