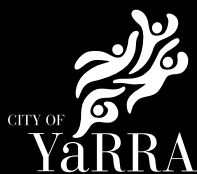
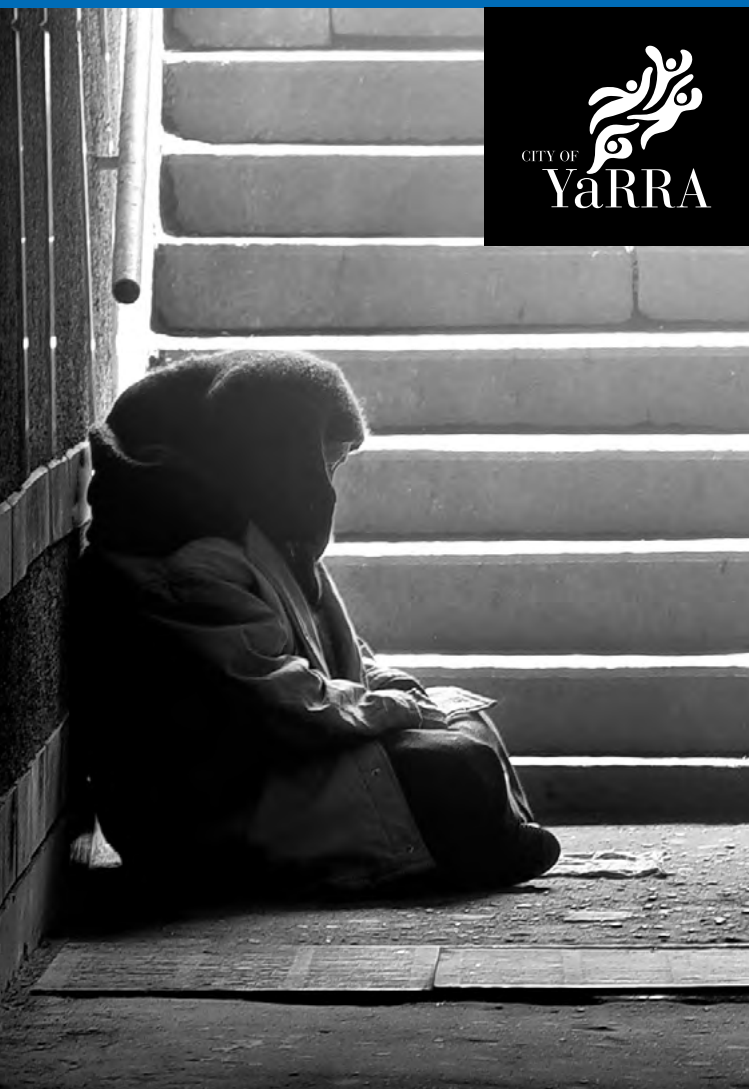


# How to respond to rough sleeping and squatting in Yarra

Updated March 2024



## **Rough sleeping**

According to Homelessness Australia only around 6% of people experiencing homelessness sleep rough. More often, homeless people are in overcrowded, insecure and inappropriate housing. Rough sleepers generally choose places that are as safe as possible, well lit, around people, and close to services.

## **Homelessness and human rights**

Our decisions and actions must be compatible with the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

People experiencing homelessness may have a history of trauma. This can lead to behaviour that may seem antisocial and that can be confronting.

## **Our role**

Assisting people who are sleeping rough is a shared responsibility. Yarra Council, homelessness organisations and Victoria Police all have a role to play.

We have an agreement with Launch Housing assertive outreach to help us respond to people experiencing homelessness.

## **Safety concerns? Call 000**

If you have any immediate concerns about safety, please call Victoria Police.

Call 000 if you see someone who:

- seems distressed
- appears to be a danger to themselves or to others
- has a child under 18 years of age with them
- is damaging property or the environment.

## **Illegal activity? Call 000**

If you have concerns about illegal activity call the police on 000 immediately.

Council officers have no authority to act on issues that are police matters, including drug use and begging.

## **Make a rough sleeping site referral**

If the situation is not urgent or unsafe you can report the issue to Yarra Council to follow up.

Please provide the location, description of person, duration of stay and any access or behaviour information to us:

- Online: [yarraroughsleepers.com.au](http://yarraroughsleepers.com.au)
- Email: [roughsleeping@yarracity.vic.gov.au](mailto:roughsleeping@yarracity.vic.gov.au)
- Call: 9205 5555

## **After hours options**

The Crisis Contact Centre (CCC) provides a 24/7, 365 day service for people experiencing homelessness. The CCC also links people with other support providers to address post-crisis needs.

- Free call 24/7: 1800 627 727 or call 9536 7777

## **Victorian Syringe Disposal Helpline**

If you find syringes in a public place or private premises, call the Victorian Syringe Disposal Helpline on 1800 552 355 (free call, 24 hours), or call us on 9205 5555.

## **Sleeping in vehicles or tents**

It is not illegal to be homeless in a public place in Victoria. Wherever possible, homeless people sleeping in tents and in vehicles will be referred to the Launch Housing outreach team before our officers inspect the site.

## **Squatting**

If you are concerned about the immediate safety of squatters, call the police on 000.

Yarra Council is required to inspect all squats, including private and commercial premises, to ensure that the building is made safe.

You can refer squats to us by calling us on 9205 5555 or email [roughsleeping@yarracity.vic.gov.au](mailto:roughsleeping@yarracity.vic.gov.au) and we will arrange an inspection.

## **More information**

[yarracity.vic.gov.au/roughsleepers](http://yarracity.vic.gov.au/roughsleepers)

## Yarra City Council

PO Box 168, Richmond, VIC 3121

9205 5555

[info@yarracity.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@yarracity.vic.gov.au)

[yarracity.vic.gov.au](http://yarracity.vic.gov.au)

## National Relay Service

TTY 133 677 then (03) 9205 5555

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### Languages

العربية 9280 1930

中文 9280 1937

Ελληνικά 9280 1934

Italiano 9280 1931

Español 9280 1935

Tiếng Việt 9280 1939

Other 9280 1940

REF 18955