

Safety & Health



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HOTLINE TO RE- PORT WORKPLACE HAZZARDS

While we hope that employees feel comfortable reporting potential hazards or unsafe conditions to their management, the hotline below provides employees with another option to report them to DHR. Please ensure that your employees know the hotline number!

(415) 557-4999

City & County of San Francisco

Department of Human Resources

SAFETY & HEALTH MATTERS

WORKING WITH AND AROUND THE HOMELESS POPULATION

Nonie Devens, RN, MPA, CCM

Working for the City & County of San Francisco offers wonderful opportunities to experience the beauty and grandeur of a world-class city. But as we navigate our way to and from the office or to meetings, there is one challenge that is impossible to ignore: There are 7500 people experiencing homelessness living in San Francisco, and the Civic Center is one of the largest areas where they gather. While there are many programs designed to assist this population, it is difficult to know what to do when you see someone in distress, behaving erratically, is not clothed, or appears to be overdosing on drugs. Engage? Offer money? Call the police? Call 911?

In this article, I provide some general information about available resources and some simple interventions that depending on the situation and your comfort level.

Mental Health & Substance Abuse:

According to the Department of Public Health, approximately 35% of people experiencing homelessness have mental health issues, with substance abuse affecting approximately 14%. I recently attended a forum for Project Homeless Connect and had the opportunity to hear many great speakers from various parts of the City speak about substance abuse and what is being done to reduce harm.

First, Naloxone (Narcan), an opioid antagonist drug that reverses potential overdose from opioids and heroin, is now being provided to our First Responders and other resource groups as part of the overall campaign to reduce harm to drug users.

This program has been more successful than anticipated: In 2015 there were 345 overdose reversals between June and October 2015, with the majority of the cases in the Civic Center area.

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WORKING WITH AND AROUND THE HOMELESS POPULATION (CONT.)

For Immediate Interventions:

It is not always comfortable (or safe) to engage with someone who is behaving erratically or is otherwise in distress. Fortunately, the following organizations can help. Simply call or obtain the mobile app to get help to the individual in crisis:

The SF HOT Team: Call 311 and ask for SF HOT Street Outreach Team. Use when you observe a person having any issues of concern, for example, someone is being harassed or is harassing people. The San Francisco Homeless Outreach Team (SFHOT) was established in June 2004. SFHOT is collaboration between the Department of Public Health, the Human Services Agency, the SF Public Library, and the non-profit Public Health Foundation Enterprises. SFHOT uses a client-centered “whatever it takes” approach, and employs comprehensive wrap-around services to meet client needs. The program also assesses medical and behavioral crises, and refers clients to emergency care as appropriate.

Mobile Crisis Team: Call 415-970-4000. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) can provide intervention services to those experiencing a psychiatric crisis for adults in the City & County of San Francisco, with access to the SF General Hospital Psychiatric Emergency Services. Services can include voluntary and involuntary clients. This team can also provide a response for geriatric crisis and HIV crisis after 5PM and on weekends.

Concrn: Call 415-881-8278. Concrn dispatches trained volunteer responders to persons in an emotional, behavioral health, or substance abuse crisis in the Tenderloin District of San Francisco. This is part of a Pilot Program in which they provide a phone app an alternative to calling 911. To find out more information, go to: <https://www.concrn.org/> and download the app.

HOMELESS POPULATION VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Project Homeless Connect: <https://www.projecthomelessconnect.org>

St. Anthony's: Clothing Donation Processing or volunteer, go to: <https://www.stanthonysf.org/>

Hamilton Family Center: Provides housing for families in San Francisco. Donate time or materials. 415-409-2100 or go to: <https://hamiltonfamilycenter.org>

DOPE Project: Provides education on drug overdose prevention and education to reduce harm associated with drug use. Go to: harmreduction.org

Community Housing Partnership: Volunteers assist with filing and data entry, managing resources and logistics. Go to: VolunteerMatch.org

ESSENTIAL FACTS ON ZIKA VIRUS

By Angela Platzer, RN, DPH Occupational Safety & Health

Before You Travel: Zika outbreaks are currently in many countries. Specific areas where the Zika virus is spreading are often difficult to determine and will change over time. If you are travelling, you should visit the CDC Travelers Health Website for the most recent information.

How It Spreads: Zika virus spreads to individuals primarily through the bite of an infected Aedes species mosquito. People can also become infected with Zika virus through sex with an infected man, and it can be spread from a pregnant woman to her unborn child. There is thought that Zika can also spread through a blood transfusion but this has not been confirmed. Zika virus cannot be spread from person to person except through sexual transmission.

Symptoms: Although many people infected with the Zika virus will not have any (or only mild) symptoms, the most common are similar to a mild flu like-illness: fever, rash, joint pain, or red eyes. Symptoms can last from a few days to a week. Individuals usually recover without having to seek medical treatment. Zika is, however, risky for women who are pregnant. The virus can cause microcephaly, a birth defect of the brain, in fetuses. Other problems detected among fetuses and infants infected with Zika before birth are defects of eye, hearing deficits and impaired growth.

If you suspect you have Zika, you will need to treat the symptoms as there are no specific medicines available. Get plenty of rest, drink fluids to prevent dehydration, take medication to reduce fever and pain. Follow up with your physician if you have any questions or concerns.

Prevention: There is no vaccine to prevent Zika. The best way to prevent diseases spread by mosquitoes is to protect yourself from mosquito bites. This can be done by:

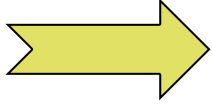
- Wearing long sleeved shirts and pants;
- Keeping mosquitoes outside by using screens in windows and doors;
- Treating your clothing and gear with permethrin;
- Using EPA-registered insect repellents;
- Using mosquito netting to cover babies at night if screened rooms are not available.

The best way to prevent sexual transmission of Zika is by using condoms.

Dealing with Pan Handlers

HandUp! Rather than giving money or food, consider giving a HandUp card which can be redeemed through a network of non-profit organizations for groceries, clothes, or other necessities. For more information or to purchase HandUp gift cards, go to: <https://handup.org/giftcards>

**WCD
UPDATE!**



**REMINDER: HOW TO PROPERLY REPORT A WORKERS'
COMPENSATION INJURY OR ILLNESS**

Use The Right Claim Form: In January, 2016, the State Division of Workers' Compensation adopted a new claim form that is required to be used for any injury occurring on or after 1/1/2016. The new form provides an expanded explanation of benefits, some of which have changed, and is thus considered proper "notice" to employees who are filing a claim. The form must be provided by the employer to an employee who reports an injury or illness that he or she believes is work-related within 24 hours.

Upon receipt of a completed claim form from the employee, the department representative must complete the bottom half of the form and send to the claims administrator along with a completed Employer's First Report of Injury, Form 5020. We, or our Intercare partners, will take it from there.

Note that the new DWC-1 Claim Form and the 5020 Employer's First Report of Injury are available in a fillable format and can be accessed through the DHR Website under Forms & Documents.

Employer/Department Responsibilities: Under California law, notice of an injury to a supervisor or manager is considered notice to the claims administrator. Any delay in providing a claim form and/or reporting an injury or illness can hinder or even eliminate our ability to properly investigate whether the claim is compensable.

The best practice is to provide a claim form if something is reported and document that it was done. After that, it is up to the employee to file the claim. No follow-up is necessary. Of course, in an emergency situation where the employee is injured to the point where he or she cannot complete the form and you realize that the injury was caused by work, you should complete the Employer's First Report of Injury and send in to your claims administrator to get the claims process started.

AUTOMATIC DEPOSIT FOR DISABILITY PAYMENTS ARE IN SIGHT

The CCSF Payroll System switched to automatic deposit or debit cards with great success. In collaboration with the Treasurer's Office and the Controller's Office, we are working to eliminate paper check printing and processing for workers' compensation payments to mirror the payroll system for active employees. This will improve efficiency, reduce costs to the City, expedite payments, help prevent overpayments, and reduce the City's carbon footprint that results from mail delivery. We hope to implement this in the 2016-17 Fiscal Year!