

Homelessness: Step by Step Relief

When you go for a walk on a busy street in Hawaii, what do you see? Trees, the beach, cars, shops. All in all, Hawaii is a nice place to live. But do you see something else within this paradise? Yes, there is something rather noticeable, and not to mention troublesome about what you might see on your daily stroll: all of the homeless people. They are on the sidewalks, on benches, under trees, even sleeping in the treeline. Do you like stepping around them on your way to the bank? No, of course not. And neither do they. Over 62% of the state's homeless population lies on Oahu alone, and 33% of them are children (Hope Services Hawaii). Something has to be done about the homeless problem. Ignoring homelessness won't do any good. It seems as though the solution is out of our hands, but with the help of a step by step transitional housing method, we can improve the homeless problem in Hawaii.

There are around 7,220 homeless people in Hawaii, and around 4,959 on Oahu as said on Hawaii News Now. Imagine how much worse it will become in 50 years if we do nothing. Last year, the homelessness rate dropped statewide in Hawaii, but on Oahu it has increased by 25% since 2009 (Hawaii News Now). If this number continues to increase 25% every 8 years, there will be approximately 19,000 homeless people living on Oahu by 2067. Even though it will take a lot of hard work and effort, I think that by following the proposed method we can reduce the number of homeless people in Hawaii. Clarence T.C. Ching worked hard to make Hawaii a better place, and I think that my method to help the homeless problem is connected to the first goal of Clarence T.C. Ching. He wanted to help needy, destitute, sick, and aged people, and I think helping homeless people is doing just that. Homeless people are mostly needy and

destitute, and some are sick or aged as well. I think that helping all people to have an equal opportunity to get a good job and a home is very important, and this is why I created this step by step housing method.

The first step in the method I propose is just getting the homeless people off of the streets and into short term shelters. These shelters would provide a roof over their heads, food, water, and a place to sleep. This step is very important because often short term shelters that don't offer work don't help as well in the long term. However, this would be a transitional shelter so that homeless people could simply leave the street and have a place to live until they could move into a longer term transitional shelter. This is the step where people with medical conditions and special needs will be assessed. If their situation prohibits them from being able to move on like the other people in the process, they may be placed in group homes, hospitals, or other appropriate places according to their needs. The rest of the individuals without disabilities would live in this short term shelter for up to three weeks, depending on availability, and then move into a longer term transitional shelter.

These people would stay in this long term transitional shelter for three to six months. Some people think that having long term shelters like this one is a bad idea because they think that homeless people won't move on or be inclined to get a good job and a home. I think that because this step is not extremely long term (only up to six months) and because the people living there would have to show motivation to move on and eventually move into a home, this step would work. In these months, residents would have to do a variety of things to show their progress and motivation. First, they would have to help with chores around the shelter and show

that they were looking for a job. Once they have a job, they would have to show that they can keep it and be responsible with the money they earn, including by opening a savings account.

When they first move into the long term transitional housing, they would be offered a job building tiny homes. These are large boxes or shipping containers that are made into small homes for homeless people. If they didn't want to work building tiny homes, they would have to go out and find another job, as I stated earlier. After three months, their case would be examined, and the state would see if they had a steady job and earned the money necessary to move on to the next step in the process. Their case would be examined again every month after that in order to move them to the next step in the process as soon as possible. The final step would be to move the residents into tiny homes. They would live in these tiny homes as long as they needed to, working, making money, some of them continuing to build homes for others to move in.

Using a step by step transitional housing method, the homeless problem in Hawaii can be addressed. I think that my method would work because it combines some of the ideas of others into a process that would get the homeless people off of the streets, into shelters, and into some kind of home in less than a year. The homeless population would transition from short term to long term housing, moving from homelessness to home occupancy in a relatively short time. I believe that if we use this strategy, we may significantly lower the number of homeless people in Hawaii in less than two years.

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