Update on DART’s Homelessness and Mental Health Initiatives

Customer Service, Safety & Mobility Committee
June 8, 2021

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Today’s Briefing

• Background
• Initial Timeline
• Spring 2021 Activities
• Next Steps
Background

• DART’s response to individuals experiencing homelessness and mental health issues is part of a broader discussion on the Agency’s approach to safety and security on the DART system.

• On April 13, 2021, the DART Customer Service, Safety and Mobility Committee (CSSM) was briefed on DART’s efforts related to individuals experiencing homelessness and mental health issues and next steps.

• The briefing serves as an update on DART’s progress in addressing individuals experiencing homelessness and mental health issues on the DART system.
Background: Defining the Homeless Population

• Addressing individuals experiencing homelessness is not a one size fits all approach
• National Coalition for the Homeless identifies 3 distinct groups:
  – Transitional Homeless
  – Episodic Homeless
  – Chronic Homeless
• Each group requires its own response
• Shift from enforcement to engagement based on needs of the population
Timeline Presented in April 2021

Spring 2021
- Survey
- Development/Deployment
- Coordinated Response
- Workgroup Engagement

Data Analysis
- Safety/Security Policy Discussions
- Pilot Development
- Employee Education and Customer PSA

Summer 2021

Fall 2021
- Transit Homelessness Workshop
- Pilot Implementation

Winter 2021–2022
- Data driven pilot refinement
- Program Development
Spring 2021 Activities

• Coordinated Response Workgroup Engagement
  – DART Membership in the Continuum of Care (CoC)
  – CoC Street Outreach Team Participation

• Data Collection
  – Grant application with the University of Texas at Arlington for ongoing data collection and refinement
  – Survey Development/Deployment
    o Internal and External Meetings on survey development
    o Engaging a 3rd party to conduct survey
      ▪ Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute proposal
Spring/Summer 2021 Activities

• Transit Homeless Workshop Preparation
  – National Transit Homelessness Working Group Calls
    o Agenda/Attendee Planning

• Employee Education and Customer PSA’s
  – Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training opportunities
    o Metrocare Services MHFA grant
    o Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance and Parkland Hospital
  – Public Service Announcements with City of Dallas Office of Homeless Solutions

• Safety/Security Policy Discussions
Next Steps

Fall 2021
- DART Board Approval for 3rd Party to conduct internal survey
- Transit Homelessness Workshop

Winter 2021
- Survey Analysis and Pilot Recommendations
- Conduct Internal Training
- Pilot Implementation

Winter/Spring 2022
- Data Driven Pilot Refinements
- Final Program Development

Spring/Summer 2022
- Final Program Recommendations and Implementation
Thank You