

Cross-Lines Community Outreach Statement on Proposed Camping Ordinance

September 30th, 2025

We at Cross-Lines are deeply concerned by the proposal to adopt an ordinance that would ban unlawful camping in Wyandotte County. While the intention behind such a measure may be to address visible homelessness, a punitive approach does nothing to resolve the underlying causes, nor does it help our neighbors who are already living without stable shelter.

Here's why this kind of ordinance fails those it purports to help:

- **Criminalization doesn't equal resolution.** Prohibiting where someone can rest or sleep does not offer them housing, jobs, or access to medical care. All it does is push people into more hidden, unsafe places, disrupting fragile support networks.
- **Displacement causes more harm.** When encampments are cleared without alternative options, residents lose their possessions, shelter, and stability. This often forces them into danger or further instability.
- **The real solution is investment in services.** What is needed instead are comprehensive, well-funded interventions: affordable housing, permanent supportive housing models, wraparound case management, mental health and addiction recovery services, employment support, and accessible crisis response teams.
- **Voices from the community must be heard.** People who have experienced or are currently experiencing homelessness must have a seat at the table. Any policy that affects their lives should be shaped with their input, rather than being decided solely by enforcement logic.

At Cross-Lines, we are committed to solutions that restore dignity, build pathways out of homelessness, and ensure that every person has a safe place to rest. We urge our civic leaders to reject punitive ordinances in favor of policies that invest in affordable housing, supports, and the people themselves.

If your heart is with those struggling every day, we invite you to join us in advocating for real, lasting change. Affordable housing, permanent shelter, meals, wrap-around support, and community programs are what make a difference, not bans.

Executive Team

Cross-Lines Community Outreach