

# Safe Parking Network

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is the Safe Parking Pilot Program?**

The Safe Parking Network is a temporary pilot program in Pierce County that will support families and individuals experiencing homelessness while living in their vehicle. Sites will be identified, set-up and managed through local partnerships and collaboration with faith-based organizations, non-profits and government programs. Guests will be provided a safe place to sleep and stabilize while also quickly getting connected to needs services and assistance. The ultimate goal of the SPN is to connect families and individuals to permanent housing and get them out of their vehicles.

### **Who is eligible to stay at the Safe Parking Sites?**

Families, couples and individuals living in vehicles in Pierce County are eligible to temporarily stay at the Safe Parking Network (SPN) Sites. This program is not accepting anyone living in a Recreational Vehicle (RV, motorhome or trailer).

Site partners will have the flexibility to identify who they would like to serve at their site.

### **What services are provided at the site?**

Host sites provide a parking spaces that are spread out to ensure social distancing rules are followed. Guests will have space for their vehicle park and that is it. The sites will be equipped with portable toilets, hand washing stations, garbage services and connection to outreach services. Each site will be uniquely set-up to the specific needs of the guest being served. Sites may have perimeter fencing and privacy screening depending on their location. Each host site will have a dedicated contact person that is the point of contact for the community. A Program Manager will provide oversight and support to each site.

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### What kind of funding is available for Site Hosts?

Site Hosts/Partners will identify the gaps in funding and specific funds needed to manage their site through the end of December 2020. They will then fill out the Site Application and turn in detailed funding request to the SPN Funding Committee. The Funding Committee will review the costs and make a decision on whether to fund the project or not.

Examples of potential funding include (but are not limited to):

- Portable toilets
- Handwashing/hygiene stations
- Garbage services
- Fencing
- Security
- Lighting
- Technology upgrades

### Where will sites be located?

We will be very strategic and thoughtful about the placement and location of SPN sites. We will work with local jurisdictions to identify low impact site locations. Ideally, sites will be distributed equitably throughout Pierce County, near population centers, so that guests can be close to employment, schools, public transportation, and services. However, not every community has an agency willing to host a site. Our first partners will be churches and non-profits that are already engaged in addressing homelessness and ready to begin this work. The location of these partners will be a critical factor in locating the initial Safe Lots.

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### **Who operates the sites?**

Sites will be operated through a collaborative partnership between the site host and Metropolitan Development Council (MDC). MDC is the fiscal agent and operator/manager of the Safe Parking Network. They will work closely with the site host to safely and strategically set up the sites in Pierce County. Social service partners, volunteers and outreach workers from the community will provide support and connection to services.

### **How long can guests stay in the program?**

Guests will be able to stay for 60-days. Additional 30-day extensions may be given to guests on a case-by-case basis. Guests that are engaged in services and working towards getting housed will likely be given extensions.

### **Are RV's allowed at the site?**

To be very clear, there will be no R.V.'s allowed at the site. We understand there is a large sub-population of individuals living in R.V.'s in Pierce County, but these sites and this program is not for them.

### **Will sites follow COVID-19 protocols from the CDC?**

All Safe Parking Network sites will follow all recommendations, requirements and protocols from the Pierce County Health Department and CDC. This will include an onsite consult and tour of the site before opening to ensure the site is safe and all social distancing techniques are in place.

### **Will this program cause more people to park in my neighborhood?**

No, one goal of the Safe Parking Network is to decrease the number of unsanctioned vehicles illegally parking on city streets and in neighborhoods. This program will finally give these families and individuals living in their vehicles a safe and sanctioned place to sleep overnight. Currently, families or individuals living in vehicles have no safe or

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sanctioned option for car camping in Pierce County. All sites will be vetted with the assistance of the City or County in which they are located. Families and individuals accepted into the program are the only ones permitted to stay at the site. There will be no visitors allowed at the sites.

### **How are the sites and guests kept safe?**

*During intake, host site volunteers ensure that guests understand and agree to the rules, restrictions, and responsibilities associated with the Safe Parking program. Guests are expected to engage with outreach services, enroll in coordinated entry and take advantage of this temporary opportunity. There is zero tolerance for predatory, violent or harassing behavior at the site. Drug and alcohol use and possession are strictly prohibited at the sites. No firearms or weapons are allowed on the property. Guests will also sign a “Good Neighbor Agreement” and are expected to keep the site clean and avoid disruptive behavior. There will be no sex offenders or individuals with open warrants allowed at the site.*

Site management will also work closely with local law enforcement agencies and fire departments to ensure the site and surrounding community are safe.

### **How do I volunteer to help out at a site?**

*This program is very dependent on volunteers from the community. If you are interested in volunteering, you can do so in many ways. You can contact an existing site, you can contact Metropolitan Development Council at 253-3921 or visit their website at [mdc-hope.org](http://mdc-hope.org) or you can contact Colin DeForrest at 253-348-4596 or email at [colin@i2-strategies.com](mailto:colin@i2-strategies.com)*

### **Who should I contact for further information about the Safe Parking Network?**

- ➤ To be a Site Host, to donate to the SPN program, or for general program questions: contact Colin DeForrest at the number below
- ➤ For a referral to a Safe Parking Network site: contact Coordinated Entry at 211 or contact Colin DeForrest at 253-

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