



Roll Call Training Bulletin

Produced by: Captain Brent Kaneyuki, Office of Specialized Services
Prepared by: Officer Mark Kimble, PSU

Katherine Lester, Chief of Police
Volume 24-11

Unlawful Camping Enforcement Guidelines

12-31-2024

This Roll Call Training Bulletin (RCTB) provides updated guidelines for Sacramento Police Department (SPD) employees to follow when responding to violations of Sacramento City Code (SCC) § 12.52.030 (Unlawful Camping Ordinance). While the city's Incident Management Team (IMT) will continue to be the lead entity for unlawful camping response, SPD will continue to respond to reports of unlawful camping violations when required. Officers should still attempt to offer shelter or alternative housing before taking enforcement action and document such efforts.

I. General

- A. Unlawful camping is defined in SCC § 12.52.030.
- B. Officers should take enforcement action when a violation of the unlawful camping ordinance exists on a call for service. With supervisory approval, officers may elect to not take enforcement action if there are compelling circumstances (i.e., the person has medical issues, inclement weather).
- C. The unlawful camping ordinance **will not be enforced between the hours of 2200 to 0600 on public property** unless it involves an urgent encampment and with sergeant's approval.
- D. An urgent encampment includes the following:
 1. A non-vehicle encampment that is in a roadway.
 2. On the property of a private residence.
 3. Impedes immediate access to a public safety facility including a fire department, police department, hospital, or jail.
 4. In the path of impending fires or floods.
- E. District sergeants generally should not cancel calls regarding unlawful camping violations.
- F. Officers responding to a call regarding an unlawful camping violation shall utilize their department-issued cell phone to enter a call for service (CFS) on the City of Sacramento 311 App or by calling 311 prior to closing out the call.
 1. The 311 entry is important so that all homeless encampments are tracked in a central repository, to prevent duplicate efforts by patrol and IMT, and to accurately track the number of homeless encampments in the city.
- G. A new dispatch call type code (camp) has been created for use for calls for service that are solely regarding urgent encampments and will be a priority 4 call.
- H. Officers responding to calls on private property can still enforce trespass violations of Penal Code § 602 or 9.16.140 SCC at all hours of the day.

II. Public Property Response Procedures:

- A. SPD Dispatch:
 1. Will refer calls on public property that are solely regarding unlawful camping to 311 unless the call involves an urgent encampment.
 2. When a call is received regarding an urgent encampment on public property, a call shall be created, and officers dispatched.
 3. SPD Dispatch will prioritize and dispatch calls, according in accordance with General Order 510.04 (Dispatching Sequence of Assignment).
- B. SPD Officers:
 1. When responding to a call for service involving unlawful camping on public property, during the hours of 0600-2200, officers shall:
 - a. Properly resolve the call for service and complete all necessary documentation.



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- b. In accordance with General Order 523.03 (Misdemeanor and Infraction Offenses) officers may make a custodial arrest when they are able to properly safeguard the individual's property. If the amount of property needed to be safeguarded is outside of an officer's capability to manage it, a sergeant shall be notified to determine the appropriate course of action.
2. SPD officers should not engage in enforcement of the unlawful camping ordinance on public property between 2200 and 0600 hours unless it involves an urgent encampment. Sergeant approval will be required to enforce the unlawful camping ordinance during these hours.

III. Private Property Response Procedures:

A. SPD Dispatch:

1. When a call is received for an individual trespassing on private property, and the trespassing involves an urgent encampment, officers shall be dispatched to resolve the urgent issue.
2. When a call is received for an individual trespassing on private property, and the call does not involve an urgent encampment, the following protocols shall be followed:
 - a. If an owner or designated agent is available, requesting to have the individuals removed, and willing to sign a notice of trespass or there is one on file, officers will be dispatched to encampments.
 - (1) A designated agent is any person or organization (e.g., private security company) expressly authorized by the owner of the private property or business premises to issue a notice of trespass on the owner's behalf.
 - b. If there is any question of property ownership, the incident shall automatically be referred to the IMT via 311.

B. SPD Officers:

1. When responding to a call for service on private property, and unlawful camping is an element of the call, officers should:
 - a. Properly resolve the call for service and complete all necessary documentation.
 - b. Determine whether to cite for unlawful camping violations or trespass violations.
 - (1) Generally, the unlawful camping ordinance will not be enforced on private property, and officers will enforce trespass violations.
 - (2) If an urgent encampment needs to be mitigated, and the elements needed to enforce a trespassing violation have not been met, the unlawful camping ordinance may be enforced.
2. If the property owner or agent is on scene:
 - a. Officers shall attempt to obtain voluntary compliance to vacate the property, to include if the unlawful camping is in a vehicle.
 - b. If unsuccessful, enforcement action should be taken for trespassing in accordance with General Order 538.02 (Trespass Violations) when it is within the officer's capability to safeguard all the arrestee's property.
 - (1) If the size or amount of the property amount exceeds the officer's capability to safeguard, a sergeant shall be contacted to determine the appropriate course of action.
 - c. If a custodial arrest is required for an individual living in a vehicle, officers shall comply with the applicable law and General Order 536.02 (Recovered, Stored, Impounded, and Asset Seized Motor Vehicles) regarding the disposition of the vehicle.

IV. Documentation

- A. To maximize efficiency and ensure consistency, an unlawful camping report template has been created. This template is optional for use in report writing, and only to be used for violations of SCC § 12.52.030 (Unlawful Camping Ordinance). The unlawful camping template is available in Mobile Reporting Entry (MRE) and can serve as the observations portion of the report.



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V. Evidence Guidelines:

- A. When enforcing the unlawful camping ordinance, officers shall document the camping paraphernalia by capturing it on their body worn camera and including the details in the report. There is no need to book the items as evidence, unless exemptions apply (e.g., personal property, evidence to support additional charges).

VI. Property Guidelines:

- A. In accordance with General Order 525.01 (Evidence and Property) officers shall safeguard personal property. During a custodial arrest, if officers find a caretaker for the property, the caretaker's verbal agreement to safeguard the property shall be notated on body worn camera, and that person's information shall be documented in the report.
- B. If officers are unable to find a caretaker for the property, the arrestee's life necessities and personal property shall be booked for safekeeping.
- C. Property shall be categorized in 3 areas:
 1. Life Necessities – No court has provided an exhaustive list but has identified representative examples, including personal identification documents, birth certificates, medications, medical equipment, family memorabilia, toiletries, cell phones, sleeping bags, blankets, tents, and clothing.
 2. Personal property – Includes life necessities and any other personal property with objective value. Officers shall ask the arrestee to identify what is trash versus their personal property.
 3. Perishable items and trash – Will not be booked for safekeeping. If those items are left on scene, officers will notate on the 311 call that trash clean-up is required.

Applicable Law:

Sacramento City Code § 12.52.030 (Unlawful Camping Ordinance)

It is unlawful and a public nuisance for any person to camp, occupy camp facilities, or use camp paraphernalia in the following areas:

- A. Any public property; or
- B. Any private property.
 1. It is not intended by this section to prohibit overnight camping on private residential property by friends or family of the property owner, so long as the owner consents and the overnight camping is limited to not more than one consecutive night.

Definitions:

Unless the particular provisions or the context otherwise requires, the definitions contained in this section shall govern the construction, meaning, and application of words and phrases used in this chapter.

"Camp" means to place, pitch or occupy camp facilities; to live temporarily in a camp facility or outdoors; to use camp paraphernalia.

"Camp facilities" include, but are not limited to, tents, huts, vehicles, vehicle camping outfits or temporary shelter.

"Camp paraphernalia" includes, but is not limited to, bedrolls, tarpaulins, cots, beds, sleeping bags, hammocks or cooking facilities and similar equipment. "City Manager" means the city manager or designee.



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"Establish" means setting up or moving equipment, supplies or materials on to public or private property to "camp" or operate camp facilities.

"Maintain" means keeping or permitting equipment, supplies or materials to remain on public or private property in order to camp or operate camp facilities.

"Operate" means participating or assisting in establishing or maintaining a camp or camp facility.

"Park" means the same as defined in Section 12.72.010 of this title.

"Private property" means all private property including, but not limited to, streets, sidewalk, alleys, and improved or unimproved land.

"Public property" means all public property including, but not limited to, streets, sidewalks, alleys, improved or unimproved land and parks.

"Store" means to put aside or accumulate for use when needed, to put for safekeeping, to place or leave in a location.

"Street" means the same as defined in Section 12.16.180 of this title. (Prior code SCC § 44.03.006)

Appendix I

The photos below, and captions beneath them, are examples of what does and does not constitute a violation of the unlawful camping ordinance.

Examples of violations:



This is an example of a violation, as a mat and sleeping bag are set up.



This is an example of a violation, due to the mattress being utilized.



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The use of cardboard, a pillow, and a tarp make this a violation.



This is a violation of the illegal camping ordinance due to the use of a sleeping bag.



Due to the use of the sleeping bag, this is also a violation of the camping ordinance.

Examples depicting no camping violation:



There is no violation here, as there is no camping paraphernalia being utilized.



This is not an example of a camping violation, but blocking a doorway is a violation of the sidewalk ordinance (12.24.020 SCC).



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There is no violation, as the subject is not blocking the sidewalk and has no camping paraphernalia.



There is no violation, as the subject is not blocking the sidewalk and has no camping paraphernalia.



There is no violation of the camping ordinance, but could be a violation of the excessive storage ordinance (12.52.040 SCC).



While this is not a camping ordinance violation, this may be a violation of illegal possession of the shopping cart.



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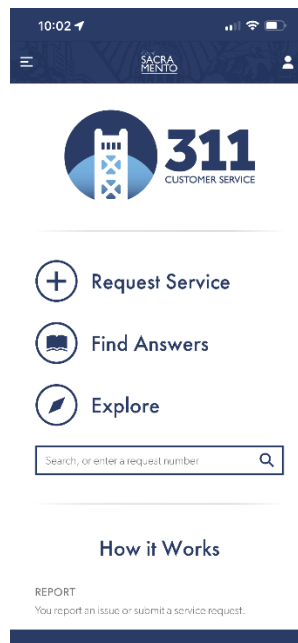
Appendix II

Procedure for Entering a Call on the 311 App

- Locate and open the **Sacramento 311 App** on your Department-issued phone.



- After opening the **311 App**, select "**Request Service.**"



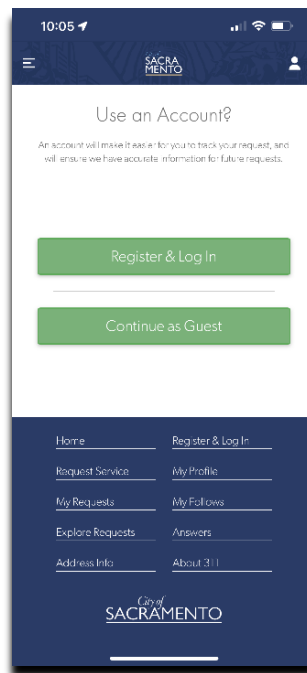


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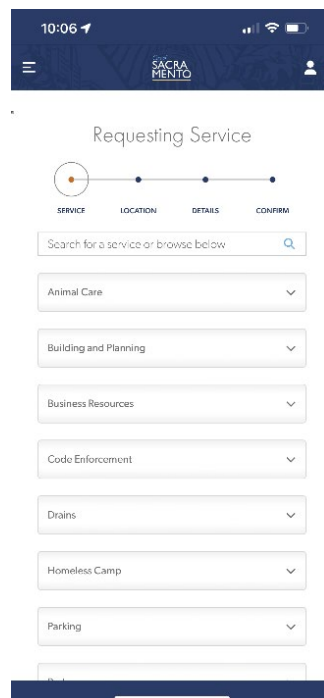
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- Officers with a 311 Account may utilize it, create an account using **"Register & Login"** or select the **"Continue as Guest"** option.



- Select the **"Homeless Camp"** option.



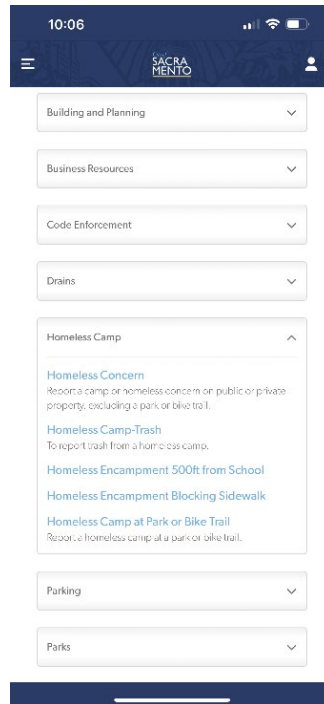


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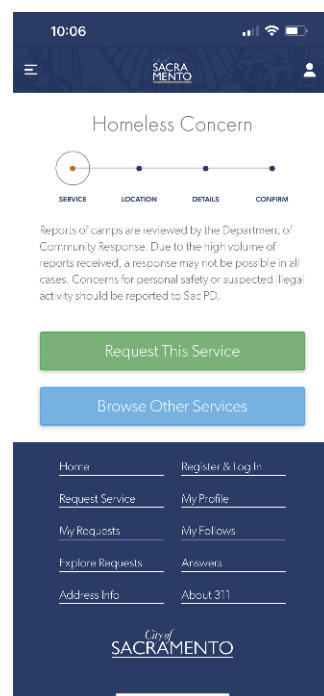
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- Then, select the most appropriate option from the list.



- Select "Request this service."





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- Enter the address where the camp is located or use the map feature to drop a pin at the camp's location.

10:07

SACRAMENTO

Service Location

Homeless Concern

SERVICE LOCATION DETAILS CONFIRM

Please search or use the map to select the address. Any similar open requests in the area will be displayed.

Use Map

Enter Address or Place

No address selected

- Enter "**public or private property**" using the dropdown boxes, and add photos via the "**Upload Files**" tab, if applicable. If there is an operational need for photographs of the encampment, include for IMT follow up. This will assist when the IMT responds for follow-up.

1:06

SACRAMENTO

Request Details

Homeless Concern

SERVICE LOCATION DETAILS CONFIRM

* Is the camp on private or public property?

Select an option

Add Photos and/or Files

Upload Files

Additional Notes

0/500 characters

Type something...

Next



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In the "Additional Notes" box, Officers shall enter:

- patrol1
- Officer's last name
- SPD CAD Call or Report Number
- Whether follow-up is needed from the IMT, and what that follow-up is. Example comments might include "No IMT follow-up needed", "Trash pick-up required", "Subject(s) cited, and camp still there", etc.).
 - If a citation was issued or an arrest occurred.
 (This will allow IMPACT/DCR Staff to search for calls entered by officers)

- Officers may enter their contact information on the "Contact Details" page or check the "I'd rather stay anonymous" box. Adding a contact on this page will allow the officer to receive a disposition of the call after it is closed.

1:11 SACRA PIEDITO

Contact Details

Please provide your contact information below so we can update you on your case's request. We do not share your contact info with other officers.

* First Name

* Last Name

* Phone Number
Numbers only (ex. 5555555555)

* Email Address

I'd rather stay anonymous*

*Please note that if you select this, we will not be able to contact you in the event of an issue with your request.

Next

- On the "Request Confirmation" page, confirm the information you entered is accurate and hit the "Submit" button.

1:11 SACRA PIEDITO

Request Confirmation

Homeless Concern

SEARCH LOCATION DETAILS CONFIRM

Please verify that the information below is correct.

Address for Request
300 RICHARDS BLVD, SACRAMENTO 95811

Is the camp on private or public property?
Private Property

Notes
patrol1 C/C: Jones 2412345

◀ Edit Location

◀ Edit Request Details

✓ Submit

✕ Cancel Request



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After submitting the service request

- A 311-call number will be provided.
- Officers shall enter that 311-call number along with the names and identifying information of the individuals they contacted on the CAD Call. Also, indicate if an arrest or citation occurred and to whom.

Once submitted, the IMT will evaluate and determine the next appropriate steps.

Appendix III (Report Template)

Date:

Time:

Location

Officer 1

Officer 2

Marked Unit Unmarked Unit

Body Worn Camera In Car Camera

The encampment was located at a:

Public Place

Private Place

Type of Encampment:

Bedding or blankets present

Trash or debris present (description):

Food present

Carts or other forms of transportation present

Prior advisements made:



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Prior CAD Call(s) and/or Report(s)

Action Taken:

Cited/Released

Booked

Violation(s) cited or booked:

602 PC (Trespass)

1203.2 PC (Violation of Probation)

8.140.030(A) SCC (Camping along critical Infrastructure)

8.140.030(B) SCC (Storage within critical Infrastructure)

12.24.020 SCC (Sidewalk Violation)

12.52.030(a) SCC (Unlawful Camping - Public Place)

12.52.030(b) SCC (Unlawful Camping - Private Place)

12.52.040(a) SCC (Illegal Storage of Property - Public Place)

12.52.040(b) SCC (Storage of Property-Private Place without owners consent)



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Description of violation(s):

Additional Observations (optional)



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Unlawful Camping Flowchart

