



Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department



The role of public health is to:

PROMOTE community-wide wellness,

PREVENT disease, and

PROTECT the community from infectious diseases,
environmental hazards, and epidemics

Recommendations Regarding the Sit/Lie Ordinance

Public Health and Human Services Subcommittee

July 22, 2010

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Background

April 8, 2010, City Council passed a Resolution (CUIR # 295) regarding medical exemptions to the Sit/Lie Ordinance.

- The City Manager was directed to work with homeless advocates and stakeholders, including House the Homeless, to consider additional possible medical exemptions to Section 9-4-14 of the City Code
- The City Manager was directed to return to the Council Public Health and Human Services (PHHS) Subcommittee with a recommendation for additional possible exemptions
- A friendly amendment from the dais called for staff to explore the feasibility of additional benches in the downtown area.

Stakeholder Participation

- Two stakeholder meetings were held: May 26 and June 7
- The first meeting provided situational information regarding the ordinance and enforcement of the ordinance, and participants provided feedback and asked questions regarding exemptions.
- The second meeting focused primarily on benches. Participants also discussed their points of view regarding exemptions again.

Staff Recommendation

The majority of the stakeholders, including the downtown homeless services agencies, were opposed to adding any additional exemptions to the Ordinance and believe the Ordinance as it stands is enforceable, with adequate discretion provided to APD to recognize medical conditions during enforcement.

Based on the stakeholder feedback and successful implementation of the Ordinance to date (determined in consultation with APD and Community Court), no additional exemptions are recommended.

Recommendations Regarding Benches

- **The Great Streets program includes plans for adding benches in the Downtown Areas.**
- **Adding benches in the areas around the downtown social services providers is not recommended.**