



COORDINATE OUTREACH COVERAGE
Key Considerations, Tips & Resources

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Key Considerations:

In order to truly end homelessness, your community must ensure that you are not only conducting outreach throughout your entire geography but that the outreach is coordinated and documented.

To ensure complete coverage and avoid unnecessary duplication, outreach teams (and/or other services you have engaged to assist with identifying unsheltered homelessness e.g., by-law, police) should coordinate to understand where and when each other is working.

Documentation of your coordinated outreach may include a wall map, written schedule, or other proof of a coordinated outreach structure.

The regularity of outreach and street engagement should reflect the unique nature of your geography and available resources. Outreach may be more frequent in “hot spots” with high concentration of individuals experiencing homelessness and less intense in, for example, rural or mountainous regions.

Ask yourself the following questions and refer to the tips and further resources below for assistance.

- a) Is the geographic coverage of your outreach clearly mapped out, informed by your data and regularly assessed, to ensure you are able to reach all unsheltered individuals within your community?
- b) Have you coordinated your outreach, ensuring that your outreach teams are deployed at the locations and the times that they are mostly likely to effectively engage with unsheltered homeless individuals, while minimizing duplication between providers?
- c) Do you have a documented outreach policy that clearly states how your outreach teams will be deployed and how they work with each other to swiftly connect individuals to housing?

Tips:

Tips are included below on resourcing outreach, mapping your outreach coverage, coordinating outreach, and documenting policy.

1. Resourcing Outreach

- Understand the [specific role played by street outreach](#).
- Think creatively to use all possible available resources. Remember to start where you are, use what you have, and do what you can.
- If you do not currently have a specific homeless outreach program or have limited resources, consider utilizing others in your community (e.g., other outreach programs, other homeless-specific services, first responders, and other services with which people

may come into contact such as social assistance, libraries, food banks, health or community centres etc.).

- Train first responders (e.g. EMTs, police, by-law) and community institutions (e.g. libraries) to complete the common assessment or create streamlined a process by which they can refer individuals to access points.
- Secure agreement for non-homelessness-specific partners to make referrals to dedicated outreach staff or access points (ensure warm referrals).
- Organize workers in agencies (e.g. shelters) to conduct mini outreach blitzes as often as they can (e.g., once or twice a month).
- Coverage should be frequent enough that you are confident in your data.

2. Mapping Coverage

- Map outreach efforts in your community's geography by facilitating a meeting with all organizations doing outreach, including mental health teams. See [facilitation guide](#).
- Get a large map of your community; a paper map on the wall is great, and projecting Google Maps on a screen can work too.
- Mark the parts of the map where they regularly do outreach.
- If 75% or more of the map is covered, move onto coordinating and documenting.
- If less than 75% of the map appears covered, discuss the uncovered portions. Why are they not being covered? Write down the main 1-3 reasons and look to solve them by coordinating your coverage.

3. Coordinating Outreach

- Coordinate outreach teams so that they work collaboratively with coverage and case conferencing.
- While the outreach providers are convened, construct a written schedule of when and where they do outreach:
 - On the map, mark hot spots and ensure that they are covered more frequently.
 - On the map, mark places where people experiencing homelessness are rarely found, and ensure that outreach providers visit them less frequently.
- Use this [Outreach Coverage Matrix](#)
- Evaluate the outreach schedule to ensure that resources are being efficiently allocated. If you need to increase geographic coverage, use the map and schedule to find outreach efforts that you can reallocate to other locations.
- Make the outreach coordination document(s) available after the meeting and ask participants to update the schedule as their plans change. Consider making the schedule on Google Docs so that workers can easily edit it.

- Create a community-wide schedule to determine when and where outreach coverage happens, and communicate it to all parties

4. Documented Policy

- Samples on website page listed below

See further information on the BFZ-C Website on the
[Street Outreach Page](#)