

Panhandling & How You Can Help

There's a better way to give.

Supporting local agencies that provide food, shelter and support services to many clients is the best way to help. These agencies are coupled with services that provide pathways and assistance out of negative living situations, helping to disrupt the cycles of poverty, substance use disorder, and mental illness that often contribute to panhandling. Service providers leverage each dollar given to multiply the impact of your donation. For example, \$1 provides enough food for three meals through the Food Bank of Central New York, and \$2.34 provides a hot meal at the Rescue Mission.

Did you know?

In 2019, Onondaga County partnered with the City of Syracuse and In My Father's Kitchen to establish a program called **Hire Ground?** Based on a successful program developed in Albuquerque, NM, this initiative provides the unemployed homeless and panhandlers with opportunities to earn wages. Through paid day labor work experiences, paired with onsite intake meetings, individuals are also connected to social services.

How You Can Make a Difference:

- Make a Donation to one of the local agencies providing much needed services for our community members.
- **Volunteer** at one of the many local agencies and give back to the community.

Who to Call, When:

- 911 – Call in the event of an emergency. If you're not sure whether the situation is a true emergency, officials recommend calling 911 and letting the call-taker determine whether emergency help is needed.
- 211 – Call in the event you'd like to connect social service providers to individuals in need. Call if concerned about individuals sleeping outside, especially in cold weather; people who may need food/shelter/clothing, mental health care, addiction intervention.
- (315) 423-HELP – Call with any non-emergency concerns. 423-HELP is a special phone number established for Downtown Syracuse to provide assistance with quality of life concerns, such as loitering. After regular business hours, the phone rolls over to the Syracuse Police Department officers on duty. If there's no immediate answer, please leave a message including date, time, and details (location, activity, description) of the concern.