

# TIPS FOR ENGAGING PANHANDLERS



## Have grace and understanding for those on the streets

Individuals who are on the streets asking for money every day are not bad people; they are just folks with incredible challenges who need help. Recent studies have shown people with mental illness and physical disabilities do the highest percentage of panhandling. Start from a place of compassion when thinking about or interacting with those on the streets.

## Be warm and treat each person with kindness

Many times the most important thing you can give someone panhandling on the streets is a kind disposition and a smile. Look them in the eyes, and acknowledge them as a human beings when you walk by.



## About giving them money:

The vast majority of those you see panhandling on a regular basis are people with substance abuse issues. Again, this doesn't make them bad people, but it does mean that most of the money you give to a frequent panhandler is going to be used to buy drugs and alcohol. Giving a panhandler cash, in most circumstances, will not benefit that person long-term. When approached by someone soliciting a donation from you, consider giving that person food or other essential items as a substitute for cash.

## Know what's available in the community

Our community provides a regular regimen of publicly available cooked meals that are served by passionate volunteers. Be aware of these resources, and help steer people toward them, if asked. Many panhandlers may not be interested in these options, but your knowledge of them will empower you to direct people to sources that can help provide their most basic needs.

## Think about solutions

Long-term investments in: permanent housing and shelters & social and mental health remedies are the only way to fix the underlying causes of panhandling. Use your voice to let elected and civic leaders know how you feel, and express your support for continued homeless solutions, even if those solutions cost money. Please register to exercise your right to vote, get involve in Boards, Commissions, churches and grass roots organizations. Remember that many of the most frequent panhandlers are people with physical and mental disabilities that make it impossible for them to just "pull themselves up by their bootstraps." The most vulnerable among us need our help getting off the streets, and many of them will need our help staying off the streets.



See below for a list of suggestions to give away and resources



**SUGGESTED BASIC NEED ITEMS TO GIVE TO PEOPLE PRACTICING  
PANHANDLING:**

- New Socks
- Deodorant
- Wet Wipes
- Soap
- Hand Sanitizer
- Razors
- Jackets/Coats
- New Hats
- New Gloves
- New Underwear
- Water Bottles
- Prepackaged Snacks (chips, fruit, granola bars, crackers etc.)
- Mints, cough drops, gum
- Toothbrush/Toothpaste
- Comb/small brush
- Chap stick
- Kleenex

The Dignity Project: distribute packs of female hygiene products such as sanitary pads, tampons, toothpaste and a toothbrush, a bar of soap, deodorant, and shampoo.

Distribution is done by Jewish Family Services 333 Bloomfield Avenue, Suite A, West Hartford, CT 06117 Tel. 860-236-1927, [info@jfshartford.org](mailto:info@jfshartford.org)

## **WEST HARTFORD FOOD RESOURCES**

### **Breakfast**

- **Universalist Church of West Hartford**  
Fern Street Food Ministry  
433 Fern Street, West Hartford, CT 06107  
Tel. 860-233-3669 Contact Coordinator 860-233-3669 ext. 109

Every other Monday morning at 8:45 AM to when the Mobil Food share is there, they welcome the local community for a free to go meal to take home.

The Mobile Food Share food truck outside has additional assistance/food.

### **Food Pantries**

- **Town of West Hartford Food Pantry, West Hartford Social Services**  
50 South Main Street, West Hartford, CT 06107  
Phone: 860-561-7569 or 860-561-7580

Curbside pickup: Tuesday 3:30 PM -5:30 PM  
Wednesday 9:00 AM-11:00 AM  
Friday 10:00 AM -12: 00 PM

The Food Pantry has non-perishable food items. Residents are eligible to use the Food Pantry once a month as needed. In order to use the Food Pantry, residents will need to provide a photo ID and a recent utility bill or piece of mail, showing a West Hartford address. Additional information, such as income and household size, may also be required and can be discussed with a staff member.

- **Jewish Family Services - The Anja Rosenberg Kosher Food Pantry**  
333 Bloomfield Ave Street A, West Hartford, CT 06117  
Phone: 860-236-1927  
Contact: Miriam Brander at [mbrander@jfshartford.org](mailto:mbrander@jfshartford.org)

Convenient contactless, curbside pick-up! To learn more about our scheduled distribution dates or for an application, you may or email her.

- **Mobile Food Share:**

There are several locations in West Hartford where Foodshare's mobile food van, delivers fresh produce and other food once a month. Time vary by location. Anyone 18 y/o and older is eligible to visit any location and only need to bring his/her own bags. ID is NOT required.

<b>Mobile Foodshare around West Hartford 2020</b>						
Town	West Hartford	West Hartford	West Hartford	Hartford	Hartford	Hartford
Name & Address	The Universalist Church 433 Fern Street	Congregation Beth Israel 701 Farmington Ave	Crossroads Plaza 740 North Main Street (Behind Big Y)	Hartford UMC 571 Farmington Ave	Cathedral of St. Joseph Back Parking Lot 809 Asylum Ave	Catholic Charities Asylum Hill Family Center 60 Gillett Street
Day	Every other <b>Monday</b>	Every four weeks on <b>Friday</b>	Every four weeks on <b>Friday</b>	Every other <b>Monday</b>	Every other <b>Wednesday</b>	Every other <b>Friday</b>
Time	8:45 – 9:15 A.M.	1:00-1:45 P.M.	1:00 – 1:45 P.M.	12:15-1:00 P.M	11:30AM-12:15 P.M	9:45 - 10:30 A.M
January	13, 27	17	3, 31	6, 20	15, 29	3, 17, 31
February	10, 24	14	28	3, 17	12, 26	14, 28
March	9, 23	13	27	2, 16, 30	11, 25	13, 27
April	6, 20	10	24	13, 27	8, 22	10, 24
May	4, 18	8	22	11	6, 20	8, 22
June	1, 15, 29	5	19	8, 22	3, 17	5, 19
July	13,27	3, 31	17	6, 20	1, 15, 29	3, 17, 31
August	10, 24	28	14	3, 17, 31	12, 26	14, 28
September	21	25	11	14, 28	9, 23	11, 25
October	5, 19	23	9	12, 26	7, 21	9, 23
November	2, 16, 30	20	6	9, 23	4, 18	6, 20
December	14, 28	18	4	7, 21	2, 16, 30	4, 18

## **CLOTHING**

- **Jewish Family Services Tara’s Closet**

333 Bloomfield Avenue, Suite A West Hartford, CT 06117

Phone: 860-236-1927

Contact: Miriam Brander at [mbrander@jfshartford.org](mailto:mbrander@jfshartford.org)

Tara’s Closet at Jewish Family Services distributes clothes to those in need and serves all people regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, disability, gender or sexual orientation. It is open seasonally by appointment and staffed by volunteers who will help JFS clients choose items for themselves and their families.

## **RESOURCES IN SURROUNDING TOWNS:**

### **SOUP KITCHENS**

- **House of Bread**, 1453 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06120  
Breakfast & Lunch Monday through Friday 860-278-3561 x233
- **Hartford Rescue Mission**, 650 Windsor Street, Hartford, CT 06120  
Serves an Evening Meal Mondays through Fridays 4:30 to 5:00 pm 860-241-0989
- **East Hartford Interfaith Ministries Friendship Soup Kitchen**,  
837 Main Street, East Hartford, CT 06108  
Serves a meal at 5 pm on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 860-528-5605
- **The Friendship Center at St. Elizabeth House**, 118 Main Street, Hartford, CT  
Open Tuesday through Saturday 8 am to 4 pm Breakfast served 8 am to 9 am and Lunch served 12 pm to 1 pm, also offers access to showers, laundry facilities, personal care items, health care, emergency food pantry, case management support services, and homelessness prevention services.

### **SHELTERS FOR HOMELESS**

To have access to shelter, individuals need to have access to call 211, if a phone that does not accept dialing “211” or from out of Connecticut, dial 1-800-203-1234. The line is operating 24/7. Online: <http://www.211ct.org/>

### **MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES**

**Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services | Region 4**  
<https://portal.ct.gov/DMHAS/Programs-and-Services/Region-4/Region-4>

### **HELPLINES AND SUPPORT**

*If you are experiencing a life-threatening medical emergency or fear for your safety, call 911. If you or someone you care about is experiencing a crisis, call 211 for more help.*

- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 1-800-273-8255 Trained crisis workers are available to talk 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Your confidential and toll-free call goes to the nearest crisis center in the Lifeline national network. These centers provide crisis counseling and mental health referrals. Live web chat also available: [suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat)  
**Nacional de Prevención del Suicidio:** 1-888-628-9454
- **SAMHSA Treatment Referral Helpline:** 1-877-726-4727 Get general information on mental health and locate treatment services in your area. Speak to a live person, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. EST.
- **Substance Abuse Treatment Access Line:** 1-800-563-4086 24/7 access line for addiction services information and referral.

- **Crisis Text Line for Youth:** Text “LISTEN” to 741-741, or visit [crisistextline.org](https://crisistextline.org) for info.
- **Veterans Crisis Line:** 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1 or Text 838255 for confidential support. Connects veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text.

**Veteran’s Homeless Clinic:** 860-666-6951, ext. 6466 or 203-907-6591

**Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence:** 1-888-999-5545

A statewide coalition of individual sexual assault crisis programs. The Alliance works to end sexual violence through victim assistance, community education, and public policy advocacy.

**National Domestic Violence Hotline:** 1-800-656-4673 Call if you or someone you care about has or is experiencing domestic or relationship-based violence and needs support, advice, and connections to a safe place.

**LGBT National Hotline:** 888-843-4564

We provide a safe space that is anonymous and confidential where callers can speak on many different issues and concerns including, but limited to, coming out issues, gender and/or sexuality identities, relationship concerns, bullying, safer sex information, suicide, and more.

**Alcoholics Anonymous:** 1-866-783-7712

**Narcotics Anonymous:** 800-627-3543

**Wheeler Clinic:** <https://www.wheelerclinic.org/>