People Who Use Drugs Deserve Housing Too

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Building a *healthy Arizona* with people who use drugs
Status Report: Housing

Zooming out: Social factors

Activity: Putting it to work
Status Report

Sources: Local grassroots and mutual aid organizations that regularly and meaningfully work with unhoused neighbors. AZ Based Newspapers, SPW Workers own experience
The Zone, Phoenix: pre closure
The Zone: Cleanout

900+

People displaced from The Zone Phoenix
Closed Camps Throughout AZ

Yavapai County
2023 ordinance made illegal to sleep in your car or outside anywhere that is not designated for camping (which often requires reservations and permits)

Bullhead City
Laughlin Bridge cleared out Physical barriers to bar access to the river, and cut down trees and brush that people were using for heat relief. “Illegal dumping”

Santa Rita Park
Cleared out several times in 2023. Has always been illegal to give food, supplies, money to residents of the park, enforced at the convenience of the government.
Zooming Out

Social Factors of Drug Use
Drug use does NOT equal addiction

Experimental
(Single or short-term use)

Recreational
(Controlled-use in a social setting)

Situational
(Use based on specific reason)

Intensive
(High Dose - Binge)

Compulsive
(Frequent/Daily Doses - Withdrawal)
Types of stigma that affect PWUD and Housing

- Individual
- Institutional
- By Association
- Internalized
With each layer that’s added, there is more to get through to reach traditional, stable housing.
Putting it Into Practice

Scenarios from those doing the work
Tangible Suggestions

In your Program
- Offer housing options
- Clear and consistent protocols and policies surrounding substance use
- On demand Harm Reduction Services for housing clients

At your agency
- Clear and consistent protocols and policies surrounding substance use
- Adequate support and training for housing case managers

With your Landlords
- On demand Harm Reduction Services
- Prioritize your relationship with your client
- Predatory FMR rates and rental companies

In your position
- Take clients on tours of facility
- Expanding view of housing
- Know tenant rights—and tell them!
- Practice exercising rights together
- Foster and prioritize trust
Your client uses drugs casually, has never caused any issues in their life. Maybe they have SMI designation, involved in peer support, Case manager, social security, (food box trips weekly), church involvement.

Your client got housing after being unsheltered for 2 years. Tend to have guest visit (who are currently unsheltered) and offer them food, rest and showers. They get a complaint from housing manager due to people visiting.

Landlord does a “random” walk through and sees a pipe. They revoke your clients housing and they are now back on the streets....
What can you take back?

Thoughts, revelations, connections, etc
Thank You

For free Naloxone, educational workshops, technical assistance, collaboration or to learn more about our programs, contact us at:

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