



PalAmerican
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SECURITY

Addressing the Rising Unhoused Population
in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County



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Introduction

Pittsburgh has been grappling with a notable increase in its unhoused population, presenting challenges across various sectors. This guide provides current statistics, explores underlying causes, examines legislative responses, and discusses the impacts on healthcare, manufacturing & unionized industries, and residential security (gated communities). Additionally, it highlights how PalAmerican Security offers tailored solutions to address these challenges.



Current Statistics and Trends

As of the latest data, approximately **11,000 individuals** encounter some aspect of homelessness annually in Allegheny County, which includes Pittsburgh ([Pittsburgh Foundation](#)). The 2024 **Point-in-Time Count** reported **1,026 individuals** experiencing homelessness, with **76% residing in shelters** ([Allegheny County Analytics](#)). Notably, there was an **8% increase** in unsheltered homelessness compared to the previous year.

Current Statistics and Trends

Several factors contribute to the rising unhoused population in Pittsburgh:

Housing Affordability and Availability: The city faces a shortage of affordable housing, with new developments often focusing on luxury units, leading to increased rents and displacement of lower-income residents ([Reddit Pittsburgh](#)).

Economic Disparities: Widening income gaps have made it challenging for lower-income residents to afford housing, pushing many into homelessness.

Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders: A significant portion of the unhoused population suffers from mental health issues and substance use disorders, hindering their ability to maintain stable housing.



State Legislative Responses

Pennsylvania and Pittsburgh have implemented measures to address homelessness:

Zoning Amendments: Pittsburgh's Planning Commission approved zoning changes to facilitate the development of homeless shelters and transitional housing, aiming to increase capacity and address the crisis ([TribLive](#)).

Affordable Housing Initiatives: The "500 in 500" plan, launched in June 2024, aims to provide 500 affordable housing units within 500 days. As of February 2025, 191 units have been created, and 278 individuals have secured housing ([Axios Pittsburgh](#)).

Impacts on Various Sectors

Healthcare (Hospitals & Clinics)

Security Officers for ER & Lobby Areas: On-site officers provide a visible deterrent, promoting patient and staff safety.

De-Escalation & Crisis Intervention: Trained personnel manage disruptive behavior with compassion and professionalism.

Mobile Patrols & Access Control: Secure hospital perimeters and prevent unauthorized access.

Patient Watch Services: PalAmerican provides trained security personnel for 24/7 patient watch, creating continuous observation of high-risk patients while reducing the burden on medical staff.

Emergency Room Overcrowding: Hospitals experience higher patient volumes due to unhoused individuals seeking medical care for untreated chronic conditions and mental health issues.

Strained Resources: Healthcare facilities face increased costs related to uncompensated care, security risks, and public health concerns.

Staff Safety & Patient Experience: Unhoused individuals seeking shelter in emergency rooms can create security challenges and impact patient satisfaction ratings.

Increase in Hospital Violence: The rise in mental illness among the unhoused population has contributed to an increase in violence within hospitals, affecting both staff and patient safety.

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Manufacturing & Unionized Industries

Workforce Impact: Many workers in Pittsburgh's manufacturing sector face housing instability, which affects their attendance and job performance.

Worksite Security Risks: Homeless encampments near industrial sites pose safety hazards, liability concerns, and potential disruptions to operations.

Union Advocacy & Social Responsibility: Unions and employers may seek solutions to address the root causes of homelessness while balancing safety and productivity.

Residential Security (Gated Communities)

Unauthorized Access & Trespassing: Gated communities face concerns about non-residents entering private property, impacting safety and resident comfort.

Property Value Concerns: Residents worry about declining home values due to nearby encampments or security issues.

Community Safety & Well-Being: Increased need for security patrols and controlled access measures to protect residents and amenities.

PalAmerican's Solutions for Each Sector

Healthcare (Hospitals & Clinics)

Security Officers for ER & Lobby Areas: On-site officers provide a visible deterrent, promoting patient and staff safety.

De-Escalation & Crisis Intervention: Trained personnel manage disruptive behavior with compassion and professionalism.

Mobile Patrols & Access Control: Secure hospital perimeters and prevent unauthorized access.

Patient Watch Services: PalAmerican provides trained security personnel for 24/7 patient watch, providing continuous observation of high-risk patients while reducing the burden on medical staff. These professionals assist in de-escalation, monitor high-risk individuals, and increase patient and staff safety without requiring additional nursing resources.

Manufacturing & Unionized Industries

Facility Perimeter Security: Prevent unauthorized access to worksites and deter loitering.

Incident Response Teams: Quick deployment of security personnel to handle disruptions or trespassing incidents.

Employee Safety Escorts: Promote workforce security, especially for night-shift workers.

Residential Security (Gated Communities)

Access Control & Visitor Screening: Trained officers manage gated entries, verifying resident and guest identities.

24/7 Mobile Patrols: Regular sweeps of community spaces, parking lots, and perimeters.

Community Safety Training: Educating residents on security best practices and emergency response procedures.

PalAmerican's Differentiated Approach to Empathetically Handling the Unhoused

PalAmerican emphasizes a compassionate yet effective strategy:

Clear Boundaries: Establish and communicate property boundaries to deter unauthorized access.

Environmental Deterrents: Utilize design elements like strategic landscaping to discourage loitering.

Integrated Surveillance: Employ intelligent video monitoring systems to detect and respond to unauthorized activities.

Collaborative Enforcement: Work alongside local law enforcement to uphold policies against loitering and unauthorized camping.

Compassionate Engagement: Train security personnel to engage respectfully with the unhoused, providing information on available resources and support services.

Community Involvement: Encourage property stakeholders to support local shelters and participate in homelessness solutions.





Conclusion & Call to Action

The rising unhoused population in Pittsburgh presents unique challenges for **healthcare, manufacturing, and residential security sectors**. While homelessness is a complex societal issue, businesses and property managers must take proactive steps to safeguard their environments, employees, and assets. **Security is not just about enforcement—it's about creating a safe and welcoming space that balances protection with empathy.**

PalAmerican offers a **comprehensive and compassionate approach to security**, integrating professional guard services, mobile patrols, and a state-of-the-art **Security Operations Center (SOC)** to deter unauthorized activity, minimize disruptions, and enhance overall safety.

Take the Next Step:

Schedule a Security Assessment – Connect with PalAmerican's security experts to discuss your unique challenges.

Hire PalAmerican for On-Site Security – Deploy professional security officers trained in de-escalation and public engagement.

Comprehensive Security Training – Equip your team with best practices in crisis intervention and risk mitigation.

Your security challenges deserve a strategic, compassionate, and effective solution. Let PalAmerican help you navigate the complexities of securing your property while maintaining an empathetic approach. Contact us today to schedule your consultation!

Contact Us

PalAmerican Pittsburgh
329 Forest Grove Rd Suite 204
Coraopolis, PA 15108

Contact: Nicole Ryan
Email: nzenter@palamerican.com
Tel: 408-978-9111