



PalAmerican

SECURITY

Addressing the Rising Unhoused
Population in St. Pete & Tampa Market



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The St. Pete / Tampa area is experiencing 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 luxury residential communities, education, and healthcare. Additionally, it highlights how PalAmerican Security offers tailored solutions to address these challenges with professionalism and empathy.

Current Statistics and Trends

As of recent reports, the St. Pete / Tampa region has seen a 15% increase in its unhoused population over the past year. Key statistics include:

Hillsborough County has over 1,500 individuals experiencing homelessness on any given night (Tampa Hillsborough Homeless Initiative, 2024).

Pinellas County reports approximately 2,400 individuals experiencing homelessness, with a rise in unsheltered individuals (Pinellas County Homeless Leadership Board, 2024).

40% of the region's homeless population is experiencing chronic homelessness due to mental illness or substance abuse disorders (Florida Housing Coalition).

Causes of the Increase

Several factors contribute to the rising unhoused population in the St. Pete / Tampa market:

Housing Affordability & Shortages: The rapid increase in real estate prices and rent costs has displaced lower-income residents.

Economic Disparities: The cost of living in St. Pete and Tampa continues to rise, outpacing wage growth, making housing unattainable for many.

Mental Health & Substance Use Disorders: A significant percentage of the unhoused population suffers from mental health challenges and addiction, limiting their ability to secure stable housing.

Influx of Transient Populations: The mild climate and social services in the region attract unhoused individuals from other parts of the country.

State Legislative Responses

Florida has enacted various measures to address homelessness, particularly in the St. Pete / Tampa area:

Affordable Housing Initiatives: The Live Local Act (2023) allocated \$711 million toward workforce and affordable housing across Florida, with investments in the Tampa Bay area.

Emergency Shelter Expansion: Hillsborough and Pinellas counties have increased funding for emergency and transitional housing programs.

Mental Health & Rehabilitation Programs: Florida's legislature has boosted funding for mental health initiatives aimed at stabilizing at-risk individuals before they become homeless.

Impacts on Various Sectors

Luxury Residential & HOA Security

Unauthorized Access & Trespassing: Increased homelessness has led to rising concerns about non-residents entering private communities.

Vandalism & Property Crime: Higher rates of petty crime and vandalism are affecting gated communities and high-end residential areas.

Resident Safety & Community Perception: Security concerns influence property values and homeowner confidence.



Education (Guardian Program for Schools)

Safety Risks Around School Campuses: Schools are seeing increased reports of encampments near educational facilities, raising concerns about student safety.

Impact on Student Well-Being: Homelessness among students has risen, with over 5,000 homeless students identified in the Tampa Bay school districts (Florida Department of Education).

Guardian Program Implementation: More schools are seeking enhanced security measures, including the presence of trained guardians to manage potential safety concerns.

Security Officers for ER & Lobby Areas: On-site officers provide a visible deterrent, increasing 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.

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

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

PalAmerican's Solutions for Each Sector

Luxury Residential & HOA Communities

Access Control & Visitor Verification: Security personnel manage gated entries, allowing only authorized individuals gain access.

Mobile Patrols & Incident Response: Regular security sweeps and rapid response to unauthorized activity enhance resident safety.

Surveillance & Environmental Design: Implementation of strategic landscaping and lighting to deter unauthorized presence.

Education (Guardian Program for Schools)

School-Based Guardians: Armed and trained professionals provide a security presence on campus.

Threat Assessment & Emergency Preparedness: Schools receive expert guidance on handling security threats and crisis response.

Community Safety Partnerships: Collaboration with law enforcement to manage encampments near school properties.

Healthcare (Hospitals & Clinics)

Security Officers for ER & Lobby Areas: On-site officers provide a visible deterrent, increasing 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. These professionals assist in de-escalation, monitor high-risk individuals, and increase patient and staff safety without requiring additional nursing resources.



PalAmerican's Empathetic Approach to Security

PalAmerican Security integrates security with a compassionate approach:

Clear Boundaries & Prevention Strategies: Establishing security perimeters and deterrent measures to manage safety concerns.

Advanced Surveillance & Access Control: Leveraging technology to enhance security while maintaining a welcoming environment.

Community & Institutional Partnerships: Collaborating with local agencies to address homelessness holistically.

Compassionate Engagement: Training security teams to interact respectfully with the unhoused population while upholding property and safety standards.



Conclusion & Call to Action

The rising unhoused population in the St. Pete / Tampa market presents unique security challenges for residential communities, schools, and healthcare facilities. While homelessness is a complex societal issue, businesses and property managers must take proactive steps to safeguard their environments, employees, and assets.

Take the Next Step:

Schedule a Security Assessment – Discuss your specific needs with PalAmerican’s security experts.

Hire On-Site Security Officers – Deploy trained personnel to provide a professional security presence.

Security Training & Risk Mitigation – Equip your team with best practices in emergency response and crisis intervention.

Let PalAmerican help you navigate security challenges with professionalism, empathy, and expertise. Contact us today to learn more!

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