

# City of Boston Storage Program Policy

## 1. Introduction

For individuals experiencing homelessness, a lack of secure storage options for their personal belongings can create a significant barrier to shelter, treatment options, and other critical resources. The City of Boston Storage Program (hereinafter the “Storage Program”) is designed to provide safe and secure storage solutions for individuals experiencing homelessness within our community. By facilitating transportation of personal belongings to the Storage Program and permitting regular access to belongings throughout the duration of program use, the City of Boston seeks to mitigate these obstacles for individuals experiencing homelessness across the City.

## 2. Program Purpose

The primary objectives of the Storage Program are:

2.1 To offer a secure place for individuals experiencing homelessness, and residing in campsites, to store their belongings, reducing the risk of theft or loss.

2.2 To promote the dignity and well-being of Program Participants by providing a safe and accessible storage facility.

2.3 To facilitate regular access to essential personal items, documents, and belongings that are necessary for daily living, employment, and accessing social services.

2.4 To address barriers to shelter, to treatment options, and to other critical resources otherwise resulting from a lack of safe and secure storage solutions.

## 3. Definitions

"Campsite" means any place where a tent, tarp, or other temporary structure is established for the purpose of maintaining an outdoor shelter.

“Camp Materials” means items used to establish or facilitate occupancy of a Campsite, including tents, tarps, or other temporary structures, as well as large furniture, stoves, and other cooking instruments.

“Program Participants” means individuals experiencing homelessness within the City of Boston who are offered storage pursuant to Section 16-65.6 of the Boston City Code.

“Storage Personnel” means the Storage Program staff, including but not limited to City staff involved in implementing the Storage Program.

“Storage Program” means the City’s scheme to store personal belongings of Program Participants.

#### **4. Program Participants**

4.1 The Storage Program may only be used by Program Participants as defined above.

4.2 Program Participants will be contacted directly by Storage Personnel, who will assist with transportation of the Program Participant’s belongings to the Storage Program.

#### **5. Program Operation**

##### 5.1 Service Provided

Program Participants will be provided at least four (4) storage bins, provided by the City, to temporarily store their belongings for at least 120 days. The average storage bin size is approximately 27 gallons.

##### 5.2 Rules and Regulations

Program Participants must adhere to the following rules and regulations:

- Respect the privacy and belongings of other Program Participants.
- Do not store illegal or hazardous materials.
- Report any damage or security concerns to Storage Personnel.

### 5.3 Property Eligible for Storage Program

The following items are eligible for storage. This is not an exhaustive list, and Storage Personnel will use best judgment to allow items for storage:

- Personal identification and documents
- Valuables
- Clothing
- Hygiene products and toiletries
- Items of basic necessities

### 5.4 Property Ineligible for Storage Program

The following items are prohibited from storage. This is not an exhaustive list, and Storage Personnel will use best judgment to determine what items are appropriate for storage:

- Furniture
- Bulk items unable to fit in a 27-gallon tub
- Perishable goods, including food, liquids, or organic matters of any kind
- Animals
- Plants
- Flammable or combustible objects
- Firearms, explosives, weapons, ammunition
- Hazardous substances (including items contaminated with biohazards)
- Currency
- Illegal items or substances
- Vehicles
- Property infested or potentially infested with pests or rodents
- Items deemed unsafe to store by Storage Personnel, including locked or sealed containers

In the event that Storage Personnel cannot store an item due to ineligibility of the item or its size, Storage Personnel will assist the Program Participant in disposing of the item.

### 5.5 Labeling and Logging of Property

Upon entry into the storage program, all bins will be labeled with the Program Participant's identifying information. To access their belongings at a later date, the Program Participant will provide the identifying information associated with their bins.

## 5.6 New or Additional Items

Additional items may be added to bins, but must still meet eligibility requirements.

## 5.7 Unclaimed Property of Program Participants After 120 Days

In the event that a Program Participant does not claim their property within 120 days, Storage Personnel will attempt to contact the Program Participant using the contact information provided. If more time is needed to store the property, Storage Personnel may store the property for an additional 60 days. If Storage Personnel cannot contact the Program Participant over the course of a 30-day period, Storage Personnel will dispose or donate all items stored with the program. Storage Personnel will record each date of attempted contact with the Program Participant as well as the date of disposal or donation of the items.

If Storage Personnel is unable to locate the Program Participant and proceeds to dispose of or donate the property, Storage Personnel may store any form of personal identification, including driver's licenses, passports, and Social Security cards. Due to safety concerns, Storage Personnel will not sort through bins to identify these items.

## **6. Onsite Location Overview**

### 6.1 Location and Designated Access Hours

- The storage facility will be located at [Address]
- Designated Access Hours for Program Participants to access their property shall be on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

### 6.2 Access

- Program Participants will be granted access to their storage bins during designated hours.
- Access may be monitored and supervised by Storage Personnel for security purposes.

### 6.3 Staffing and Security of Onsite Location

The Storage Program will be staffed by trained personnel responsible for facility supervision and participant assistance.

## **7. Feedback System**

### 7.1 Service Provided

The City's Feedback System is a system that allows Program Participants to submit general feedback regarding the Storage Program or to submit a claim for reimbursement of lost or damaged property.

### 7.2 Access to the Feedback System

Program Participants can access the Feedback System in two ways. First, Program Participants may use an online form. Second, Program Participants may request a physical form from Storage Personnel.

## **8. Abandoned Property and Unattended Property**

### 8.1 Property where the Owner is not Readily Identifiable

For property at a campsite that is unclaimed by an individual or where the owner is not readily identifiable, Storage Personnel will make a determination as to whether the property is abandoned or unattended. In either case, property that poses an immediate health and safety risk is subject to immediate disposal.

### 8.2 Procedure to Differentiate Between Unattended Property and Abandoned Property

The City recognizes that individuals will not always be co-located with their campsite and their belongings at all hours of the day. In order to ensure that

unattended property at a campsite is not disposed of, Storage Personnel will first attempt to identify the owner and to determine the status of the property, including through inquiry to other people in the area. If the Storage Personnel cannot identify the owner of the property, they will then use their best judgment to determine whether the property is temporarily unattended or abandoned. Storage Personnel may store any form of personal identification, including driver's licenses, passports, and Social Security cards. Due to safety concerns, Storage Personnel will not sort through belongings to identify these items.

## **9. Amendments to Policy**

Following a period of review and evaluation, the policy may be amended as needed to reflect changes in program operations, regulations, or community needs.

## **10. Conclusion**

The City of Boston is committed to providing a safe and secure storage solution for individuals experiencing homelessness and residing in encampments, with the goal of promoting their dignity and well-being. This policy serves as a guideline for the operation of the program and is subject to regular review and improvement.

## **11. Indemnification and Liability Waiver**

The Storage Program will be located in a locked facility where Program Participants must provide identifying information in order to access their belongings. However, Program Participants store their items with the Storage Program at their own risk.

By participating in the Storage Program, Program Participants agree to indemnify and hold harmless the City of Boston, the Boston Public Health Commission, the chosen vendor, agents, officers, and employees against any and all claims, liabilities, and costs for personal injury or property damages, or other damages.