

SCOPE



Safety



Cleaning



Ownership



Partnership



Engagement

Leading the Way: SEPTA's Coordinated Response to Safety and Security

Table of Contents

Letter from General Manager and CEO Leslie S. Richards
and Board Chairman Pasquale T. Deon, Sr. **1**

What is the Problem?/Defining the Challenge **2**

Where is the Problem? **3**

What are we Doing about it? **5**

What do we Need help with? **13**

Appendix **16**



Letter from GM/CEO and Board Chairman

Every night, more than a thousand individuals experience homelessness in Philadelphia and the surrounding counties. The scale of this crisis is so great that it exceeds the capacity of existing safety nets. Many of these individuals end up seeking shelter on SEPTA's vehicles and in our stations. This is not an individual failure. It is a profound failure of society, and one that we cannot ignore on a practical or moral level.

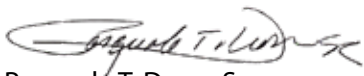
Last year, in response to this crisis, we launched our nationally recognized SCOPE program. SCOPE, which stands for Safety, Cleaning, Ownership, Partnership and Engagement, has harnessed every person and resource at SEPTA to be a part of the solution. Our transit police officers are working side-by-side with outreach workers to connect people to community-based services like housing and mental health care. Our maintenance staff has redoubled its efforts to keep our elevators, bathrooms, stations and vehicles clean for riders. We have increased the presence of security workers and other attendants to make our system safer for all and easier to navigate.

Equally important, in its first year of operation, SCOPE has mobilized homeless service providers, government agencies, nonprofits, community organizations, academic groups and others to partner with us. Recognizing the complexities and the long-term efforts required to address chronic homelessness throughout our system, SEPTA is creating a new Outreach Services Department led by a new director who will report directly to the chief operating officer. This new department will continue driving SEPTA's vision and approach for addressing homelessness agencywide and overseeing staff who have been working internally and externally to coordinate SEPTA's vulnerable population initiatives. These critical investments are necessary to enable SEPTA to sustain its role as the region's economic engine.

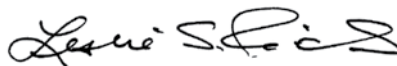
We know that public transit not only moves people to their destinations, but it also moves people to action by bringing partners and solutions together in the communities SEPTA serves. In the end, it is only through coordinated, communitywide action that we will be able to connect people to services like housing and mental health care to end homelessness on our system.

SEPTA cannot solve this public health crisis on our own. But with support and action from diverse partners, we can make SEPTA safe for all and continue to be the economic backbone of the city and region.

Sincerely,



Pasquale T. Deon, Sr.
Board Chairman



Leslie S. Richards
CEO and General Manager



WHAT is the Problem?

Defining the Challenge

Each day hundreds of individuals experiencing homelessness, mental health and drug addiction seek shelter in SEPTA stations and on our vehicles because our property offers immediate shelter- often on a 24/7 basis. We understand that all people have the same basic life-sustaining need for shelter. We want to see those in need connected with appropriate resources. Some of the people seeking temporary refuge on SEPTA property are victims of abuse, including domestic violence and elder abuse. Some are veterans, who have not received the critical services they deserve. Others are young people who have aged out of foster care. This population, which we call the “vulnerable population,” represents a humanitarian crisis and we are committed to addressing this complex societal issue in a compassionate and impactful way.

As the region’s economic driver, SEPTA must focus on our purpose: to deliver safe, reliable, accessible, customer-focused transit services. We recognize the suffering and extensive needs of the vulnerable population, and we have taken many actions to help them. At the same time, when the vulnerable population interacts with our employees and paying customers, it often makes them feel less safe on our system. This leads to reduced ridership, and it threatens the ability of our agency to recover and contribute effectively to the region’s economic vitality, sustainability, and quality of life.

During the pandemic, the vulnerable population increased throughout our service area. As a result, service delays have been exacerbated due to destinationless riders refusing to leave the trains and platforms, thus utilizing the system as a place of shelter/respice. Members of the vulnerable population use SEPTA stations and shelters as a place to take illegal drugs, find safety, and stay out of the elements, eat

meals, and use transit facilities for activities of daily living which damages to SEPTA facilities and, occasionally, disturbs interactions with



customers. Almost daily, members of the vulnerable community suffering from mental health issues or under the influence of drugs jump or fall into the track area, causing potential injury, loss of life and severe service disruption.

In March 2021, the crisis became so acute at the Somerset Station on the Market Frankford El that SEPTA was forced to close this station entirely for two weeks. Individuals experiencing homelessness, mental illness and opioid addiction had been using the station as shelter, and the stairs, platform and elevator had degraded from urine and fecal matter. Needle and drug paraphernalia littered the area. To overhaul the station and bring it back to a state of good repair, SEPTA invested more than \$1 million during the two-week closure. While efforts were put in place to help prevent damage from recurring, the elevators today are again showing signs of degradation due to the influx of illicit behavior.

There were an estimated 1,250 opioid overdose deaths in Philadelphia in 2021, an increase of 8.7% from 2019

Source: Panel Discussion: Stigma Around Opioid Use Disorder Presents Challenges to Treatment, The Pew Charitable Trusts’ Philadelphia Research and Policy Project, May 4, 2022. <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2022/05/04/panel-discussion-stigma-around-opioid-use-disorder-presents-challenges-to-treatment>

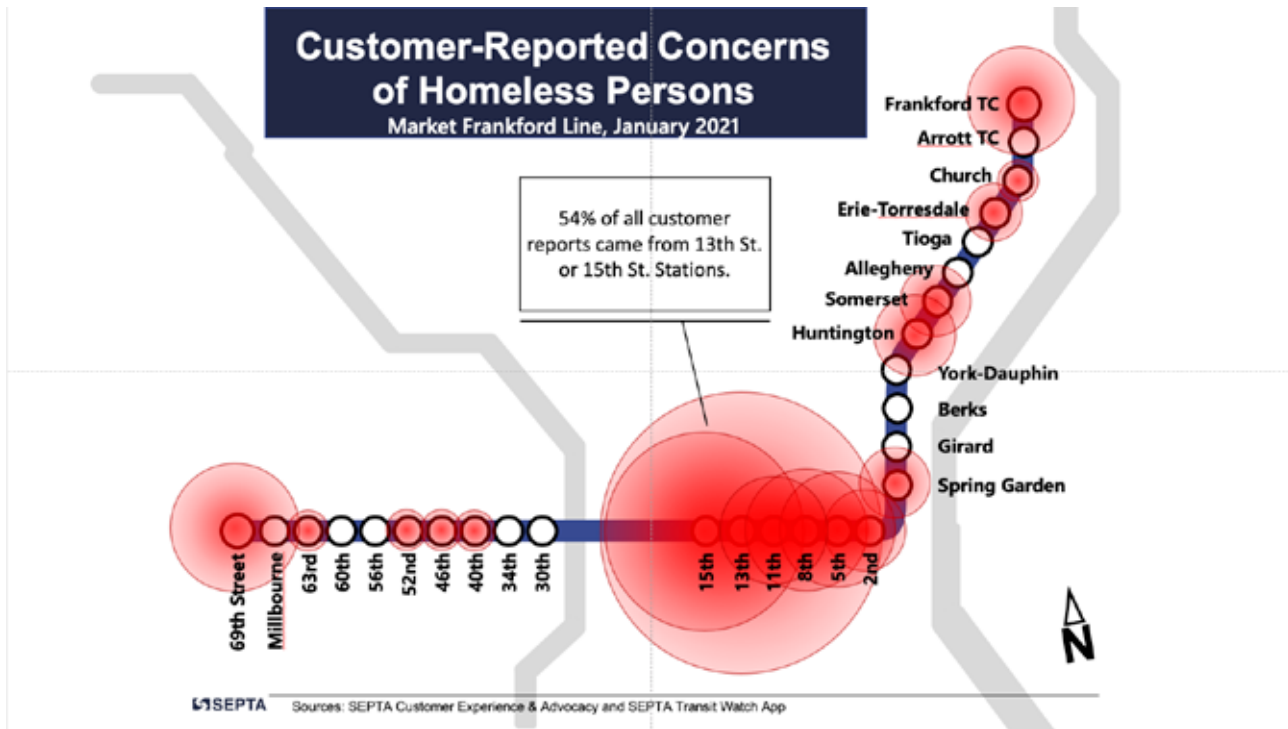
To solicit ongoing feedback from riders and employees and provide them with an immediate way to call for help, SEPTA uses its “Transit Watch App” and “Veritas” (an online, customer service reporting tool). Customers and employees use these tools to report issues, make recommendations, file complaints, and offer commendations to SEPTA. The Transit Watch App can be downloaded to a computer, smartphone or tablet (see sidebar on page 16).

According to recent data from Veritas and feedback from our Transit Watch App, homelessness is among the top three report types, along with smoking and cleanliness. These reporting tools also help us identify where the problem areas are on our system so that we can target our resources to address this public health crisis.



WHERE is the Problem?

Based on data collection and employee feedback, SEPTA created this heat map, to identify the most prevalent **hotspots** on our system. Although this map does not highlight all areas where the vulnerable population seek shelter, it identifies some of the most challenging stations, specifically on the Market Frankford Line.



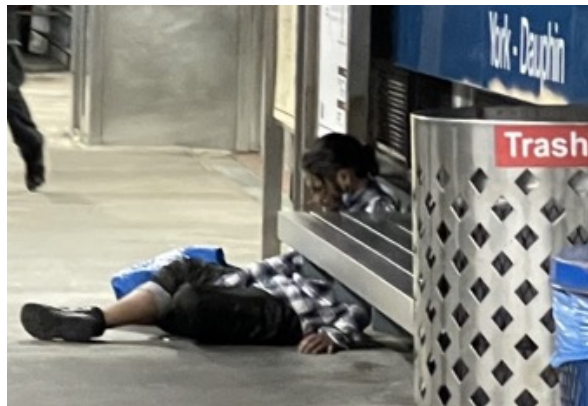
Market Frankford Line:

- Allegheny
- Frankford Transportation Center
- Huntingdon
- Somerset
- 69th Street Terminal



Regional Rail Stations:

- Jefferson
- Suburban



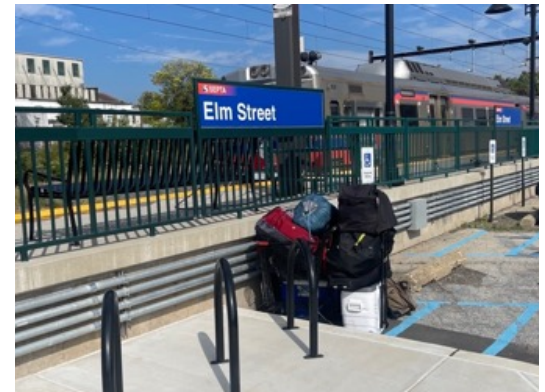
While there was a 2% average increase in the total number of unsheltered persons in Philadelphia from 2017 to 2021, the city also lost **333** emergency shelter beds in the last two years.

Source: A data snapshot from the City of Philadelphia's Office of Homeless Services describes various metrics about the City of Philadelphia's mission to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring.

Additional areas of concern are 2nd, 5th, 8th, 11th, 13th, 15th Street/ City Hall, and Norristown Transportation Center. A recurring problem for SEPTA is found on the Market Frankford El train. Since 2020, the number of vulnerable individuals on the train has increased exponentially. Our attempt to keep ahead of this surge has stretched SEPTA's resources.

In February 2022, SEPTA participated in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) annual Point-In-Time (PIT) Count of unsheltered individuals. This is done by the Continuum of Care (CoC) that is funded by HUD to provide services for individuals experiencing homelessness. By partnering with the Counties' CoCs, we established our own baseline count, providing us with recent and robust data to use in advocating for services and funding for vulnerable individuals in need of housing, treatment and other social services. The Agency's count, noted in the grid below, revealed 562 people seeking shelter on SEPTA property in Philadelphia and the surrounding counties.

The results crystallized the enormity of the problem which identified that out of the 562 unsheltered individuals counted by SEPTA, **78%** were located within Philadelphia County, **17%** in Delaware County and **3%** in Montgomery County. Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services PIT count revealed that there are 700 unsheltered individuals living on the streets of Philadelphia, and SEPTA's independent 2022 point-in-time count revealed 437 unsheltered individuals on SEPTA's stations and vehicles within Philadelphia County.



PIT Count – By the Numbers							
COUNTY	2020*		2021*		2022*		SEPTA 2022
	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Unsheltered
Bucks	303	30	265	23	399	28	0
Chester	499	23	x	x	x	x	0
Delaware	252	25	x	x	289	46	95
Montgomery	261	40	x	x	532	36	19
Philadelphia	4,676	958	3602	700	x	x	437
Trenton TC	x	x	x	x	x	x	11
Totals	5,991	1,076	3867	723	931	64	562

*Source: FY2021 Data Snapshot, City of Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services. <http://philadelphiaofficeofhomelesservices.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/FY2021-Data-Snapshot.pdf>

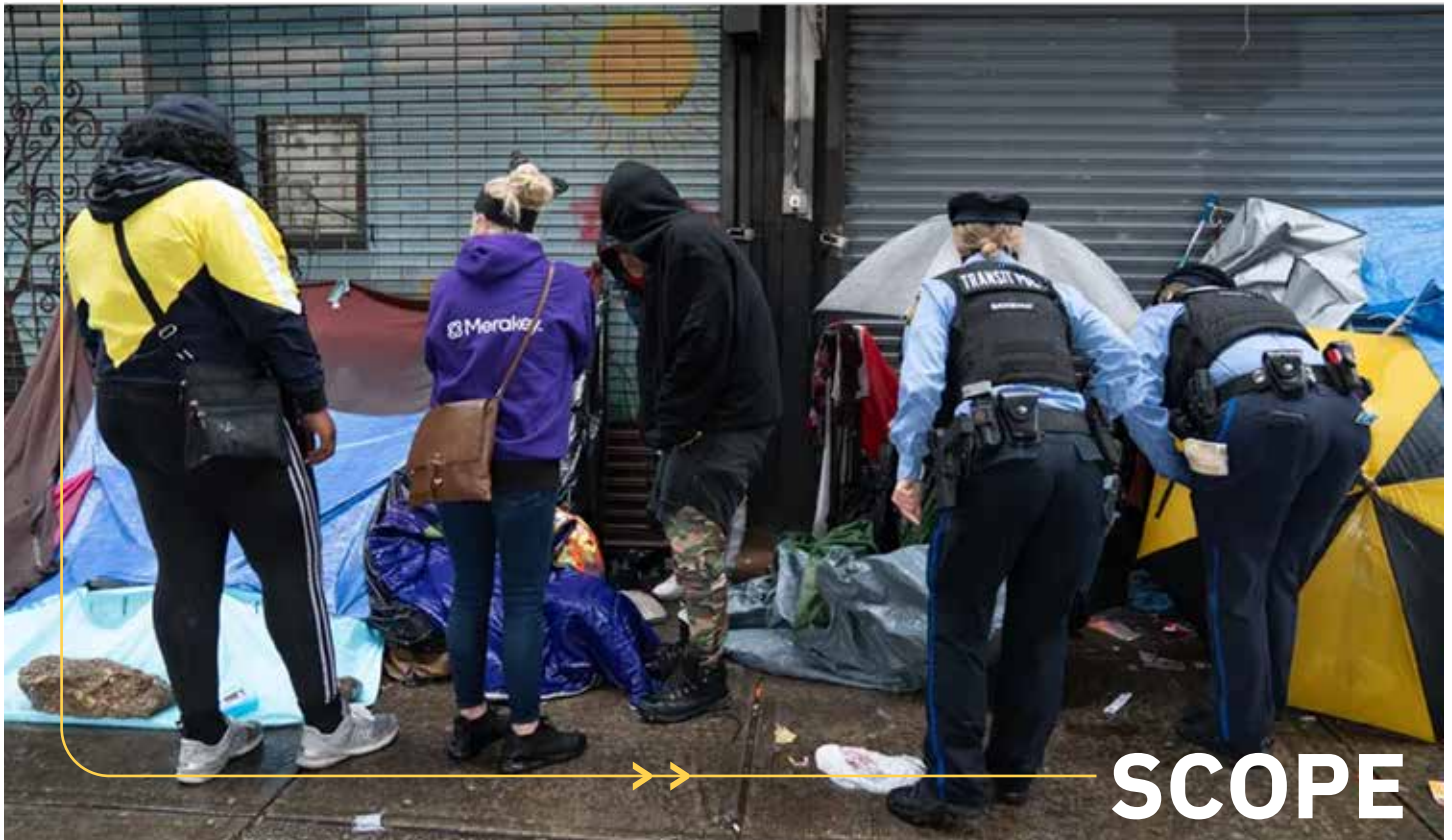
WHAT are we doing about it?

Making SEPTA Safe for All

As a leading transit agency, SEPTA has always been committed to customer safety and investing in new technology to continuously enhance system security. Our customers have long had access to emergency call boxes in the Market Frankford Line (MFL)/Broad Street Line (BSL) stations to contact SEPTA Transit Police. Every MFL car is equipped with two passenger emergency intercoms that enable customers to communicate with the train operator. Every BSL car is equipped with six passenger emergency alarms to alert the train operator to emergencies happening within the car. In addition, thousands of SEPTA staff are on the system every day in direct contact with SEPTA's Control Center, which coordinates police response, monitors the 28,000 cameras on SEPTA property and vehicles, etc.

As the vulnerable population increased on our system, in April 2021, SEPTA launched its SCOPE program, a comprehensive and compassionate response to the challenges of the vulnerable population. **SCOPE** stands for:

-  Safety
-  Cleaning
-  Ownership
-  Partnership
-  Engagement.



At the heart of our SCOPE initiative are three overarching goals. These objectives, which guide every action we undertake, are to:

Ensure a safe working environment for all SEPTA employees.

Provide a clean and safe transportation system for riders.

Connect vulnerable individuals within the SEPTA service area to critical community-based social services, including housing, mental health care and substance abuse treatment programs, so that they can reintegrate into society and lead healthy, fulfilling lives.

To meet these goals, SEPTA's strategy is to increase visibility while compassionately engaging and connecting the vulnerable population to resources. SEPTA is also working to increase public awareness of the vulnerable population's needs and encourage everyone to be a part of the solution. Riders have access to enhanced crowdsourcing tools to report concerns, and everyone within the authority – from maintenance workers to engineers to transit officers – is empowered to identify problems and put forward solutions.

At the same time, SEPTA found itself downstream in this situation and is actively heightening awareness of its limitations as a transportation agency in addressing this complex societal problem. A key challenge and objective of the SCOPE program, therefore, is to continue encouraging multiple governmental and nongovernmental organizations to do their part to find lasting solutions.



Reports of violent crime incidents involving a gun rose 39% from 2019 to 2021 in Philadelphia

Source: Year-end incident report from the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, which describes crimes reported to and logged by the Philadelphia Police Department. https://data.philadao.com/Incidents_Report_YE.html

Here is an overview of what we are doing now, with our partners, to ensure a safe and clean transit system:



SAFETY

Recent and ongoing efforts to prevent crime and improve security include:

- Increasing uniformed police deployment on board trains to enforce order maintenance and quality of life concerns that impact our customers perception of safety.
- Deploying SEPTA transit officers strategically at key locations to address the vulnerable population and prevent crime.
- Deploying 88 SEPTA Outreach Specialists (SOS) throughout the day on a variety of Sub/EL trains and stations.
- Providing 24-hour security coverage at Norristown Transportation Center.
- Partnering with the Norristown Police Department to include Norristown Transportation Center on their security tours; and with the Chester Police Department to include Chester Transportation Center on its list of daily security checks.
- Creating a Virtual Patrol Center to monitor some of the system's stations and concourses using 30,000 cameras. Every revenue vehicle, MFL/BSL stations, and select trolley and regional rail stations are equipped with cameras.
- Increasing under-cover surveillance at Frankford Transportation Center and Norristown Transportation Center and 15th Street (including others) to help eliminate drug transactions and illegal behavior.
- Deploying SAVE units throughout the service area to engage the vulnerable population. These co-responder teams create a presence of safety for customers and employees while leading the vulnerable community away from the SEPTA system and into needed services.
- Equipping custodians with SEPTA cell phones to communicate directly with transit police.
- Creating elevator monitor attendants at Somerset Station, a new feature under SCOPE, to maintain a level of awareness and safety while addressing conditions related to both the westbound and eastbound elevators.
- Securing out-of-sight sleeping locations to discourage loitering and illicit behavior.
- Promoting the Transit Watch App, which allows riders to report a crime or dangerous situation or ask for help discreetly and anonymously.

Track falls may be more common due to the adulteration of Philadelphia's street opioid supply with xylazine, a powerful muscle tranquilizer that cannot be reversed with naloxone (Narcan) and may cause long-term mobility impairments.



Source: Panel Discussion: Stigma Around Opioid Use Disorder Presents Challenges to Treatment, The Pew Charitable Trusts' Philadelphia Research and Policy Project, May 4, 2022. <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2022/05/04/panel-discussion-stigma-around-opioid-use-disorder-presents-challenges-to-treatment>



CLEANING: To improve overall quality of life on the system, we are:

- Allocating \$14.8 million for maintenance custodians – nearly triple the amount SEPTA spent last year – in our fiscal 2023 budget.
- Sanitizing vehicles and high-touch surfaces, including elevators, escalators, and entrances, at multiple stations throughout the day with EPA-approved disinfectants.
- Equipping thousands of our vehicles with a well-ventilated HVAC system that has an air exchange rate of 2-3 minutes, which exceeds CDC recommendations.
- Upgrading to hospital grade MERV-13 air filters, designed to remove small particles and at least 85% of droplet nuclei people inhale.
- Increasing weekend intensive cleaning campaigns by shutting down and methodically cleaning, power-washing, and sanitizing stations on the Market Frankford and Broad Street lines.
- Creating a new “quick response team” cleaning effort at the 34th Street Market Frankford El station designed to respond to major cleaning issues that arise during the train’s mid-trip operation.
- Expanding responsibility to our key platform attendants at Norristown Transportation Center and 69th Street Terminal to monitor not only the platform but also the elevators and bathroom to ensure the facilities remain clean.
- Requiring maintenance custodians at 69th Street Terminal to monitor both elevators and bathrooms during the morning and evening rush hour.
- Partnering with the City of Philadelphia to monitor the bathrooms outside the paid area at Suburban Station.
- Partnering with C.L.I.P. (Community Life Improvement Program) to help address debris and rubbish affecting SEPTA stations throughout the Kensington community.
- Partnering with Project Reach and the City of Philadelphia Sanitation Department to remove needle pile-ups at our stations.
- Participating in the largest annual Philly Spring Cleanup with SEPTA employees leading efforts at multiple districts and transportation centers taking place citywide in a single day.
- Collaborating with the City of Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services, Philadelphia police and public works departments to remove encampments near SEPTA stations and on city property.





OWNERSHIP: To increase information sharing and coordinate county resources, we are:

People with opioid use disorder are more likely to be victims of crime than the general public, and people with mental illnesses are more likely to be victims than perpetrators.

- Engaging the entire SEPTA workforce through the Vulnerable Population Working Group to address new challenges as they arise.
- Participating in bi-weekly roundtable discussions with Delaware County, the Philadelphia International Airport and the City of Philadelphia to manage and coordinate care for individual cases.
- Leading the Montgomery County Vulnerable Population Task Force, a group of cross-sector individuals from nonprofit and governmental organizations to share information and find solutions.
- Working closely with the Office of Homeless Services (OHS) to address gaps related to SEPTA service areas including accessing the homeless management information systems (HMIS), as well as with the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disability Services (DBHIDS) to address needs within the SEPTA service model.
- Engaging city, county, and state elected officials and federal officials to advocate for additional housing and funding resources and encouraging them to partner with SEPTA to address gaps and barriers to help individuals be rescued from the homeless system.

Source: Panel Discussion: Stigma Around Opioid Use Disorder Presents Challenges to Treatment, The Pew Charitable Trusts' Philadelphia Research and Policy Project, May 4, 2022. <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2022/05/04/panel-discussion-stigma-around-opioid-use-disorder-presents-challenges-to-treatment>





PARTNERSHIP:

To leverage existing resources across systems and explore innovative solutions that harness the expertise and involvement of others, we are:

- Developing a six-month “Health Navigators Program” in partnership with thirteen first-year medical students from Drexel University School of Medicine at 69th Street Transportation Center.
- Expanding “Health Navigators Program” to the Norristown Transportation Center in partnership with Cabrini University’s health and exercise students.
- Participating in Philadelphia’s Alternative Response Unit (AR-2) in Kensington to reverse overdoses and connect people to treatment services within the community and near SEPTA stations.
- Establishing a regional collaborative with Victim Service Centers to create a prevention and education campaign designed to engage customers and employees to identify signs of sexual and physical abuse; and deploying outreach teams to share educational materials and bystander training within SEPTA service area.
- Continuing to support Project HOME’s Hub of Hope to advance SEPTA’s plan to reduce homelessness in Center City and West Philadelphia.
- Collaborating with the City of Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disability Services to leverage outreach teams and training programs.
- Partnering with the Mural Arts Program to provide “Same Day Pay” opportunities to Philadelphia residents to engage in SEPTA mural art projects.
- Representing SEPTA’s priorities as part of Philadelphia’s Office of Homelessness’ Kensington Targeted Engagement Strategy workgroup to address cleaning, drug, debris, and homeless challenges within the Kensington and Allegheny service area.
- Working with Philadelphia’s Managing Director’s Office on the 100 Day Challenge to minimize homelessness in the City of Philadelphia with emphasis on the Kensington service area.





ENGAGEMENT: To compassionately connect individuals to resources, we are:

- Increasing the number of social service outreach specialists from 7 to over 50 from three firms – Merakey Parkside Recovery, One Day at a Time (ODAAT), and Eagle Staffing – to traverse the SEPTA system and engage with people experiencing homelessness by connecting them to treatment centers, housing, mental health and drug facilities.
- Expanding SEPTA's co-responder model of transit officer and social worker to four teams to dispatch as needed to additional locations throughout the system.
- Engaging an average of 201 unique vulnerable individuals monthly and connecting them to resources such as the emergency room, Police Assisted Diversion office, food pantry, Hub of Hope, crisis centers, inpatient/outpatient drug & alcohol treatment, mental health treatment, shelters, social services, and other clinics.
- Responding to an average of 1,250 customer report types submitted monthly through SEPTA's Transit Watch App and Text-A-Tip line.
- Collaborating with Norristown Police Department's outreach engagement teams and Guadenzia House to connect individuals to services within the Norristown Transportation Center (NTC).
- Implementing mandatory training agency-wide to increase employee awareness of best practices for engaging vulnerable riders, including an overview of SCOPE efforts, de-escalation techniques, and tools available to refer a situation to outreach professionals.



Evaluation and Key Performance Measures

As we continue to create innovative strategies and approaches to address the issue of homelessness on our system, we strive to ensure that our efforts are yielding the desired results. To that end, SEPTA is partnering with Drexel University's Center for Public Policy and Temple University for an independent academic review of both the SCOPE and SAVE programs. In the meantime, the following measures will be tracked, evaluated and monitored to enable data analysis and determine which strategies work and do not work:

- Decreasing incidents and assaults of employees
- Increasing number of placements into housing and treatment centers
- Decreasing number of vulnerable populations
- Increasing rider satisfaction survey scores
- Increasing employee engagement and satisfaction
- Increasing customer satisfaction scores of station cleanliness
- Decreasing incidents of loitering by vulnerable individuals and those selling illegal substances on SEPTA property
- Decreasing number of administrative enforcement notices issued by transit police
- Decreasing the number of customer service complaints centered on quality of life violations.



WHAT do we need help with?

SEPTA has a long history of implementing industry-leading solutions to address homelessness on our system. In 2017, we began working with the nonprofit Project HOME to create a new homeless engagement center known as the Hub of Hope, which opened in 2018. Located in the Suburban Station Concourse and managed by Project Hope staff, the 11,000-square-foot facility offers meals, laundry services, showers, medical and dental treatment, and case management, among other resources.

On February 28, 2019, we unveiled another innovative partnership: SEPTA Transit Police and Penn Medicine Behavioral Health collaborated to create a “co-responder program” pairing a behavioral health care provider with a police officer to de-escalate situations involving persons suffering from mental health issues and offer services to vulnerable individuals. Finally, in April 2021, SEPTA launched its holistic SCOPE program at Somerset Station and has since been expanding it throughout the system.

Even with all the actions we are taking to address the intertwined public health crises of homelessness, drug addiction and mental illness, SEPTA’s system continues to be overwhelmed by the vulnerable population. Time and again, our outreach workers engage with vulnerable individuals and refer them to services, only to have them come right back on our system in a revolving door effect.

SEPTA cannot solve this problem alone. We can’t stop the cycle! While we will work to protect every person on our transit system and to connect fellow citizens with the help they need, we need policymakers and elected officials from the city, county, and state to support a much larger, systemic approach to address homelessness, as noted in the graph below.

A WICKED PROBLEM IN CITIES: HOMELESSNESS



EVERYONE plays a part in the solution

To fully address this complex, societal problem, we believe that enforcement needs to play a role, but that lasting solutions demand the political will and efforts of multiple partners to clear the path of structural and systematic barriers. Some of the systemic barriers outside of our control, yet affecting our ability to address the crisis, include:

- An inadequate supply of emergency shelters, transitional housing and supportive services, and permanent and affordable housing services in the five-county area.
- A lack of ongoing case management for individuals involuntarily committed to treatment services, which results in their early discharge and return to the streets.
- Limited substance use/drug and alcohol treatment beds available, even for those willing to receive services.
- Little coordination or communication between counties, resulting in siloed services.

Each one of us can be a part of the solution and together we can find useful solutions to support our community and end homelessness. Whether you are a rider, an employee or a government official, your help is critical.



Call to action for our riders

- If you encounter someone who is experiencing homelessness or addiction on SEPTA's system, respect them as individuals and treat them with dignity.
- If someone is in crisis, you should alert an expert. You can seek out an outreach worker or use SEPTA's Transit Watch app – available for iPhones and Androids – to report a problem or quality of life concern involving an individual experiencing homelessness or addiction. You can also text a tip to 215-234-1911 or use the call box, located on station platforms or the emergency alarms located in vehicles to alert the train operator.



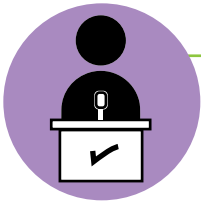
Call to action for our advocates

- Reach out to your local elected officials to ask what they are doing about homelessness, addiction and mental health.
- Speak up in favor of low-income housing, group homes, shelters, and homelessness prevention programs at neighborhood and public meetings.



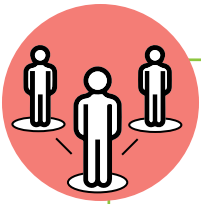
Call to Action for County's Continuum of Care (CoC)

- Include SEPTA's point-in-time count numbers as part of the CoC's official counts.
- Allocate funding for SEPTA's outreach and engagement program that connects individuals with the CoCs service providers.
- Include a SEPTA representative in the CoC governance.



Call to action for our city, county, state elected and appointed officials; and members of Congress

- Increase support and funding for low barrier housing options; transitional housing and supportive services, and permanent and affordable housing services in the five-county service area.
- Fund 55 Housing First Units to meet the needs of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness on SEPTA and engaged by our outreach teams.
- Partner with SEPTA's SCOPE program to learn firsthand about the impact of homelessness on the system.
- Allocate dedicated shelter beds and housing vouchers to SEPTA's outreach teams to address access barriers when individuals are ready to accept help.
- Monitor the adequacy and availability of inpatient and outpatient mental health treatment beds within each county and advocate for improved access and decrease wait times for outpatient mental health admissions.
- Establish a robust diversionary community court system that would provide a humane and immediate accountability for order maintenance violations and could include service and treatment.
- Encourage coordination of Crisis Response Centers with SEPTA Police to more effectively satisfy the requirements under the Mental Health Procedures Act 77 from the petition stage (302 cases) through in-patient hospitalization.



Call to action for the business community

- Reach out to your local elected officials to ask what they are doing about homelessness and to support relevant legislation.
- Speak up in favor of low-income housing, group homes, shelters, and homelessness prevention programs at neighborhood and public meetings.
- Organize site visits for political leaders and the media to visit local homeless programs to highlight ways that your community is successfully addressing the many problems associated with homelessness.



Call to action for our employees

- As our eyes and ears throughout our system, we ask our employees to say something if they see something using SEPTA's Transit Watch app or text-a-tip to 215-234-1911.
- If you encounter someone who is homeless on SEPTA's system, respect them as individuals and treat them with dignity.
- Reach out to your elected representatives and invite them to learn more about SEPTA's SCOPE program and how we are addressing safety and security on our system. Politicians oversee funding levels for homeless services and determine policies on affordable housing.

Together we can work to end homelessness and make our system safer for everyone.

APPENDIX:

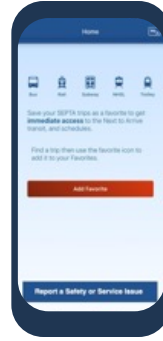
How to use crowdsourcing tools:

QR Code Scanning



Reporting through the Text-a-Tip

Reporting through the SEPTA App

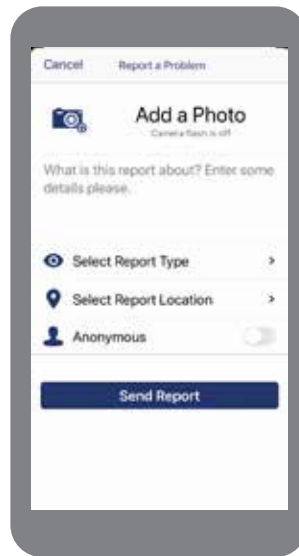


Reporting through the Transit Watch App

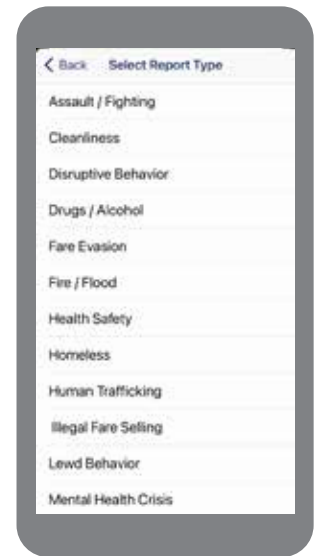
Click Report a Problem



Add a photo and description of the problem



Select Report Type



Download the app free for iOS at the Apple App Store and for Android at the Google Play Store.



SEPTA and the Nationwide Hiring Challenge

SEPTA's 210 transit police officers are exceptional public servants who protect our customers and employees every day, and we are working to give them the personnel and resources they need to do their jobs safely and effectively. But recruiting and retaining qualified police officers is a national crisis. Failure rates during the screening process for officers have been as high as 98.5%, according to Police Chief Magazine.

SEPTA Transit Police is currently budgeted for 260 officers, but it has been able to recruit, hire and train only 210. In March 2022, SEPTA Transit Police invited 961 applicants for transit officer positions to come to the state-mandated physical agility test. Only 78 people showed up, and only 24 passed the test. Twelve of those 24 passed the reading test. It is likely that only one will complete the goal of becoming a transit police officer after 34 weeks of police academy and field training. SEPTA is conducting a comprehensive marketing recruitment campaign strategy to attract candidates and promote the opportunities to join our Transit Police team.

To support our policing efforts, we have had to be creative and rely on new ways to address security. We have hired third-party contractors as part of our SEPTA Transit Police SAVE unit (saving a vulnerable entity), our SCOPE program, and our newly created SEPTA Outreach Specialists who assist customers and alert police to incidents on the Market-Frankford and Broad Street Lines. While these auxiliary programs are not replacements for law enforcement, these 145 additional "eyes and ears" free up officers to focus on law enforcement activities.



Glossary of Terms

Continuum of Care (CoC)

Continuum of Care carries out the responsibilities under HUD regulations, set forth at 24 CFR 578. The CoC's overarching responsibility is to ensure communitywide implementation of efforts to end homelessness and ensure programmatic effectiveness of the local continuum of care program.

Co-responder Model

A co-responder team model is a collaborative approach to behavioral crisis response that seeks to reduce harm and facilitate alternatives to arrest by providing SEPTA police-mental health professional co-response to calls for services involving persons in crisis on the system.

Emergency shelter

Emergency shelter means any facility, the primary purpose of which is to provide temporary shelter for the homeless in general or for specific populations of the homeless and which does not require occupants to sign leases or occupancy agreements.

Health Navigators

The Health Navigators program is a new initiative between SEPTA and Drexel University College of Medicine. The aim of this new social services pilot program is to assist members of the socially vulnerable population on SEPTA's system and to provide first-year medical students with practical experience in health advocacy by connecting people with essential health and social resources.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

The HMIS is a local information technology system used to collect data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals/families.

Homeless Encampments

Homeless encampments are locations where one or more homeless people live in an unsheltered area. These encampments can be found on properties owned by private individuals or companies or owned by local, state, and federal governmental agencies. Encampments often form because of a lack of affordable housing and because of shelter requirements that keep people from accessing them.

Housing First

Housing First is a recovery-oriented approach to ending homelessness that is not contingent on "compliance," rather a rights-based intervention rooted in the philosophy that all people deserve housing and that adequate housing is a precondition for recovery. The model centers on quickly moving people experiencing homelessness into independent and permanent housing and providing additional wraparound support for physical and mental health, education, employment, substance abuse, and community connections.

Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development administers a series of programs that address homelessness in the United States. HUD's Continuum of Care program makes grants to states, local governments and community agencies that allow each of these entities to tailor a program to meet their community needs.

Involuntary Commitment (302)

An involuntary commitment is an application for emergency evaluation and treatment for persons who are a danger to themselves or others due to a mental illness.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

Permanent housing in which housing assistance (e.g. long-term leasing or rental assistance) and supportive services (e.g. outreach, engagement, medical care, behavioral health care, case management, and life skills training) are provided to assist households with at least one member (adult or child) with a disability in achieving housing stability.

Serving a Vulnerable Entity (SAVE)

SEPTA's co-responder model that started in 2019 by the police department that pairs a mental health/crisis expert with a member of the SEPTA Transit Police department.

"Sheltered" Homeless Persons

HUD defines sheltered homeless persons as adults, children, and unaccompanied children who, on the night of the count, are living in shelters for the homeless.

Transitional Housing

Transitional housing is designed to provide homeless individuals and families with the interim stability and support to successfully move to and maintain permanent housing. Transitional housing may be used to cover the costs of up to 24 months of housing with accompanying supportive services.

"Unsheltered" Homeless Persons

For purposes of the Point-in-Time County, HUD considers individuals and families sleeping in a place not designated for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g. abandoned buildings, train stations, or camping grounds) as unsheltered homeless.

Vulnerable Population

SEPTA defines the vulnerable population as individuals experiencing homelessness, drug addiction, and co-occurring disorders (behavioral, mental health and substance use disorders) who seek shelter in SEPTA stations and our vehicles. Some are victims of abuse, including domestic violence and elder abuse. Some are veterans, who have not received the critical services they deserve. Others are patients discharged from local hospitals without housing and young people who have aged out of foster care.

Credits:

SEPTA is grateful for the agencywide support of our employees and the collaborative efforts across all our departments to make our system safe and clean for all. We are grateful for the support and commitment from General Manager and CEO Leslie S. Richards and members of the executive team; Board Chairman Pasquale T. Deon, Sr., and members of the board of directors; as well as our labor organizations and all our external partners and riders.

The critical financial and people investments are necessary to enable SEPTA to sustain its role as the regions' economic engine and, with the help of diverse partners, to make homelessness on SEPTA rare, brief, and non-reoccurring.

SEPTA's holistic and centralized SCOPE operation is being led by an integrated internal working group that meets biweekly. Special thanks to all the taskforce members including:

- Executive Sponsor – Chief Operating Officer Scott A. Sauer
- SCOPE Lead: Assistant Director of Transportation Kenneth A. Divers
- SCOPE Consultant – Flora M. Castillo, Pivot Strategies, LLC.
- Safety & Security – Acting Chief of Transit Police Charles Lawson, SAVE Unit Supervisor Lt. Valdez Trower and SOS Unit Supervisor Lt. William Saunders. Acting Chief Officer System Safety Ed Abel, Director of Accident Prevention & Investigation Koron English
- Environmental, Infrastructure and Operations – Chief Engineer Kate O'Connor, Chief Officer Metro Rail Chrystalle Cooper, Senior Director of Stations Operations Ron Benson, Assistant Chief of Vehicle Maintenance Ed Carruthers and Management Analyst Tim Catto
- Communications – Chief Communications Officer Bill Webster
 - SCOPE Audit Report Baseline Findings – Manager of Consumer Research & Service Quality Christopher Witz
 - Customer Experience and Advocacy – Assistant General Manager of Customer Experience & Advocacy Kim Heinle
 - Media Relations – Director of Media Relations Andrew Busch, Public Information Manager John Golden
 - SCOPE Program Communication Activities – Karen Cheney, Jacobson Strategic Communications,
 - Designer: Milagros Rivera-Archer, Senior Designer & Illustrator
- Services Coordination and Funding (Finance, Legal, Procurement) Chief Financial Officer Nick Grieshaber, Assistant General Manager of Procurement Andy Abdallah, Senior Director of Budgets & Transformation Erik Johanson, Senior Contract Administrator Diane McCarthy, Corporate Attorney, Malik Bates and Billy Smith, Deputy General Counsel-Litigation
- Public and Government Affairs –
 - Bucks, Chester, and Montgomery Counties-Norristown Transportation Center – Legislative Affairs Manager Rochelle Culbreath
 - Delaware County-69th Street Transportation Center – Constituent & Community Relations Coordinator Meghan Curran
 - Philadelphia County – Community & Local Affairs Manager Wendy Harvey-Green
- Regional Rail – Senior Director of Rail Transportation Kimberly Kennedy, Director of Railroad Service Deleven Williams
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- Intern – Evan Boroch, Temple University
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