



SACRAMENTO: CRIMINALIZATION OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Based on California's New Vagrancy Laws: The Growing Enactment & Enforcement of Anti-Homeless Laws in the Golden State

Berkeley Law, University of California, Policy Advocacy Clinic, February 2015

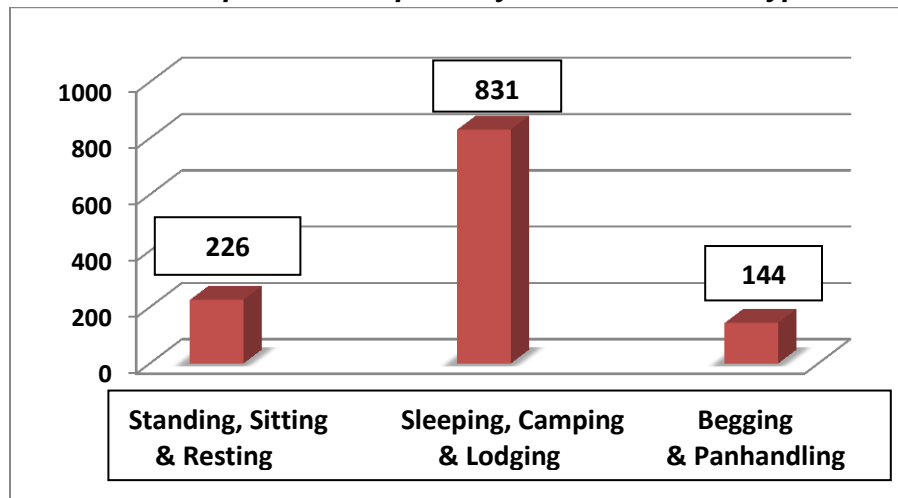
CA Context: Illegal to be homeless: In the 58 cities studied, there are 500 laws restricting and criminalizing people experiencing homelessness in 4 categories: [1] standing, sitting and resting in public places [daytime activities]; [2] sleeping, camping & lodging in public places, including vehicles [nighttime activities]; [3] begging and panhandling, and [4] food sharing with homeless people – an average of 9 anti-homeless laws per city. These 500 laws impose 581 separate restrictions on homeless people. The number of anti-homeless laws in CA has increased from 36 [1960] to over 100 in 2010. *Compared to other U.S. cities, CA cities have more anti-homeless laws restricting many more types of behavior.*

Sacramento:

- City of Sacramento has 11 municipal codes criminalizing daily activities associated with homelessness:
 - 5 codes criminalize standing, sitting and resting in public places;
 - 3 codes that criminalize camping and lodging in public places;
 - 3 codes that criminalize begging & panhandling
- Sacramento City Code Section 12.52.030 – bans camping on public or private property – unless lawfully authorized.

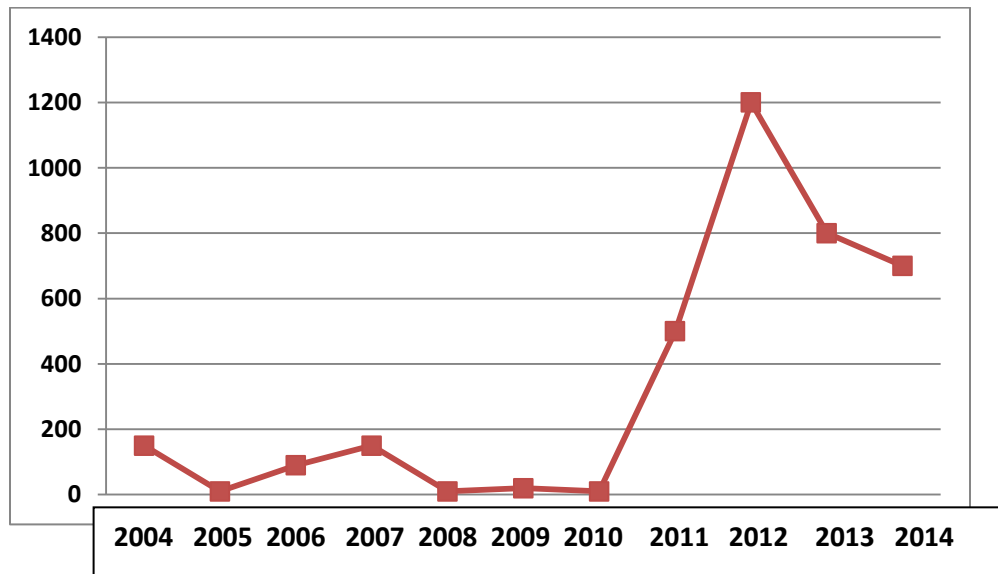
1,201 crime reports on homeless “offenses” [standing; camping, panhandling] from 2004 – 2014
69% [831 of the 1,201 crime reports] of the homeless “offenses” were cited under one code: anti-camping or MC 12.52.030: See Figure 1

Figure 1: Sacramento Police Dept. Crime Reports by Offense & Code Type: 1/2004 – 9/2014



- **2,700 illegal camping citations from 2012 – 2014 [Figure 2]:** *Why? Illegal camping enforcement is a priority for the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors giving in to political pressure & gentrification issues*

**Figure 2: Sacramento County Park Ranger Illegal Camping Citations Issued:
2004 - 2014**



- **Harassment:** In 2013 survey of 150 Sacramento homeless people by the Western Regional Advocacy Project:
 - 97% reported being harassed by the police for appearing homeless;
 - 97% reported being harassed by police for sleeping in public;
 - 63% reported being cited by police for sleeping in public;
 - 38% reported being cited for camping.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- **Join the local organizing effort:** Join the Sacramento Regional Coalition to End Homelessness [SRCEH] & the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee [SHOC] in supporting the Western Regional Advocacy Project [WRAP] in calling for a CA Right to Rest Act and the Homeless Bill of Rights Campaign;
- **Endorse [individual or organization] the CA Right to Rest Act.** For more information: *Western Regional Advocacy Project [WRAP]: www.wraphome.org*
- **Attend the next local organizing committee.**

*For more local information: Bob Erlenbusch, Executive Director, SRCEH,
916-993-7708 or bob@srceh.org, www.srceh.org*