

Declaration of Emergency

I, Mitch Reynolds, Mayor of the City of La Crosse, make the following proclamation pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 323.14(4)(b):

WHEREAS, in the City of La Crosse and in communities throughout the nation, large numbers of individuals, families, and unaccompanied youth are experiencing homelessness due to such factors as job loss, stagnant and declining wages, family crisis, trauma, substance abuse, economic reasons, mental health issues, and extreme shortages in housing; and

WHEREAS, in times of extraordinary duress, it becomes necessary to declare a state of emergency in order to preserve life and property and effectuate immediate responses in order to provide emergency services and shelters for unsheltered individuals, families, and unaccompanied youth, and

WHEREAS, there are currently dozens of people experiencing homelessness and have no indoor available indoor shelter in the City;

WHEREAS, as a potentially deadly winter storm approaches the La Crosse area, those without homes face immense challenges to survive; and

WHEREAS, for the winter of 2021-2022, the City utilized American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) for the operation of emergency winter shelter at a motel but such operation is not available for the upcoming winter; and

WHEREAS, the City of La Crosse and social service providers throughout the City continue to provide support for people in crisis even while the need for such services intensifies; and

WHEREAS, despite extensive recent efforts to provide relief for persons who are homeless, the problem persists at historic levels and adequate winter shelter space has not been secured for unsheltered individuals with the number of unsheltered individuals far exceeding what can be accommodated in available space; and

WHEREAS, there is an emergency present that demands immediate preservation of public health, and extraordinary measures are required to protect the safety and welfare of individuals.

Based on these circumstances, the City finds that a state of emergency exists. Accordingly, the City is authorized to perform the following:

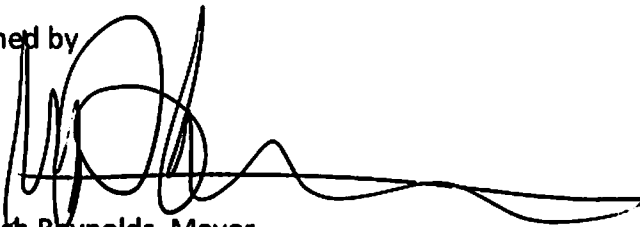
- (1) Operate an emergency warming shelter at the following locations: 1300 6th St. S. and 713 St. James St.
- (2) Expend ARPA funds previously allocated to address issues of homelessness;
and

(3) Contract with outside providers, which may include contracts for security, cleaning, and to provide emergency services.

This emergency order shall be in effect from 5:00 p.m. on 12/21/2022 until 8:00 a.m. on 12/26/2022.

The City Clerk is directed to place this Declaration of Emergency on the agenda of the next meeting of the La Crosse Common Council for its review, ratification, modification, or repeal.

Dated: 12/21/2022

Signed by 

Mitch Reynolds, Mayor
City of La Crosse