



# Create greater understanding of homelessness within your local council

Homelessness exists in many forms throughout our community, from large cities to small towns, inner suburbs and outer fringes. To end homelessness, we must first expose it and understand it. Local councils can play a part.

The Council to Homeless Persons supports and trains people with a lived experience of homelessness to go into the community and become advocates and educators on homelessness through a program called Peer Education Support Program (PESP).

Councils can create greater awareness about issues of homelessness, affordable housing, family violence and poverty by engaging a homelessness advocate:

- To deliver an 'Understanding Homelessness' training session for staff
- As a guest speaker at a local council event
- For consultation in the development of an affordable housing and/or homelessness strategy

Staff benefits:

- Equip staff to better respond to constituents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
- Help breakdown stereotypes about homelessness
- Achieve learning and development goals
- Increase social inclusion, and ensure that council policies take into consideration issues of homelessness

*The Council to Homeless Persons is the peak body for homelessness in Victoria.*

**Contact:** Cassandra Bawden, Peer Education Support Program Coordinator  
Council to Homeless Persons [Cassandra@chp.org.au](mailto:Cassandra@chp.org.au) or (03) 8415 6210

*"Something everyone should do. Very important for council and any work that involves service to the community"* Staff member, City of Port Philip

*"Spike's ability to be honest and open was key to the event"* Staff member, City of Yarra

*"Introduced many complexities of homelessness, and questions about relationships, employment, various services."* Staff member, City of Moreland

*"...got me thinking about the importance of engaging with people with real empathy and respect, and listening to them"* Staff member, City of Port Philip

*"It helped me think about the type of service we provide and how I can manage preconceptions from other people who use this service."* Staff member, City of Port Philip

*"I think sessions like this should be part of the Council induction sessions."* Staff member, City of Port Philip