

Salem News You Don't Get in *The Salem News*

42 incidents involving homeless individuals in seven days
June 1-7, 2025

Welcome to another installment of *Salem News You Don't Get in "The Salem News."* This information comes directly from the Salem Police Department, obtained under the state's right-to-know law. I have organized and annotated the information so that it's easy to see the problems that the police and Salem's citizens—especially those living in or near the Downtown—are dealing with in regard to our unhoused residents.

With three months to look at—March, April, and June—we see that in the first week of each month there were, respectively, 33, 32, and now 42 events in **one week** in which the police were called. There was no report for May, since I posted *An Inside Look at Lifebridge*. All reports are viewable here: <https://gesna-salem.com/onoh-news>

Most obvious is that the number of incidents to which the police responded is up about 25 percent. Less obvious is that many incidents are not reported. How many? We don't know, except anecdotally by residents who say, "I didn't want to bother the police." The Salem Police say, "Call us!" Calling them with an issue related to the homeless population allows them to respond to and record issues relating to that population.

Statistics for June 1-7

. 8 Medical Aid requests

In this category you'll find everything from overdoses to the need for a bandaid. This month there was one more Medical Aid call during the same period previously. Significantly, four of those police responses were to Lifebridge. There were also two calls to the Margin Street area around Lifebridge, one call to Riley Plaza, and two to Highland Ave.

—**Related: 1 call for a Suicidal Person** on Margin Street.

. 8 Well-being checks

This is typically a call made by a concerned citizen or neighbor. Police responded to calls at several Downtown restaurants, a liquor store,

the Post Office, and two locations whose addresses were redacted, likely because they were at, or in front of, a private home.

. 7 Undesirable/Unwanted Guests

These are folks who loiter on the property of a homeowner, renter, or business. The police are called when a person is requested to move along but refuses to do so. Loitering took place throughout the Downtown area, including Salem Depot, East India Mall, various locations on Derby Street, even Lifebridge.

—**Related: 3 instances of Trespassing**, at Walgreen's on New Derby Street, at Wendy's Restaurant on Lafayette Street, and at a location that has been redacted.

What's the difference between loitering & trespassing?

—**Trespassing** involves physically entering onto someone else's property without their permission or a lawful right to be there. It can be an act of crossing a boundary or staying on the property after being asked to leave.

—**Loitering**, or what the SPD defines as "Undesirable/Unwanted Guests," is more about remaining in a place or area for an extended period without a clear purpose. Typically it is hanging around.

Tip: Posting a "No Trespassing" sign legally signals that you do not wish to have uninvited guests making themselves at home in or on your property

. 4 Larceny calls

Police responded two two calls at Lifebridge, presumably because of theft between residents, as well as one call to the Peabody Essex Museum and one to Old Town Hall.

—**Related: 1 shoplifting call**, at a pizza shop in the East India Mall

What's the difference between Larceny and Shoplifting?

Here's Google: "Larceny can occur anywhere; shoplifting is always committed within a store's physical space."

Other incidents

-- **1 Assault** at the Lifebridge shelter

-- **1 Complaint of drug use** at the Broad Street Cemetery

-- **1 event described as a "Disturbance"** on Margin Street

-- **1 Drunk individual** at the North Shore Bank on Lafayette Street

-- **1 Fraud/Scam** at the Lifebridge shelter

-- **1 Malicious Damage** at a location that was redacted

-- **2 censored situations.** Something happened at Salem City Hall; something else happened near the intersection of Derby Street and Hawthorne Boulevard, but exactly what is not visible in the records provided

. **2 CIU general reports.** The Community Impact Unit, or CIU, is the dedicated police unit that reaches out to members of the homeless community in Salem. Our GESNA group has met with members of this unit on several occasions, and we have found them to be patient and caring in their interactions with members of the homeless community. There are no specifics given in these two listings

Lifebridge assumes no responsibility for its clients when they are not on premises, leaving the rest of us to deal with the problems they generate. Although not all incidents were committed by residents of Lifebridge, the fact that Salem has become known as a haven for unhoused individuals means that more of these kinds of offenses will continue to take place as ever more unhoused people take up residence in Salem's parks, woods, and elsewhere.

— Joanne Mattera

Why this report?

The point of this reporting is to understand the scope and depth of incidents taking place in our city by unhoused individuals. We know that not all homeless people are criminals, but those who are breaking the law are lowering the quality of life and imperiling the safety of all Salem residents. Alcohol, drugs, or mental illness—or a combination—are often involved. Consider this as Salem's current Mayor and City Council prepare to approve a zoning variance that would allow Lifebridge to expand—and as we move into city elections in November.

Additional reading

. **An Inside Look at Lifebridge**, May 2025

<https://gesna-salem.com/onoh-news>

. **The murder of two homeless individuals in Salem by a homeless individual** on April 23.

<https://www.masslive.com/news/2025/04/suspect-in-salem-double-murder-lived-near-crime-scene-behind-walmart-police-say.html>

. **Statistics for April 1-6**

https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/79610166-405f-4f82-8cf8-098e13a7e299/The%20News%20you%20dont%20get%20April%2024_2025.pdf

. **Statistics for March 1-7**

https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/79610166-405f-4f82-8cf8-098e13a7e299/onoh%20news_incidents_mar2025.pdf

. **Senior citizen accosted**

https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/79610166-405f-4f82-8cf8-098e13a7e299/interview_camarda_july2024.pdf

. **Salem Police logged over 1600 "Homeless Incidents" in 2024**

<https://gesna-salem.com/blog/f/salem-police-logged-over-1600-homeless-incidents-in-2023>

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www.gesna-salem.com

. **Visit our GESNA Facebook page**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1296570384591885>

Incidents: June 1-7, 2025

TYPE	INCIDENT
7 Unwanted Presence + 3 Trespassing	10
4 Larceny + 1 Shoplifting	5
Wellness Check	8
8 Medical Aid + 1 Suicide Call	9
Other	10
TOTAL INCIDENTS	42
SOURCE: Salem Police Dept. Terms as used by SPD.	
Infograph courtesy GESNA/ONOH.	

OTHER INCIDENTS: Included an Assault, Drug use, Disturbance, Drunk individual, Fraud, Malicious damage, 2 situations, and 2 CIU reports.

INCIDENTS TOTAL 42: June 1-7, 2025



PERCENTAGE OF 42 INCIDENTS: June 1-7, 2025

