

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

26 incidents involving homeless individuals in seven days September 1-7, 2025

Welcome to September's installment. We have some good news and some bad news this month. The **good news** is that the number of incidents is down from previous months—26 the first week of September, versus 54 in August, and 44 in July. The **bad news** is that some of the incidents are more serious: an arrest, a B&E of a motor vehicle, vandalism, and a response to a suicidal person. Also worth noting: 26 incidents by any other single group in one week would be considered epidemic.

The information in this article comes directly from the Salem Police Department's Case Incidents report, obtained under the state's right-to-know law. I have organized and annotated the information so that you can see the problems that the police, Salem's citizens, and visitors experience daily with some of our unhoused, and often transient, population. As is typical, the location of the reported incidents is in and around Downtown. I've noted specifics within each category.

Statistics for September 1-7

10 Requests for Medical Aid

A call for Medical Aid could be for anything from treatment for a fall to administering Narcan for an overdose.

- . Four calls were to Lifebridge itself
- . Four were to the Margin Street area around Lifebridge
- . One on Washington Street
- . One at Salem Depot

--1 **Additional:** Police responded to a request for Mental Health aid at Riley Plaza

7 Incidents of Loitering

In the language of police reports, loitering is described as "Unwanted Guests." These are folks who hang out on the property of a homeowner, renter, or business. The police are called when a person is requested to move along but refuses, or when an owner/tenant

feels unsafe asking loiterers to move, especially if drug use is involved. Loitering took place throughout Downtown and farther afield.

- . Three calls to Derby Street, one of those specifically to Bit Bar
- . One call to Steve's Market
- . One to Palmer Cove Park
- . One to Shaw's Market on Highland Avenue

2 Well-being checks

Well-being checks are typically called in by neighbors or friends of the person, or by someone in an establishment where a person is found sleeping, high, or unresponsive.

- . One at Speedway on Derby Street
- . One at the Essex Street Mall near Cabot Money Management

The Incident Report I receive does not indicate the outcome of these well-being checks, only that police responded to calls.

Single incidents in the following categories (several of them serious)

- 1 Arrest at Pioneer Terrace in the Salem Housing Authority complex
- 1 B&E to a motor vehicle parked on Derby Street
- 1 Dispute on Bridge Street
- 1 Disturbance at Steve's Market
- 1 Suicidal person at an undisclosed location on Highland Avenue
- 1 Vandalism, specifically graffiti at the Salem Police Department

The Community Impact Unit (CIU)

The **CIU** is the dedicated police unit that reaches out to members of the homeless community in Salem. While specifics are not available to me, I can tell you that the CIU report is a daily log that tracks the activities and situations of many of the homeless individuals who are known to members of the CIU. It is a proactive initiative aimed at helping those who wish to be helped.

There were three reports issued by the CIU in the first seven days of September. I do not know how many additional incidents were addressed by this team.

Lifebridge assumes no responsibility

for its clients when they are not on premises. This leaves Lifebridge's neighbors, as well as Downtown residents and businesses, to deal with the problems they generate. Although not all incidents reported here were committed by residents of Lifebridge, our city has become a haven for unhoused individuals. More concerning is that many are suffering from untreated mental illness and/or substance abuse issues. More of these kinds of offenses—and others more serious—will continue to take place as ever more unhoused people take up residence here.

We want to see them helped, but this burden **MUST** be shared by more than one neighborhood and more than one city.

Breaking & Entering

Breaking and Entering is something we need to be aware of. It costs money to be drug addicted, and if panhandling doesn't bring in enough for a fix, we could see more B & Es. Make sure your vehicles are locked. And, of course, secure your home. Lock your doors and windows, including those in the cellar. Inspect under your deck and porch for signs of habitation. If you have a home alarm system and/or motion-activated outdoor lighting, so much the better. If you live in an apartment building, secure access to the lobby. And a timely reminder: Don't buzz in anyone you do not know.

Additional reading

. Stats for August 1-7

https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/79610166-405f-4f82-8cf8-098e13a7e299/onoh%20news_incidents_aug2025.pdf

. Stats for July 1-7

https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/79610166-405f-4f82-8cf8-098e13a7e299/onoh%20news_incidents_july2025.pdf

. Stats for June 1-7

https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/79610166-405f-4f82-8cf8-098e13a7e299/onoh%20news_incidents_june2025.pdf

. Stats for April 1-6

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

. Stats for March 1-7

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

. Salem is Losing It, Summer 2025

https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/79610166-405f-4f82-8cf8-098e13a7e299/onoh%20news_Salem%20is%20Losing%20It_sep2025.pdf

. Homelessness in Salem: Voices from the Neighborhood and Beyond, August 2025

https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/79610166-405f-4f82-8cf8-098e13a7e299/onoh%20news_voices_aug2025.pdf

. An Inside Look at Lifebridge, May 2025

<https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/79610166-405f-4f82-8cf8-098e13a7e299/Inside%20Lifebridge-may2025.pdf>

. Senior Citizen Accosted

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

. 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>

. Visit our website

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

. Visit our Facebook Page

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

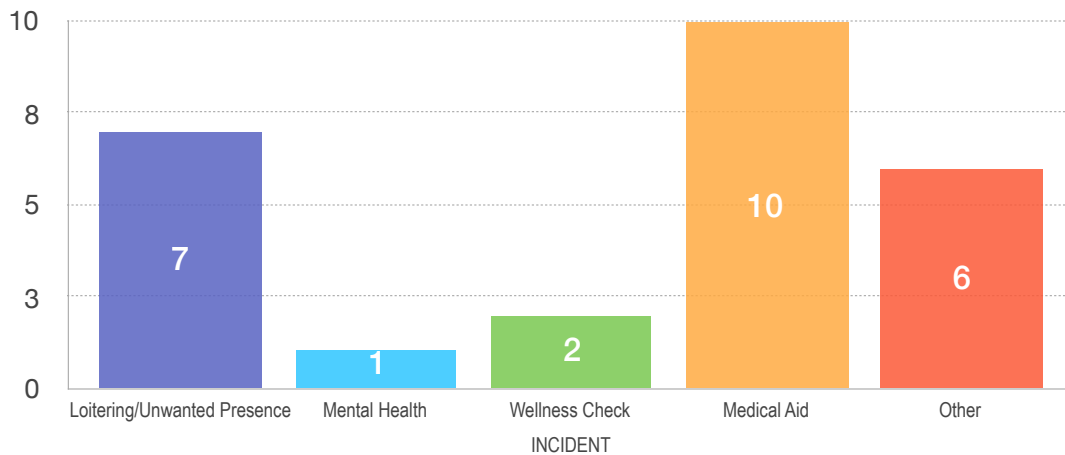
--Joanne Mattera

Incidents: September 1-7, 2025

TYPE	INCIDENT
Loitering/Unwanted Presence	7
Mental Health	1
Wellness Check	2
Medical Aid	10
Other	6
TOTAL INCIDENTS	26
SOURCE: Salem Police Dept. Terms as used by SPD.	
Infograph courtesy GESNA/ONOH.	

OTHER INCIDENTS: Included an Arrest, B&E, Dispute, Disturbance, Suicidal person, Vandalism. In addition: 3 CIU reports.

INCIDENTS TOTAL 26: September 1-7, 2025



PERCENTAGE OF 26 INCIDENTS: September 1-7, 2025

