



## Knoxville Police Department



## STOP PANHANDLING

Support agencies exist to help people meet basic needs for food, clothing and shelter.

By dialing 3-1-1, people in need can gain access to support services here in Knoxville. You do not need to feel guilty when saying no to panhandlers.

If you are the target of illegal soliciting or panhandling you are encouraged to call the Knoxville Police Department and report the violators description and the location where it occurred. (865) 215-4010.

The City of Knoxville is working to make the Central Business District a better place to live, work and visit. But giving money to panhandlers slows down the effort. A few cents may seem very little to you. However, it does more harm than good especially to the panhandlers themselves because:

- Panhandlers usually use the money to buy alcohol and drugs
- Giving panhandlers your spare change does not help them address the circumstances that put them on the street, and it may discourage them from seeking assistance from social service agencies;
- Local social service agencies can help people change their circumstances by providing full meals, shelter, clothing, health care and employment services.

When confronted by a panhandler, the most compassionate thing you can do is politely decline and keep walking.

This is a summary of Knoxville's Panhandling Ordinance:

It is unlawful for any person to solicit money or other things of value in the following circumstances:

- After sunset and before sunrise.
- By repeatedly asking a person.
- Using abusive language or profanity.
- In an aggressive manner in a public area.
- In parking lots or garages owned by the City of Knoxville.
- On private property if the owner has a sign posted or has asked the person to stop.
- From motorists in traffic
- From persons waiting in line to be admitted to a commercial establishment
- By falsely representing why they are seeking money
- Or within 20 feet of:
  - A crosswalk
  - An entrance or exit of any bank or check cashing business
  - An ATM
  - Public restrooms
  - Pay phones
  - Sidewalk café or outdoors dining area
  - A bus stop or bus station

If you want to give money to help the homeless, or those in the downtown who are in need, support programs like the ones listed below.

- Knoxville Area Rescue Ministry  
(865) 673-6540
- Salvation Army  
(865) 525-9401
- Volunteer Ministries  
(865) 524-3926

