



## Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **#GiveMHT5 Panhandling Education Campaign Launches**

*Awareness Effort Launched by Greater Manchester Chamber, Manchester Mayor and Manchester Health Department*

**Manchester, NH** — Today, the Office of Manchester Mayor Joyce Craig, the Manchester Health Department and the Greater Manchester Chamber announced the creation of an initiative to educate Queen City residents and visitors about the downside of giving money and food to panhandlers, instead asking people to donate to organizations that help people experiencing homelessness. The Give Manchester Five campaign – or **#GiveMHT5** – is a two-pronged effort to highlight the work done by nonprofits to end homelessness in the city, and to encourage residents to donate to these organizations rather than giving money directly to people who are panhandling. Learn more at [www.givemht5.com](http://www.givemht5.com).

While well-intentioned, giving to panhandlers perpetuates the cycle of homelessness and can contribute to injury or death if the money given is used to buy alcohol or drugs.

“The data we study, and the individual cases we see every day, are clear: panhandling is a ‘band-aid’ to a serious problem,” said Anna Thomas, Manchester Public Health Director. “We know that while well-meaning, money given to panhandlers doesn’t always pay for food and shelter and may even make the problem worse. A caring community works together to find solutions for all who reside there, especially those who need us most. The #GiveMHT5 campaign is a simple, safe and effective way for people to give back to something bigger than themselves and toward a stronger future for all who enjoy the Manchester community.”

“Our members care deeply about this community and look out for the most vulnerable among us,” said Mike Skelton, President and CEO of the Greater Manchester Chamber. “We also want

to do all we can to help our businesses have a successful summer season, especially as many reopen from the COVID-19 pandemic. We are proud to have worked with the Mayor's office to develop #GiveMHT5 as an effort to educate the public on why panhandling is damaging on multiple levels, and to give our community an opportunity to support organizations offering real solutions to the homelessness issue."

#GiveMHT5 informational posters and handouts are available for free to business owners to display and distribute in their establishments. City residents will also see messaging about #GiveMHT5 displayed along streets, sidewalks and intersections, electronic billboards and Department of Public Works digital sign boards around Manchester. Businesses will also be invited to take part in #GiveMHT5 a social media takeover on Thursday, August 13 and Friday August 14.

The hub of the campaign is its website, [www.givemht5.com](http://www.givemht5.com), which contains campaign information, resources and a link to a secure donation site. Donations to #GiveMHT5 will be administered by Granite United Way, which will disperse funds to Manchester nonprofits The Way Home, the YWCA, Waypoint and Families in Transition/New Horizons, which are committed to ending the cycle of homelessness.

"By contributing to organizations rather than individuals, we can ensure dollars are going towards those who are the most in need and seeking help," said Mayor Joyce Craig. "We need to work together to keep our downtown and the rest of the city safe. We're asking residents and visitors to stop giving directly to panhandlers. We encourage everyone, when you are thinking of giving money or food to someone on the street, to still treat that person with respect, but to instead donate to #GiveMHT5 and help address the root cause of homelessness."

For information on the campaign and to donate, visit [www.givemht5.com](http://www.givemht5.com).

#### **ABOUT THE GREATER MANCHESTER CHAMBER**

Incorporated in 1911, the Greater Manchester Chamber (GMC) is the largest business organization in New Hampshire, focusing its efforts primarily on Manchester and the surrounding communities of Auburn, Bedford, Candia, Derry, Goffstown, Hooksett, Litchfield, Londonderry, and Merrimack. It is the Chamber's mission to be the voice of business, shaping economic success to enhance the quality of life in Greater Manchester. For more information visit [www.manchester-chamber.org](http://www.manchester-chamber.org).

# STOP PANHANDLING

Give to those who can help.



Give to organizations helping people  
experiencing homeless in Manchester,  
not to panhandlers.

DONATE AT

[www.GiveMHT5.com](http://www.GiveMHT5.com)

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