



DESC Sock Drive

Information Sheet



DESC stands for the Downtown Emergency Service Center. DESC serves Seattle's most vulnerable homeless population, particularly those with serious mental and addictive illness. They are Seattle's largest provider of care for the homeless, with 1000 people in permanent supportive housing and up to 8000 different people served in their shelter systems each year.

DESC serves adults, and provides wrap around services that include social and mental, physical and employment counseling as well as day services, hygiene counters, evening shelter and more.

Socks are gold at DESC. Many health problems stem from unhealthy feet, and with our population, many of those medical problems stem from wearing dirty, holey socks. Often, when people have been on the streets for an extended time, they are wearing the same pair of socks for months at a time. Often without washing. This leads to all sorts of physical problems. It also leads to a loss of dignity.

Have you ever come home from a long day at work and slipped on a fresh thick pair of socks? Imagine how powerful that feeling is after weeks in the same pair.

Despite the colorful socks on the posters, what we really need are plain old tube socks, or black, grey or white athletic socks. These are often found for \$10 for a dozen.

70% of the people we work with are men, so as a default, we are asking for men's socks. We have never ever had enough. We simply give out socks to those who need them until the supply is depleted, then wait for the next donation and start again.

Socks are used as a tool for engagement. HOST, our outreach team, will sometimes use a fresh pair of socks as reward for keeping an appointment. The members of this team are the brave souls who crawl under bridges and into dark doorways to engage with this vulnerable population. The idea is to gain the person's trust enough for them to accept services, eventually getting them off the streets. The trick is meeting them for the second time, and one of the easiest ways is to say "Hey, Joe, if I can find you here tomorrow, I will bring you a fresh pair of socks and some bread."

What about used sock? We won't say no! If there are no holes in them, we can use them. Though it is best to ask for mainly new socks, if an old pair is donated, we will use them.



Benefiting the clients of



For more information please contact Don Rupp at
(206) 682-0164 x 3211 or donations@desc.org

