

Assisting Homeless Patrons at the Circulation Desk

Background

- The number of those experiencing homelessness in Kern County have increased dramatically over the last two years.
- Those experiencing homelessness often frequent the Beale Memorial Library to spend time, use the internet, and to acquire information on community resources.
- Beale Memorial Library circulation staff have noticed an increase in the number of homeless patrons that use the services provided.

Information Problem

- Circulation staff are not trained to deal with the unique needs of those experiencing homelessness.
- This lack of training creates tension between circulation staff and those experiencing homelessness.
- This tension can lead to frustration between those experiencing homelessness and the circulation staff.

Solution

- Based on interactions with circulation staff, it was determined that a webinar detailing how to assist patrons experiencing homelessness would be beneficial.
- This webinar covers how to greet patrons, the unique needs of homeless patrons, how to handle the situation if circulation staff cannot assist the patron, and what to do if an interaction results in a security concern.

Next Steps

- The webinar will be given to the supervisor of the Beale Memorial Library and made available to circulation staff.
- The use of this webinar will allow staff to better assist the homeless patrons who frequent the Beale Memorial Library.

