

MUNI MINUTES

MISSOULA MUNICIPAL COURT

In 2024, the Missoula City Council passed an ordinance criminalizing “Urban Camping” (12.60).

The current iteration went into effect on January 1, 2025. In March of 2025, the City also announced the gradual closure of the Johnson Street Shelter. The City began phased closure of the shelter in May 2025 and closed the facility entirely in September 2025. The intersectionality of the two policy decisions has resulted in 161 citations issued for “urban survival camping.”

The penalty for this violation is a \$50 fine.

Camping Citations

January 1 - December 15, 2025



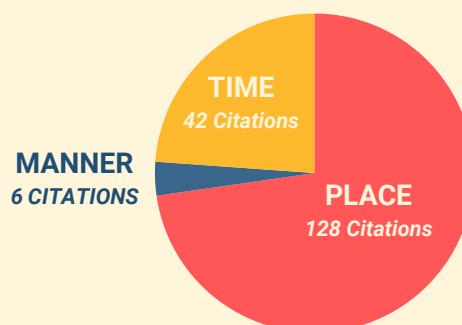
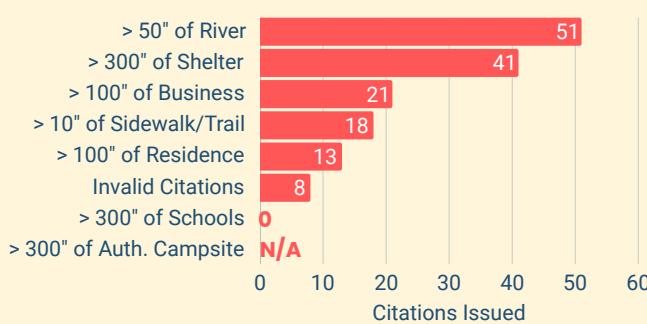
*Includes projected citations filed for the month

Camping ordinance violations remained minimal through the first quarter of 2025. As the phased closure began in May, citations increased. There were nearly four times as many citations in June than in April. Citations decreased in July but gradually increased through the fall in conjunction with the closure of the Johnson Street Shelter.

Breaking Down Camping Ordinance Violations

The ordinance arguably does not ban all camping, but restricts time, place, and manner – i.e. it criminalizes camping in certain places, at certain times, and by manner (i.e. not tidy). The vast majority of citations allege a violation of place restrictions.

94% of Camping Citations were issued with no other charges

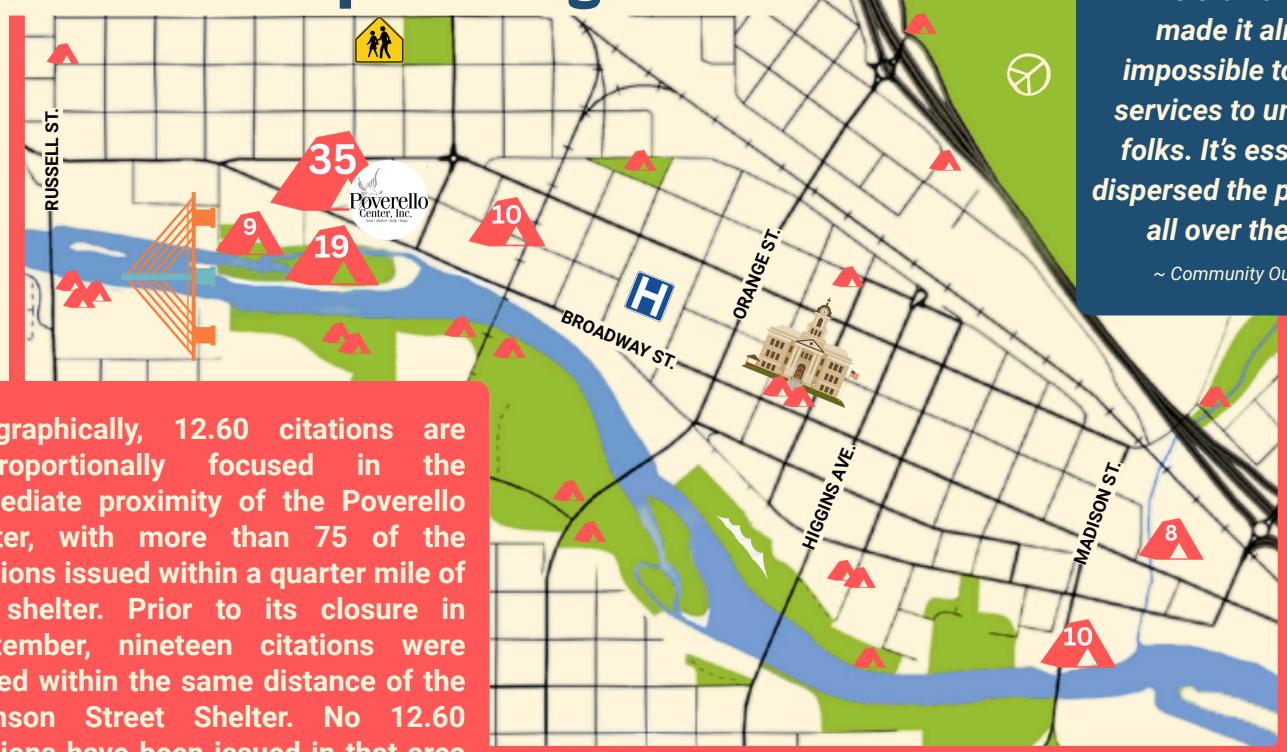


To date, no citations allege camping near a school or an authorized campsite (locations of authorized camping areas are not publicly available). The fewest number of citations were issued for the manner restriction (6 citations), highlighting that most of the citations are for a person’s physical location and not the state of their site.

“I just sleep outside on the sidewalk [without a tent]... It’s not camping if you don’t got a tent, you’re just sleeping.”

~ Unhoused Neighbor

Where Are People Being Cited?



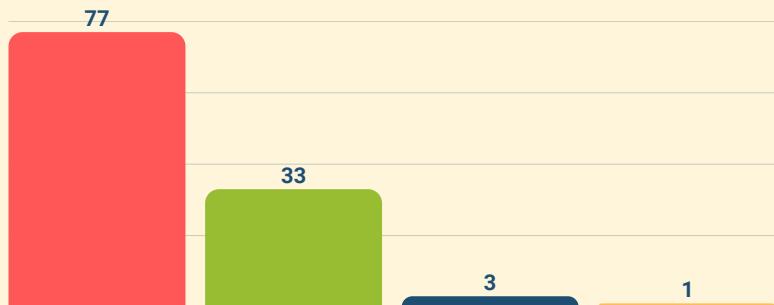
12.60 Case Filings



The charges are currently in varying procedural stages. Of the 161 cases filed for a 12.60 Camping Ordinance violation, over 50% are still pending. 47 cases have resulted in convictions, whereas 28 cases were dismissed upon motion of the City Attorney's Officer and 2 cases were dismissed by the Court.

Who is Being Cited?

19% of defendants who have received Camping Citations in 2025 have no prior legal history in Municipal Court in the last 10 years.



White - 67.5%
Native American/Indigenous - 28.9%
Black/African American - 2.6%
Asian/Pacific Islander - 0.9%

While Native American/Indigenous people make up 2.8% of the Missoula County population, they make up 14.1% percent of our unhoused neighbors, and 28.9% of those being cited for camping violations. Similarly, African Americans make up 0.6% of Missoula County's population, but 2.7% of people experiencing homelessness in Missoula, and 2.6% of those receiving camping citations.

~ Source: [City of Missoula Houseless Programs Data](#)