

Spare a thought for the homeless this Christmas

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For many Christmas is a time to be with your loved ones around the table eating all sorts of homemade dishes and treats. A time when gifts are placed neatly beneath the Christmas tree, given or received on the special day to make someone special smile.

For some people out there though, more specifically homeless people, this is not necessarily always the case.

There are however ways that members of the public can help brighten up their day, by dropping off donations at non-profit organisations which assist the homeless.

One of the places that donations can also be made is the City of Cape Town's Safe Space in Culemborg in Cape Town, says Zahid Badroodien, Mayco member for community services and health.

"The City advocates responsible giving and does not support direct handouts to street people.

"Residents are encouraged to give to shelters and registered organisations supporting street people and the City's Safe Space for street people, instead of giving direct handouts which may encourage a person to remain on the street," Badroodien says.

Festive season donations of food, toilet-

ries, blankets and good quality second-hand clothing can be dropped at the City's Safe Space which is currently accommodating 230 street people, who can access social support, development and expanded public works programme opportunities at the site, Badroodien says.

The provincial department of social development also supports non-government organisations (NGOs) that look after the homeless.

"As part of its day-to-day business, the department provides funding to NGOs that work directly to get people off the streets, and to empower them with skills-training, uniting them back with their families and integrating them back into our communities," Esther Lewis, spokesperson, told *TygerBurger*.

The department however has no special programmes planned for the festive season.

"The department also assists the homeless by funding 27 shelters with R47,6 million, which provides 1 401 beds each day.

"The shelters render key social work services aimed at reunifying homeless adults with their families, with R16 million allocated to sustained family reunification services," Lewis explains.

► The City of Cape Town's Safe Space can be contacted at 021 801 0140.