

EDITORIAL

Our position: An effort by local churches to help with identification cards can provide fresh starts

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Imagine yourself without any ID in your wallet and the chaos it would create.

Now think of yourself as a homeless person without an ID.

For homeless people, it goes beyond the inconvenience of not being allowed to cash a check. IDs allow them to rent motel rooms, get a job, or seek essential services that may get them off the streets.

Fortunately, help is on the way today.

A coalition of local churches will send volunteers to the Orlando Union Rescue Mission for an event called IDIGNITY -- which will bring a number of services under one location.

The Florida Division of Driver Licenses, the Orange County Health Department, and the Social Security Administration, among others, will be available to give people critical forms of IDs like a license or a birth certificate.

This is scheduled to be the first of three monthly events of this kind, coordinated with the help of the Homeless Services Network. The hope is that the regional commission trying to end homelessness is paying attention.

This is basic training on how to deal with homeless people, who can number as many as 9,000 during peak months in winter. It's a practice, too, recommended by the federal agency dealing with the homeless problem.

But most important, it's common sense. The more people you get off the streets, the less of a burden they are to social services, law enforcement, health and other agencies.

By helping them, this community helps itself.

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