

THE CITY OF NEWPORT

RESOLUTION

OF THE

COUNCIL

No.2026-12

***RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A
PUBLIC HEALTH VENDING MACHINE PROGRAM***

WHEREAS, homelessness is a significant issue within our community, and many individuals who are homeless also face additional challenges, including substance use, mental health concerns, and physical health disparities that are often compromised due to the lack of accessible support systems, contributing to further health disparities and social challenges; and

WHEREAS, the City of Newport recognizes substance use disorder as a public health issue that affects individuals, families, neighborhoods, and municipal services; and

WHEREAS, harm reduction strategies aim to minimize the negative health impacts of risky behaviors, especially those associated with substance use, by providing safer alternatives and access to life-saving resources while fostering a sense of dignity and trust with vulnerable populations; and

WHEREAS, providing basic wellness resources, such as hygiene products, over-the-counter medications, and other health essentials, including harm reduction tools, can have a profound impact on the daily lives and overall well-being of individuals experiencing homelessness while respecting their autonomy and addressing immediate health needs; and

WHEREAS, a public health vending machine offers an innovative and easily accessible way to address the unique needs of individuals who may be experiencing homelessness and substance use disorders or are at higher risk for injury, infection, and/or overdose thus reducing barriers to healthcare access for vulnerable populations; and

WHEREAS, the City of Newport is committed to supporting its homeless population with inclusive, compassionate programs that prioritize both immediate safety and long-term well-being; and

WHEREAS, municipalities have a responsibility to pursue data-driven strategies that reduce overdose deaths and protect life, reduce emergency response costs, improve community cleanliness and safety, and create pathways to treatment and recovery; NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that the City Council will establish a pilot public health vending machine program to support the health, safety, and well-being of homeless individuals, and individuals suffering with substance abuse disorders; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the public health vending machines will be stocked with a range of health, hygiene, and harm reduction products, such as the following examples:

- **Personal Hygiene Items:** Soap, shampoo, conditioner, toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, hand sanitizers, sanitary wipes.
- **Health Essentials:** First aid kits, band-aids, and antiseptic wipes.
- **Cold Weather and Comfort Items:** Socks, gloves, blankets, scarves, rain ponchos, and other seasonal essentials.
- **Harm Reduction Tools:**
 - **Naloxone (Narcan):** A life-saving medication to reverse opioid overdoses
 - **Fentanyl Testing Strips:** To help individuals test substances for the presence of fentanyl, reducing the risk of overdose
 - **Educational Materials:** Related to overdose prevention, treatment, and recovery services; and

the items will be determined by City Administration, who will consult and work with the following organizations to identify and address the most pressing health and wellness needs of the homeless and substance abuse disorder populations:

- AIDS Care Ocean State (ACOS) - the organization that will supply and stock the vending machine;
- the Newport Fire Department;
- the Newport Police Department;
- the Newport Prevention Coalition;
- and other community organizations as deemed necessary; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the City Administration, along with the Newport Fire Department, and Newport Police Department will determine the best location of the vending machine; and BE IT FURTHER


RESOLVED, the program will include provisions for regular monitoring and maintenance of the public health vending machines, including:

- Routine restocking of products based on demand
- Regular servicing to ensure the vending machines remain operational
- Collection of feedback from individuals using the machines to ensure the program is meeting their needs; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the City will evaluate the effectiveness of the public health vending machine after 1 year, using both quantitative data and qualitative feedback from community partners, to assess the impact on the health and safety of the community.

STEPHANIE SMYTH
ELLEN PINNOCK

IN COUNCIL
READ AND PASSED
JANUARY 14, 2026


LAURA C. SWISTAK, CMC
CITY CLERK