LONG BEACH
CITY COLLEGE

SAFE PARKING PROGRAM

- LBCC's Safe Parking Program provides enrolled, unhoused students with a secure place to sleep in their vehicles overnight.
- LBCC's Safe Parking Program is the only known initiative of its kind at a community college in the nation.
- Safe Parking Program students receive case management, Wi-Fi, restrooms, showers, and access to long-term housing support.

Introduction:
A COMMITMENT TO STUDENT WELL-BEING

Long Beach City College (LBCC) has a longstanding commitment to removing barriers to student success, including the growing challenge of housing insecurity. Recognizing that many students are living in their vehicles while pursuing their education, LBCC launched its Safe Parking Program in October 2021. As the first initiative of its kind at a community college in the region, the program provides a safe, supportive space for students to park overnight—offering stability and dignity as they work toward their academic goals.

Understanding the Need:
HOUSING INSECURITY AT LBCC

In the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, LBCC distributed an emergency needs request form for students to complete. Survey results revealed that approximately 70 students were sleeping in their vehicles each night. In response to this urgent need, the college launched the Safe Parking Program.

While the Safe Parking Program was a critical first step in addressing student homelessness during the pandemic, the need for broader, sustained support became increasingly evident. It has helped tremendously that the LBCC Board of Trustees has been focused on meeting students' basic needs for years—even before the launch of the program. Their ongoing support and leadership have been instrumental in driving these efforts forward. As the college continued to prioritize student well-being, it expanded its work to better understand and address housing insecurity on a larger scale.

A Basic Needs survey conducted in Spring 2024 revealed troubling statistics about housing insecurity among LBCC students. A total of 747 students reported being at risk of or currently experiencing homelessness. Of these, 169 students were literally homeless—living in cars, couch surfing, or staying in public spaces. An additional 578 students requested support with overdue rent or utility payments, further emphasizing the demand for housing assistance and related services.

Spring 2024 Basic Needs Survey:

747 STUDENTS

reported being at risk or currently experiencing homelessness

▼

Of those, 169 of these students were literally homeless

SERVICES AND SUPPORT

The Safe Parking Program provides a secure, designated overnight parking area at LBCC's Liberal Arts Campus, open nightly from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. The area is monitored by campus safety personnel to ensure a safe environment for both students and their vehicles. While this program serves as a vital lifeline for students experiencing homelessness, it is intended as a temporary, stopgap solution—not a long-term answer to housing insecurity.

To support students in transitioning to more stable living situations, LBCC staff provide individualized case management services. Participants also have access to:

- On-site restrooms and Wi-Fi throughout the night
- Campus showers, available daily from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.
- Supportive items such as inflatable mattresses, blankets, hygiene kits, and gift cards for meals or groceries
- Financial assistance for car insurance, registration, and minor vehicle repairs—critical resources that help students remain mobile and engaged in their education

ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION

Students must be enrolled in the current semester to participate, though there is no minimum unit requirement. The program is also open to those enrolled in non-credit or continuing education courses. Each participant is paired with LBCC staff for case management services, focusing on transition planning and connections to long-term housing resources.

Impact and Growth: FROM PILOT TO EXPANSION

The program's pilot phase (October 2021–June 2022) served 12 students. Among those, 6 successfully transitioned into stable housing, and 3 graduated—early indicators of the program's positive impact.

By December 2024, the number of participants had grown to 31. As more students reach out for help, the program continues to serve as both a critical support system and a model for addressing student homelessness in higher education.

SAFE PARKING PROGRAM:

Pilot Phase (Oct 2021 – June 2022)

12 STUDENTS ASSISTED

- **6 transitioned into stable housing**
- **3 went on to graduate**

A Broader Housing Strategy
LONG-TERM VISION

The Safe Parking Program is just one part of LBCC's comprehensive approach to addressing student housing insecurity, which includes plans for a 431-bed affordable student housing facility at the Liberal Arts Campus. The project is funded by Measure LB and Measure AC, which was approved by Long Beach voters to support campus modernization and affordable student housing, the college has also received $1 million in federal funding from Rep. Nanette Barragán to support a mixed-use student housing complex in North Long Beach. This work is strengthened through collaboration with the City of Long Beach, CSU Long Beach, and the Long Beach Unified School District via the Long Beach Housing Promise, a shared commitment to providing safe, stable housing for all students and their families.

READ MORE

The Washington Post

Account Required

The Guardian

5 GOALS FOR THE NEXT 5 YEARS

ENSURING STABILITY & SUCCESS FOR SAFE PARKING STUDENTS

- All students sleeping in their vehicle will have a guaranteed path to long-term housing stability.
- All Safe Parking students will access transitional or permanent housing within one semester.
- All Safe Parking students will receive vehicle maintenance service and minor repairs from our LBCC Auto Technology department.
- 85% of Safe Parking students will graduate or transfer.

Sources

1. “Long Beach Housing Promise Meeting #2,” October 8, 2024. 2. “Long Beach Housing Promise Event,” November 9, 2023. 3. LBCC Press Release. “LBCC Launches Pilot Program for Student Overnight Parking,” November 1, 2021. 4. “Safe Parking Update”. March 26, 2025. 5. “Affordable Housing Prep”. January 29, 2025.

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