

# FAQ

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. What is the Visalia Navigation Center?

The Visalia Navigation Center is a Low-Barrier Navigation Center (LBNC) that will have service-enriched living quarters focused on guiding residents into permanent housing. LBNC is defined as a Housing First, low-barrier, temporary, service-enriched shelter focused on helping homeless individuals and families quickly obtain permanent housing. Low barrier includes best practices to reduce barriers to entry, such as allowing partners, pets, storage of personal items, and privacy. The navigation aspect of the center consists of case managers connecting residents to supportive services. On-site resources include beds, showers, laundry facilities, meals, phone/mail services, animal kennels, storage space, and parking for residents. On-site services will include employment training, public benefits, health services, substance abuse and mental health services, and connections to permanent housing opportunities.

### 2. What is CSET's Role?

CSET, in partnership with other organizations, will manage and operate Visalia's first Low Barrier Navigation Center. This involves overseeing day-to-day operations and providing access to essential services for up to 100 temporary residents. Our commitment is to create a safe and supportive environment for individuals experiencing homelessness, ensuring they receive the assistance needed to regain stability.

### 3. What is TC Hope?

Tulare County Hope for the Homeless (TC Hope) is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization formed in March 2019 to build a Low-Barrier Navigation Center in Tulare County. Motivated by compassion for those experiencing homelessness, the volunteer board of directors is comprised of local residents who worked tirelessly to fundraise and organize support for the Visalia Navigation Center.

### 4. Does Visalia need a Low-Barrier Navigation Center?

Yes! According to a 2023 KTHA Point in Time survey, there are 1,053 people experiencing homelessness in Tulare County. Despite an increased need for housing, local shelter space has remained unchanged in the last decade. The community's existing shelters are at capacity, and because Visalia does not currently have a low-barrier navigation center, many individuals and families are being turned away and unable to access safe and secure, temporary housing.

## 5. How is this different than an emergency shelter?

This is different than an emergency shelter in several ways. First, beds will be assigned, and residents can stay at the Navigation Center for 90-180 days. Second, an online referral system, accessible by local partners and the Police Department, to access updates. Third, a line will not be formed each day to get into the facility because all residents will be enrolled and assigned a bed.

## 6. What types of services will be provided at the Navigation Center?

The Navigation Center will be a one-stop center to house and provide residents access to an array of services. Many of the service providers will have office space, office hours, and staff at the Navigation Center.

Case managers will be assigned to work closely with the resident(s). These Case Managers, along with the service partners will provide access to mental health and behavioral health services. Residents will have assistance to secure basic needed documents, such as birth certificates, California driver's licenses, or ID cards. They will be assisted with enrollment for benefits, and given opportunities for skills and job training and readiness. There will be 3 meals a day provided, access to showers, and storage for personal possessions. There will be a kennel for their dogs and the residents will be provided with extensive supportive services to help break the cycle of homelessness and facilitate their being able to move to permanent housing.

## 7. Who can stay at the Visalia Navigation Center?

The Visalia Navigation Center will provide temporary housing for single individuals as well as private spaces for families experiencing homelessness. Because children may be residing at the center, registered sex offenders will not be allowed entry or enrollment.

## 8. What are the staffing plans and safety precautions at the Visalia Navigation Center?

The Visalia Navigation Center will have onsite staffing 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Office space will be provided for several agency partners, including the Kings/Tulare Homeless Alliance, Tulare County Behavioral Health, and CSET employment services. Pre-enrollment is required for all residents (no evening drop-in services), transportation to/from the center will be arranged for residents through partner agencies, and no overnight parking will be allowed for non-residents. Due to these requirements, there will be extremely limited activity to and from the Visalia Navigation Center, especially in the evening and night hours. The center will feature a 6-foot concrete masonry wall, and security guards and cameras on site.

## 9. How can I get involved?

Community residents can get involved with the Visalia Navigation Center by volunteering or serving on the Neighborhood Advisory Council. The Neighborhood Advisory Council will be established prior to the end of construction, and will provide information and receive feedback from nearby residents on the Visalia Navigation Center operations. If you're interested in joining this council, please reach out via email to [vnc.info@cset.org](mailto:vnc.info@cset.org). For volunteering opportunities or additional information about the center, visit [www.cset.org/vnc](http://www.cset.org/vnc).