

# It Is Now Illegal to Share Food with the Homeless in Florida

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If you're someone who believes in personal (not government-provided) charity and who likes to make sure that as many homeless people as possible get a decent meal each day, good for you. But you might want to avoid Fort Lauderdale, Florida, because you could wind up with a hefty fine and some jail time.

Seriously.

According to reports, police in the city issued citations and further threatened to arrest two priests and a 90-year-old World War II vet for the "crime" of feeding homeless people. A group of bozos on the city council recently approved a measure making the sharing of food a citable offense. As reported by *The Daily Sheeple*:

Fort Lauderdale police removed at least three volunteers, as well as the Sunday lunch they were serving to several dozen homeless people, citing a controversial new ordinance that prohibits food sharing. Passed in October, the measure was created to try to cut down the growing population of homeless people in Fort Lauderdale.

All it has really done is put a chill on charity.

## **"The whole world is watching"**

In video footage [located on this web page](#), you can see three police officers show up and disrupt an in-progress feeding program, removing Arnold Abbott, 90, the Rev. Canon Mark Sims of St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church, and the Rev. Dwayne Black of the Sanctuary Church.

As the men are being removed and the operation disrupted, several [people](#) begin to protest the police action, following the police officers as they escort the men to their patrol cars.

"Shame on you, arresting an elderly man!" shouted someone in the assembled crowd.

"The whole world is watching!" another shouted.

But the officers, who don't have any choice but to enforce laws the city passes, were unrelenting. In the video one officer explains to the three men, "Basically you are going to be cited for serving to the community without proper accommodations. Everything is explained in here. This is a citation. If you guys continue to come out here you will face

arrest.”

As *The Daily Sheeple* further reported:

The ban on sharing food is part of city officials’ recent efforts to cut down on the burgeoning downtown [homeless](#) population. The most recent law – passed by a 4-1 vote – limits where outdoor feeding can be located. It can’t be situated near another feeding site; it has to be at least 500 feet from residential property; and feed program organizers must seek permission from property owners for sites in front of their buildings.

City officials say the new laws are merely “public health and safety measures,” but opponents have begun referring to them as “homeless hate laws,” the *Sun-Sentinel* newspaper reported.

“We are simply trying to feed people who are hungry,” Sims told the paper. “To criminalize that is contrary to everything that I stand for as a priest and as a person of faith.”

The program in question is operated by a group called Love Thy Neighbor. Abbott, its founder, has served [food](#) to homeless people for two decades.

### **“We’ve lost our collective minds”**

The anti-homeless feeding ordinances follow additional mandates in Fort Lauderdale that have banned homeless people from soliciting at the city’s busiest intersections, from sleeping on public property uptown, and have strengthened measures against defecating in public. There is also a new measure making it illegal for anyone to store their personal belongings on public property.

“I’m not satisfied with having a cycle of homeless in the city of Fort Lauderdale,” said Mayor Jack Seiler, in an interview with the *Sun-Sentinel*. “Providing them with a meal and keeping them in that cycle on the street is not productive.”

But such ordinances don’t really do anything to address the cycle, either, or correct it – they just penalize anyone who wants to help such people.

“I think we’ve lost our collective minds. We’re arresting people who should be lauded and lauding people on Wall Street and elsewhere who should be arrested,” Joel Berg, executive director of the New York Coalition Against Hunger, according to Sheeple’s source.

### **Sources:**

<http://www.thedailysheeple.com>

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com>

<http://www.local10.com>

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