

DECIPHERING PANHANDLING

Quality of life and public safety are the building blocks of great neighborhoods. It is the BID's mission to keep our streets clean and safe for everyone who lives, works, and visits our District. This document serves to provide a basic understanding of panhandling laws in the City of Albany in an effort to maintain safety and, for those who want to help, connecting those in need with the many community-based services available to them.

What is **PERMITTED SOLICITATION** in the City of Albany:

Passive solicitation - seeking a donation without approaching or stopping an individual or addressing a donation request to any specific person

Active solicitation - seeking a donation (by words, bodily gestures, or signs) when approaching or stopping an individual

What is **ILLEGAL SOLICITATION** in the City of Albany:

Active solicitation is prohibited throughout the City in the following circumstances:

- Within 10 feet of any entrance or exit of any bank or check cashing business during its business hours or 24hrs if they have an ATM facility attached.
- When approaching an occupant of a motor vehicle when located on a street for the exchange of goods or services in an aggressive manner.
- On private property without permission from a property owner.

Aggressive solicitation is prohibited throughout the City, and is defined as:

- Approaching, speaking to, or following a person resulting in that person:
 - Fearing bodily harm to oneself or to another, damage to or loss of property.
 - Otherwise being intimidated into giving money or other thing of value.
 - Suffering unreasonable inconvenience, annoyance or alarm.
- Intentionally touching or causing physical contact with another person or an occupied vehicle without that person's consent in the course of soliciting, asking or begging.
- Intentionally blocking or interfering with the safe or free passage of a pedestrian or vehicle by any means, including causing a pedestrian or vehicle to take evasive action to avoid physical contact.
- Using violent or threatening gestures toward a person solicited.

To report panhandlers who violate these City ordinance provisions:

If you feel it is an emergency, call 911.
Albany Police Department: 518-438-4000

