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As soon as the door locks behind the constable, many people face the hard decision of where they are going to sleep that night.

Many get referred to homeless shelters and organizations that can help find them temporary housing, a short-term solution to the epidemic they are facing.

“Every day we come across new people who are being evicted and face homelessness,” Constable Kristen Randall, from Precinct eight said. “A lot of people who get evicted don’t have any court or criminal records...but once they have an eviction on their record, a lot of other things start happening.”

She has seen people that once they have been evicted from their homes, they try and come back in to have a warm or safe place to sleep for the night. That results in a trespassing charge, which leads to even more criminal charges, just for trying to find a place to stay, according to Randall.

Over 13,000 people were evicted in the city from 2015 to 2018, with the process taking as little as five days for a landlord to file a lawsuit against the tenant if rent isn’t paid, according to an article from Tucson Local Media. As rent continues to be pushed past due, many tenants have late fees and court charges stacked against them.

As their day in court appears, many tenants are ill-prepared to defend themselves, or are unaware of the formalities in place. Without a written agreement in place between the landlord and tenant, it becomes a “he said/she said” battle over things such as back payment agreements or terms of

fixing things at the residence. Many tenants do not even make it to court to state their argument, resulting in an easy ruling in favor of the landlord.

According to the National Low-Income Housing Coalition, there were 940,000 tenants in Arizona at the beginning of the year, with roughly a fourth of them considered to be “extremely low-income,” or a family of four that lives on \$24,000 a year or less. For comparison, the average income needed to live in a two-bedroom at fair market value is \$38,000 for one year.

Many of the tenants who find themselves in court or facing eviction are getting evicted because they did not pay their rent. Once the ruling is over, the tenants are faced with what to do about their living situation.

Some find a hotel room to stay in for a week until they can find more sustainable housing, while others who are less fortunate and no money in their pocket, are out on the street that night.

Cliff Wade, a homeless outreach specialist with the City of Tucson, works with many people who have faced eviction and who are now coming to him as their last resort. He helps people who have an eviction on their record find appropriate housing, according to Wade.

“My name is on the streets, pretty good. I’ve been doing this for like 10 years with agencies for four and with the city for about two years. I find [the homeless people] in the parks, the streets, the deserts, shelters, places they sleep, homeless camps, whatever and then it's trying to figure out what I can do for them, what type of housing, and where they can go,” Wade said. “I got a lot of resources thank goodness and I can do the vulnerability index survey on them which gives me an idea of what type of housing that they would succeed in and then we try to find them into a better type housing they might be able to succeed.”

Wade has been working as a resource to anyone facing housing discrimination for over 10 years. He has personally seen the rise in prices of rent in apartments and houses in the city go up in recent years, causing many people to live on the streets as a result of not being able to afford their rent any longer.

“Our biggest problem in this town is the landlords. They're raising their rents. I got some that are charging almost \$800 a month for a \$500 apartment two years ago. That's ridiculous,” Wade said.

Having a resource for evicted people who now face homelessness helps so that the people do not feel so alone in the process.

“The biggest thing is trying to keep them from being evicted. If we can do better at that as a community, it would save us a lot of hassle because it's really hard to house somebody who has eviction after eviction. And especially if that eviction is within the last 12 months, I got to go down to the Class D landlords...the slumlords.”

While some resources such as Wade can help someone who might be facing homelessness after they have been evicted, not all of these resources are helpful to everyone.

Many people try and look for a homeless shelter to stay in for the night, but because of certain requirements needed to even get a bed, many are sleeping in the cold, outside with whatever belongings they could manage to keep and carry.

According to Randall, most homeless shelters have people lined up by 9-10 a.m. to reserve a bed and a warm place to stay that night. She has seen multiple people try and reserve a bed but get turned away because the shelter is already at capacity by 10 a.m.

There are over 10 homeless shelters and transitional housing services that people can turn to in Tucson when they find themselves facing eviction with no place to go afterwards.

Places like Our Family Services, Gospel Rescue Mission, Salvation Army Hospitality House and many more offer a homeless hotline for assistance in how to get a bed or services from their facilities.

Many shelters also have drug and alcohol rehab treatment clinics that people can take advantage of and smoothly transition into permanent housing.

Homeless shelters during this time are also taking donations of jackets, socks, sweaters and any winter clothing for people who are in need and facing homelessness this season.