

Dear community partners,

We are disappointed to inform you of unethical, unprofessional, and potentially unlawful conduct within our agency, Anything Helps, a 501(c)(3) organization, which has been tasked with connecting the unsheltered residents of the Bitter Lake encampment (located near the Broadview Thompson school grounds) with housing and other supportive services. The email below was sent last Friday to Mike Mathias, Executive Director of Anything Helps.

We have 6 firsthand accounts plus witnesses to gross misconduct involving Mr. Mathias pressuring women at the camp to “hit” or “slam” him with meth; this is considered an intimate act by some people. Some of the women were afraid to say no or miss “hitting” his vein as they felt he had control of their housing futures. One woman states that she was overtly told by Mr. Mathias that her Emergency Housing Voucher form could be rescinded/canceled and that he could get her kicked out of her current room at the Mary Pilgrim Inn if she did not agree to do what he requested. In addition, there are 4 witnesses to Mr. Mathias using Anything Helps funds to purchase meth for himself plus reports of large cash amounts being spent to buy drugs for specific individuals in camp. Despite multiple requests to produce receipts, Mr. Mathias cannot account for all Anything Helps funds.

Other allegations of misconduct include Mr. Mathias harassing some of the above women to change their stories, showing up at camp or the Mary Pilgrim Inn to attempt contact after the women asked that he not be allowed on the property, disabling Anything Helps team email and application access, “firing” unpaid staff after they came forward with the allegations, verbal abuse of and threats toward staff, and having staff banned from all sites.

When confronted, Mr. Mathias became defensive and attempted to turn the accusations around; he sent retaliatory group texts stating the staff member bringing up the allegations was “mentally ill,” and should get help, “a child,” and that she was “always smoking meth with campers.” He told people she was fired for stealing money, was delusional, and that the team had made everything up. The team has made several additional attempts to address these allegations internally, including consulting with a lawyer, requesting an investigation with the board of directors and formally asking Mike to resign in the attached email. So far, Mike’s response to our requests has been to disable two more team members’ emails and further remove permissions to our agency’s electronic records. He has also made attempts to restrict access to locations (Lakefront shelter, Mary Pilgrim Inn) including telling staff he will have them removed from the camp.

Out of concern for our community partners and the people we serve, the team feels that it is important to bring these allegations to the attention of the public, in hopes that Mr. Mathias be held accountable. We understand that these are very serious claims and are prepared to provide supporting documentation, such as written statements from campers as well as text messages and emails from Mr. Mathias.

If you would like to speak to the team or others involved, you may respond to this email address or call . Thank you for your patience as we work through this.

The Anything Helps Team

From: **Anything Helps**

Date: Fri, Nov 26, 2021 at 6:07 PM

Subject: Moving forward

Mike,

Due to the multiple substantiated reports of misconduct, we must ask you to step away from the organization.

This includes but is not limited to direct and/or implied threats to women we serve about housing if they refused to "hit" you (inject your drugs for you); using Anything Helps finances to purchase drugs; inappropriate sexual conduct, and verbal aggression, threats, and retaliation toward staff.

This would include no contact by you, by any medium, with any Bitter Lake resident, current or past; releasing all funds, financial records, and storage unit keys and codes; handing over administrative access to email and applications; and ceasing work on all Anything Helps work, effective immediately.

If you refuse, the following will happen:

1. You will be reported to DSHS, KCRHA, DESC, LIHI, THS, the HOPE team, WA Health Benefit Exchange, Housing Connector, WA Department of Health, the school board and pertinent staff of SPS, and the staff of Broadview Thompson school. The team will comply and assist to the best of their abilities with any requests for investigation.
2. All Bitter Lake residents, current or past, will be informed of all accusations personally by a team member, either in person or by phone.

No one is pleased that it has come to this but as you have repeatedly told the team and others, Anything Helps must focus on the needs of those we serve. That can't be done while your issues are distracting from the mission.

The team