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# City of El Paso Partners with Cisco to Launch *El Paso Helps*

## *New Online Portal Assists Residents in Crisis, Connects the Community to Immediate Live Help*

### News Summary:

- El Paso Helps is a one-stop program with a new portal quickly connecting community members in crisis with a live person to assist with vital services such as street outreach, shelter, food, COVID-19 assistance, mental health counseling, and more.
- El Paso Helps is a collaborative effort with nonprofit partners and Cisco, the City of El Paso's longtime technology partner. El Paso Helps is facilitated by Webex and Cisco's networking infrastructure solutions.
- El Paso Helps is based on the City's successful pandemic pilot program, the Delta Welcome Center, intended to centralize services for unhoused community members to access social services. In two years, the Center served 5,000 unique individuals, setting the groundwork for El Paso Helps.

**EL PASO, Texas, Feb. 23, 2023** – Today, the City of El Paso is proud to launch El Paso Helps, a one-stop online portal for centralized social services delivery. El Pasoans in need will now have access to simple and effective community resources where individuals are connected directly to live agents and 24/7 street outreach.

One of the biggest challenges for individuals experiencing crisis or homelessness is the inability to easily access and navigate resources for basic needs. El Paso Helps is designed to help people quickly and simply identify local resources. Individuals can visit [www.ElPasoHelps.org](http://www.ElPasoHelps.org), select a category of need, and are then connected to live agents offering resource assistance for basic needs, housing placement, emergency shelter, and trained social workers to engage and support individuals in crisis. Street outreach is also available 24/7 at (915) 298-1115.

This easy-to-use, live help portal connects vulnerable populations directly with agencies providing assistance. Current support includes:

- **Street Outreach** (Amistad): 24/7 teams providing help to individuals on the street;
- **Shelter** (Opportunity Center for the Homeless): Temporary emergency shelter through a new Welcome Center;
- **Food, Safe Place, and COVID-19 Assistance** (United Way): Resilience Navigators from United Way can provide help for people seeking to navigate existing community resources;
- **Housing** (Endeavors): For permanent housing options through Rapid Rehousing;
- **Mental Health** (Emergence Health Network): Access to mental health counseling, addiction services, and veterans care.

—more—



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“The City of El Paso is at its strongest collaborating with partners in search of innovative solutions to support some of our most vulnerable community members and address our homeless population and those in crisis,” said Mayor Oscar Leaser. “Powered by partnerships with our local nonprofit organizations such as the Opportunity Center and Endeavors and longtime technology partner Cisco we continue to deliver on the City’s Strategic Plan.”

“The City of El Paso’s leadership in launching El Paso Helps illustrates the power of collaboration between the public and private sectors,” said Gary DePreta, Vice President for State, Local Governments, and Education at Cisco. “By leveraging Webex by Cisco, members of the El Paso community can now connect virtually on video with live help, allowing for a better user experience in navigating government and social services.”

“Since 2020, this team of partners – from area nonprofits to technology leader Cisco to local solutions provider Computacenter – has stepped up to serve El Pasoans when they needed us the most,” said Nicole Ferrini, the City of El Paso’s Climate and Sustainability Officer. “El Paso Helps is an unprecedented effort that builds on partnership and recognizes that no one entity can do this alone. Today we are focused on El Pasoans in the most immediate crisis, such as those experiencing homelessness. The City’s objective is to continue to grow the number and types of services available through El Paso Helps.”

The City has demonstrated a longstanding commitment to serving its unhoused community members, for example, in standing up the Delta Welcome Center during the COVID-19 pandemic to offer temporary shelter to over 5,000 individuals in two years. Now, El Paso is building on this progress to offer more long-term solutions for community members, leveraging American Rescue Plan funding to increase access and services for El Pasoans experiencing or at risk of homelessness as outlined in the City’s Strategic Plan (Goal 8.2).

If you or someone you know is experiencing homelessness you can visit [EIPasoHelps.org](https://EIPasoHelps.org) or [EIPasoAyuda.org](https://EIPasoAyuda.org). Individuals can also call (915) 298-1115 for a 24/7 street outreach team to assist.

### **About Cisco**

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