

## Toronto Housing and Homelessness Service System Planning Forum January 10, 2024

**Date and time:** January 10, 2024, 10:00am – 12:00pm  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87159395431>

Land acknowledgment: [Our Proposal | Indigenous Caucus - Canadian Housing & Renewal Association \(forindigenousbyindigenous.ca\)](#)

### 1. SSHA Items and Updates

#### Name and budget update

- SSHA is now Toronto Shelter & Support Services (TSSS) to reflect the redefinition of division's focus on homelessness following the transfer of the Housing Secretariat in 2022.
- Today is the launch of the 2024 Capital and Operating Budget Launch ([toronto.ca/budget](https://toronto.ca/budget)).
- February 1, 2024, is Mayor Chow's launch of the budget with special Council meeting on February 14, 2024

#### Shelter system flow data – refer to slide deck

- Shelter System Flow Data for the month can be accessed through the City's website: [Shelter System Flow Data – City of Toronto](#)
- Data posted on the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month (November 2023 data discussed at this meeting)

**Q:** Are we counting the people who are receiving COHB or people who have secured housing with COHB?

**A:** Both are counted and there is a lag and shelter system flow is different than program outcomes.

**Q:** Do we share this data with senior levels of government – COHB is so important?

**A:** Yes, it is shared.

**Q:** Is there a priority list when people are placed in housing who experience chronic homelessness? Could we have a breakdown? Do we know how many permanent housing units are coming live over the year on some of the projects that are being completed?

**A:** By-name list is used, and proportion is given to street outreach for chronic homelessness. We have a different process for Indigenous Peoples who are not on the By-name list. Also, other priorities for women, seniors, 2SLGBTQ, Black clients etc. For tracking permanent housing units, we have estimates from providers.

**Q:** What is the connection of COHB and supports?

**A:** We are always looking for more funding in this area, and areas to work with people on this.

**Q:** Do you have statistics on how long people who have left shelter and have secured housing stay in housing/retention statistics? If the number of people returning to shelter is large it, it may indicate the need for more supports.

**A:** We do track returns to the shelter system in terms of people who have left and people who have left for housing (two different categories). Toronto has a lower number of returns compared to other jurisdictions, but there still is a number of people.

**Q:** Are there income limits from COHB?

**A:** We think the Province does the income testing, but not sure of threshold. Will get back to group.

**Q:** Are people in receipt of COHB receiving assistance to secure housing, specifically landlord engagement?

**A:** Yes, to both; for certain populations are focus for landlord engagement (e.g. refugees). Nothing formal but move to develop something.

Will invite Richard from Housing Secretariat to February meeting and maybe have COHB as agenda item.

#### Winter Plan Updates

- Winter Services Plan: most significant change is activation criteria that moved away from TPH and to TSSS criteria.
  - -5 is when four of Warming Centres open (177 spaces) and weather alerts (e.g., freezing rain and snow) from Environment Canada forecast monitored three days in advance.
  - -15 activate enhanced Street Outreach and fifth warming centre (30 spaces) activation
  - Three respites (24/7, not activation based) and Better Living Centre that includes two agencies.
  - Surge spaces (68 spaces)
  - [City of Toronto's 2023/24 Winter Services Plan for people experiencing homelessness – City of Toronto](#)
  
- We've had five activations so far serving ~3300+ people. When sites are deactivated, make sure to refer people out and will close and no new admissions

**Q:** Concerns that sites weren't open until 5pm during weather January 9, 2024.

**A:** 5pm is business improvement from last year when it was 7pm. It takes time to ramp-up, open, bring in staff etc. This is a year of learning; we are tracking and will go back to Council.

**Q:** How are you able to refer people into shelters? Do they have priority if access a Warming Centre?

**A:** We focus on referring people out of Warming Centres into shelter space. Not ideal to refer to Warming Centres because often full and unfortunately does mean that some people calling CI will have to wait longer.

**Q:** BLC is supposed to close early this year. Is there a contingency plan?

**A:** Yes, we are working hard on it because we will have to refer 240 people out starting in February. It is a priority, no location yet.

## **2. Free WRAP Wellness Recovery Action Program (TPL)**

- WRAP is an education and planning tool including concepts like hope, education, empowerment, self-advocacy, and interpersonal support and connection. In a group setting, individuals explore self-help tools (i.e. peer counseling, focusing exercises, relaxation and stress reduction techniques) and resources for keeping themselves well and feeling better in difficult times. Groups meet once a week for 8 to 10 weeks.
- [WRAP - Gerstein Crisis Centre | Gerstein Crisis Centre \(gersteincentre.org\)](https://www.gersteincentre.org/)

**Q:** Is there wraparound programming?

**A:** Yes, transport, refreshment and counselling provided by Gerstein Crisis Centre.

## **TAEH Items and Updates**

- Briefing note, Federal Fall Economic Statement: [Briefing+Note+2023+HSM+-+Federal+Fall+Economic+Statement+Final.pdf \(squarespace.com\)](https://www.squarespace.com/files/media/documents/Briefing+Note+2023+HSM+-+Federal+Fall+Economic+Statement+Final.pdf)
- Report going up on their website later today.
- Congratulations to Bee Lee Soh from the TAEH PWLE Caucus who was selected to join the new City of Toronto Housing Rights Advisory Committee.

**Q:** Can someone from City come to speak to group on rooming house legislation and will there be funds to support landlords to bring rooming houses up to standards?

**A:** Yes, however no extra money for tenants who are displaced. There should be more funding in existing programs.

## **3. Other Business**

- January 22-28 is Emergency Shelter and Homelessness Service Worker Appreciation Week. TSN has collected a roundup of events and activities that are celebrating the efforts of workers in the sector – submit your plans to [stephanie@toshelternetwork.ca](mailto:stephanie@toshelternetwork.ca)

THHSP Forum Archive: <https://taeh.ca/toronto-forum>

**Next meeting:** February 14, 2024, 10:00 am -12:00 pm

**Zoom Meeting**