

END HOMELESSNESS

ST. JOHN'S #WECANENDIT

MARCH 20, 2020
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

End Homelessness St. John's Calls on the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to Suspend Residential Evictions During COVID-19 Pandemic

Given the unprecedented circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's declaration of a public health emergency, End Homelessness St. John's and our community partners are requesting the province institute measures to **suspend all residential evictions until further notice.**

A provincial suspension of evictions is urgently needed to mitigate the hardship confronting our most vulnerable neighbours, including many workers throughout our province who are already experiencing an unexpected and significant drop in income due to economic disruptions related to COVID-19. The Government of Ontario, as an example, put a freeze on eviction orders on March 16.

While assistance appears to be on the way from the Government of Canada, there will likely be a lag in the delivery of those measures. A suspension on residential evictions would allow households to get financial assistance measures in place and avoid further disruption to the lives of individuals and families in these already uncertain times.

Immediately suspending evictions is also aligned with the requirement for social distancing. By ensuring our neighbours remain housed, we can further prevent the spread of COVID-19 by:

- Reducing instances of emergency/family shelter usage
- Reduce the need for couch surfing, and
- Prevent unnecessary social interaction between tenants looking for a new home, and landlords conducting viewings.

On March 18, the Prime Minister announced that additional funds are being made available through Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy to address the effects of COVID-19. End Homelessness St. John's serves as designated Community Entity for St. John's under Reaching Home. We are committed to working with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and our community partners to enable Reaching Home resources to support those who find themselves in hardship as a result of COVID-19.

ABOUT END HOMELESSNESS ST. JOHN'S

End Homelessness St. John's exists to prevent and end homelessness. Working collaboratively with community stakeholders, EHSJ is leading the implementation of the St. John's Community Plan to End Homelessness. Through the continuation of coordinated system-wide planning and EHSJ's leadership, St. John's will become the next community in Canada to end homelessness.

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