

# END HOMELESSNESS

## ST. JOHN'S #WECANENDIT

March 30, 2020

### End Homelessness St. John's with Community & Government Partners to Coordinate Rapid Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

On March 18, 2020 the Prime Minister announced that the Government of Canada will be providing Reaching Home with an additional \$157.5 million to support people experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 outbreak.

End Homelessness St. John's (EHSJ), as the Federal Government's designated community entity for St. John's has received confirmation that the Federal Government will provide our community with an additional \$979,034 to support a COVID-19 response for the homeless-serving sector. The funding is expected to start flowing in early April and can be used for a range of needs such as purchasing beds and physical barriers for social distancing and securing accommodation to reduce overcrowding in shelters.

EHSJ serves on the Province's Vulnerable Populations Task Group and are working closely with the Housing and Homelessness sub-group. Recognizing that the situation surrounding COVID-19 change rapidly, EHSJ is aligning the Federal Government funding to add capacity to the shelter system to create safe and supportive spaces for our neighbours experiencing homelessness.

EHSJ and our provincial partners have secured the following supports:

- **Accommodations:** Two sites have been confirmed, with others identified as needed. These sites are for current shelter clients and/or those who require shelter because they are homeless. We have one site dedicated for shelter clients who have screened in for COVID-19 testing and require isolation. A second site will add capacity to the shelter system.
- **Food:** We recognize that folks requiring isolation, regardless of the site they're going to, will require food. We're working with local food suppliers and vendors who can provide to-go meals, including hot dinner options that can be safely transported to accommodations.
- **Transportation:** For those who require transportation to one of the sites we have secured a transportation option.
- **Supports:** We have worked to identify Eastern Health supports for those on-site who require isolation due to testing for COVID-19. We have also identified security options to ensure folks remain in isolation.
- **Incentives:** We've heard from our community partners, including the physicians with the Downtown Health Collaborative that we should provide certain incentives, ie. Cigarettes, phone cards, entertainment, etc. to help people remain in isolation.
- **PPE:** We are using portions of our Federal Government funding to purchase PPE, in concert with NL Housing and the Provincial Government, for appropriate supplies to be on-site.

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We continue to work with NL Housing and our provincial partners at Eastern Health, HCS and AESL to ensure our neighbours who are in shelters, or require shelter, have access to safe and secure supports.

We recognize that the situation remains fluid and we are seeing changes daily. We are planning for these additional funds to stretch over several months, but as things change, we will pivot to respond to needs as they become identified and as we acquire additional public system supports.

Sincerely,



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