

Auditor General Audit of Warming Centres & 24-Hour Winter Respite Sites

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE PRESENTATION
FEBRUARY 12, 2025**

TORONTO SHELTER & SUPPORT SERVICES

Support for Audit Findings

Toronto Shelter and Support Services welcomes the recommendations made by the Auditor General.

Overall, the recommendations from the audit will support with:

- Enhancing **planning** efforts
- Improving **data collection**
- Strengthening **financial controls**

Existing Pressures in the Shelter System

- Shelter **demand is expected to remain high** throughout 2025.
- As of January 15, 2025, an average of **114 callers** per day to the Central Intake Call Centre could not be matched to shelter space (compared to **206 callers** per day as of November 15, 2024).
- There are an additional **681 families** on the family shelter placement list waiting for a space in family shelters.
- The City currently provides shelter to approximately **12,000 people** experiencing homelessness both within the shelter system and outside of the system in bridging hotels.

Service Added in Winter

Maintain and Add
Shelter Capacity

Warming Centres

24-Hour Winter Respite
Sites

Enhanced Street
Outreach

Surge Capacity

Supportive Housing

Implementation Complexities

Locating Space

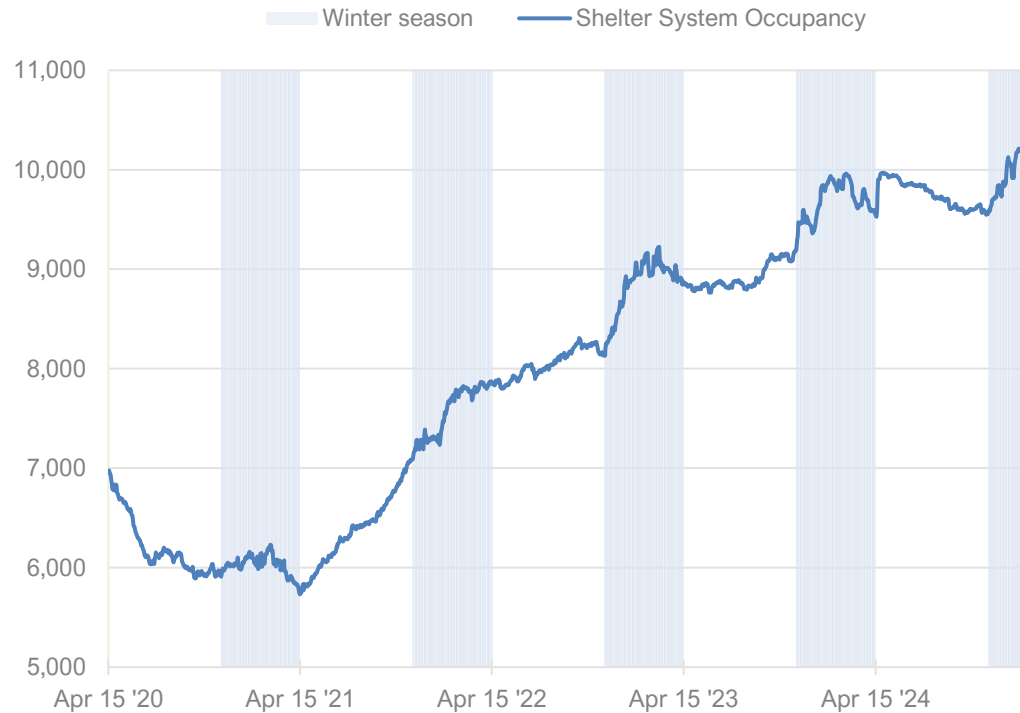
Negotiating Agreements

Hiring and Training

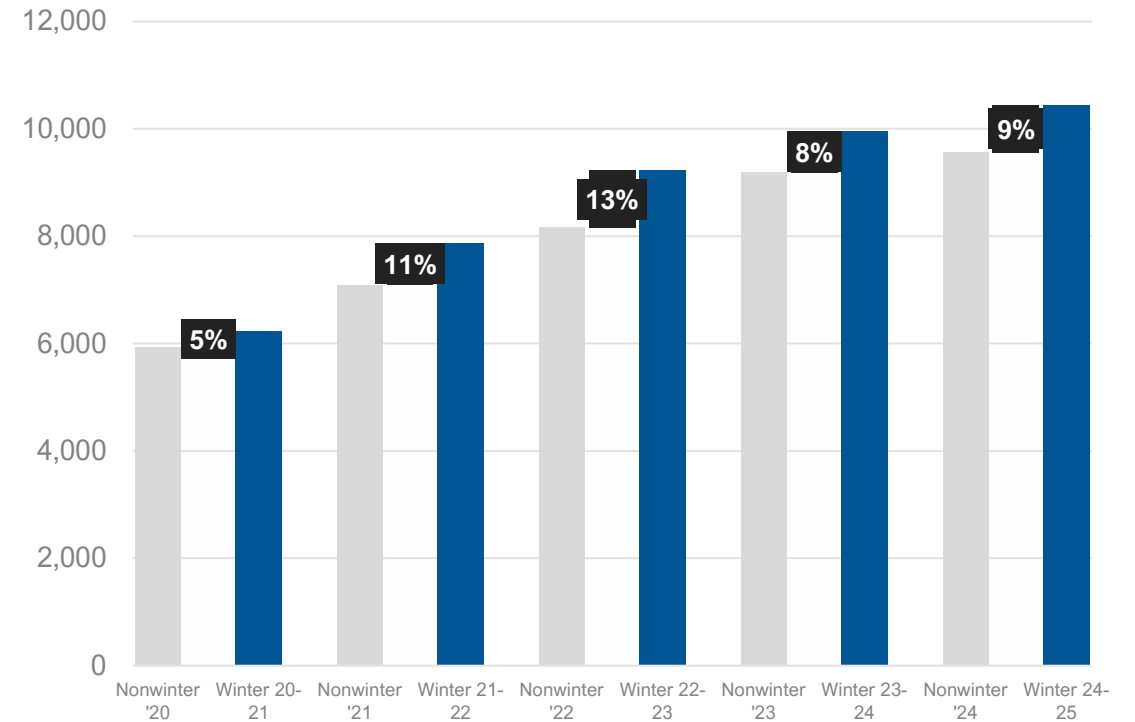
Increasing Demand

Winter spaces add ~10% to shelter system capacity

Shelter System Occupancy, winter season highlighted



Winter peak increases over pre-winter occupancy



Activating, Deactivating Warming Centres

ACTIVATION	DEACTIVATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Open when temperatures reach -5°C; -15°C and during extreme weather warnings▪ 24/7 weather monitoring▪ Environment Canada alerts (weather warnings)▪ Open at 5PM▪ Drop-in hours extended	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Approach is client-focused▪ Three days of weather warmer than -5°C or -15°C▪ Central Intake focuses on client referral out of Warming Centres▪ Warming Centres remain open until the last client is referred to a space in the base shelter system▪ Stop accepting new admissions at 9AM

Actions Taken to Improve Service

- **Lowered** the temperature threshold from -15°C to -5°C
- **Advancing** the Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy to expand the base shelter system
- **Completed** reconciliation and cost recovery process related to the 2023/2024 Winter Services Plan
- **Entered** into agreements with service providers to operate Warming Centres, 24-Hour Winter Respite Sites for 2024/25 winter season
- **Implemented** tracking of overflow at Warming Centres (via SMIS) for 2024-25 winter season

Next Steps

Collaborate with other City Divisions, including:

- **Corporate Real Estate Management** (CREM) to facilitate capital work, negotiate real estate agreements, explore additional temporary sites
- **Purchasing and Materials Management Division** (PMMD) on feasibility of cost savings on contracts

Within Toronto Shelter and Support Services:

- Review **services** at warming centres
- Assess **collecting data** on people who are not able to access services
- Develop a methodology to produce a range for **key costs categories**
- Enhance **financial controls**
- Review **applicability of recommendations** from this audit to other shelter programs

Thank you