

Supporting Unhoused Rights Holders Working Group Meeting 6 – January 14, 2026

HRAC Members

Diana Chan McNally (Working Group Chair)
Elizabeth McIsaac
Lindsey Lemieux
Bee Lee Soh

City Staff

Alison Kooistra, Policy Development Officer, Toronto Shelter and Support Services
Adwoa Afful, Policy Development Officer, Toronto Shelter and Support Services
Hannah Barry, Toronto Urban Fellow, Toronto Shelter and Support Services

Housing Secretariat Support

Meredith Kratzmann, Senior Strategic Policy Consultant
Asha Sivarajah, Coordinator, Policy and Programs

The meeting of the Housing Rights Advisory Committee's Supporting Unhoused Rights Holders Working Group started at 1:30pm.

Notes

1. Chair Updates

- In response to ([MM34.4](#)), the Working Group Chair submitted a letter to the Executive Committee through ([HS8.11](#)), highlighting key concerns associated with recent changes made by Council to the City's Interdivisional Protocol on Encampments (IDP) and its potential impacts on encampment residents.
 - In alignment with HRAC's mandate, this Working Group shared interest in being kept abreast of how Toronto Shelters and Support Services (TSSS) will be incorporating this Council direction to ensure that it does not obstruct the human rights of encampment residents and unhoused people.
- Members shared interest in understanding how the City advances supportive housing developments, including through prefabricated and/or modular construction.

2. Consultation: Mapping Pathways from Homelessness to Housing Tool ([EC23.6](#))

- **Overview:**
 - Through ([EC23.6](#)), TSSS has been directed to:
 - a) map the various pathways from homelessness into housing, through services offered by the City and community partners, and;
 - b) consult with HRAC on clarifying system navigation for people experiencing homelessness and identify the associated human rights-based outcomes.
 - This Economic and Community Development Committee (ECDC) direction stems from discussions arising from a previous working group meeting minutes ([HS8.4](#)).
 - In response to this direction, staff from Toronto Shelter and Support Services (TSSS) requested a consultation with this Working Group on its draft Pathways to Housing Tool and Document Readiness Tool.

- **Staff Presentation**
 - The tools are intended to be user-centered and empower clients with accurate information to access housing opportunities (including supportive, subsidized, and affordable housing).
 - Staff overviewed their development process, which included 15 engagement sessions with frontline and program staff, as well as the Toronto Indigenous Community Advisory Board (TICAB).
- **Working Group Feedback**
 - **General Notes**
 - In general, the group felt that resources were clearly organized, accurate and helpfully summarized and visualized complex information. The group provided detailed feedback on how the resources could be improved to be clearer for people experiencing homelessness and provide some additional guidance for specific population groups.
 - **Pathways to Housing Tool**
 - **Training for Drop-In Workers and Frontline Staff**
 - Since many drop-in workers often don't have a fulsome understanding of the shelter system, this impacts their ability to get clients into a shelter.
 - Recommend providing training to the drop-in sector in accompaniment with the tools.
 - Shelter staff and shelter counsellors additionally need this training as they are not always aware of all these pathways and resources for their clients.
 - **Pathways for Survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**
 - The current draft tool does not include pathways available for people leaving GBV.
 - The tool would benefit from including referral pathways from Violence Against Women (VAW) networks.
 - Often, GBV survivors do not have the appropriate documentation to access a housing pathway (or their documentation is withheld).
 - Training should be provided for frontline workers on how to support GBV survivors to obtain their ID and required documentation.
 - **Accessibility & Transparency**
 - The tools must clarify why clients can access supportive housing through both a referral and direct application process:
 - Provincially-administered supportive housing is intended for various priority populations (people with disabilities, seniors, etc.) and is offered through a direct application stream.
 - City-administered supportive housing is intended for people experiencing homelessness and is offered through a referral stream (Priority Access to Housing with Supports (PATHS)).
 - It would be helpful to explain City programs that clients may not be familiar with (Coordinated Access, PATHS, Rapid Rehousing Initiative (RRHI)).

- Recommend circulating the tools to disability organizations to identify if there are elements to include for people with disabilities.
- **Document Readiness Tool**
 - From a frontline perspective, it has been increasingly difficult to support a client to get ID through Partners for Access and Identification (PAID).
 - Obtaining photo ID is a major challenge for people experiencing homelessness as they often do not have a fixed address. This can impact eligibility for housing benefits.
 - Free tax filing services are hard to access and are a missing resource, (drop-in workers often file taxes on the side of their desk).
 - Tax filing support should be built into the services offered by Toronto Community Housing and Toronto Seniors Housing as tax documents are required to maintain eligibility for community housing.
 - Tax filing is challenge for people who are in psychosis.
 - Consideration should be given to how tax filing and documentation readiness impacts people who are undocumented or trafficked.
 - Overall, the resource is very helpful for frontline workers, but may need to be adapted for people experiencing homelessness
 - For example, a simple flow chart with yes/no questions can help clients find the support they need at every step in their path to document readiness and housing.
- **Human Rights-Based Outcomes**
 - The tools should be periodically updated in consultation with people with lived experience who will be utilizing them.
 - Recommend testing the tools with people with living experience, such as Toronto Underhoused and Homeless Union (TUHU)
 - In alignment with understanding whether the tools are achieving human rights-based outcomes, it would be helpful to evaluate where people are getting the answers for the questions they are looking for.
 - Is there a way to track whether this document is helpful and has supported someone in accessing a housing opportunity or obtaining required documents?
 - Further consideration should be made towards establishing human rights-based service standards across all the available pathways.

3. Discussion & Planning

- **Outcomes of the City's Enhanced Outreach Model**
 - Per [HS7.5](#), HRAC has requested that City Staff provide an update in Q1 2026 on human rights outcomes advanced through the implementation of the Enhanced Outreach Model (EOM).
 - This motion arises from discussions during the HRAC September meeting on the City's response to the Dufferin Grove Encampment.
 - There is a gap in the supports offered to people exiting an encampment and entering supportive or community housing.
 - Interested in the following information:
 - Where people went after the deployment of the EOM?

- How information is tracked for encampment residents, including whether they return to an encampment?
- Why someone did or did not go back to their encampment after the deployment of the EOM?
- How does the City manage the process after an encampment is cleared?

4. Next Steps

- Plan to request staff from the Housing Secretariat to provide an overview the pipeline for City-supported and supportive housing developments, including the key barriers (zoning, permitting approvals, capital funding, operating funding, etc.) to increasing and expediting the development of new supportive housing for people experiencing homelessness.
- Plan to compile a document with additional follow-up questions to TSSS in advance of its update on the implementation of the EOM ([HS7.5](#)).
- Consider requesting an update from TSSS on its formation of a Service User Advisory Group (SUAG) for shelter clients.
- Consider requesting an engagement with Toronto Underhoused and Homeless Union (TUHU).

Meeting ended at 4:15 pm.