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# Housing + Homelessness Service Glossary 2019

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**24-Hour Respite Site**

Provides essential services to individuals experiencing homelessness in an environment that prioritizes ease of access to safe indoor space. Services provided include resting spaces, meals and service referrals. An allied shelter service that operates on a 24/7 basis.

**24-Hour Women's Drop-in**

A type of 24-Hour Respite Site that provides services to women and transgender or gender-non-binary people who are experiencing homelessness.

A

**Affordable Home Ownership Program**

Provides capital funding to developers and down payment loans to qualified households to make home ownership more affordable.

**Affordable Housing Program**

Provides housing units where rental or home ownership costs are lower than market rates. Can be developed and operated by either non-profit housing providers or private sector housing providers.

**Affordable Rental Housing Program**

Provides capital funding for development of rental units where rent is set at or below average market rate by the number of bedrooms, as measured by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Rent is calculated based on the unit and not on the household's income. Units may be operated by either non-profit housing providers or private sector housing providers.

**Allied Shelter Services**

Emergency overnight spaces that offer a safe, warm indoor space and connections to other supports to meet the immediate needs of people experiencing homelessness. Provided to respond to increased demand for homeless shelters and/or operate from a low-barrier approach to serve people who may otherwise not access homeless shelters.

**Alternative Housing**

A social housing provider with a mandate to provide housing to households that are exiting homelessness. Supports are provided that emphasize the provision and maintenance of stable housing and community integration (rather than medical or mental health supports provided in supportive housing). Some Alternative Housing providers also provide additional supports through the Supports to Daily Living program. Households do not have to be on the Centralized Waiting List.

**Alternative Space Program**

Provides temporary overnight spaces that are activated only when there are no suitable shelter or other overnight spaces available. Located within existing homeless shelter facilities, often in common spaces or meeting rooms.

**B****Bridging Grant**

A non-repayable, one-time grant for eligible households to help secure a rental unit in the private housing market in Toronto. This financial support covers first and last month's rent.

**C****Central Intake**

Provides a 24/7 telephone-based service that offers referrals to emergency shelter programs and other overnight accommodation, as well as information about other housing stability services.

**Centralized Waiting List**

The centralized application and waiting list for rent-geared-to-income housing provided by City-funded and administered social housing providers, including the Toronto Community Housing Corporation as well as more than 200 other non-profit and cooperative housing providers. Administered by Housing Connections.

**Commercial Rent Supplement Program**

A rent supplement program that provides a rent-geared-to-income subsidy to eligible households mostly in private market rental buildings. Selection of households is through the Centralized Waiting List.

**Community & Economic Reintegration Team (CERT)**

A pre-employment supports program that offers employability and life skills programming, system navigation services and capacity development supports in City-operated shelters.

**Community-based Housing Help**

Provides housing help services in a range of community-based service locations to help people find housing and prevent homelessness. Services vary by the community agency provider and are often focused on serving specific groups such as youth, seniors, newcomers, Indigenous people and/or people who are LGBTQ2S.

**Co-operative Housing**

Social housing where members of the co-operative (co-op) corporation own the building. Members elect from amongst themselves a board of directors who are responsible for overseeing the management of the building. There is generally a mix of rent-geared-to-income and market rent units within the building. Co-ops are subject to rules in the Co-operative Corporations Act and are not considered to be landlords and therefore are not subject to the Residential Tenancies Act.

**Coordinated Access to Housing & Supports**

A consistent approach to assessing, prioritizing, and connecting people experiencing homelessness to housing and supports. The system prioritizes access to housing and supports based on a set of criteria and a common assessment tool, and matches high priority clients with available housing and support opportunities.

**D****Drop-in Services**

Provide daytime locations that offer access to a range of services which may include food, showers, laundry facilities, health services, information and referrals, and social and recreational activities. Services are provided in a welcoming, safe and non-stigmatizing environment. Operate year-round.

**E****Emergency Shelter Program**

A homeless shelter program that can be accessed by any individual or family experiencing homelessness with or without a referral.

**Eviction Prevention In the Community (EPIC) Program**

Provides eviction prevention and shelter diversion services to eligible tenants facing imminent risk of eviction. Operates outside of regular business hours and offers mobile services to meet the client where they are at. Referral is required.

**Extreme Cleaning Services**

Provide intensive home cleaning for people with complex health and mental health issues to address situations that have put their housing at risk, such as hoarding and bedbugs. Referral is required.

**F****Financial Support Services**

Grants, loans or money management services that support households with finding or keeping housing.

**Financial Trusteeship**

Provides money management assistance to ensure that rent is paid on time to avoid eviction. The financial supports may include setting up rent payments, financial literacy coaching and liaising with creditors, income security programs, landlords and employers.

**Fixed Rate Rent Supplement Program**

A rent supplement program that provides a fixed monthly subsidy to eligible households in the private market or through non-profit housing providers. Funding is provided to non-profit housing providers or to private market landlords through community agencies. Households do not have to be on the Centralized Waiting List.

**Follow-up Supports Program**

Provides housing support services to people who have exited homelessness and moved into scattered site housing units, usually in the private rental market. Services are linked to the tenant rather than the unit and can move with the tenant.

**Furniture Banks**

Provide gently-used household furnishings to eligible households at low cost.

**H****Habitat Services Program**

Coordinates onsite housing support services and subsidies to tenants in qualified boarding homes through contracts with mainly private market landlords. Regular monitoring ensures compliance with the contract and its associated standards.

**Harm Reduction**

An approach, set of strategies, policy or any program designed to reduce substance-related harm without requiring abstinence. Harm reduction is a key aspect of SSHA's Housing First approach, which focuses on the provision of housing and supports with no preconditions or 'readiness' requirements for the person to accept treatment for any physical or mental health or substance use issues.

**Homeless Outreach and Overnight Services**

Services that provide overnight accommodation and street outreach for people experiencing homelessness.

**Homeless Shelters**

Supervised residential facilities that provide temporary accommodation and related support services to assist people experiencing homelessness to move into housing. Operate year-round.



**Homelessness Prevention Services**

Support households to keep their housing or to be re-housed, where the household is at imminent risk of eviction. Services may include landlord mediation and supports, access to information on tenant rights and responsibilities, referrals to legal clinics, referrals to the Toronto Rent Bank, financial trusteeship and financial literacy programs, and connection to income security programs.

**Housing Affordability**

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation defines housing as affordable when a household spends less than 30% of its gross (before-tax) income on housing.

**Housing Allowance**

A fixed-amount housing benefit provided directly to eligible households, usually in the private rental market. It is tied to the household (portable), so it moves where they move. The benefit is intended to ease the household's financial burden but may not completely cover the gap between an affordable rent (defined as 30% of gross household income) and the market rent.

**Housing Benefits**

Non-repayable, monthly financial benefits provided to make rental housing more affordable.

**Housing Connections**

Administers the Centralized Waiting List for rent-geared-to-income housing, including approving applications for eligibility and management of the Toronto Applicant Waiting List (TAWL) database system. Includes management of a telephone-based service and walk-in Resource Centre located at 176 Elm Street to respond to service inquiries and provide assistance and information about applications.

**Housing First**

An approach to addressing homelessness that focuses on helping people to find permanent housing as quickly as possible, with the supports they need to maintain it. The underlying philosophy of Housing First is that people are more successful in moving forward with their lives if they have housing first. Housing First principles include rapid access to housing with no housing readiness requirements, client choice, strengths based and client-centred supports, and a focus on community integration.

**Housing Help Centres**

Provide a full range of housing help services, including distribution of Toronto Rent Bank funds, to help people find housing and prevent homelessness. Designated Housing Help Centres are located throughout the city and are open to all households requesting services.

**Housing Help for Shelter Clients**

Provides shelter clients with housing help services that meet the requirements of the Toronto Shelter Standards. These include assessment of client needs, development of an individualized service plan and case management using a Housing First approach.

**Housing Help Services**

Connect people to community services and resources to help them find housing and prevent homelessness. Services may include providing rental vacancy listings, assistance with housing applications and informal mediation with landlords.

**Housing Stability**

Having a place to live that is affordable, healthy, safe, and secure, with the supports required to maintain housing over time.

**Housing Stability Service System**

The full range of housing and homelessness services administered by Shelter, Support and Housing Administration that are intended to address homelessness and increase housing stability for vulnerable residents.

**Housing Support Services**

Services that provide supports to help people maintain their housing, such as tenant rights and responsibilities, neighbourhood orientation, money management, and referrals to health supports.

I

**ID Clinics**

Provide services to help people get the identification they need to access housing, health care, income supports, and other services.

**Indigenous Housing**

Social housing provided by non-profit Indigenous organizations and/or which has an approved mandate to house Indigenous households.

**Indigenous Organization**

An organization which meets all three of the following criteria: 1) the organization identifies itself as Indigenous; 2) the board is comprised primarily of Indigenous members; and 3) the organization is mandated to serve primarily Indigenous clients.

## L

### **Layered Housing with Supports Program**

Provides housing support services to people who have exited homelessness and have moved into dedicated/clustered or scattered housing units. Supports are usually linked to the unit, and not the tenant, and can be provided in the private market or through non-profit housing providers.

### **Local Housing Corporation**

A social housing provider established through provincial legislation and managed by local governments in Ontario. In Toronto, the Local Housing Corporation is Toronto Community Housing.

## M

### **Mandate for Housing Providers**

A social housing provider with special requirements to house, in accordance with the mandate, one or more of the following applicant groups: seniors, people exiting homelessness (i.e., alternative housing), Indigenous people, artists and applicants from specific ethno-cultural or religious groups. The City may also recognize other special mandates.

### **Market Rate Rental Housing**

Some social housing providers offer rental unit at rates that are at or below average market rates, as measured annually by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Not to be confused with private market rental housing.

### **Motel/Hotel Shelter Program**

Provides shelter beds through contracts with hotel and motel operators, which enables the City to expand and contract emergency shelter capacity in response to demand for services.

## N

### **Non-profit Housing**

Social housing provided by a non-profit corporation, overseen by a volunteer board of directors. Generally, 25% to 100% of tenants pay rent-geared-to-income, and the remaining pay market rents.

## O

### **Out Of The Cold (OOTC) Program**

Provides a place to sleep overnight and a meal program that is delivered by volunteers in a network of inter-denominational faith-based organizations during the winter season (November to April). Services vary, depending on the location, and may include showers, laundry, clothing, and service referrals. A City-funded community agency coordinates the services and provides staffing, cleaning services, housing supports and other supports as needed. An allied shelter service that is open every night during winter, on a rotating basis by location.

## P

### **Part-time Shelter Beds**

Emergency homeless shelter beds that operate year-round, but only on specific days of the week (e.g., weekends).

### **Portable Housing Benefit**

A variable-amount housing benefit provided directly to eligible households, usually in the private rental market. It is tied to the household (portable), so it moves where they move. The benefit covers the gap between an affordable rent (defined as 30% of gross household income) and 80% of the average rent in the household's local housing market.

### **Pre-employment Supports**

Help people to re-engage with the labour market by securing and maintaining jobs or getting involved in other meaningful employment activity. Services include the development of life skills, vocational readiness, applied work skills, job searching and job coaching.

### **Private Market Rental Housing**

Rental units that are developed and operated by private sector organizations. Rents are set according to the legislated rules in the Residential Tenancies Act.

### **Public Housing**

Housing developed predominantly by the Ontario Housing Corporation (OHC) in the 1960s. The projects were 100% rent-geared-to-income housing and tended to be large high-rise buildings built in large urban centres. Ownership was transferred from the Province to the municipal service managers in 2001, and in Toronto is now part of the Toronto Community Housing portfolio. Now known as Local Housing Corporations.

## R

### **Random Draw for Affordable Housing Units**

A means of allocating new Affordable Rental Housing Program units in private buildings through a random draw of eligible applicants.

### **Rent Supplement**

A housing benefit provided directly to landlords for eligible households living in a specific housing unit. It is tied to the unit (non-portable).

### **Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI)**

A housing benefit where rent is based directly on the household's income so that they pay no more than 30% of their gross (before-tax) monthly household income towards rent. Rent charges for households receiving social assistance are set by the Ontario government.

### **Rooming House Emergency Relocation Program**

Provides emergency response and eviction prevention services to tenants involved in sudden or imminent rooming house emergencies, such as fires, sudden closure, and urgent hazards. Assistance may include facilitating access to emergency housing alternatives, storage of belongings, connections to income supports and legal assistance, and support to find and keep new housing.

## S

### **Seniors Subsidized Housing**

Social housing available to people who are 59 years of age or older. Many of these buildings have support services onsite.

### **Service System Manager**

The organization or entity responsible for the administration of provincial and federal funding and the planning and management of the Housing Stability Service System. Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA) is the legislated Service System Manager for the City of Toronto.

### **Services to Find Housing and Prevent Homelessness**

Services that are provided to assist people to find housing and to prevent homelessness.

**Shelter Management Information System (SMIS)**

A secure, web-based system that provides real-time information on available shelter beds across all City operated and funded shelters. The system is used to collect client information to improve service planning and to facilitate access to available services. The use of SMIS is mandatory at all City-funded shelters.

**Shelter Sectors**

A means of categorizing homeless shelters based on the gender, age and household size of the client group(s) served at the shelter location. There are currently five shelter sectors in Toronto: adult men, adult women, mixed adult (co-ed or all gender), youth and family.

**Social and Affordable Housing**

A range of housing types where rental or home ownership costs are lower than market rates.

**Social Housing**

Rental housing developed with the assistance of government so that rents are more affordable for low-income households. The assistance of government can take various forms, such as capital or operating funding, land, or access to lower mortgage rates. The particular funding program under which the housing was created determines eligibility.

**Street Outreach Services**

Engage people experiencing homelessness who are sleeping outdoors, with a focus on establishing supportive relationships as a first step to addressing their immediate health and safety needs and providing supports to move into housing. Operate year-round throughout the city as part of the Streets to Homes Program.

**Streets to Homes (S2H) Program**

Provides street outreach services and housing follow-up supports to assist people who are sleeping outdoors or who are street-involved to find and keep housing.

**Streets to Homes Assessment and Referral Centre (SHARC)**

Provides a 24/7 walk-in service that offers single individuals and couples referrals to emergency shelter programs and other overnight accommodation, as well as information about other housing stability services. Other services onsite include SHARC Respite, a housing walk-in program for Streets to Homes Program clients, and a transitional shelter program for Streets to Homes clients engaged in a housing plan. Located at 129 Peter Street.

**Streets to Homes Assessment and Referral Centre (SHARC) Respite**

Provides access to safe indoor space while people are waiting for a referral to an emergency shelter program or other temporary overnight accommodation. Services provided include access to snacks, telephones, showers and laundry facilities. An allied shelter service that operates on a 24/7, year-round basis.

**Strong Communities Rent Supplement Program**

A rent supplement program that provides a rent-geared-to-income subsidy to eligible households in private market rental and non-profit housing units. Selection of households is usually through the Centralized Waiting List.

**Supportive Housing for Mental Health and Addictions**

Housing and support services for people with mental health and addiction challenges that are funded and administered by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care and the Local Health Integration Networks. Not administered by the City of Toronto. Not to be confused with Alternative Housing.

**Supports to Daily Living Program**

Provides housing support services to tenants living in alternative housing units. Supports are linked to the unit and not the tenant.

**T****Tenant Defence Fund Program**

Assists tenants through a Tenant Support Grant Program and an Outreach and Organizing Program. The Tenant Support Grant Program, administered by SSHA, provides direct grants to tenant groups to retain legal representation regarding above guideline increases (AGI) applications, and demolition or condominium conversion appeals. The Outreach and Organizing Program, administered by a partner agency, helps tenants organize to prepare their defence before the Landlord Tenant Board and/or the Ontario Municipal Board.

**Tenant Hotline**

A telephone-based service that provides information to tenants in Toronto on their rights and obligations under the Residential Tenancies Act, including topics such as leases, maintenance, repairs, evictions and discrimination.

**Tenant Relocation Support Services**

Provides supports to rooming house and Single Room Occupancy (SRO) tenants who face eviction due to demolition, renovation or redevelopment. Tenants are given access to eviction prevention services to help them find and keep new housing, often negotiated through the Planning application process and provided by the developer.

**Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC)**

Toronto's largest social housing provider, overseen by the City of Toronto as sole shareholder and managed by a Board of Directors. TCHC is Toronto's Local Housing Corporation. The majority of TCHC tenants pay rent-geared-to-income (RGI).

**Toronto Non-profit Rent Supplement Program**

A rent supplement program that provides a rent-geared-to-income subsidy to qualified households living in what would otherwise be market rent units in social housing (known as Market Rate Rental Housing). Selection of households is through the Centralized Waiting List.

**Toronto Rent Bank**

Provides interest-free loans to eligible households for rental arrears or for first and last month rental deposits to help them find or keep housing. These financial supports are available through Housing Help Centres.

**Transitional Housing**

Social housing provided for four years or less to people who need some structure, support and skill building as they move from homelessness to permanent housing.

**Transitional Shelter Program**

A homeless shelter program that provides required, specialized programming and can be accessed by eligible individuals and families experiencing homelessness by referral only.

**W****Warming Centre**

Provides immediate safe indoor space for people during extreme cold weather alerts. Facilities vary, but often include City of Toronto buildings or community recreation centres. Services vary, depending on the facility, and may include at a minimum resting spaces, snacks and referrals to emergency shelter. An allied shelter service that operates on a 24/7 basis for the duration of an extreme cold weather alert.



Housing Stability Service System				
Homelessness and Housing First Solutions			Social and Affordable Housing System	
Homeless Outreach and Overnight Services	Services to Find Housing and Prevent Homelessness	Housing Support Services	Housing Benefits	Social and Affordable Housing
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