

PREAMBLE

The City of Toronto has a long history of providing shelter services. For the past three decades, demand for shelter services has gradually increased in response to the on-going challenges of a lack of affordable housing and higher rates of poverty within a growing city. In order to meet the changing needs of clients, the administration and performance of the shelter system has become more proactive, and its services more specialized and flexible.

The City of Toronto is committed to delivering high-quality services that improve the lives of individuals and families experiencing homelessness. In order to fulfill this commitment, the Toronto Shelter Standards (TSS) were created in 1992 to ensure that services are delivered in a consistent manner across the shelter system. This version of the TSS was adopted by City Council in 2015 and revised in 2022.

The TSS provides City of Toronto-funded shelter providers and clients with a clear set of expectations, guidelines and minimum requirements for the provision of shelter services in Toronto. All emergency and transitional shelters funded or directly operated by the City of Toronto, in any and all built-forms where shelter services are delivered, are required to adhere to the TSS.

While every effort is made to ensure that the TSS address major governance, operational and service delivery considerations, this document is not exhaustive.

Shelter providers, including their Board of Directors, will consult qualified legal professionals and/or other appropriate advisors about any and all legal and financial obligations related to their operation as a shelter. Providers are expected to review, adhere and follow, all applicable federal, provincial and municipal legislation/regulations, their operating agreements, and the Principles of Service Delivery (as described under Section 5) for additional guidance and clarity.

Shelter providers and clients that require clarification on a shelter-related matter that is not addressed by the TSS are advised to review the Principles of Service Delivery for guidance and/or contact Shelter Support and Housing Administration Division (SSHA).