

Operation of a Specialized Program to Support Clients with Complex Behavioural Needs

Expression of Interest

Application and Process Overview

June 2025

Overview of Toronto Shelter and Support Services (TSSS) Division

- TSSS is responsible for managing a coordinated and effective system of shelter homelessness services. Toronto's homelessness system provides immediate, housing-focused, person-centred services:
 - Emergency shelters
 - 24-hour respite sites
 - 24-hour drop-ins
 - Temporary COVID-19 response programs
 - Street outreach services and encampment response to individuals living outdoors
 - Daytime drop-ins
- TSSS works closely with 75+ community service providers and sector partners to deliver these services.

Shelter Safety Action Plan

The Shelter Safety Action Plan (SSAP) was adopted by City Council in December 2024 to guide the homelessness sector's work in improving safety in the City of Toronto's shelter system. The SSAP provides a roadmap for prioritizing and continuously improving shelter safety for staff and clients across Toronto's shelter system

- To better understand factors that contribute to psychological and physical safety and the areas in which shelter safety can be improved, TSSS reached out to researchers at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) to conduct research on the factors that contribute to safety in Toronto's shelter system
- The study provided evidence and recommendations that would support the City to make improvements in across the shelter system. The findings and recommendations in the study strongly informed the Council-approved SSAP.
- The SSAP outlines 14 key actions to be implemented over the course of 2025-2028



Expressions of Interest

What We Heard:

Development of a Specialized Program

- The CAMH Shelter Safety Study reported that a small group of clients account for a sizeable number of critical incidents and service restrictions and that there was a high degree of overlap between the two groups (i.e. clients who had a high number of critical incidents were also frequently service restricted).
- Key informants and shelter staff in the study perceived few supports for clients with complex needs, leading to cyclical patterns of shelter use. Further, some study participants felt that existing shelter programs did not have the capacity to provide the supports needed for these individuals with increased complex needs.

Expression of Interest

- TSSS developed an **Operator Expression of Interest (EOI)** process to:
 - Provide opportunities for non-profit organizations, in Toronto, to submit proposals to operate a specialized program to support people experiencing homelessness with complex behavioural needs.
 - Identify an operator for a specialized program to support people experiencing homelessness with complex behavioural needs and to build the capacity of frontline shelter staff, at a select number of shelters, to implement restorative justice intervention models.
 - Ensure that all organizations that apply (“Proponents”) receive fair treatment in the solicitation, receipt, and evaluation of their Application(s).

TSSS strongly encourages joint applications from non-profit organizations proposing to operate services in partnership in response to this EOI.

Specialized Program – Client Overview

The purpose of the specialized program is to support people with histories of violent behaviour in shelter who may be:

- Experiencing challenges with mental health, substance use and addictions,
- Have a high number of admissions into shelter programs, critical incidents while residing in shelter, and service restrictions.
- Currently staying within the shelter system or outdoors.

Specialized Program – Objectives

The specialized program is being funded to achieve the following objectives:

Increase service continuity for individuals with complex behavioural needs to improve their access to housing-focused case management and necessary supports.

Provide intensive clinical mental health and behavioural supports and services from a trauma-informed, harm-reduction and restorative justice-based lens.

Build organizational capacity of select shelter sites and shelter staff to be trained and supported in implementing restorative justice intervention models (e.g. healing circles).

Reduce the severity and frequency of escalations, harmful, or disruptive behaviour within shelters.

Resources and Funding

- The program funding for the specialized program is until the end of 2026, dependent on City Council approval in the 2026 operating budget, and with possibility of extension at the discretion of the City.
- The funding allocated for this specialized program is up to \$400,000 annualized.
- Proponents must submit a proposed budget, using the template provided, as part of their Application.

EOI Resources

Key Resources

- This presentation provides a **high-level overview** of the EOI.
- TSSS's Operator of Specialized EOI website will contain full details, including:
 - The EOI Guidelines
 - Details on deadlines
 - The link to the application
 - Contact information (tsssEOI@Toronto.ca)

Key Documents

- **The Toronto Shelter EOI Guidelines:** Defined details of the EOI
- **Application Form** (in Medallia, online platform)

Eligibility Requirements

Who Should Apply?

TSSS is seeking Applications from non-profit organizations that have expertise in:

- Providing direct services to people experiencing homelessness that reside in shelter or outdoors (e.g. encampments) and may live with complex mental health, substance use and/or addictions or have lived experience of incarceration and/or institutionalization
- Delivering mental health services, conducting assessments and diagnostics on state of mental health, disability, and/or addictions, providing therapeutic and/or psychiatric interventions
- Building organizational capacity and training frontline staff
- Implementing restorative justice intervention models (defined in Section 8.1), crisis management, de-escalation

Eligibility Requirements

Proponents must meet **ALL** the following requirements to be eligible for this EOI:

1. Be incorporated as a non-profit organization with a recently audited financial statement (or apply with trustee).
2. Complete an organizational profile in the City of Toronto's [Toronto Grants Rebates and Incentives Portal](#) (TGRIP) prior to submission.
3. In the case of joint applications where more than one organization is submitting a joint Application, Proponents must submit a: proposed governance and decision-making model to clarify the relationship between organizations and an outlined description of the roles and responsibilities between the organizations submitting the Application
4. Be primarily located and provide in person services in Toronto.
5. Be in good standing with the City.
6. Commit to and abide by the terms of the EOI Guidelines and [Toronto Shelter and Support Services \(TSSS\) Directives](#), and [Toronto Shelter Standards](#).
7. Commit to a referral process for the intaking of clients that may be limited to City-defined referral pathways.

Service Delivery Requirements

Proponents must demonstrate how they will deliver the following scope of work:

Mobile Behavioural Case Management

- Manage a caseload of high needs clients to provide flexible support plans tailored to each client's needs, strengths and goals.
- Frequency of service (i.e. number of visits/engagements) with clients may be up to be 4-5 times per week in different settings (i.e. in shelter, or outdoors).

Building Organizational Capacity

- Build capacity of frontline shelter staff on how to implement flexible restorative justice intervention models, at a select number of sites to be determined at the discretion of the City.
- Provide ongoing support (e.g. coaching, debriefing) to frontline shelter staff on implementing restorative justice intervention models.

Service Delivery Requirements

Program Staff Skills and Capacity

- Staff onboarded to operationalize mobile behavioural case management are to meet, at minimum, the following criteria:
 - Considerable experience providing services to people experiencing homelessness.
 - Dedication, passion, and a commitment to upholding person-centered values when working with clients who have complex needs, inclusive of people who may be experiencing significant behavioural challenges.
 - Hold strong values in harm-reduction, human rights, and housing first approaches. Additionally, belief in a non-judgmental, non-punitive, and strengths-based approach to working with clients.
 - Experience working in fast-paced, crisis-centered environments where clients will be actively using or experiencing emotional duress.
 - Connect clients with appropriate community services, if the required resources are not available on site and/or if additional supports are required.
 - Have capacity to work in multiple locations throughout Toronto.

Service Delivery Requirements

Data Management and Reporting

- Ensure the accurate collection and maintenance of client records, including client progress, and report on key performance indicators to track outcomes, demonstrate impact, and inform program planning and decision making using the Shelter Management Information System (SMIS).
- Provide progress and outcome reports to Toronto Shelter and Support Services (TSSS), on a regular basis, or as requested by TSSS.

Collaborate with City of Toronto

- Commit to collaborate with the City to implement a specialized program, including but not limited to:
 - i. Providing services to clients and shelter sites based on a clearly defined eligibility criteria to help ensure that services are tailored for key populations and shelter sites.
 - ii. Developing and reporting on key performance indicators to measure the effectiveness of client's and shelter staff training outcomes and make recommendations to enhance the program model
 - iii. Meeting regularly with Toronto Shelter and Support Services to provide progress updates and to address issues when needed

Application Process

Application Instructions

1. Read all information available on TSSS's EOI webpage, including the EOI Guidelines.
2. Ensure that your organization meets all eligibility requirements, as listed in the EOI guidelines.
3. Complete an organizational profile in the City of Toronto's Toronto Grants Rebates and Incentives Portal (TGRIP)
 - In the case of the organization having an existing organizational profile on TGRIP, the Proponent is required to ensure that all information is up to date, inclusive of Audited Financial Statements that reflect that last 23 months.
4. Complete an electronic application via Medallia prior to Application closing: June 20, 2025.

Application Instructions

The Application form will ask for:

1. Basic organization details
2. Your service delivery interests (e.g., sector, geography)
3. Your program and service experience
4. Your operational plan for delivering scope of work as outlined in EOI Guidelines
5. Optional: Letter(s) of support for program partnerships

Your TGRIP Organizational Profile will be reviewed for:

- Organization Info
- Service Locations
- Core Work
- Demographics
- Governance
- Documents

Recommendations

1. Review the PDF copy of the survey ahead of time, to ensure that you have all necessary information. Note that you cannot submit via PDF, and you must submit via Medallia.
2. **Write your responses in a separate word document prior to entering information into Medallia** to ensure that you have a backup. This is essential in the event of a power outage or computer crash.
3. If you are unsure at any time, contact TSSS at tsssEOI@Toronto.ca.
4. If you use the "back" button in this application, you will be redirected to the previous screen BUT you will lose all information that you entered on the current page and subsequent pages.
5. Ensure that you have enough time to complete the survey in one session, otherwise use the pause button to continue later.

Evaluation Process

Evaluation Process

- Eligible applications will be evaluated and scored by an Evaluation Committee made up of a staff from across the City's Toronto Shelter & Support Services Division.
- Staff bring with them expertise and knowledge in the areas of shelter operations, mobile case management, and training shelter staff and building organizational capacity, among other areas.

Evaluation Criteria	Value
Section 1: Eligibility Verification	Pass/Fail
Section 2: Financial and Organizational Health Verification, assessed on TGRIP	15% of total
Section 3: Service Experience	15% of Total
Section 4: Proposed Operational Plan	50% of Total
Section 5: Proposed Budget	20% of Total
Section 6: Optional: Letters of Support for Proposed Partnerships	Pass/Fail
Total Application Content	100%

Scoring

- Information collected in the application is used to verify eligibility, inform the evaluation committee, match proponents to sites, and score applications.
- The following three application sections factor into scoring:
 1. Financial and Organizational Health Verification
 2. Service Experience
 3. Proposed Operational Plan
 4. Proposed Budget
- The following application sections will be evaluated as Pass/Fail to continue:
 1. Eligibility verification
 2. Letter(s) or support for proposed partnerships (**only if required**)

Announcements

- The evaluation will take approximately 1-3 months following the Application Deadline, depending on the volume of Applications.
- Once the Evaluation Committee has completed their evaluation, they will inform all Proponents of their outcome, regardless of whether they are the Successful Proponent or not.
- Unsuccessful Proponents can request feedback from TSSS via email to tsssEOI@Toronto.ca within 30 calendar days of receiving notification of its unsuccessful Application.
 - In this case, TSSS will provide a written summary of opportunities for the Proponent to improve their application for a future EOI.

Thank You