



Ontario Alliance to **End Homelessness**

June 27, 2022

MP John Brassard, john.brassard@parl.gc.ca
MP Doug Shipley, doug.shipley@parl.gc.ca
MPP Andrea Khanjin, andrea.khanjin@pc.ola.org
MPP Doug Downey, doug.downey@pc.ola.org
Simcoe County Council, clerks@simcoe.ca
Barrie City Council, cityclerks@barrie.ca

Re: Closure of hotel-model shelter in Barrie, Ontario

Dear elected policymakers,

We are writing in support of the Barrie service providers, advocates, and people experiencing homelessness, and their calls for government collaboration to address the housing needs of those experiencing homelessness.

Housing is a human right. While a two-week extension has been granted on the closure of the hotel-model of emergency shelter, there is still no adequate transition plan. It is our understanding that this lack of planning and housing supply could result in approximately 100 people with nowhere to go, in addition to the over 50 people already living rough in Barrie. The long-term solution is housing—social housing, supportive housing, subsidized housing—but until that housing is built, shelters save lives and meet an immediate need. While it is not the solution to homelessness, we urge you not to let the hotel-model of emergency shelter end without an adequate transition plan.

The Ontario Alliance to End Homelessness urges all four levels of government to continue to collaborate and extend funding for the hotel-model of emergency shelter and create a plan to provide permanent, supportive housing options.

In the meantime, we will also draw your attention to the National Protocol for Homeless Encampments in Canada, as highlighted in the [Simcoe County Alliance to End Homelessness \(SCATEH\)'s Position Paper on Homeless Encampments](#). We share their position that residents of encampments are rights holders whose rights and dignity should be upheld.

www.oaeh.ca

info@oaeh.ca | 705-725-2228

There are a number of valid reasons why an individual may choose a tent over a shelter bed, but most people in encampments would take an offer of housing that met their needs. We encourage City Council and staff to consider the National Protocol when designing their own protocol for engaging with encampment residents. International human rights law does not permit governments to destroy peoples' homes, even if those homes are made of improvised materials and established without legal authority. Alternatives must be explored and evictions must be paused while a rights-based approach is developed.

Thank you,



Jennifer van Gennip
Co-chair
Ontario Alliance to End Homelessness



Daphna Nussbaum
Co-chair
Ontario Alliance to End Homelessness