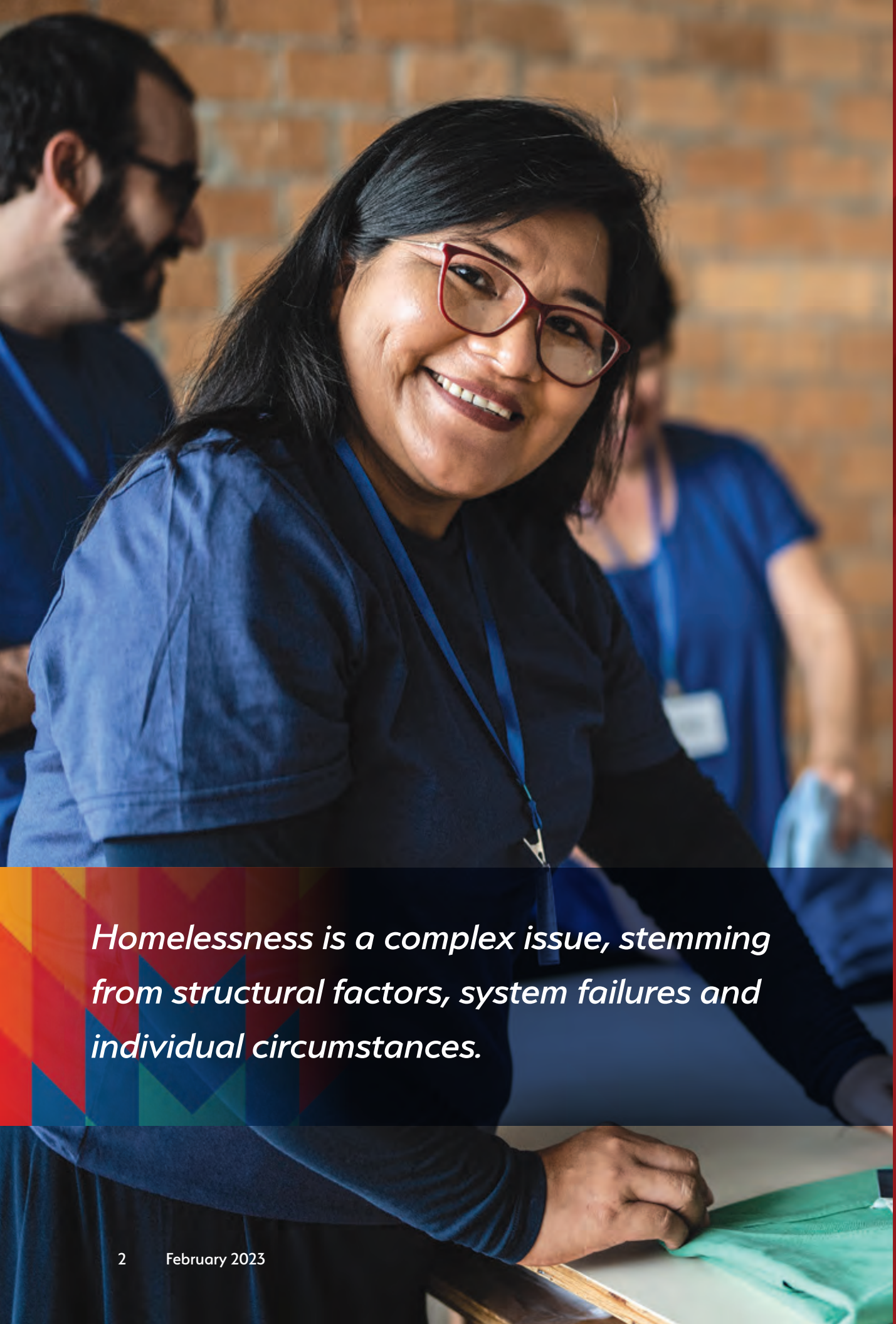
A Place for Everyone

A Collaborative Homelessness Strategy for Manitoba

Manitoba



Homelessness is a complex issue, stemming from structural factors, system failures and individual circumstances.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Co-chairs of the Poverty Reduction Committee of Cabinet 4

Introduction 6

Action Plan 6

Guiding Principles 7

Pillar 1: Modernizing the Emergency Response 8

Pillar 2: Providing Housing with Supports 10

Pillar 3: Preventing Homelessness 14

Pillar 4: Developing Person-Centered Services 17

Pillar 5: Building Capacity in Rural and Northern Manitoba 18

Governance 19

Evaluating Progress 20

Looking Ahead 21

Acknowledgements 22

Message from the Co-chairs
of the Poverty Reduction Committee of Cabinet

On behalf of the Manitoba government, we are pleased to launch our province's first strategy to end homelessness. The release of this document marks a major change in our approach to meeting the needs of people who are precariously housed or experiencing homelessness.

To develop this strategy, we began by engaging with Manitobans to hear their ideas and priorities. We are grateful to all of the people who participated in the process and particularly those with lived experiences who shared their insights. Thank you for entrusting our team with your stories. Your desire to make a positive difference in the lives of others experiencing similar challenges was clear.

We consistently heard that being more proactive and ensuring timely and holistic service delivery could prevent homelessness in many situations. We also heard about the need to strengthen existing services, build a more fulsome continuum of options, and eliminate barriers to access. Participants told us that responsibility for the issue of homelessness should not rest with one government department. As a result, our strategy incorporates a whole-of-government approach.

The input we received laid the foundation for a strategy that is responsive to the needs of people who are at risk or experiencing homelessness. We believe it holds the potential to be transformative.

We commit to acting on the input we received and acknowledge our responsibility to provide the supports and opportunities needed for people to make and sustain positive life changes. Community collaboration will be ongoing, facilitated by a community advisory committee.

We recognize that Indigenous peoples are disproportionately affected by homelessness. Our government will continue to take steps in support of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and work in partnership with Indigenous governments, service providers and communities to address homelessness.

While there is more to be done, we are proud of the steps taken to date, including more than doubling our annual support for shelter, transitional housing and outreach mentor services to $15.1 million from $6.1 million. We look forward to our ongoing collaboration with community as we implement the other initiatives outlined in this strategy and work to ensure that safe, suitable housing is available to all Manitobans.

Sincerely,

Honourable Rochelle Squires
Minister of Families

Honourable Wayne Ewasko
Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning

We consistently heard that being more proactive and ensuring timely and holistic service delivery could prevent homelessness in many situations.

Manitoba's Homelessness Strategy

The provincial government plays a critical role in ensuring all Manitobans have access to adequate, affordable, and suitable housing. Addressing homelessness is a shared responsibility, and requires collaboration with other levels of government, as well as community organizations. In the past, most provincial efforts have concentrated on meeting the immediate needs of people experiencing homelessness. We recognize, however, that focus needs to be shifted from managing to ending homelessness. In the 2021 Speech from the Throne, the Manitoba government committed to developing a first of its kind provincial homelessness strategy.

Homelessness is a complex issue, stemming from structural factors, system failures and individual circumstances. It is also related to experiences of poverty, trauma, discrimination, mental health and addictions. The Manitoba government held a provincial consultation in the winter of 2022 to ensure a range of voices informed the strategy. The consultation engaged over four hundred diverse stakeholders, including service providers, Indigenous governments and people with lived experience. Participants stressed the urgency of the situation and advocated for a strategy that addressed the actual needs of people experiencing homelessness.

The strategy is also informed by a review of provincially funded emergency shelter and transitional housing services. The review found that funding for these services is outdated and inadequate. It recommends increasing funding to shelters and transitional housing services to allow providers to better support clients' well-being, stabilization and access to permanent housing. The review also recommended that the province increase the supply of transitional, supportive and social housing; implement harm reduction approaches; and improve transition planning for people exiting the health and corrections systems, as well as youth transitioning out of care.

The strategy is divided into five pillars, each of which addresses a critical area of the province's homelessness response: modernizing the emergency response, providing housing with supports, preventing homelessness, developing person-centered service, and building rural and northern capacity.

Acting out of urgency, the Manitoba government has taken early actions, as detailed in this strategy, to modernize the emergency response and to prevent homelessness, such as increasing basic needs benefits, indexing Rent Assist, more than doubling the funding for homeless shelters, and supporting the Downtown Community Safety Partnership.

The Manitoba government is grateful to all the people who participated in the announcement of those early actions, and in the consultation process and the program review of shelter and transitional housing services. Your frank discussions, thoughtful suggestions and commitment to helping people in your communities inspired us. We look forward to working with you to implement the rest of the actions outlined in this strategy.

ACTION PLAN

The following section details the strategy's guiding principles, its foundational pillars and the actions planned for the next two years. More initiatives will be developed and added to the strategy in the remaining three years.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

INCORPORATING A WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Collaborating across departments will improve our ability to achieve meaningful outcomes, leverage other government strategies and address multi-system issues.

AIMING TO END HOMELESSNESS

Addressing the root causes of homelessness and rapidly rehousing people with the necessary supports to help them stabilize, maintain housing and move forward will focus provincial efforts on ending homelessness.

BEING COMMUNITY-INFORMED

Involving Indigenous governments, community-based organizations and people with lived experience is necessary to ensure the strategy is meaningful, effective and responsive.

EMPHASIZING RECONCILIATION AND INDIGENOUS-LED PROGRAM RESPONSES

Indigenous people are over-represented among those experiencing homelessness due to intergenerational trauma, colonialism and structural racism. Indigenous leaders and organizations must be involved in every part of the strategy, from design to delivery, in order to address this disparity and meaningfully advance reconciliation.

RESPONDING TO REPERCUSSIONS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The pandemic disproportionately affected people who are precariously housed or experiencing homelessness; targeted interventions are needed to address the long-term repercussions and lessons learned from the pandemic.

These principles guided the development of the strategy's pillars and will inform the development of each initiative.

PILLAR 1 Modernizing the Emergency Response

Manitoba's emergency response has largely been crisis-oriented, focused on meeting the immediate needs of people experiencing homelessness. To shift our focus to preventing and ending homelessness, we must invest in activities that stabilize the existing system and then help people find and retain housing. Modernizing our emergency response will require reducing barriers to accessing shelters, increasing coordination within provincial departments and improving cooperation among all levels of governments and homeless-serving organizations.

INITIATIVES

Develop a training program for shelter support workers (announced June 2022)

Emergency shelters require trained staff to operate effectively. The departments of Economic Development, Investment and Trade and Families have developed a training program with Red River College Polytechnic that will equip current and prospective shelter support workers with critical skills in mental health and addictions, de-escalation techniques and trauma-informed care. The training will allow employees to better support people in crisis and more effectively connect them with the supports they need to find and retain housing.

Increase funding to reflect the actual costs of operating overnight shelters (announced October 2022)

Provincial funding for emergency shelters had not changed since 2009 and was the lowest rate paid in Canada. The rate was not based on the actual costs of operations and had not been adjusted for inflation. As a result, providers were unable to offer competitive salaries, were understaffed and struggling to meet their clients' basic needs. Increased annual funding beginning October 1, 2022 will allow shelters to continue to operate and provide their services in a more dignified and comprehensive manner.

Fund shelters to operate as 24/7 service hubs

Current provincial funding is for 12 hours of overnight operation. Funding shelters to operate during the day will help shift their focus from managing to ending homelessness. Twenty-four-hour service will reduce barriers to accessing shelters and foster a more person-centered approach, allowing people to utilize shelter services whenever they need. It will also allow shelters to offer better case management services, programming to support wellbeing and shelter during periods of extreme weather.

This is the second phase of modernizing the emergency response. The location and months of operation for these service hubs will depend on community need and the capacity of individual shelters to do so.

Provide annual funding for N'Dinawemak (announced August 2022)

N'Dinawemak, which opened in December 2021, plays a vital role in Manitoba's emergency response to homelessness. It is the only Indigenous-led and 24/7 shelter funded by the province. N'Dinawemak is an important step towards advancing reconciliation and addressing the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in the province's homeless population. The department will continue to fund N'Dinawemak as an emergency shelter based on the new funding model. Looking ahead, the government will work closely with N'Dinawemak to develop their vision for transitional housing, a 24/7 safe space and a service hub.

Expand the Homeless Outreach Mentor program (announced October 2022)

Mentors provide crucial services to help people who are experiencing homelessness, or are precariously housed, find and retain housing. The demand for mentors is far greater than program's current capacity. As part of the homelessness strategy, the provincial government will expand the number of mentors working in the system as well as increase the funding to allow the mentor salary to increase. Expanding the number of mentors will help meet the needs of current users of shelters and support shelters as they move to a housing focus. Increasing the salary will help attract and retain mentors. The additional funding will allow the program to expand from eight to twenty-one mentors and align the salary with other support workers in shelters and transitional housing.

Enhance support for the Downtown Community Safety Partnership (announced November 2022)

The Downtown Community Safety Partnership (DCSP) is intended to enhance wellbeing and safety in downtown Winnipeg by providing a high visibility, welcoming presence, assistance and outreach to the community and community-based resources. By providing appropriate supports and services to people prior to situations escalating, the DCSP aims to avoid crises that require a police response. Funding to DCSP is being enhanced to help maintain and expand their services, including the recent addition of the Clean Slate Program. This program provides training, skill development and employment for marginalized individuals.

Provide funding for the St. Boniface Street Links OASIS Mobile Outreach Project (announced November 2022)

People experiencing homelessness and/or struggling with addictions issues face multiple barriers to accessing services. Outreach and Supportive Intervention for People Who Use Substances (OASIS) Project multi-disciplinary teams provide outreach and individualized care, as well as facilitate access to wraparound supports, to help such individuals stabilize and find and maintain housing. Teams also support clients to access crisis stabilization, substance use treatment and other recovery-oriented services. Providing funding to the pilot project will help ensure more individuals are able to access the services they need.

Twenty-four-hour service will reduce barriers to accessing shelters and foster a more person-centered approach, allowing people to utilize shelter services whenever they need.

PILLAR 2

Providing Housing With Supports

Access to adequate, affordable and suitable housing, as well as the supports to maintain that tenancy, is critical for people to successfully exit homelessness. To make progress on ending homelessness, the province and community agencies must work together to increase the supply of social housing including transitional and supported housing models. In particular, more culturally appropriate housing options need to be developed to support Indigenous peoples, who are overrepresented in the province's homeless population.

INITIATIVES

Restart the Proposal Development Fund to support housing project development (announced August 2022)

The Proposal Development Fund will provide up to $75,000 to non-profits that want to partner with Manitoba Housing to develop new social housing for people who are precariously housed or experiencing homelessness. A call for expressions of interest will identify organizations interested in developing housing and the funding will be awarded to successful candidates to further develop their proposals.

Access to adequate, affordable and suitable housing is key to transitioning people out of homelessness. Manitoba Housing will lead the planning and development of 700 new social housing units in 2023/24."

Develop new units of community-based social housing over five years

Access to adequate, affordable and suitable housing is key to transitioning people out of homelessness. Manitoba Housing will lead the planning and development of new social housing units, beginning with 700 in 2023/24. New units will be developed through a combination of construction, acquisition and rent supplement agreements. The new supply plan includes establishing supports to help people maintain their tenancies, as outlined below, and will prioritize community-based housing intended to help people with intensive support needs. In addition to the new supply, the government is increasing the maintenance budget for existing social housing stock. The increase will support the repair of vacant rental units and the overall condition of properties.

Develop support services to complement the new housing supply

To complement new social housing units, the departments of Families and Mental Health and Community Wellness will fund community-based service teams to support the tenants. This funding will expand the capacity of existing Housing First providers, develop new Housing First teams in additional communities and assist with staffing new supported housing facilities.

The department will fund three levels of service to meet the different intensity of supports required by clients. Teams supporting clients with low levels of need will assist with acquiring ID, accessing other basic services and finding rental housing. Medium intensity teams also will provide case management services to facilitate access to provincial health and social services and help clients

maintain tenancies. High intensity teams will provide clinical support and assistance with activities of daily living.

The service teams will be developed in alignment with the new social housing rental units: adding service capacity to support households as the new rental units are developed. Over five years, the service capacity will expand to serve households in the new social housing units. The funding of the support services is based on one-third of clients in each of the three levels of service intensity.

Collaboration between Families and Mental Health and Community Wellness will help build critical linkages between the homelessness strategy, the Mental Health and Community Wellness Five Year Roadmap, the social housing sector and the health system.

Create new support service positions in Manitoba Housing

As the largest landlord and provider of subsidized housing in the province, Manitoba Housing is the primary, and often only, rental option for people experiencing homelessness. Manitoba Housing serves people who are the most difficult to house and often cannot rent in the private market due to their negative rental history. Over 60 per cent of new tenants in Manitoba Housing are exiting homelessness. Manitoba Housing, however, does not have the staff complement necessary to support the complexity and variety of needs of these tenants. To ensure safe buildings, support new and existing tenants with staying housed and connected to health and other services, Manitoba Housing will create new support service positions. The employees will be frontline – working with tenants and existing property services teams across the province.

Increase funding to transitional housing programs (announced in October 2022)

Provincial funding to transitional housing programs has not changed since 2009. As a result, service providers are understaffed and unable to provide the level of support needed to help their clients stabilize and move into independent housing. This leads to people staying in transitional housing for prolonged periods and contributing to the lack of supply. Based on the funding model developed through the department of Families program review, an increase in annual funding will ensure transitional housing services are sustainable and can help their clients develop the skills they need to move onto the next step of their housing journey.

The funding increase will include Resource Assistance for Youth's (RaY) Emergency Shelter and Transition (REST) program, which stabilizes youth experiencing homelessness to prepare them for long-term tenancies.

Provide funds for transitional and supportive housing projects in development

Demand for transitional and supportive housing

in Manitoba exceeds the current supply. Funding for the construction and operation of new housing projects will help meet this demand and ensure more Manitobans have access to the supports they need to move forward in their housing journeys, including people struggling with mental health and addictions issues. The projects include:

- Ross Ellen Housing, a project of Home First Winnipeg, will provide 47 units of supported housing for people living with mental health and addictions issues and are at-risk of or experiencing homelessness, using a Housing First approach.
- Astum Api Niikinaahk, a project of Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata, will provide 22 units of culturally-appropriate supported housing for people exiting unsheltered homelessness.
- A project of Wahbung Abinooniiag, will provide 26 apartments of 3 and 4 bedroom units, for women and children experiencing gender-based violence who are at risk of homelessness.
- Velma's House, a project of Ka Ni Kanichihk, will provide a 24/7 safe space and transitional housing for 40 women.
- A project of West Central Women's Resource Centre will provide 16 apartments of 1 to 3 bedroom units for women and children who have experienced gender based violence.
- Veterans Village, a project of the Homes for Heroes Foundation, will provide 20 units of housing, as well as resources, services and training, for veterans experiencing homelessness.

Provide annual operating funds for the North End Women's Centre transitional housing program (announced March 2022)

The program provides a safe and supportive residential environment for women and children affected by domestic violence. The program provides women with a community-oriented home to live in for up to one year while recovering from addictions and working towards restoring their health and wellness. The North End Women's Centre delivers harm reduction services and programming based on anti-oppression principles. The department of Families and the federal government provided capital funding to build the facility and the federal government provided operating funds for five years until March 31, 2022. The department of Families received authority to provide operating funds for 2022/23. Annual operating funds will allow the organization to continue to offer this critical programming and help to meet the demand for transitional housing in the province.

Move transitional housing to block funding

Existing transitional housing for people experiencing homelessness was funded on a per diem basis with providers required to submit monthly invoices and ensure clients were enrolled on EIA before they could move in. The department moved Salvation Army in 2021/22 and Red Road Lodge and Mainstay in 2022/23 to block funding. The providers now receive quarterly payments based on full occupancy. Block funding greatly reduces the administrative burden, reflects historical occupancy rates and allows for greater flexibility and better planning for the organizations. Block funding also reduces client barriers by making it easier for organizations to accept new clients as soon as space is available.

Targeted and person-specific supports need to be in place so that people can get assistance before they lose their housing.

PILLAR 3 Preventing Homelessness

Preventing homelessness is more effective and less expensive than intervening once the issue is already entrenched. Targeted and person-specific supports need to be in place so that people can get assistance before they lose their housing. By targeting prevention efforts to at-risk people and points of transition from government systems, we can prevent or greatly reduce the time people spend experiencing homelessness.

INITIATIVES

Increase the basic needs benefit for people in receipt of EIA (announced August 2022)

Participants in EIA receive a basic needs benefit intended to cover the costs of food, clothing and other personal items. The amount of this benefit depends on a household's eligibility category, the number of children and adults in the household and their living situation. The amounts of the basic needs benefits have not increased since 2004 despite a significant rise in the cost of living.

High rates of inflation are especially difficult for low-income households, particularly for adults without children, because they do not have access to additional supports such as the Canada Child Benefit. By increasing the basic needs benefit for adults without children, these individuals will be better positioned to keep pace with the rising cost of living. The department increased the basic needs benefit effective October 1, 2022 by $25 a month for single adults in the disability category, $50 for single adults and $100 for couples without children in the general assistance category.

Develop a community-based bridge program

EIA provides financial assistance to Manitobans who have no other way to support themselves. Recipients have access to benefits to help with the costs of food, clothing, personal and household items and housing, as well as, basic dental, optical, and prescription drug coverage. Wait times for EIA enrollment fluctuate and some circumstances are very emergent, contributing to the risk of homelessness and financial hardship for Manitobans who are waiting to receive benefit payments. By providing funding to community agencies to deliver EIA-equivalent assistance for up to 60 days, while applicants wait for their EIA intake

appointment, the financial burden will be lifted from Manitobans in dire need of income support, reduce the time experiencing homelessness or prevent homelessness.

Increase the Rent Assist rate for EIA clients (announced October 2022)

EIA Rent Assist is a shelter benefit for people who receive EIA benefits and pay rent in the private market. It is provided as part of regular monthly benefits and is indexed to 75 per cent of the median market rent. This rate increased to 77 per cent of median market rent in January 2023. The increase to Rent Assist will result in maximum monthly benefits rising between $34 and $70, depending on the size of the household, improving their ability to afford the cost of housing.

Extend the Supports for Young Adults Grant

Youth aging of the child welfare system are at risk of homelessness. Further extending the expanded eligibility criteria for the Supports for Young Adults Grant will provide youth aging out of care with financial assistance and housing supports, including those beyond the age of 21, which will contribute to preventing young people from experiencing homelessness and other negative outcomes as a result of aging out of care.

Expand the Canada-Manitoba Housing Benefit

The Canada-Manitoba Housing Benefit is one of the programs delivered under the bilateral funding agreement related to the National Housing Strategy. One stream of this benefit provides a rent top-up for people who are at risk of homelessness. In Winnipeg, this benefit is delivered by End Homelessness Winnipeg. In partnership with End Homelessness Winnipeg and the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation, the department of Families is expanding delivery to ensure it is available province-wide. The department is also reviewing the adequacy of the benefit.

Evaluate the Manitoba Rent Relief Fund

The Manitoba Non-Profit Housing Association developed the Rent Relief fund in 2021 with a one-time grant from the department of Families. The fund was set up as a two year pilot of a rent bank model. The fund helps low to moderate income households secure and stabilize housing by providing no-interest loans for rent, utilities, damage deposit and first month rent payments. Rent Relief Fund employees also provide referrals to other income and support services. Existing funding will allow for continued operations during the evaluation.

Everyone's experience with homelessness is different. As such, we need to focus on people's unique needs and goals, instead of one-size-fits-all responses to homelessness.

Mentorship Hubs for youth who have aged out of Child and Family Services

Once youth exit care, they often lose the support system that would help guide them through the initial phases of adulthood and connect them to programs and services for which they are eligible. Establishing a Youth Mentorship Hub Program designed to support youth exiting care will help to ease this transition and decrease their lifetime dependency on government

supports. Four hubs will be developed across the province, each of which will employ three mentors to do outreach, provide case management and support services to eligible youth.

Improve transition planning for clients of provincial services

Significant life transitions can greatly increase the risk of homelessness. This includes aging out of the child welfare system, transitioning from children to adult disability services, exiting correctional institutions or being discharged after an extended hospital stay. Improving transition planning for clients within Child and Family Services, Community Living Disability Services, Corrections and Health will help ensure people are equipped with the skills and supports they need to find and retain housing before they exit these systems. The government has established a working group of representatives from various departments to improve transition planning and address other government systems issues.

Expand supports to help people involved with the criminal justice system successfully transition into the community (announced October 2022)

Providing holistic supports for people leaving incarceration or who are involved with probation services helps reduce their risk of homelessness and the potential for recidivism. Manitoba Justice will expand initiatives that help these individuals access services they need including:

- A pilot with Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) and the Women's Correctional Centre to offer virtual Identification Application Clinics will be expanded to other correctional centres.
- Additional Correctional Staff will be trained to complete income tax returns for inmates, so that this initiative can expand to more correctional centres.
- Probation Services is creating a new Bail Supervision program to provide intensive supervision as well as providing the necessary supports to improve success rates in the community. Assistance will be provided in areas such as acquiring identification, accessing EIA, finding suitable housing, attending programs to address problematic behaviours, enrolling in education or training programs, etc.

As well, the department of Families will issue a request for proposals to deliver employment and training programming, with wraparound supports, for EIA clients who are involved with justice system.

Enhance the Bed Bug Grant Program

Some people become homeless because they are unable to manage pests in their home. This can include not having regular access to laundry, inadequate food storage, an inability to keep up with cleaning, or the inability to move furniture in order to prepare for pest treatments. Manitoba Housing will be doubling the size of the Bed Bug Grant program, from $200,000 to $400,000, so that community agencies can access funding to support their clients in dealing with pests.

Significant life transitions can greatly increase the risk of homelessness.

PILLAR 4

Developing Person-Centered Services

Everyone's experience with homelessness is different. As such, we need to focus on people's unique needs and goals, instead of one-size-fits-all responses to homelessness. Services should be simple and easy to access. A coordinated service delivery system will help to ensure people receive the right services at the right time.

INITIATIVES

Extend funding to End Homelessness Winnipeg for five years (announced August 2022)

End Homelessness Winnipeg plays a vital role in coordinating the delivery of services in Winnipeg's homeless-serving sector, and is the co-creator of the new coordinated access system for Winnipeg. This system will assist people who are at-risk of, or experiencing homelessness, by assessing their needs and finding the appropriate housing and support services for them. A five year funding commitment will support End Homelessness Winnipeg's critical work in coordinating service delivery.

Establish an interdepartmental working group to improve service delivery

Fragmented systems and services, each with their own complex rules and eligibility, create barriers to people exiting homelessness. Departments must work together to ensure their services are quick and easy to access. A new interdepartmental working group will facilitate this collaboration and make it easier for vulnerable Manitobans to get the supports they need to find and retain housing.

Align coordinated access and Manitoba Housing applications in Winnipeg

End Homelessness Winnipeg implemented a coordinated access system in April 2022 for people experiencing homelessness. Through the system, people are assessed and connected to Housing First teams who assist with finding housing and providing support services to maintain tenancies. Approximately 60 per cent of Manitoba Housing applicants identify as homeless. Aligning coordinated access and Manitoba Housing application processes will help people receive the social housing and supports they need for successful tenancies.

Support the integration and expansion of HIFIS across the province

HIFIS is a database used by some homeless serving agencies in Brandon, Thompson and Winnipeg. The three organizations responsible for HIFIS want to develop the ability to share information between the three communities and increase the number of organizations using the system. This will reduce barriers for people moving between communities and improve data collection in the province.

PILLAR 5

Building Capacity in Rural and Northern Manitoba

Communities in rural and northern Manitoba face a huge gap in services compared to Winnipeg and other urban centres. Unique solutions are required to build capacity and address the amplified stigma and discrimination in these communities.

INITIATIVES

Develop a communication campaign to address stigma

People experiencing homelessness face discrimination on a daily basis and in smaller rural and northern communities, this stigma is amplified. Biases and stereotypes limit an individual's access to the goods and services they need to survive and participate in their communities. Working with community agencies and people with lived experience, the Manitoba government will develop a provincial campaign to counter this discrimination.

Conduct an environmental scan of needs and services outside of Winnipeg

Communities in rural and northern Manitoba often face greater challenges related to homelessness compared to larger urban centers. Smaller communities lack critical services, which often forces people experiencing homelessness to leave their friends and families to access the supports they need. Hiring a consultant to work with the department of Families and the Association of Manitoba Municipalities to conduct an environmental scan of homelessness needs and services outside of Winnipeg will reveal where service capacity needs to be bolstered.

Establish a homeless outreach mentor at Oscar's Place and add mentors in Brandon and Thompson (announced October 2022)

Oscar's Place provides emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness in The Pas and the surrounding area. The shelter currently lacks the capacity to provide programming and services to help clients transition out of homelessness. Establishing a Homeless Outreach Mentor at Oscar's Place will allow the shelter to make progress on ending, rather than managing, homelessness. Additional homeless outreach mentors in Brandon and Thompson will increase their capacity to assist people experiencing homelessness.

Extend funding for the Housing Supports Initiative

The Manitoba Non-Profit Housing Association created the Housing Supports initiative in 2021 with a one-time grant from the department of Families. Through a call for proposals process, the initiative selected 19 organizations to deliver 18 month projects that support eviction prevention, organizational capacity building and case management services. The department will make annual contributions to the initiative from 2023 to 2025.

Support the creation of a Youth Community Healing Lodge in Thompson (announced March 2022)

In March 2022, $2 million in funding was provided to Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) to lead the implementation and operation of a youth community-healing lodge in Thompson. The positive treatment environment will promote physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional healing for participants, helping to address intergenerational impacts of colonization and the loss of awareness of Indigenous culture, customs and traditions. The lodge will provide more justice resources in the north to reduce youth recidivism

rates and decrease the use of RCMP cells for non-violent youth detained under the Intoxicated Person's Detention Act.

Establish sobering centres in Brandon and Thompson (announced in 2020 and 2021)

Sobering Centres provide a 24/7 safe and secure environment for non-violent, publicly intoxicated individuals to stay while the effects of drugs and/or alcohol wear off. These centres offer an effective alternative to police and hospital-based responses to public intoxication. Funding has been provided to help establish and operate sobering centres in Brandon and Thompson, and the need for centres in other communities is being explored.

Governance

The purpose of the strategy is to outline and guide provincial efforts to address homelessness over the next five years. Having a governing structure oversee the strategy is critical to ensuring its timely and effective implementation, as well as making sure the strategy adapts to changing needs and priorities. The strategy's governing structure is divided into two levels and comprised of both internal and external stakeholders. These levels are:

THE POVERTY REDUCTION COMMITTEE OF CABINET

The Poverty Reduction Committee of Cabinet is responsible for overseeing the homelessness strategy within government. It is supported by a Deputy Ministers' committee to ensure collaboration across departments and an Assistant Deputy Ministers' steering committee to provide operational oversight within their respective departments.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

An external committee responsible for supporting the implementation and evaluation of the strategy will be established. Reporting to the Assistant Deputy Ministers' steering committee, the Advisory Committee will include 10 to 15 members serving two-year terms with representation of youth, women and Indigenous Manitobans. Individuals will be selected through a call for members application process.

Having a governing structure oversee the strategy is critical to ensuring its timely and effective implementation, as well as making sure the strategy adapts to changing needs and priorities.

Evaluating Progress

The evaluation framework outlined in the table below is a work in progress. The Assistant Deputy Ministers' and Advisory committees will further refine and finalize the framework by March 31, 2024. This framework will provide the basis of annual public reporting on progress made towards ending homelessness.

Each initiative in the strategy will have its own accountability measures that will be reported on internally.

MEASURES FOR ENDING HOMELESSNESS

Goal	Indicator	Baseline
Reduce homelessness	Number of people experiencing homelessness	2018 PIT counts from Brandon, Thompson & Winnipeg
Reduce Indigenous homelessness	Number and percentage of people experiencing homelessness who identify as Indigenous	2018 PIT counts from Brandon, Thompson & Winnipeg
Reduce youth homelessness	Number and percentage of youth experiencing homelessness	2018 PIT counts from Brandon, Thompson & Winnipeg
Reduce chronic homelessness	Percentage of people experiencing chronic homelessness (+6 months)	HIFIS, coordinated access
Reduce inflows to homelessness	Percentage of people experiencing homelessness for the first time	HIFIS, coordinated access
Reduce the number of households in core housing need	Proportion of Manitoban households in housing that does not meet one or more of the adequacy, affordability and suitability standards	2016 Canadian Census

Looking Ahead

This strategy affirms the provincial government's ongoing commitment to working with community organizations, other levels of government and people with lived experience to address homelessness in our province.

The strategy reflects what we heard from Manitobans on the barriers faced by people experiencing homelessness and the gaps in the homeless-serving sector. This feedback was used to formulate the strategy's foundational pillars and inform the initiatives planned for 2022/23 and 2023/24. It highlights our current and ongoing work across government and with diverse stakeholders to support better services, practices and care for some of the most vulnerable residents of Manitoba.

Initiatives for subsequent years will be developed with guidance from the governance committees. These actions will be based on ongoing and future community needs. This will ensure the strategy remains responsive to the changing needs and priorities around homelessness in Manitoba.

With a new framework for measuring homelessness and core housing need, the Manitoba government is committed to continuing to improve data collection and reporting to gain a better understanding of the causes of homelessness and its impacts on different groups. This will help to ensure we invest in and implement the most effective solutions to end homelessness in our province.

Our government's commitment to addressing homelessness does not end in 2027 but continues until all Manitobans have access to adequate, affordable and suitable housing.

Our government's commitment to addressing homelessness does not end in 2027 but continues until all Manitobans have access to adequate, affordable and suitable housing.

Acknowledgements

Over 400 people took part in the provincial consultation, sharing their thoughts and ideas on how to address homelessness in Manitoba. This included 90 people with lived experience, who, in sessions facilitated by community-based organizations, provided their vital insight into the challenges faced by people experiencing homelessness.

Nine service providers participated in the program review of emergency shelter and transitional housing services. Their experience providing these critical programs was central to developing a more effective and sustainable emergency response to homelessness.

The Manitoba government is grateful to every individual who has contributed to the strategy. The candid feedback provided during the consultation and review was integral to ensuring the strategy addresses the actual needs of people experiencing homelessness. We deeply appreciate the early support given during the announcements of the strategy's initial actions.

Your dedication to ending homelessness in our province is evident in the passion and thoughtfulness with which you have taken part in developing and implementing the strategy. Thank you all for your participation to date and we look forward to working together.

GROUPS THAT PARTICIPATED IN THE CONSULTATION INCLUDE:

Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg

Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre

Addictions Foundation of Manitoba

Brandon Downtown Safety and Wellness Taskforce

Brandon Friendship Centre

Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation

Chalet Malouin

Chalmers Neighbourhood Renewal Corp.

City of Brandon

City of Dauphin

City of Selkirk

City of Winnipeg

CMHA – Central Region

CMHA – Interlake Eastern

CMHA – Parkland/The Pas

CMHA – Parkland/Swan Valley

CMHA – Swan Valley/Dauphin

CMHA – Thompson

Community Futures Parkland

Dauphin Friendship Centre

Downtown Community Safety Partnership

Elbert Chartrand Friendship Centre

End Homelessness Winnipeg

Fearless R2W

Flin Flon Aboriginal Centre

Flin Flon Neighbourhood Renewal Corp.

Housing First

Keewatin Tribal Council Inc.

Klinic Manitoba

Life's Journey Brandon

Lord Selkirk School Division

The Link (formerly Macdonald Youth Services)

Main Street Project

Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre

MaMowWeTak

Manitoba Harm Reduction Network

Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak

Manitoba Key Worker Program

Manitoba Library Association

Manitoba Métis Federation

Manitoba Non-Profit Housing Association

Men Are Part of the Solution – Thompson

New Journey Housing

North End Community Renewal Corp.

North End Women's Centre

Nova House

Opaskwayak Cree Nation – Opaskwayak Health Authority

Peer Connections Manitoba (DCHS Office)

Portage la Prairie Bear Clan

Portage la Prairie Community Revitalization Corp.

Portage Urban Indigenous People's Coalition

Rainbow Resource Centre

Reaching Home

Red River North Counselling and Therapy Services

Red Road Lodge

Resource Assistance for Youth Inc.

Right to Housing Coalition

SAM Management Inc.

Sara Riel Inc.

Samaritan House

SEED Winnipeg Inc.

Selkirk Community Church

Selkirk Community Health Office

Selkirk Community Renewal Corp.

Selkirk District Community Foundation

Selkirk FASD Coalition

Shawenim Abinoojii

Siloam Mission

Sioux Valley Dakota Nation

Sioux Valley Health Centre

Spence Neighbourhood Association

SSCOPE Inc.

St. Boniface Street Links

Stands Strong Eagle Woman

Swampy Cree Tribal Council

Swan Valley Consumers Co-op Ltd.

Swan Valley Crisis Centre

The Pas Community Renewal Corporation

The Salvation Army Winnipeg

The Women's Resource Centre Brandon

Thompson Crisis Centre

Thompson Public Library

Town of Swan River

Two Ten Recovery Inc.

Under One Roof

Wahbung Abinoonjiiag Inc.

West Broadway Tenant Committee

West Central Women's Resource Centre

Western Manitoba Regional Library

Westman Youth for Christ

Winnipeg Housing Rehabilitation Corp.

Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Council – United Way Winnipeg

Winnipeg Public Library

Wolseley Family Place

YWCA Brandon

YWCA Thompson

https://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/homelessness/index.html

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