

Moving Forward: Steps to Secure Housing

Vancouver – Oppenheimer Park

Victoria – Topaz Park

Victoria – Pandora Avenue

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Provincial Response to COVID-19

Provincial numbers

- To date, BC Housing has secured 2,749 spaces to provide secure shelter and allow people to be able to self-isolate per recommendations from the Provincial Health Officer
- This total represents all regions across the province

Provincial Response to COVID-19

Provincial numbers

Regional breakdown of secured spaces:

- Fraser: 563 (Abbotsford, Burnaby, Chilliwack, Hope, Langley, New Westminster, Richmond, Surrey)
- Vancouver Coastal: 768 (Squamish, Vancouver)
- Interior: 679 (Cranbrook, Kamloops, Kelowna, Nelson, Penticton, Revelstoke, Salmon Arm, Trail, Vernon, West Kelowna)
- Vancouver Island: 470 (Campbell River, Courtenay, Duncan, Nanaimo, Parksville, Port Alberni, Sooke, Victoria)
- North: 269 (Burns Lake, Dawson Creek, Fort St. James, Fort St. John, Prince George, Price Rupert, Quesnel, Smithers, Terrace, Vanderhoof)

MOVING FORWARD: STEPS TO SECURE HOUSING

Step 1 Moves:

Tents to Shelters, Hotels
and Supportive Housing



Step 2 Moves:

Shelters and Hotels to
Supportive Housing



Using Hotels as an Interim Measure

- Hotels are standing vacant in most cities throughout BC due to the travel restrictions
- BC Housing has identified hotels as a temporary housing option for those who don't have a home and need to self-isolate
- BC Housing has been working with hotel associations, private hotel owners and municipalities to identify appropriate hotel and community centre options
- These hotels and community centres are being rented on a temporary basis, and all hotel owners have signed a lease agreement
- BC Housing has committed to professional and rigorous cleaning of all buildings prior to handing them back over to the owners

Interim Steps in Vancouver and Victoria

- In both Vancouver and Victoria, our priority is to offer temporary accommodation appropriate to meet the needs of the individual
- Effort will be made to keep self-identified families together
- In both cities, we are negotiating other hotel leases
- We expect new hotel sites to be available in the days and weeks to come

Response in Victoria

- Estimated 360 people residing on Pandora Ave and in Topaz Park
- In Victoria, BC Housing has already secured 324 spaces across five hotels and we are negotiating leases for additional sites.

Response in Vancouver

- In Vancouver, BC Housing and partners will provide temporary housing and sheltering options to people living at Oppenheimer Park
- The move will include approximately 300 people
- BC Housing has worked with the City of Vancouver to identify eight locations with 686 spaces where vulnerable individuals would be able to recover and self-isolate, including:
 - 8 hotels
 - 2 emergency response centres

Vancouver & Victoria Partners

Non-profit societies that have significant experience working with vulnerable populations will oversee the day-to-day management of hotels, motels and community centre spaces. Housing providers include:

- PHS Community Services Society
- Lookout Housing & Health Society
- Community Builders
- Atira Women's Resource Society
- Carnegie Outreach
- Lu'ma
- Coast Mental Health

Operations

Housing with Supports

- These sites are being operated similarly to supportive housing. Support services will be available, depending on the needs of the clients.
- Staff will be onsite 24/7 to monitor people going in and out of the buildings, to prevent guests from entering and to provide support to residents.
- Daily meals will be provided to all residents, as well as cleaning services.

Operations

Protocols to Support Residents & Staff

- The number of staff and level of support will be different at each location, depending on the populations and needs of the people being housed.
- Every operator will follow BCCDC and health protocols in terms of visitor policies and self-isolation at their buildings.
- Every individual must follow isolation protocols and service providers will work to ensure all individuals who require self-isolation are doing so.

Operations

Access to Individualised Services

- Access to hotels and community centre self-isolation sites will be referral-only, depending on the level of needs of an individual and preferences.
- Staff and partners will ensure that each person who moves into a self-isolation site will be provided with the specific services and supports they need.
- From day one, each guest will get their own room or bed – depending on the facility – there will be daily healthy meals and staff available for guests 24/7.

Operations

Client-Centered Arrangements

- There will be designated spaces for women only, including a floor of a hotel in Vancouver that has been reserved for women and a facility in Victoria for women.
- BC Housing will also be working directly with Ministry of Children & Family Development who will identify youth that are living in encampments. BC Housing will work closely with MCFD to determine appropriate housing for youth.
- In Vancouver, one hotel in particular has been identified for those who test positive for the virus. Other hotels in the City are for those who are experiencing homelessness and do not have COVID-19.

Moving Process

- An outreach worker will connect with each person to understand their housing needs.
- Each person will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and matched to accommodation that meets their needs.
- Each person will be given bins in which to pack their personal items. Assistance will be provided to those who need help.
- Storage for additional belongings will be available, if needed.
- Professional movers will help move bins. Movers will be provided with PPE and will do everything possible to ensure social distancing.

Next Steps

Medium & Longer Term Housing Plans

- Using hotels, motels, community centres, and other facilities is an interim solution until more permanent housing options can be made available.
- BC Housing recognizes there is an urgent need and we are working in collaboration with local municipalities, health authorities and non-profit partners to develop housing options, including considering acquisitions and exploring temporary modular and permanent supportive housing.