
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

County expands warming centre opportunities for unhoused individuals

Works with Salvation Army and Elizabeth Fry Society to open additional warming centres in Barrie for winter 2024/25

Midhurst/November 6, 2024 – The County of Simcoe is partnering with the Salvation Army Bayside Mission and the Elizabeth Fry Society Simcoe Muskoka to enhance winter warming for those living unhoused in the region.

These additional warming centre services in the City of Barrie create more opportunities for individuals living unhoused to come indoors when they are most at risk. While at County-funded warming centres, individuals can access support to find shelter, housing, healthcare, and other services and supports.

This is just one part of the County's [10-point homelessness prevention strategy](#), which provides significant investments and resources to help unhoused individuals across the region.

The strategy makes affordable housing even more attainable by increasing supply, creating “deep rent subsidies”, increasing eviction prevention services, and improving available shelter. It commits the County to find new opportunities, enhance community shelter services, and improve safety throughout the community.

Last week, the County enacted its alternate spaces strategy and today's announcement furthers support for unhoused individuals in the Barrie area. This comprehensive system response increases available warming and shelter spaces as the region approaches the coldest nights of the year. To maximize options for access to warm, indoor locations, all County of Simcoe Social and Community Services offices, located in Alliston, Barrie (3rd floor), Collingwood, Orillia and Midland, are open from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. for individuals to come in from the cold.

The County reminds residents that warming centres are open during the coldest months of the year for vulnerable populations. These warming centres are part of the regional system approach to homelessness prevention with support from community partners.

The warming services listed are funded by the County of Simcoe in partnership with the City of Barrie and the City of Orillia, which are above and beyond the regular municipal service contributions.

Additional County of Simcoe Warming Centre locations in the City of Barrie and in additional communities will be released in the coming weeks.

Those in need of shelter or warmth can always call 2-1-1 to connect with a nearby shelter or visit one of the locations listed below.

Warming opportunities available at the following locations

Barrie	Orillia
<p>Salvation Army, Bayside Mission 16 Bayfield Street, Barrie <i>Overnight warming will be available up to seven (7) days per week as required.</i> The Salvation Army Warming Centre will initiate overnight warming centre operations upon their discretion based on temperature, wind chill, weather events and at a minimum of -10°C or colder. The maximum capacity in the warming centre is eight (8) male participants.</p>	<p>The Lighthouse Orilla Orillia Community Church 64 Colborne St. E, Orillia <i>Overnight warming will be available from 9:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., up to seven (7) days per week as required. Effective November 18, 2024-April 30, 2025</i></p> <p>The Lighthouse Overflow Overnight Warming Centre will initiate overnight warming centre operations upon their discretion based on temperature, wind chill, weather events and at minimum -10°C or colder.</p> <p><i>The maximum capacity in the warming centre is sixteen (16) participants with sleeping mats. The maximum capacity may increase to thirty (30) if all participants are seated at tables.</i></p>
<p>Elizabeth Fry Society Simcoe-Muskoka Simcoe Residential Hotel 31 Bayfield Street, Barrie Up to ten (10) rooms with shared facilities available for short term stays through the Simcoe Residential Hotel. The Elizabeth Fry Society Simcoe-Muskoka will provide onsite case management and housing support during the day. Rooms will augment other overnight warming programs and create increased access to indoor spaces for couples in addition to individuals when shelter beds are full or, in circumstances where, due to unique needs, an individual may not be able to access an emergency shelter or other warming programs. The location is pet friendly. Will serve 10 to 12 individuals. <i>Effective November 15, 2024-April 30, 2025</i></p> <p>Additional County of Simcoe warming locations in the City of Barrie including daytime and overnight warming will be announced in the coming weeks.</p>	<p>Bradford West Gwillimbury</p> <p>WOW Living Bradford Out of the Cold Café 177 Church Street, Bradford <i>Overnight warming will be available from 9:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m., up to seven (7) days per week as required. Effective October 15th, 2024 - April 30, 2025</i></p> <p>WOW Living (Out of the Cold Café) will initiate overnight warming centre operations upon their discretion based on temperature, wind chill, weather events and at a minimum of -10°C.</p> <p><i>The maximum capacity in the warming centre is ten (10) participants for extended hours or overnight, and daytime (10am-2pm) is 50 participants.</i></p>

About the County’s 10-point homelessness prevention strategy

The County of Simcoe’s 10-point Homelessness Prevention Strategy provides a strong, data-driven plan to help vulnerable residents and our communities. The strategy includes a considerable added investment toward the goal of preventing and ending chronic

homelessness. For further details and ongoing updates to the homelessness prevention plan, visit simcoe.ca/HomelessnessSystem.

About the County of Simcoe

County of Simcoe is composed of sixteen member municipalities and provides crucial public services to County residents in addition to providing paramedic and social services to the separated cities of Barrie and Orillia. Visit our website at simcoe.ca.

- 30 -

Andrea Walasek
Public Relations Consultant
County of Simcoe, Service Simcoe Department
249-535-3511 (mobile)
Andrea.Walasek@simcoe.ca

Collin Matanowitsch
Manager, Public Relations
County of Simcoe, Service Simcoe Department
705-734-8386 (mobile)
Collin.Matanowitsch@simcoe.ca