

# Alberta Interagency Council on Homelessness

## *Roles and Mandate*



2012

## 1. Background

In 2009, the Province of Alberta committed to ending homelessness by 2019 by approving *A Plan for Alberta: Ending Homelessness in 10 Years*, the first of its kind in Canada. The Plan was developed by the Alberta Secretariat for Action on Homelessness and provides policy direction to end current homelessness and prevent future homelessness from a provincial perspective. Seven communities (Calgary, Edmonton, Wood Buffalo, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Red Deer and Medicine Hat) have multi-year plans to end homelessness that align with the provincial plan and address local priorities. Alberta's Plan, including the community-based approach, has received provincial and national awards and has gained international interest.

In the first three years of implementation, Human Services has worked with its community partners to provide permanent housing to over 5,900 homeless Albertans along with needed wraparound supports, with more than 80 per cent maintaining their housing.

Housing 5,900 formerly homeless Albertans and providing them with supports to help them maintain their housing is a significant accomplishment. In order to end homelessness in Alberta by 2019, the Province must maintain the momentum generated by the successes seen in the first three years of implementation of the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. Alberta's communities have the basic systems in place to house individuals and end their homelessness. But this is not enough to end homelessness in Alberta by 2019.

Homelessness is a complex problem with a variety of causes and manifestations. It requires comprehensive solutions that cut across multiple service systems and better integration with on-the-ground community organizations. Strong leadership and effective collaboration, with an emphasis on strategic planning and performance management, are essential to continued success.

## 2. Mandate and Accountability

### **Mandate:**

Created under s. 7 of the *Government Organization Act*, the Alberta Interagency Council on Homelessness provides advice and guidance on policy, regulatory and program changes required for successful implementation of *A Plan for Alberta: Ending Homelessness in 10 Years*.

### **Accountability:**

The Council is accountable to the Minister of Human Services and will report annually to the Government of Alberta through the Minister on progress made in the implementation of the Plan.

## 3. Duties and Responsibilities

### **The Council:**

- Provides shared leadership for ending and preventing homelessness through the continued and evolved implementation of the Plan.
- Ensures a strengthened systems approach through co-ordination between and among Alberta communities, the non-profit sector and different levels of government: provincial, federal and municipal, whose programs and services affect the homeless population.
- Ensures community involvement in the development of advice to the Government of Alberta and public awareness through strategic communication.

- Supports research and data collection to ensure advice is evidence-based and enhances outcomes-based reporting to demonstrate accountability to the Minister, the public and communities.
- Identifies short and long-term priorities and develops annual action plans for focus and investment. Monitors progress made against the goals and targets established in the Plan as well as the annual action plan. Prepares and provides to the Minister an Annual Report indicating the Council's major activities and accomplishments and the extent to which its planned activities and goals were achieved.
- Reviews funding processes and models.
- Strikes working groups as needed.
- Holds meetings as required, but generally at least four times per year.
- Oversees compliance with all relevant policies and procedures by which the Council operates, and ensures the Council operates at all times in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, the Council's Code of Conduct and to the highest ethical standards.
- Provides regular opportunities for local community entities to provide input and advice.

Currently, the following seven communities (Calgary, Edmonton, Red Deer, Lethbridge, Wood Buffalo, Grande Prairie and Medicine Hat) have established local community entities with compositions and mandates that are unique to each regional context. Members of these bodies vary but often include representation from homeless shelter operators, community-based organizations, municipal governments and faith-based organizations. Once the Alberta Interagency Council on Homelessness is established and operational, consideration will be given to supporting community entities to evolve to a community level structure that aligns with the composition of the Interagency Council on Homelessness.

#### **Individual Council Members:**

Council members must act honestly, in good faith, and in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct. Council members will leave aside personal interests to advance the public interest and achieve the provincial goal of ending homelessness by 2019. Council members shall also endeavour to keep their organizations and sector colleagues informed of Council activities.

#### **The Minister:**

- Appoints Council Members based on their assessment that the appointees have the appropriate knowledge, skills, experience and values to assist the Council in achieving its objectives and performing its functions.
- Monitors the operations and performance of the Council to ensure that it is fulfilling its mandate in compliance with Government of Alberta policies.
- Engages Cabinet colleagues through the Ministerial Group on Families and Communities regarding recommendations flowing from the Council.
- Conducts regular (at least every three years) reviews of the Council's mandate and purpose to determine if the work of the Council is still relevant to the needs of Albertans, if it is aligned with government priorities and if the operations and functions are being carried out in a manner consistent with government objectives.

## **Alberta Homelessness Research Consortium (AHRC)**

The role of the current AHRC (established in 2010) is to support the Council work by strengthening research capacity, informing policy development, and sharing best practices for ending homelessness. The Council will review and approve AHRC's Terms of Reference and annual provincial research agenda.

### **Local Community Entities<sup>1</sup>**

Seven existing local community entities will provide cross-sector advice to the Council from the local community perspective to inform Council's policy and program advice to government.

## **4. Members**

In order to ensure representation from all relevant sectors that serve, or offer programs and services that affect the homeless, the Council shall consist of senior level representative (e.g., Executive Directors, Chief Executive Officers) from the following organizations/sectors:

- Four representatives from seven Alberta community-based organizations (Edmonton, Calgary, small urban in northern Alberta, and small urban in southern Alberta).
- Two representatives from First Nations, Métis, Inuit organizations.
- One representative from the Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnership Strategy
- One representative from the City of Edmonton Housing Department
- One representative from the City of Calgary Housing Department
- One representative from the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association
- Two representatives from select homeless-serving agencies
- Two representatives from select large homeless shelter operators
- One member of the former Alberta Secretariat for Action on Homelessness
- One former homeless Albertan or current Housing First client
- One representative from the Youth Advisory Panel Representative
- One representative from the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters
- One representative from the Alberta Chiefs of Police Association
- One representative from Family and Community Support Services
- Two representatives from Housing Management Bodies from Alberta's identified seven communities
- Two representatives from Apartment and Residential Rental Associations
- One representative from Habitat for Humanity
- One representative from Alberta Health Services, Mental Health and Addictions
- One Assistant Deputy Minister from each of the following core Government of Alberta ministries (Human Services, Municipal Affairs, Health and Justice and Solicitor General)

## **5. Structure**

Reporting to the Government of Alberta through the Minister of Human Services, the Council will be supported by the cross-ministry Assistant Deputy Minister Committee on Housing and Homelessness, the Alberta Homelessness Research Consortium and Human Services (through the Family Violence Prevention and Homeless Supports Division).

Seven local community entities will also support and inform the Council advice to the Government of Alberta. See attached organizational structure (Attachment 1).

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<sup>1</sup> Local community entities are groups that provide advice to community-based organizations (CBOs) that identify local priorities from a homelessness perspective. CBOs are responsible for implementing both the local and provincial plans to end homelessness and distribute provincial funding to local homeless-serving agencies to support the delivery of programs and services that address homelessness.

## 6. Meetings

Wherever possible, Council shall meet four times per calendar year, in June, September, December and March.

Agendas will be prepared by the Council Chair(s) with the support of the Executive Director, Family Violence Prevention and Homeless Supports and the guidance of the cross-ministry Assistant Deputy Minister Committee on Housing and Homelessness.

The Council will provide an opportunity to hear from at least one community advisory body at each meeting.

Human Services, through the Executive Director, Family Violence Prevention and Homeless Supports, will provide administrative and operational support to the Council for actioning, tracking and reporting items arising from Council meetings.

## 7. Recruitment and Appointment of Council Members

### **Initial Member Appointment**

Individuals are recruited and appointed by the Government of Alberta and collectively constitute “the Council”. Appointment of each member of the Council is for a fixed term of up to three years, with the potential of re-appointment. An individual’s appointment is limited to a maximum of ten years of continuous service.

The recruitment and selection process will be managed by Human Services. The Minister will send correspondence to each of the organizations outlined in Section 4, requesting the organization’s participation on the Council through a representative that matches skill, experience and competency qualities as outlined in a competency matrix to allow for a diverse composition skills and knowledge. The competency matrix will consider the personal attributes, skills, and knowledge of potential members, as follows:

#### **Personal Attributes:**

- Collaboration
- Accountability
- Integrity
- Commitment to ending homelessness in Alberta
- Respects differences
- Ethical – no conflicts of interest
- Flexibility

#### **Skills:**

- Communication
- Decision-making
- Strategic thinking
- Analytical
- Conflict resolution

#### **Knowledge:**

- Social Science degree
- Mental health background
- Justice/correctional system
- Governance and accountability of public
- Sector specific knowledge (e.g., housing)

After appropriate screening for conflict of interest considerations, recommendation of a list of names will be made to the Minister for consideration. The Minister will choose individuals from the list and the department will formalize the appointment process through a Ministerial Order.

## **Recruitment to Vacancies**

When vacancies arise, the competency matrix will be used to identify competencies required of the new recruit. Knowledge of homelessness and homelessness issues will be of paramount importance when considering appointment of Council members.

When a vacancy occurs, the Council will recommend a set of desired values and competencies to the Minister to form the basis for the recruitment of a new individual. Values will include respect, integrity, excellence and accountability.

## **8. Remuneration**

Council members are entitled to be paid remuneration and expenses in accordance with the Committee Remuneration Order, Schedule 1, Part A, as follows:

1. A member of a committee, other than the chairman, shall be paid
  - a. \$164 for up to and including four hours in any day, or
  - b. \$290 for over four hours and up to and including eight hours in any day, or
  - c. \$427 for over eight hours in any day, spent on the business of the committee.
2. The chairman or person acting as the chairman of a committee shall be paid
  - a. \$219 for up to and including four hours in any day, or
  - b. \$383 for over four hours and up to and including eight hours in any day, or
  - c. \$601 for over eight hours in any day, spent on the business of the committee.
3. The chairman and members of a committee are entitled to be paid travelling and living expenses in accordance with the Subsistence and Travel Allowance Regulation made by Ministerial Order 1.98, as amended, or any Order made in substitution therefore, as though they were employees of the government.
4. Where the Minister responsible for the committee is satisfied that the chairman or a member of the committee suffers a loss of remuneration as a result of his service on the committee, the Minister, subject to the prior approval of the Minister charged with the administration of the *Public Service Act*, may increase the fees payable under this Part up to a maximum of double the appropriate rate determined under Section 1 or 2.

## **9. Interaction between Council and Human Services**

### **Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM), Family Violence Prevention and Homeless Supports (FVPHS), Human Services**

- The ADM, FVPHS is accountable for the Council's departmental support and interaction with government.
- The ADM, FVPHS with support from the ADMs of the other core ministries on the Council (Municipal Affairs, Health and Justice and Solicitor General) will serve as the main conduit between the Council and the Cross-ministry ADM Committee on Housing and Homelessness. Each of the ADMs from the four core ministries will participate as full members of the Council.
- The ADM, FVPHS will lead the interaction and ensuring advice and recommendations flow back and forth between the Council and the ADM Committee.

## **Cross-ministry ADM Committee on Housing and Homelessness (ADM Committee)**

- The ADM Committee is comprised of ADMs from the ministries of Human Services; Municipal Affairs; Health; Justice and Solicitor General (previous four are identified as the core ministries); Executive Council; Service Alberta; Aboriginal Relations; Education; Infrastructure; and Culture.
- The ADM Committee will provide strategic advice to the Council with respect to:
  - Implementing the Plan;
  - Ensuring homelessness strategies align with Alberta’s Social Policy Framework and related poverty plans;
  - Oversight of implementing policy decision arising from the Council’s advice to government; and
  - Providing direction to the Interagency Council on Homelessness, as needed.
- Members of the ADM Committee will, as appropriate, brief and seek feedback from: their respective deputy ministers, departmental colleagues, and the ADM Pod on Families and Communities regarding “whole of government” policy proposals arising from the Council that may affect the policies and/or programs of other ministries.

## **Executive Director, FVPHS**

- The Executive Director, FVPHS will serve as the main liaison with the Council Chair(s) and members and Human Services on an ongoing basis. The Executive Director leads a team of administrative and professional Government of Alberta staff who provide operational and administrative support to the Council with respect to preparing meeting agendas, taking and distributing meeting minutes, ensuring accountability requirements are met, managing the Alberta Homelessness Research Consortium, and supporting the ADM, FVPHS to liaise between the Council and the ADM Committee.
- The Executive Director, FVPHS is accountable to the ADM FVPHS, Human Services.

## **10. Administration**

### **Review of the Terms of Reference**

The Terms of Reference shall be in effect for not more than three years. It must be renewed or revised by the expiry date.

The Terms of Reference must be affirmed annually by the Minister and the Council Chair, or on a change in either the Minister or Council Chair. Any changes to the Terms of Reference require a Ministerial Order amendment.

### **Transparency**

The Ministerial Order, which includes the Terms of Reference, will be filed with the department of Human Services, the Council and the Agency Governance Secretariat (AGS). In support of the principle of transparency, this document will also be easily available to the public on the Agency’s website, on the AGS website \_\_\_\_\_ [if applicable] or through the Executive Director, Family Violence Prevention and Homeless Supports, Alberta Human Services.

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Council Chair

*Alberta Interagency Council on Homelessness*

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Minister

Alberta Human Services

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*Date*

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*Date*

**Approval and Review Date:**

These Terms of Reference were approved by the Deputy Ministers on [**Date**]. The Terms of Reference should be reviewed every three years by the Cross-Ministry ADM Committee on Housing and Homelessness.

**Minister's Accountability**

The Minister of Human Services is accountable to the Legislature for the operation of the Council.



# Interagency Council on Homelessness

## Proposed Community Representative Governance Structure

The purpose of establishing an Alberta Interagency Council on Homelessness is to support the plan to end homelessness in Alberta by 2019 by ensuring:

- Albertans are housed and provided the supports they need to remain housed.
- Homeless prevention and reduction programs are coordinated across systems.
- Alberta's 10 year Plan to End Homelessness remains a priority for the Province, communities and Albertans.

### Minister of Human Services\*

\* Ministerial Group on Families and Communities

### Roles

#### Decision-Making

- Provide advice to government with respect to:
  - Ending and preventing homelessness.
  - Increasing public awareness.
  - Demonstrating accountability.
  - Ensuring a strengthened systems approach.
  - Developing priorities and annual action plans for focus and investment.
  - Coordinating funding policies.
  - Supporting research, data collection and enhanced outcomes-based reporting.
- Authority to strike working groups as needed.

Support the Council work by strengthening research capacity, informing policy development, and sharing best practices for ending homelessness.

- Ensure homelessness strategies align with Alberta's Social Policy Framework.
- Oversee implementation of policy decisions arising from the Council's advice to government.
- Provide direction to the Interagency Council on Homelessness, as needed.

\* Includes representation from: Executive Council, Human Services, Municipal Affairs, Health, Justice and Solicitor General, Aboriginal Relations; Education, Infrastructure, Service Alberta and Culture.

- Provide operational support to the Interagency Council on Homelessness.
- Ensure accountability requirements are met.

Provide cross-sector advice to the Interagency Council on Homelessness from the local community perspective to inform policy and program recommendations to government.

### Council Supports

**Research**  
(Alberta Homelessness Research Consortium)

**Cross-Ministry ADM Committee \***

**Departmental Operational Support**

### Provincial Interagency Council on Homelessness

Senior level representatives (e.g., Executive Directors, Chief Executive Officers) from:

- 4 - 7 Cities Group (Edmonton / Calgary / 1 small northern Alberta / 1 small southern Alberta)
- 2 - First Nations, Métis, Inuit Organizations
- 1 - Federal government (Homelessness Partnership Strategy)
- 1 - Alberta Urban Municipalities Association
- 2 - Select Housing First Service Delivery Agencies / 2- Select Large Homeless Shelter Operators
- 1 - Member of the former Alberta Secretariat for Action on Homelessness
- 1 - Homeless Albertan / Housing First Client
- 1 - Youth Advisory Panel Representative
- 1 - Alberta Council of Women's Shelters
- 1 - Alberta Chiefs of Police Association
- 1 - Family and Community Support Services
- 2 - City of Edmonton and City of Calgary Housing Departments
- 2 - Housing Management Bodies
- 2 - Apartment and Residential Rental Associations
- 1 - Habitat for Humanity
- 1 - Alberta Health Services, Mental Health and Addictions
- 4 - one ADM from each of the following GoA ministries: Human Services; Municipal Affairs; Health; and Justice and Solicitor General

Note: Once established, the Interagency Council on Homelessness will have the authority to establish an Executive Committee.

Grande Prairie Community

Red Deer Community

Edmonton Community

Lethbridge Community

Medicine Hat Community

Calgary Community

Wood Buffalo Community