

## STAFF RECRUITMENT

CAEH heard from community leaders that staff recruitment and retention are acute challenges to keeping individuals and families safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. This document provides tips and considerations for communities looking to maintain coverage of essential staff roles as part of their COVID-19 response and/or recovery.

- **Advocate for leadership and support from your local Public Health Authority (PHA)** for roles that require healthcare support. Check out CAEH's COVID-19 Resource on [Requesting Support from Local PHAs](#) for examples of how local authorities have worked with service providers to deploy healthcare professionals in response and recovery initiatives.
- **Identify Critical Functions** - Pages 6 and 7 of [BC Housing's Sample Pandemic Continuity Plan](#) provides templates for identifying and prioritizing critical functions and staff resources. Knowing which functions must continue can help identify the specific skillsets and qualifications that are needed to safely and appropriately staff a part of the community's COVID-19 response.
- **Share Staff through Mutual Support Agreements** - Gather local service providers to assess if staff can be shared between agencies or programs on a temporary basis. Reorganize staff roles across multiple agencies wherever possible.
- **Reach Out to Big Non-Profits** - Reach out to big-name non-profit and social service organizations that work with vulnerable populations to see if any local staff could offer their support.
- **Repurpose Social Services/Municipal Staff** - Social services staff who have been deemed as non-essential may be able to shift roles and provide support as part of a community's response to COVID-19. For example, [Ontario has granted flexibility](#) to redeploy municipal workers to respond to homelessness, and has announced that [pandemic pay](#) will be issued to some staff roles in shelters.
- **Secondments** - Assess if staff from other departments or outside organizations could join the local response team. This could potentially prevent job loss at the same time as maintaining coverage.
- **PiT Volunteers** - Many communities were gearing up to complete a Point-in-Time Count before the spread of COVID-19. Consider reaching out to those who registered as some volunteers may have experience working with vulnerable populations.
- **Media Call-Out** - Consider putting a call for staff in local media. Be specific in which skillsets or requirements are needed based on critical functions.
- **Reduce HR Barriers** - Stress the importance of mitigating and [managing the spread of COVID-19 in homelessness service settings](#) to the appropriate Human Resources (HR) team, especially if collaborating with HR has been a barrier to rapidly recruiting or retaining staff.
- **University Students** - Connect with social services departments in post-secondary institutions that have closed their campuses. Students may be willing or able to volunteer their support.
- **Staff Service Continuity** - Keep the same housing workers or Intensive Case Managers for people participating in Permanent Supportive Housing programs where possible. See CAEH's COVID-19 Resource on [Continuing Housing First Visits](#) for ideas that respect physical distancing.

- **Recruitment Agency** – Consider using a recruitment agency to assist with staff recruitment on behalf of the homeless-serving sector. Support could range from consultation to full recruitment.
- **Check if your province has a Volunteer Recruitment Strategy** – [Quebec](#), [Alberta](#), and [Manitoba](#) have initiated coordinated registration websites where residents can volunteer to help vulnerable populations and be connected with organizations that are in need of support.
- **Incentives** – Offer staff a referral bonus and/or new staff a sign-on bonus to support recruitment.
- **Enlist Participant/Resident Support** – Seek paid or volunteer support of service participants to assist with cleaning and other tasks as appropriate.

**Disclaimer:** This document is a collection of resources and/or ideas compiled by the team at CAEH. Please follow [Public Health Agency of Canada guidelines on COVID-19](#) as the primary resource for all health-related concerns.

CAEH will continue to update this resource as new information or ideas become available. Please refer to the CNH3 website Resources page at [cnh3.ca/resources](http://cnh3.ca/resources) for additional information. If you have an idea or resource to share or are seeking further support, please contact us at [info@caeh.ca](mailto:info@caeh.ca).