

A Pandemic Response and
Recovery Toolkit for Homeless
System Leaders in Canada

Appendix A-5.

Drop-In and Day Service Considerations

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## A-5. Drop-In and Day Service Considerations

Drop-ins and other types of day services (e.g., hygiene centre; clubhouse; meal program) are a resource, at least pre-pandemic, that were used by people who are homeless, as well as people of low-income who are often precariously housed. Across the county, not all existing drop-in and day services have remained open, while a small number of communities have opened new drop-in programs in light of COVID-19. The action priorities outlined in the table below start with the assumption that before immediate actions are even outlined that a decision has been made to continue to operate the existing facilities or to relocate the drop-in/day service to a new location during the pandemic that may be more conducive to physical distancing.

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| **Timeframe** | **Action Priorities** |
| **Immediate** | * Implement safe physical distancing, and configure space to allow for it.
* Create, distribute and post disease awareness and prevention materials
* Provide staff with access to PPE and instructions on its use
* Apply screening and testing protocols
* Provide access to hygiene facilities, if possible
* Provide access to harm reduction supplies, if possible
* If providing meals, switch to individual pre-packaged meals rather than buffet or cafeteria style
* Direct any person who is unwell to testing site or other appropriate health care resource
* Adapt services to support unsheltered people as necessary (e.g., take-away meals or food)
* Support unsheltered people that want shelter on how to access shelter space
* Ensure services are delivered in a trauma-informed manner
* Engage people with lived experience to ensure the response is adequate
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| **Short-term** | * Continue to provide screening and testing protocols
* Provide shelter or housing options to unsheltered people
* Examine policies and procedures that create barriers to service access
* Assess whether or not the day service is accessed equitably
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| **Medium-term** | * Provide support to any plans developed by outreach to support. Unsheltered people
* Continue to provide screening and testing
* Lead or participate in planning to assist unsheltered persons choosing to remain outdoors
* Begin evaluation of pre-existing day service facilities for capacity and other facility issues that will change operations moving forward with a focus on maintaining public health guidelines.
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| **Long-term** | * Continue to provide screening and testing
* Implement plan on facility changes that are needed
* Maintain an unrelenting housing focus, and helping people who are housed achieve the greatest amount of independence possible
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