



Office of the Commissioner
Community and Health Services Department

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of Committee of the Whole

From: Katherine Chislett
Commissioner of Community and Health Services

Date: May 30, 2023

Re: Ukrainian Humanitarian Crisis and York Region Response

This memorandum updates Regional Council on the response to the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis, including next steps on temporary accommodation supports the Region is providing.

In [March 2023](#), Council approved continued temporary accommodation and wrap-around supports to those affected by the conflict in Ukraine until end of June 2023

Since opening in 2022, the site run by COSTI Immigrant Services has temporarily housed and provided supports to over 250 individuals arriving in Canada under the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel. Through this Regional initiative, individuals were able to find more stable housing arrangements, secure employment, and settle more effectively.

Effective July 1, 2023, COSTI will stop accepting new intake at York Region's site and scale down operations as existing guests secure other accommodations, a process that may take several weeks (it takes approximately a month-and-half on average to find other accommodations). There are currently 59 individuals being supported on site.

After June, those that need assistance will be redirected to other supports, including temporary hotel accommodation being provided by the federal government and settlement services funded by Immigration, Citizenship and Refugees Canada. Over the last year, the federal government has been able to expand supports to those displaced by the conflict in Ukraine, and there are now nearly 600 federally-funded spaces across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). However, stays at the federal spaces are limited to just two weeks. Information on supports and resources can be found on York Region's [webpage](#).

York Region has been working with other GTHA municipalities to coordinate response and advocate for senior government funding to offset costs

York Region's site is among a network of sites stood up by regional and single-tier municipalities across the GTHA to supplement federal and provincial supports to those displaced by the conflict in Ukraine. Municipalities, however, have noted the need for, and requested, senior government funding to offset municipal costs. On April 3, 2023, Regional Chair Emmerson sent a letter to the federal Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and the provincial Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing reiterating the need for funding. To date, no funding commitment has been made.

Due to the absence of federal and provincial funding offset, municipal sites will start to cease or ramp down temporary supports. Peel Region will also be closing its site (one of the largest among the municipal sites) at the end of June. The Region of Durham anticipates ceasing operations by summer. The City of Toronto has extended its operations to September given the large number of refugees and asylum-seekers that are already straining its shelter system.

To date, York Region has incurred approximately \$1.8 million in total costs to operate its site, with monthly costs averaging around \$250,000. In the absence of any funding offset, these costs will be absorbed by the existing Community and Health Services budget.

As Service System Manager, York Region will continue to deliver provincially-funded Emergency Income Assistance and Child Care Fee Subsidy to Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel visa holders

As of May 12, 2023, the Region is supporting 70 children through the Child Care Fee Subsidy program and 701 individuals/families through the Emergency Income Assistance program.

Regional staff will update Council on any significant developments related to the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis.



Katherine Chislett
Commissioner of Community and Health Services



Bruce Macgregor
Chief Administrative Officer

eDOCS # 15215775