

Ministry of
Municipal Affairs
and Housing

Assistant Deputy Minister's Office

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August 21, 2019

Dear Service Managers,

I am writing to thank you for conducting local homeless enumeration in 2018, as required under the *Housing Services Act, 2011*.

I would also like to thank those of you who worked with Ministry staff to capture the lessons learned from this first province-wide enumeration. While this was an important first step, we have identified some gaps and limitations in the enumeration approach, and resulting data collected through this first data collection. We recognize that there are opportunities to improve the enumeration approach required by the ministry, and incorporate best practices which are being used in some communities. Further, we recognize that the environment in which the enumeration approach was first conceived has changed with some communities now using real time data.

For these reasons, the Ministry will pause the requirement for Service Managers to conduct local homeless enumeration to give us time to review in more detail future enumeration requirements and ensure that the data collected will be used to improve programs and outcomes for those experiencing homelessness. As such, Service Managers will not be required by the province to conduct local homeless enumeration in 2020.

The province remains committed to improving the outcomes for Ontario's most vulnerable people. In April, the Ministry launched the province's new Community Housing Renewal Strategy which is based on the principle that everyone deserves a place to call home. The Strategy intends to make community housing safer and more sustainable to help people who need it most, so that all Ontarians can find a home that meets their needs. This includes providing more than \$1 billion in 2019-2020 alone to help sustain, repair and grow community housing in Ontario and help end homelessness.

In addition, the 2019 Budget reconfirmed the province's focus on mental health and addiction issues. Supportive housing is widely considered a key element in addressing homelessness. As announced in the Budget, the Ministry is working with our partner ministries to identify opportunities to improve the flexibility of the system and outcomes for people. As part of this, the ministries will identify opportunities to streamline and improve coordination of the province's supportive housing programs and ensure that the province provides quality supportive housing with a focus on the needs and outcomes of clients, which can also help reduce cost pressures on other services, such as the health care and the justice systems.

The Ministry continues to value the role of Service Managers and recognizes the importance of Service Managers having the flexibility to design programs based on their local needs and priorities.

If you have any questions, please contact Kathryn Watson, Manager, Homelessness Secretariat, at 416 585-6472 or at Kathryn.Watson@ontario.ca.

Once again, thank you for your support and cooperation on this initiative.

Sincerely,



for Janet Hope
Assistant Deputy Minister

Cc: Marcia Wallace, Assistant Deputy Minister, Municipal Services Division