

## **Just Housing for Individuals Post-Incarceration**

Includes:

Final Report

By: Chelsea Grundy

Completed for: HSJCC

Supervising Professor: Mira Kapetanovic

Trent Community Research Centre Project Coordinator: Sarah Khaki

Course Code: FRSC 4890Y

Course Name: Forensic Community-Based Research Project

Completion Date: April 21, 2025

Project ID: 6276



Suite 3.10, Trent University Student Centre

1600 West Bank Drive

Peterborough, ON K9L 0G2

Phone: [\(705\) 748-1093](tel:(705)748-1093)

Email: [tcrc@trentu.ca](mailto:tcrc@trentu.ca)

Website: [trentu.ca/tcrc](http://trentu.ca/tcrc)

## **Acknowledgments**

**Mira Kapetanovic** – Thank you for your tireless efforts in teaching how to successfully conduct research, analyze data, and write each section of this report. Most of all, thank you for your encouragement throughout all successes and difficulties.

**Sarah Khaki** – Thank you for your hard work in making sure that all ends met with completion, of posters, successful presentations, and submission of final reports, and for all of the organizing needed to make this project possible.

**Kim Kennelly and Teryl Hoefel** – Thank you for trusting me with this research project and for being amazing and supportive hosts of this project. Thank you for your encouragement during project meetings, always showing excitement for the research, and for being so actively involved with quick responses to any concerns I may have had or information I may have needed.

**Survey and interview participants** – Thank you for showing interest in this study and dedicating your time to provide information on all aspects of this study. Your participation is the core of this project.

*The completion and success of this research project would not be possible without you and your contributions. Your work does not go unnoticed.*

## Abstract

After incarceration, justice-involved individuals face a tremendous number of barriers in finding housing, rendering most of them to be homeless. Housing is a critical stepping stone in individuals' successful societal reintegration, allowing them to focus on their mental and physical health, income stability, employment seeking, and more. This study aims to find the best practices in providing housing services for justice-involved individuals and to present service models that offer promise to meet the complex needs of justice-involved individuals in the Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Pine Ridge region. A provincial wide survey was developed and deployed, receiving data from 29 respondents on the current efforts of housing and service models. Five semi-structured interviews were conducted with service providers to gain knowledge on the success of current efforts and what areas of providing housing services and support to individuals need improvement. Results show that transitional housing and mental health and addiction services were most successful in terms of individuals successful reintegration. Early-on connections with clients, recreational programs, and community-style living were found to be successful practices in supporting justice-involved individuals. Further research would be needed to assess the feasibility of best practices suggested in this report.

### Key Words

**Addiction:** being addicted to a substance.

**Bail:** when an individual charged with a crime is released from custody as they await their trial.

**Discrimination:** prejudicial treatment that is different than others.

**Homeless:** without a home, living on the streets.

**Incarceration:** being in prison.

**Justice-involved individuals:** individuals who have been in some way involved with the justice system.

**Mental health:** the state of a person's psychological and emotional well-being.

**Post-incarceration:** after an individual has been incarcerated (in jail) and has since been released.

**Reintegration:** re-engagement in society following a period of separation.

**Stigmatization:** the act of regarding someone with great disapproval.

**Supportive housing:** affordable or subsidized housing that offers both social and health support services.

## Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Abstract .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Keywords .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Methods .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Results .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Literature review .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Surveys .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Interviews .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Discussion and Conclusion .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>References .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Appendix A .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Appendix B .....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Appendix C .....</b>	<b>61</b>

## **Introduction**

Housing instability, whether no housing prior to incarceration or losing housing while incarcerated, and the corresponding increase of mental health and addiction issues are common results of interactions with the criminal justice system. The presence of one of these aspects can insinuate the other (HSJCC, 2024b). These individuals may become re-involved with the criminal justice system due to the harsh unhoused living conditions and survival impulses to attain basic required resources (John Howard Society, 2022). Additionally, many laws have been set that criminalize homelessness. Laws such as those prohibiting loitering or sleeping in public areas and laws that illegalize asking people in passing for money or the act of squeegeeing for money (John Howard Society, 2022). These laws may be easy for housed individuals to obey, but difficult for those who are homeless (John Howard Society, 2022). When these people are caught acting against these laws, police officers often believe that bringing the individual into custody is the only option and will provide the individual with the basic needs such as food, shelter, and medical care, especially in the absence of alternative treatment programs in the region (John Howard Society, 2022). This creates a cycle of incarceration, release, homelessness, justice system re-involvement, and back to incarceration. Individuals may enter this cycle through two points: incarceration or homelessness (John Howard Society, 2022). One experiencing homelessness may have no history of incarceration but can enter the cycle as soon as they get into contact with the justice system, or, one may have no history of homelessness, but can become homelessness during incarceration (John Howard Society, 2022). At the time of incarceration, 22% of people in Ontario are experiencing homelessness, and of these individuals, 85% of them will be released back into homelessness (John Howard Society, 2022). Further, of

all people being released from a correctional facility, one in three people are released with no fixed address (John Howard Society, 2022). Breaking this cycle is the utmost goal of this project.

The process of the justice system begins when a charge is laid against an accused individual (Zorzi et al., 2006). Upon receiving this charge, the individual will either be released and given a court date in which they must appear at, or they will be held for a bail hearing (Zorzi et al., 2006). The bail hearing will determine if the accused qualifies to be let out on bail or will remain in custody until the trial. A person may be denied bail for reasons that could lead to them not appearing for court such as having no residence or no one to ensure they will attend, such as family (Zorzi et al., 2006). The John Howard Society (JHS) has initiated a bail program in which the JHS assists both male and female accused individuals over the age of 16 in being granted parole by acting as a guarantor for those who do not have one (*Bail Program*, 2025).

Additionally, JHS has a Bail Verification and Supervision program that works adjacently to their bail program, providing finances to those who cannot afford bail as well as support systems (*Bail verification and supervision program (BVSP)*, 2025). Being held in pre-trial custody may extend over a great length of time and can be done without knowledge of when they will be released (Zorzi et al., 2006). If the accused did have a place of residence, whether owned or rented, they could be at risk of losing it if they are restrained from work and unsure when they will regain an income (Zorzi et al., 2006). If found not guilty, they will then be released, and it is up to them to deal with whatever housing issues detainment may have caused (Zorzi et al., 2006). If they are found guilty however, they may be sentenced to up to two years less a day, in which they would be placed in a provincial institution, or two years or more, landing them in a federal institution (Zorzi et al., 2006). Those who are placed in a provincial system are assessed for eligibility for special programs, like the Temporary Absence Programs, which allow individuals to attend work

during their regular scheduled hours (Zorzi et al., 2006). This would allow offenders to keep their employment and continue to make housing payments. Those who are placed into the federal system are assessed by what is called a Classification Officer (Zorzi et al., 2006). This officer will determine the level of security the offender requires, and then therefore the facility in which they are placed (Zorzi et al., 2006). Although efforts are made to keep these placements close to the offender's home community, it is not always possible, and they can be placed anywhere in Canada (Zorzi et al., 2006). Furthermore, at any time, Corrections Services Canada (CSC) may decide a new level of security is required for the offender resulting in relocation that may be even further from home (Zorzi et al., 2006).

Of the individuals admitted to provincial correctional facilities in Ontario – a total of 51,000 in 2018/2019 – there are two groups (John Howard Society, 2022). Group one encompasses those who have been convicted of a crime (John Howard Society, 2022). Group two includes individuals who have been accused, but not convicted, of a crime, cannot provide bail, and are awaiting trial (John Howard Society, 2022). Of these individuals admitted, 71% belong to group two (John Howard Society, 2022). This means that there are more individuals in Ontario provincial correctional facilities that have not been convicted for a crime than there are those who have. 50% of people who are held awaiting trial are held for over 12 days, 30% are held for over a month (John Howard Society, 2022). Most of these individuals will be released with no conviction, however the outcomes of being released after incarceration remain the same as if they had been convicted.

Prior student research has looked to the need and effectiveness of transitional housing as well as viability of tiny homes as transitional housing in Peterborough, Ontario. This research highlighted the challenges justice-involved individuals face post incarceration, such as

homelessness, lack of employment opportunities and access to treatment options for complex mental health and addiction conditions (Whalen, 2023). Due to this, it was found that the most effective housing for these individuals have on-site staff and leadership and treatment programs within facilities (Whalen, 2023). The location and structure of these housings must adhere to the general needs of the individuals being released from institutions (Kaszechki, 2020). This includes locations in which public service facilities and active transport is accessible, as well as grocery stores and public transit (Kaszechki, 2020). Structure wise, a community-style layout should be considered over an apartment-style building. An apartment-style building would make it easy for individuals to isolate themselves and makes it difficult to notice when individuals are falling through the cracks or are struggling. It should also be noted that it is best for these new structures to fit the culture of the city to be better accepted by the community. A Toronto size and looking apartment would not fit within the aesthetics of the City of Peterborough (Kaszechki, 2020). In a community-style build, individual's presence is noticed and accountability from others is more achievable, and residents can better support each other (Kaszechki, 2020). This style also helps facilitate living amongst others and therefore progresses social reintegration.

A 2006 study conducted Zorzi et al. examined programs that currently exist to assist justice-involved individuals in finding suitable housing upon release, whether that may be from provincial or federal institutions in Canada, with a focus on the provinces of Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia. The study identified the need for re-housing supports as finding residence is a primary issue offenders face upon release. Having no place to go home to once released is a reality for an estimated 30 percent of those incarceration in Canada. Those who are within a federal level of institution receive discharge planning which begins around a year before they are to be released to identify and address needs, with housing first on the list. Housing needs to be

dealt with prior to other needs as plans will have to be drawn based on where the individual will be residing. Federal level institutions also use what is called a gradual release program. This program allows individuals to enter a supervised setting in the community.

The 2020 provincial housing and justice forum conducted by the Provincial Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committee (HSJCC) highlighted the lack of coordination between mental health and addiction services and the need for system navigators of housing supports, more employment support programs, and case management for individuals needing long-term housing (HSJCC, 2024b). The forum proposed three service-level recommendations including: mandatory equity-focused training for landlords, increased access to legal services to aid in income security, and increased collaboration between service providers; and three system-level recommendations including long-term investments in housing and case management for those in the justice system facing mental health and addiction issues, development of a provincial strategy for standardized release from correctional facility planning, and that Ontario Works benefits continue through imprisonment to aid in avoidance of post-release homelessness (HSJCC, 2024b).

Titled “Just Housing for Individuals Post-Incarceration”, this project was being conducted in collaboration with the Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committee (HSJCC) of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Pine Ridge (HKPR). The HKPR HSJCC encompasses Peterborough City and County, City of Kawartha Lakes, Haliburton County, and Northumberland County. This Regional HSJCC, founded in 2006/2007, works to identify people who are in contact with the justice system and experience mental health, addiction, and related conditions and influence changes towards decriminalization, deinstitutionalization, and destigmatization of these individuals. This project aims to explore new and existing supportive

housing models for justice involved individuals, with a focus on those with complex needs. It will look to identify where the community of HKPR is at for providing these housing supports and provide insight to how they can improve their efforts to meet these needs. To achieve this, the project will seek the current best practices across Ontario for the delivery of housing services for justice-involved individuals, what support other communities are giving, and finally what service models offer promise to meet the complex needs of justice-involved individuals in HKPR. The project will look at short-term and long-term options, and transitional housing.

### **Methods**

This research project consisted of three components: a literature review, a survey, and semi-structured interviews. The literature review was used to explore current and past short-term, long-term, and transitional housing. It compared supports used by different agencies and organizations and evaluate the variety of service models that they use. The survey was used to determine the current efforts communities and agencies across the province are using to provide support to justice-involved individuals. The semi-structure interviews provided in-depth knowledge of how agencies are providing housing support for justice-involved individuals and to acknowledge how they can be bettered.

This method approach follows that of Zorzi et al., (2006) in their research report on housing options after correctional facility discharge. Their methods were split into two phases. Phase one consisted of a literature review to gain knowledge of what has already been identified as needs for rehousing-services, what type of services are being used and their successfulness. A jurisdictional scan was also completed in Phase 1 that sought to identify the re-housing services being offered currently across Canada. Phase two included the conduction of interviews. These

interviews provided information on challenges individuals face after incarceration, what supports are available to the versus those that are needed, and strengths and limitations of the available supports.

### **Ethics Review**

All research involving human participants must receive approval from a Research Ethics Board prior to collecting the data that involves participants. The ethics board looks at who the participants are that are included in the study, how consent will be obtained for participation, what will be expected of the participants and their experience while participating, and what the risks are for participation. All of this information is then given to the participants to allow the to provide informed consent.

Using the ROMEO portal provided by Trent University, the “Graduate of Undergraduate: Application of Human Participant Research” application form was filled out. This form consists of 12 sections including sections on study design, participants, risks and benefits, confidentiality, informed consent, conflict of interests, etc. Along with this form, consent forms for both the survey portion and interview portion of the study were created. The emails that would recruit participants were also drafted and included in the ethics submission. Finally, completion of the TCPS2 CORE-2022 certificate was required and completed. This certificate, the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, outlines guides for conducting research according to ethical procedures. The current research study received approval from Trent University’s Research Ethics Board on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025.

### **Literature Review**

For the scope of this project, the literature review included published, peer-reviewed articles; reports; and grey literature. The process started by reading the research papers of two

students who had worked on previous projects with HKPR HSJCC which acted as stepping stones for this project. Peer-review articles were sought out using both Google Scholar and Trent Library's Omni search engine to access journal databases such as Scholars Portal, JSTOR Life Sciences Collection, Wiley Online Library. Key phrases inputted into these search engines included:

“[Short-term] [Transitional] [Long-term] housing for individuals after incarceration”,

“Barriers individuals face after incarceration”,

“Where do individuals go after release from prisons?”,

“Housing navigation systems for justice-involved individuals”, etc.

These led to articles published in journals such as the Journal of Dual Diagnosis, Campbell Systematic Review, Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, and Theoretical Criminology. These phrases were also inputted into Google to find information from organizations' websites like CMHA or Homes First Toronto. The reports used were found on reputable websites including the Government of Canada and the Provincial HSJCC. Information was grouped into categories to write the different sections of the literature review including barriers justice-involved individuals face when finding housing, the effectiveness of service models, client navigation systems that are being used to move individuals through the housing continuum, and the short-term, long-term, and transitional housing different communities and agencies are offering.

## **Survey**

The anonymous survey deployed for this project was created using Qualtrics. The survey consisted of 44 questions, however, not all questions were visible to every respondent as the

survey was programmed to display questions based on the answers to previous questions. The questions created were a mix of question types including multiple choice, short text entries, select all, matrix tables. Topic of these questions covered demographics of those within agency's housing and services; the type of housing and service supports that are being offered and the success of them; how many clients are residing in their supportive housing, how long they may stay, and how many successfully transition into permanent housing; and the barriers that keep communities from implementing such support and services. The complete survey is provided in *Appendix A* of this report. Once completed, the survey was sent to the host organization, who then sent it to members of the Provincial HSJCC. These members were asked to share the link with regional and local chairs and networks. After two weeks, the survey closed to begin analysis. Qualtrics software compiles responses under their "Data & Analysis" tab. These responses were then transferred into Excel spreadsheets, organized by topics for ease of reviewing. Some data were given numerical values, such as 0 or 1, to determine conclusions such as which models and services were reported most successful.

## **Interviews**

Participants for the semi-structured interviews conducted were sought out by the host organization of this project. Those who were willing to participate in an interview were connected with myself to set up a date and time. Participant interviewed included employees of different positions belonging to the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) and Four Counties Addiction Service Teams (FourCAST), The 30-to-45-minute interviews were conducted via Microsoft Teams. Topic of discussion included how individuals moved through the interviewee's organizations, and furthermore, the housing continuum, beginning at initial point

of contact; what efforts they have seen to be successful, and also unsuccessful; the amount of collaboration needed between services versus the amount that actually happens; and what the ideal scenario of support would be. A complete list of discussion topics and questions can be viewed in *Appendix B* of this report. To allow these interviews to feel more like a discussion and to ensure important information was not missed, notes were not taken at the time of the interview. Instead, with consent of the participants, interviews were recorded and transcribed by Microsoft Teams. The recordings were reviewed at a later time to take thorough notes. These notes were then analyzed to extract common themes between each interview using Braun & Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework for doing a thematic analysis. This included reading through the interview transcripts and making initial comments, then to perform initial coding of the data, generating themes, defining and naming the themes, and finally interpreting and reporting these themes. A summary of this analysis is given in *Appendix C*.

## **Results**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The competitive housing market currently facing Canadians is in no question. Individuals who come out of the justice system are especially victimized by insecure housing. Many of these individuals may have had a home prior to incarceration, however, they are unable to sustain rental fees while incarcerated, causing them to lose their housing. After release, they face discrimination due to their criminal record, mental and physical health conditions, and income status. All of which makes landlords reluctant to house them.

In their 2024 Pre-Budget Submission, the Provincial HSJCC requested \$33 million for the development of innovative and evidence-based housing and support models (HSJCC, 2024a).

From this, they recommended \$11 million to be put towards supportive and transitional housing for justice-involved individuals (HSJCC, 2024b). Their third request was that community mental health and justice organizations use the justice-involved populations' rent subsidies, which they supply, more flexibly to meet the individualized needs of their clients (HSJCC, 2024b).

For the last two years, according to committee meeting minutes, workplans, and annual reports found on the Provincial HSJCC website, almost half of the regional and local HSJCCs have had some degree of call for supportive housing and services to be built into their annual or semi-annual work plan, showing that the need for these services and supports is being recognized and acknowledged. This review will explore best practices of short-term, transitional, and long-term housing and evaluate service models that meet the complex needs of justice-involved individuals.

## **Barriers**

Before going into the depths of housing solutions for justice-involved individuals, it is important to address and understand the many barriers these individuals face. The most notable barriers are that most individuals who have no place of residence and are involved with the justice system suffer complex mental health and addiction issues, requiring them to need ongoing support. According to Zorzi et al. (2006), of the homeless population, twenty to fifty percent live with extreme mental health issues. As well, those who have a dual diagnosis of paired mental health disorder with substance use disorder account for twenty to forty percent of those experiencing homelessness. The stigmatization of these disorders, coupled with a criminal record, lack of education, and lack of employment are all factors that are highly discriminated against by high-quality private landlords when seeking housing as these landlords can legally

discriminate against these factors in many provinces of Canada. This results in individuals having to resort to rundown housing in high-risk neighborhoods as part of substantial private housing.

Another very prominent barrier in the search for housing of these individuals is the lack of affordable housing that is offered and available. Housing constitutes as “affordable” housing when less than 30% of income before tax is spent on housing (John Howard Society, 2022). With one of the lowest rates in Canada, in 2018 Peterborough’s vacancy rates were at 1.6%, with even less affordable housing (Kaszechki, 2020). Even with available units, there is still a high competitiveness to obtain it, as well as the individual must have enough of an income to afford it and make regular payments – a reality that many unhoused and justice-involved individuals lack.

Ties to the community and peers, whether it be family or friends, are a crucial part of successful reintegration into society following release from a correctional facility. Unfortunately, with only 43 federal prison facilities in Canada and them being mostly located in urban cities, people, especially those from rural areas, face major dislocation from their community and family (Maier, 2020). The same is true for transitional housing locations. The closest one to someone may still require a big change in location. This results in not only a feeling of starting over but starting over in a place they do not wish to be, away from any social supports they may already have.

## **Service Models**

This section will discuss the different models of housing and support approaches, and their success. It will also cover the system navigation models in which clients are connected with these services and housing options.

### ***Housing First***

Developed by Dr. Sam Tsemberis, “Housing First” is an effective, evidence-based model for the delivery of housing supports that many agencies and organizations follow (John Howard Society, 2016). The outdated “treatment first” approach requires an individual to have their mental health and addiction issues under control before progressing to housing (Baxter et al., 2019). Conversely, the housing first approach does not require any form of abstinence before entering the housing supports. The theory behind this is to get individuals into a spot of housing stability so that they can then work with internal services to focus on other factors such as mental health and addiction problems, social reintegration, employment seeking, etc. The rapid housing stabilization allows individuals to not worry about where they are going next and focus more on bettering themselves. Funded by Canada’s Mental Health Commission, the *At Home/Chez Soi* project evaluated the Housing First model as a best practice in the field (HomelessHub, 2024). The study included 2,000 randomized participants, half who were under the Housing First model and half who received “treatment as usual” (HomelessHub, 2024). The results found that if you place someone experiencing chronic homelessness with complex mental health and substance use into housing with supports, they will remain housed (HomelessHub, 2024). After the first year of receiving the Housing First treatment, 80% of clients remained housed, with a noticeable decline of health services needed due to improved health as well as less involvement with law enforcement (HomelessHub, 2024).

### ***Assertive Community Treatment***

Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) is a service model that has shown effectiveness when paired with the Housing First approach. This multidisciplinary approach consists of a team of community healthcare workers who work to offer care to those with high-level needs. It was first established for individuals experiencing long histories of homelessness combined with histories of hospitalizations regarding severe mental health issues. Clients were offered personalized substance abuse treatment by a dual diagnosis team if they also were suffering from substance use. Housing was offered to these clients following the housing first approach. The multiple service-providing factor makes ACT a cost-efficient intervention (Moledina et al., 2021). Homelessness not only causes strain on the individuals but also costly burdens on shelters, and emergency and non-emergency medical services due to the increased demand for these services. For one month, a single hospital bed can cost up to \$13,500; a correctional facility \$4,300, and a shelter bed \$2,100 (HSJCC, 2024b). When compared with treatment as usual and other intervention models, ACT has shown to reduce psychiatric hospitalizations, emergency department visits, and reduce homelessness through housing stability (Clark et al., 2016, Moledina et al., 2021).

### ***Critical Time Intervention***

Critical time intervention (CTI) is another service delivery mechanism that works similarly to ACT intervention methods in which social support and relationship building are provided during a time of critical transition. (Clark et al., 2016; Moledina et al., 2021) The difference is that CTI is delivered for a limited time, is not as intensive as ACT, and the goals of CTI are limited. Moledina et al. (2021) defines CTI as an approach that provides “cognitive remediation” in which the prior underused prefrontal cortical functions are reactivated through

cognitive tasks, which explains the improvements seen for symptoms of schizophrenia and PTSD. CTI has shown to reduce homelessness in those being discharged from psychiatric hospitals, and even reduce psychiatric rehospitalization following release from incarceration (Clark et al., 2016). Because CTI targets the transition time as one moves through the housing continuum, housing stability and time spent homeless are shown to significantly improve across studies (Moledina et al., 2021).

Homes First Toronto, an organization that provides stable, affordable housing and supports to those living without a home, combines the Housing First model with the critical time intervention model to supply housing for over 2,500 people (Homes First, 2024). In 2023, a total of 153 clients out of a total of 530 housing placements were reported to successfully have broken the cycle of homelessness, presenting the effectiveness of CTI (Homes First, 2024).

## **System Navigation Methods**

This section will discuss the different methods currently being used to move individuals throughout the housing continuum. This includes the ways organizations meet the clients and the assessments for how they become eligible for certain supports.

### ***By-Name Priority List***

The By-Name Priority List is one of the more prominent ways that an individual will get on the radar of housing and support services. This list includes everyone in the organization's or agency's location who is experiencing homelessness. It includes information on their needs to gain successful housing and supports (City and County of Peterborough, 2023). Any agency in said location may add someone to the By-Name Priority list, however, once this is done, it is the

responsibility of the listing agency to keep contact with those individuals (City and County of Peterborough, 2023). Adding an individual to this list requires the completion of an intake process. To meet the criteria for intake, the individual must experience homelessness for more than 14 days and must reside in the location of the agency (City and County of Peterborough, 2023). Once this is established, the agency will take the individual through the four sections of the intake including consent, collection of personal information, assessment of need, and entry of the data into the list (City and County of Peterborough, 2023). The next section will discuss the method in which assessment of need is done.

### ***VI-SPDAT Assessment Tool***

In order to be added to the By-Names-Priority list, an assessment of the individual's needs is required. To do this, an assessment tool called the Vulnerable Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) is used (City and County of Peterborough, 2023). This is a triage-based screening tool that identifies the best housing type for which the individual should be recommended for as well as identifies who is of the greatest need (City and County of Peterborough, 2023). Health and social needs are ranked on a points system: low (0-3), medium (4-7), high (8-13), and very high (14+) (City and County of Peterborough, 2023). Someone who ranks a low score is someone who could benefit from affordable housing and resources but requires no formal housing interventions and intensive supports (City and County of Peterborough, 2023). Someone in the medium score rank is in need of rapid rehousing and shows moderate physical and mental health (City and County of Peterborough, 2023). These individuals are recommended financial aid to gain housing stability and have access to support services (City and County of Peterborough, 2023). Those in the high score category are

recommended for permanent housing with access to services and case management (City and County of Peterborough, 2023). Finally, those who are categorized as having a very high score are recommended for permanent housing with around-the-clock service supports and case management (City and County of Peterborough, 2023). Once a score is given, it can be entered into the By-Names-Priority List in order to finish the intake for listing (City and County of Peterborough, 2023).

### ***The Coordinated Access System***

The coordinated access system is a tool used to provide housing supports to those who have been entered on the By-Names-Priority List. It helps to decide who on this list gets priority for different housing and supports that become available. The types of resources that the Coordinated Access System works to provide are permanent supportive housing solutions, case management services, mental health and addiction supportive housing, and rent supplements (City and County of Peterborough, 2023). Allocation of services such as rent supplements and mental health and addiction services are based on the By-Names-Priority List for the order in which they will be offered, however, extra steps are taken when housing becomes available. The system first filters the list for eligible individuals (City and County of Peterborough, 2023). From this filtered list, the top four names are taken and sent to the housing provider who then selects one of the four individuals (City and County of Peterborough, 2023). They then contact this individual and begin the rental agreement process as well as a care plan to connect the individual with the needed support services while housed, should the client accept the offer (City and County of Peterborough, 2023). If the client does not accept the offer, no penalty is placed on the client, and they will remain in their spot on the list (City and County of Peterborough, 2023).

## **Housing Models**

### ***Short-term Housing***

Short-term housing provides safe, immediate relief in the time of crisis (CaseWorthy, 2025). This housing provides residency for a few days to a few weeks (CaseWorthy, 2025). Emergency shelters and bail beds are two types of short-term options. In 2017, Ontario launched its Bail Bed Program in five locations: Barrie, Kitchener, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, and Toronto; a total of 70 beds will be made available across these locations (General, 2017). The goal of this program is to provide vulnerable, accused individuals with safe, supportive, and supervised housing options while awaiting a hearing (General, 2017).

The John Howard Society (JHS) is a criminal justice organization found community-wide within Ontario which exercises “effective, just, and human responses to crime and its causes” (John Howard Society, 2016). JHS has developed multiple programs across Ontario communities to aid in the reintegration of incarcerated men into society. JHS facilitated the Residential Rehabilitation Program in Thunder Bay that offers short-term housing for 39 men and even 9 women (HSJCC, 2024a). These individuals are either currently involved with the justice system or at risk of becoming involved (HSJCC, 2024a). The program offers individuals safe shelter which meets the client’s basic needs and allows them to focus on understanding the factors that have put them there (HSJCC, 2024). It uses evidence-based criminogenic assessment tools to develop an individualized plan to avoid re-involvement (HSJCC, 2024). JFS also brought this philosophy to London, Ontario, working to find a solution to post-incarceration homelessness (John Howard Society of London & District, 2024). They are using a hotel-based intervention as

a short-term rapid stabilization for those released from institutions that have been successful in allowing individuals to find employment (John Howard Society of London & District, 2024).

The City of Cornwall has contracted a seven-month lease of the former long-term care center, Parisien Manor, in efforts to provide short-term housing for those without any other place during the winter months (Cornwall Ontario Canada, 2023). The facility has 20 rooms.

Individuals in encampments and others who are on the city's registry of homeless people will be of priority (Cornwall Ontario Canada, 2023). The site will have a presence of Cornwall Housing services and community partners and will offer mental health and addiction services, and supports in finding residents more secure, permanent housing (Cornwall Ontario Canada, 2023).

Those who have not been successful in finding housing will be moved to Massey Commons, an old school that is being prepared to offer supportive housing and services similar to Parisien Manor (Cornwall Ontario Canada, 2023). The city will negotiate an extension of Parisien Manor if needed after the seven months (Cornwall Ontario Canada, 2023). A resident of Parisien Manor, Sylvie, has shared her story in gratefulness to the program (O'Neil, 2024). After losing her home and being homeless six times in the past ten years due to a physical disability, she states that she now has the resources and services she needs and says the program at Parisien Manor is allowing her to start over again and is hopeful that she will find more permanent housing (O'Neil, 2024). Unfortunately, updates show that this facility is up for question and debate in current council meetings, after complaints from surrounding residents.

### ***Transitional Housing***

Transitional housing acts as a bridge between short-term and permanent housing (Caseworthy, 2025). Individuals may reside in transitional housing for up to one to three years.

This type of housing provides stability to individuals so they can focus efforts on social reintegration, addressing mental health and addiction issues, employment seeking, and other independent life skills. The City of Kawartha Lakes currently houses an eight-bed transitional housing program at the Harrison House (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2023). This is a co-ed program that supports individuals who have been diagnosed with mental health illnesses to recover and transition into independent living (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2023).

Harrison House, located in the Kawartha Lakes, Ontario area, is a smaller, co-ed, transitional housing program which holds eight beds and offers support in life skills and independence (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2023). Residents are involved in social recreation, house meetings, psychoeducation, and life skills (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2023). Residence can last up to two years, with the hope of transitioning to independent living (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2023).

Under the wing of the John Howard Society of South Etobicoke and using the HF model, plans to build permanent Reintegration Center with transitional housing units for individuals released to homelessness (John Howard Society, 2016).

The Elizabeth-Fry Societies of Ontario operate on the same basis of the John Howard Society but instead focuses on the reintegration of criminalized women, with housing supports to those released on parole (Elizabeth Fry Society, 2024). The Elizabeth-Fry NOW program was established in April 2021 and supports criminalized women with mental health conditions and substance use needs, providing low-barrier transitional housing and a combined Circle of Care while aiming to find permanent housing that fits their needs (Elizabeth Fry Society, 2024).

Restorative Justice Housing Ontario is an approach to repair the harm that results from criminal action by providing safe and secure transitional housing to justice-involved individuals

upon release from custody (Restorative Justice Housing Ontario, 2024). February 2020 marked the first house for men, and as of January 2024, there are five operative RJHO houses within the GTA, providing 21 men and women with affordable, supportive, and stable housing (Restorative Justice Housing Ontario, 2024). Here they have a foundation to work on healing and seeking employment and volunteer experience (Restorative Justice Housing Ontario, 2024).

For almost 40 years, Hamilton's Bridge House has provided transitional housing for 6 men at a time (The Bridge, 2023). The goal of this program is to provide safe housing as they work the find secure, permanent housing post-incarceration (The Bridge, 2023). They offer case management, employment supports, peer support, clothing, food security, and more (The Bridge, 2023).

The City of Peterborough initiated a Modular Housing Project in May of 2023. The Modular Bridge Housing Community consists of 50 modular homes, washroom facilities, and a service hub, and welcomed its first residents in November 2023 (Lambie, 2025). This community seen a 98% move-in rate, which is 38-58% higher than typical transitional housing programs (Lambie, 2025). In just six months of operation, four residents of the community found employment, one resident was successful in finding permanent housing, and emergency services seen a 90% decrease in calls (Lambie, 2025). It has also been reported by the community staff that there have been significant improvements in residents' mental and physical well-being (Lambie, 2025). In August 2024, the City of Peterborough's Modular Bridge Housing Community Project received the Peter J. Marshall Innovation Award Jury at the 2024 Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Conference (Lambie, 2025).

### ***Long-term Housing***

Long-term housing is safe, permanent places of residence, which can be from the public or private sector, although the latter can have increased barriers and is generally considered “off-limits” to those with supportive needs that landlords discriminate against (Zorzi et al., 2006). For some, long-term residency may be fully independent however, for others, this may still include supportive programs in which individuals may attend appointment-like or have the supports come to them.

One of the biggest barriers of justice-involved individuals is the lack of available affordable housing on the market. Garden Suites are a new innovative way to increase housing supply and address the lack of housing we are facing and is a potential program that could be joined with the criminal justice system for justice-involved individuals post-incarceration. A garden suite is a smaller unit within an ancillary building located on one’s property, detached from the primary building, and not on the public lane (City of Toronto, 2024). The idea was adopted by Toronto in February of 2022. The City has implemented two programs to aid property owners with the expenses of building these units. The Development Charges Deferral Program for Ancillary Secondary Dwelling Units allows participants in the *Expanding Housing Options in Neighborhoods* initiative to defer their costs for these suites (City of Toronto, 2024). The other program is the Affordable Laneway and Garden Suite Program offers up to \$50,000 in forgivable loans (City of Toronto, 2024). This program means that loans up to this amount used for the development of these suites can be partially forgiven or even completely forgiven if the rent charged to the tenant in the first 15 years does not surpass the City of Toronto Average Market Rate, and after these 15 years, the loan is forgiven (City of Toronto, 2024). Despite these assistance programs and the benefit of revenue that would be received by property owners, City News reports that only 6 garden suites have been built in the two years following the program

initiation (Bond, 2024). However, they state that there has been a total of 244 applications to build, 114 of these applications are under review, 97 building permits have been issued, and 57 suites are in construction (Bond, 2024).

Homes First is another Toronto innovative program that offers affordable and stable housing and support services. The program is currently providing long-term supportive housing to 2,500 individuals across 26 properties that range from emergency shelters to apartment buildings (Homes First, 2024). In 2023, 1194 clients had cases being handled by the Homes First teams (Homes First, 2024). The combination of the Housing First model and Critical Time intervention, as discussed in the “Service Models” section of this review, was able to support 530 of the individuals leave the shelter system and provided housing placements (Homes First, 2024). 153 of these clients were followed up after placement and reported success in breaking their cycle of homelessness, one of the major goals of this program (Homes First, 2024).

## **SURVEY**

The survey, while being deployed provincial-wide, received a total of 29 complete results. Participants were mostly located in Peterborough and the surrounding area, such as Hastings and Lindsay, but also reached further areas like Perth, London, and Algoma Ontario. Out of these 29 responses, only nine reported that their agency provides housing options for justice involved individuals leaving 19 responses of not providing housing, and one respondent who reported that their agency used to. Six out of the 20 participants that reported their agency does not currently provide housing say that they expect to provide housing for justice-involved individuals in the next 2-6 years. The others stated that there has been no discussion about offering housing options. While many state they do not provide housing, 20 participants stated

that they did have programs to support individuals in finding housing. Lack of funding was reported to be the leading barrier of providing housing with responses from 86.96% of the participants. Those whose agencies do provide housing say that their funding comes from a range of sources such as non-profit/charity organizations, the Municipal government, and federal or provincial funding. Lack of space or property was the next largest reported barrier with response from 73.91% of participants. 65.22% of participants reported a lack of support from the community which is restraining approval, 47.82% reported difficulty with building permits and zoning restrictions, 39.13% for lack of individuals to staff the services, 34.78% for lack of knowledge on the best practices for supportive housing, and 34.78% participants reported that there is a backlog of addressing tasks and issues.

Participants who answered “Yes” to whether or not their agency provides housing for justice-involved individual were asked a series of questions on what type of housing, how many clients reside in them and for how long, and how many clients were successful in finding permanent housing afterwards. Four out of the nine participants whose agencies provide housing stated that they offer short-term housing options. Two participants reported that 1-5 clients reside within their short-term housing and two reported 20-40 clients. Responses for how long clients resided in the short-term housing ranged from 5-10 days to over two months. Success rates for their clients finding permanent housing afterward varied greatly being less than 10%, 21-30%, 41-50%, and 61-80%. Seven out of the nine participants reported that they offer transitional housing. The number of clients residing in their transitional housing was either 1-5, 10-20, 20-40, 40-60. Clients in these housing options were reported to be residing there for either 4-6 months, 1-2 years, or even over 3 years. Success rates for their clients finding permanent housing afterward were 51-60%, 61-70%, and 81-90%. Four of the nine participants reported that they

offer long-term housing options. The number of clients residing in their housing were either 1-5 or 20-40. Clients in these housing options were reported to be residing there for either 3-4 years or over five years. Success rates for their clients finding permanent housing afterward were less than 10%, 11-30%, and 71-80%.

Participants were also asked what supportive services they offer and provide to justice-involved individual. These services included mental health services, addiction services, brain injury support, medical services, employment services, food security support, and social reintegration services. Mental health services were the service that was had to most by agencies, with 18 respondents saying that they offer this service. Following that, food security supports were said to be offered by 15 respondents, 14 offered addiction services, 14 offered social reintegration services, 12 offered employment support, six offered medical services, and four offered brain injury support. While these are not directly housing supports, these services are crucial in successfully finding and maintain housing units and their relationship with their landlord. After being asked what support services the participants' agencies, participants were asked to rate each support service on how successful they were thought to be in improving clients' reintegration into society and finding safe, permanent housing. Mental health and addiction services were reported the most successful in clients' reintegration and finding housing, reported successful by 13. Medical services and food security supports were the next most successful services. Employment support was mostly deemed somewhat successful, and brain injury services were reported somewhat not successful. When asked if clients were allowed to re-enter their program or service, 19 out of 29 respondents said that clients were allowed to re-enter their agency's programs. The percentage of clients that have used the programs more than once varied from less than 5% of the clients to 61-80%.

Finally, participants were asked a series of questions on whether garden suites may have the potential to reduce the barrier of a lack of available, affordable housing, and could be used to house justice-involved individuals. Three respondents stated that their community had implemented at least one garden suite. One of these three recorded the implementation to be successful. The other two stated that it was too early to say. Another three participants said that their community had discussed these suites as a potential housing option but had not yet implemented one. Overall, when asked how supportive citizens of the community are in integrating garden suites, the responses were almost equally divided between somewhat supportive or somewhat unsupportive.

## **INTERVIEWS**

Recurring and key themes were extracted from the interviews conducted for this study project. These themes encompass the current way services and supports are being provided, barriers that both clients and service providers are facing, and ways to improve the overall housing continuum.

### ***Connecting with the client***

Currently, there are a number of ways that clients get referred to service support workers. When an individual receives a charge, they will meet with duty counsel prior to their court date. The duty counsel may advise the individual to speak with certain support workers where issues are relevant. The duty counsel can refer the individual to these services and ask that the workers reach out to the individual or let them know that they may be hearing from the individual. Probation offers may refer the individual to the services that they may require once released. There are also release from custody workers that go into the jail and meet with clients who have

been referred say by the probation officer or the courts. Finally, while not all services accept it, drop-ins are another way that clients get into contact with service providers.

From there, the service worker to whom they get referred to will work them with client to access the required services, whether it is mental health, addiction support, housing, etc. and to complete any paperwork and assessments needed to get into specific programs. There are also housing support workers that work with the client while they are in housing, to make sure they are keeping up the unit and their health so that they do not lose their housing.

It is important to understand that client's journey through these supports is in no way linear and each client has unique needs. This also means that clients may not have the same response to a plan of delivery for the support as another client. Service workers should be adaptable to how they provide support to their clients. Some agencies expect clients to attend appointments on a specific day and specific time, however, for an unhoused individual who may or may not have a cell phone, this is extremely unrealistic. When unhoused individuals are worrying about where they are going to sleep tonight or when and where their next meal will be, attending something at a specific day and time is not on the front of their mind. Service providers should be adaptable to meeting with the client within the community, and to also be ready to complete tasks, like paperwork or assessments, when the client is ready, instead of waiting for the next appointment, as the lives of these individuals is quite unpredictable. One interview participant shared a story about a client who was not responding to the delivery of the support, being difficult to track down and also uncomfortable with the meeting set ups. When the participant noticed this, they realized that to provide this client with the best possible support, they would need to get creative. The service worker discovered that the client liked being outdoors with his dog, and so instead, the worker agreed to meet with the client out in the

community, a plan that the client was much more comfortable with. Being adaptable to meet the needs of each client is crucial in providing successful support to the individual.

### ***Agency Collaboration***

Along with collaboration with the clients, participants mentioned that there needs to be better collaboration between supports and agencies. Some participants said that they too sometimes feel stuck, like they do not know where to go next for the client. Unfortunately, to get a client into one program or support, they need an assessment from another agency, who may require something from another. All of the services are intertwined and require one to get the other, however the lack of collaboration can make meeting ends difficult, and ultimately that affects the quality of support provided to the client. It was quite prominent that case management is needed and would give the best support for each individual. Instead of waiting on agencies to get back to the single worker that has the client, it would be ideal to have all of the supports, one person per support say, sit down, either virtually or together in person, and lay down everything that is needed and to form an action plan, addressing multiple needs. These meetings would not need to be long per client and would speed up the support process greatly. It was also mentioned that it would be interesting to see how the process would look if one agency provided one, different service. This would allow the support worker to move the client along a clearer path as they work through the programs.

### ***Barriers***

Systematic barriers are present for both workers trying to provide support to clients, and the clients themselves when seeking support or housing. An interview participant said, even with all the right supports, the barriers being faced are still present. One of the biggest barriers that service providers face, specifically in providing housing supports, is the lack of housing. There is

minimal available and affordable housing in today's society to place justice-involved individuals into. Not only does this make finding clients housing difficult, but it also makes going through the program difficult as many clients cannot afford to get their own housing units outside of the agency housing. Therefore, clients are remaining in agency housing for such a long time, and this creates extremely long waitlists for those trying to get into agency housing. Currently, the length of the housing waitlist in Peterborough area is 8-10 years.

Another huge barrier that unhoused individuals face is transportation to and proximity of support services. Not only is attending scheduled appointments difficult, but getting to these services is just as much a challenge. Individuals who are unhoused may be moving around a lot, and therefore are not always close to where the support offices are. Having support services close to where the clients would be expected to be, or vice versa making housing close to the services, would be the ideal set up to mitigate this barrier. Some smaller communities are able to provide transportation to places like appointments or recreational programming, however this is not the case for most.

Other barriers include lengthy application processes, support from the community, discrimination by landlords, and cooperation from hospitals. Applications to get clients into housing is extremely tedious for both the support worker and the client, with multiple different document packages with repetitive questions. Unfortunately, with this lengthy process, some clients get overwhelmed and lose hope and engagement in the program. Lack of support from the community is a barrier when trying to implement new supports, or even just upkeeping the current ones. Many communities get push back from their residences on homeless interventions. Discrimination by landlords is a big barrier when clients try to find their own housing. A lot of landlords are not interested as soon as they see a criminal records, violent or not, or that they are

receiving support for mental health and substance use or receiving government funding. This removes many listings off the already small market. Cooperation from the hospitals was another barrier that came up in several interviews. While some communities are fortunate to have community nurses or doctors, many do not and many of the unhoused justice-involved individuals do not have a family doctor, therefore they rely on the hospital. Participants mentioned that many of their clients are hesitant to seek medical attention if needed since they know they will be in the waiting room for a long time, and if they struggle with substance use, they fear going into withdrawal. They say the hospital will not medicate them to prevent the withdrawal symptoms and are often treated poorly. Another issue face was that if clients were in a state of psychosis, being a threat to themselves or others, and needed treatment right away, hospitals are turning the individuals down, blaming it on the substances and saying that if they quit, then they can get treated. Even if they could get in somewhere or stopped using substances, they would likely to have missed the critical window of care. On top of that, if they chose to stop using, to get the proper assessments and documents to enter a rehab program, it would take so long that clients feel it is not worth it.

### ***Housing First Reality***

While interview participants agreed that once people are housed it gives them an opportunity to have a place to call their own as they work with supports and make connections with people, a true “Housing First” model is not the reality of many agencies. The agencies of the workers interview for this study all required their clients to have worked with an employee for some time, some three months, before being able to apply for housing. Some said that this is because their community does not offer transitional housing and therefore the individuals must

be stable enough to maintain their housing unit. Other say it allows the support worker to understand what will best suit the client and where they would be successful.

### ***Recreational Programming***

The need for recreational programming was brought up in almost all of the interview conducted for this study. This would be a low barrier, no cost recreational center that could offer coffee and tea for the individuals, and light recreational activities such as board or card games, movies, wellness groups, arts, or really whatever the individuals attending would like to see. The purpose of this programming would allow the justice-involved individuals, whether housed or unhoused, to have a place that they can meet other people, destress, and even connect with support services. One participant's community offers bowling some nights, and they reported that they have a great turnout, and their clients really enjoy going and connecting with people. This would also be a way to encourage engagement as clients wait for housing.

Socialization is such a crucial role in the success of these individuals as they move through the housing continuum and getting themselves better. One participant used the "Rat Park" study of Alexander et al. (1981) to explain the impact of socialization. In these studies, one rat was placed in a cage alone with a water bottle filled with plain water, and another which had drugs in it (Alexander et al., 1981). The rat would only drink from the water bottle which had the drugs. However, when more rats were placed in cage along with equipment like wheels, they all drank out of the plain water bottle (Alexander et al., 1981)

### ***Transitional Services***

For an individual to go from unhoused, maybe never have owning their own place or even having their own bedroom, to housed is extremely difficult. This transition often leads to an unsuccessful and negative experience which most time results in clients losing their housing.

Transitional services are needed to support these individuals with this transition. These workers would be on-site to help teach the necessities of having their own place like doing laundry, cleaning, maintain good relationships, making deadlines, and all the basic tasks that many of them have not been taught. Some communities have implemented this in their housing where support is increased for the first 90 days to help get clients going and reevaluate to see if the support is still needed. It is also important to ensure clients keep up with their housing as the funding behind provided somebody with their own place when the person may not be ready is a risk that would be unfortunate when funding is so scarce.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to compile a list of best practices for providing housing services to justice-involved individuals post-incarceration. Here I will list key findings from this study that represent the best practices of providing these supports.

#### *Early Connections*

Support for the individual needs to begin as soon as possible. This means while they are still incarcerated instead of waiting for them to be released or soon-to-be released. This gives support workers time to understand what supports the individual will require when they are released and can get the processes started, especially for supports like housing that have such long waitlists. Connecting with justice-involved individuals while they are still incarcerated also gives the individual a sense of having some constants with their contacts when released.

#### *Transitional Services*

Within this study, transitional housing was seen to be the most effective housing model for later client success in finding permanent housing afterwards. On-site transitional support is

also needed to aid individuals in the transition from unhoused to house, especially in the first few months.

### *Recreational programs*

Recreational programs would be extremely beneficial for the success of clients' social reintegration and maintaining their housing. It also is a way to keep individuals who are not yet housed engaged in the support programs. While a "recreational center" would be the ideal plan, even just recreational programming with events in common areas would be beneficial.

Something to get clients out of their housing, socializing, and destress.

### *Community-Style Living*

Community-style living, where housing units, support services, and recreational activities are all together would be the ideal model for housing justice-involved individuals. This would give clients a sense of community where they can socialize. It also takes away the barrier of getting to the recreational programs and to their support and service appointments. A community-style approach would allow individuals to keep each other in check, as it would be noticed if someone was falling through the cracks. It was suggested that this style be set up similarly to retirement communities. However, it needs to be done strategically as others have mentioned that if these communities are too secluded, it can hinder the community feeling, and can also create this mindset of a "forbidden" part of the city by the community's citizens.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

This study faces limitations in generalization of these conclusions. Although the survey did reach communities province-wide, most of the responses came from individuals working in the Peterborough and surrounding area. For the interviews, all participants were located within Peterborough and the surrounding area and although each held a different position, four of the

five interview participants were members of the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA). This could create bias as they are mostly all seeing the same type of supports and how they are provided. This study was also limited to its sample size. The survey only received 29 responses and the interviews had only five participants. A small sample size means that the results may not be a true representation of what other service models are being used and are having success. It should also be mentioned that after viewing the survey results, it appears that there may be discrepancies as to what truly classifies as short-term, transitional, and long-term housing.

Future directions of this study could take the next step as to finding how much of these best practices are feasible. Many of the conclusions of this study are based on an ideal world. Feasibility would have to be looked into in order to actually provide these recommendations.

## References

- Bail program*. John Howard Society of Ontario. (2025, January 19). <https://johnhoward.on.ca/jhs-program/bail-program/>
- Bail verification and supervision program (BVSP)*. John Howard Society of Ontario. (2025, January 19). <https://johnhoward.on.ca/jhs-program/bail-verification-and-supervision-program-bvsp-3/>
- Alexander, B. K., Beyerstein, B. L., Hadaway, P. F., & Coombs, R. B. (1981). Effect of early and later colony housing on oral ingestion of morphine in rats. *Pharmacology, biochemistry, and behavior*, 15(4), 571–576. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0091-3057\(81\)90211-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/0091-3057(81)90211-2)
- Bond, M. (2024, February 24). “lackluster”: 6 garden suites built in Toronto since approval to address “missing middle” housing. CityNews Toronto. <https://toronto.citynews.ca/2024/02/23/garden-suites-toronto-housing/>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Canadian Mental Health Association. (2023, March 23). *Harrison House*. CMHA Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge. <https://cmhahkpr.ca/programs/harrison-house/>
- City of Toronto. (2024, March 19). *Garden Suites*. <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/garden-suites/>
- Cornwall Ontario Canada. (2023, November 9). *City of cornwall unveils winter housing plan*. City of Cornwall. <https://www.cornwall.ca/Modules/News/index.aspx?lang=en&newsId=db194845-d07a-4572-81cc-d14ca6fef00>
- Differences between transitional and supportive housing*. CaseWorthy. (2025, January 13). <https://caseworthy.com/articles/differences-between-transitional-and-supportive-housing/>
- Elizabeth Fry Society. (n.d.). *Transitional housing*. Elizabeth Fry Society. <https://elizabethfryngo.org/programs-services/transitional-housing-2/>
- General, A. (2017, January 25). *Ontario Making Criminal Justice System Faster and Fairer in Eastern Ontario*. Ontario newsroom. <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/43473/ontario-making-criminal-justice-system-faster-and-fairer-in-eastern-ontario>
- HomelessHub. (n.d.). *Housing first*. <https://homelesshub.ca/collection/programs-that-work/housing-first/>

- Homes First. (2024, March 22). *What we do - homes first*. <https://homesfirst.on.ca/what-we-do/>
- HSJCC. (2024a). 2024 Pre-Budget Submission to the Minister of Finance. Provincial Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committee. <https://hsjcc.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024-HSJCC-Pre-Budget-Submission-2024-01-31.pdf>
- HSJCC. (2024b). Housing and justice report: Improving supportive housing for justice-involved individuals with mental health and addiction issues. [https://hsjcc.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/HSJCC\\_Housing-Justice-Report\\_EN.pdf](https://hsjcc.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/HSJCC_Housing-Justice-Report_EN.pdf)
- John Howard Society of London & District. (2024, August 1). *Breaking the cycle of post-incarceration homelessness*. <https://jhslondon.com/breaking-the-cycle-of-post-incarceration-homelessness/>
- John Howard Society. (2016). *Reintegration in Ontario: Practices, Priorities, and Effective Models*. John Howard. <https://johnhoward.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Reintegration-in-Ontario-Final.pdf>
- John Howard Society. (2022). (rep.). *No Fixed Address*. Retrieved from <https://johnhoward.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/No-Fixed-Address-Final-Report.pdf>.
- Kaszechki, E. (2020). Viability for Tiny Home Community in Peterborough as Means for Transitional Housing. *Trent University*.
- Lambie, B. (2025, August 20). *City of Peterborough receives Municipal Innovation Award*. AMO. <https://www.amo.on.ca/policy/city-peterborough-receives-municipal-innovation-award>
- O’Neil, S. (2024, May 16). *Temporary Transitional Housing in Cornwall has helped Sylvie Feel Safe | Cornwall standard-freeholder*. Cornwall Standard-Freeholder. <https://www.standard-freeholder.com/news/local-news/transitional-housing-at-the-former-parisien-manor-in-cornwall-has-helped-sylvie-feel-safe>
- Restorative Justice Housing Ontario. (n.d.). *Restorative justice housing ontario*. RIJO. <https://rjho.ca/>
- The Bridge. (2023, July 12). *Transitional Housing Program*. The Bridge Hamilton. <https://hamilton-bridge.ca/transitional-housing-program-hamilton/>
- Whalen, M. (2023). The Effectiveness, Need and Success of Transitional Housing Facilities. *Trent University*.
- Zorzi, R., Scott, S., Doherty, D., Engman, A., Lauzon, C., McGuire, M., & Ward, J. (2006). (rep.). *Housing Options Upon Discharge from Correctional Facilities*. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Retrieved from

[https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2011/schl-cmhc/nh18-1/NH18-1-332-2006-eng.pdf](https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2011/schl-cmhc/nh18-1/NH18-1-332-2006-eng.pdf)

Appendix A

Start of Block: Consent



Consent Survey consent By checking this box you are agreeing to participate in this study and are confirming that you have: read the information in the consent document provided above by clicking "Survey consent"; have asked any questions you have about the study; are aware that you may withdrawal consent to participate either while completing this survey or within 14 days after completion; have received a copy of this agreement; and are not giving up any legal rights by signing this consent agreement.

- Yes, I consent to participate in this research study survey.
- No, I do not consent to participate in this research study survey.

End of Block: Consent

---

Start of Block: Agency Information

What agency or organization do you belong to?

\_\_\_\_\_

Geographically, where is your agency or organization located?

\_\_\_\_\_

What is your position/job title at this agency or organization?

\_\_\_\_\_

End of Block: Agency Information

---

Start of Block: Housing

Does your agency or organization currently provide or has in the past provided structural housing options for justice-involved individuals post-incarceration?

- Yes, we currently provide housing options.
- We have in the past provided such housing options
- No

-----

Display this question:

*If Does your agency or organization currently provide or has in the past provided structural housing... = We have in the past provided such housing options*

What are the reasons the agency/community had to terminate these services? (etc., funding, Covid-19)

---

Display this question:

*If Does your agency or organization currently provide or has in the past provided structural housing... = We have in the past provided such housing options*

Do you predict that these services will be reintegrated?

- No
- Yes
- 

Display this question:

*If Does your agency or organization currently provide or has in the past provided structural housing... != No*

Which type of housing is (or was) offered?

- Short-term Housing
- Transitional Housing
- Long-term Housing
- Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
-

*Display this question:*

*If Which type of housing is (or was) offered? = Short-term Housing*

As a rough estimate, on average, how many clients are (were) residing in your short-term housing at any given time?

- 1 -5
  - 5-10
  - 10-20
  - 20-40
  - 40-60
  - Over 60
- 

*Display this question:*

*If Which type of housing is (or was) offered? = Transitional Housing*

As a rough estimate, on average, how many clients are (were) residing in your transitional housing at any given time?

- 1-5
  - 5-10
  - 10-20
  - 20-40
  - 40-60
  - Over 60
-

*Display this question:*

*If Which type of housing is (or was) offered? = Long-term Housing*

As a rough estimate, on average, how many clients are (were) residing in your long-term housing at any given time?

- 1-5
  - 5-10
  - 10-20
  - 20-40
  - 40-60
  - Over 60
- 

*Display this question:*

*If Which type of housing is (or was) offered? Text Response Is Not Empty*

As a rough estimate, on average, how many clients are (were) residing in your other specified housing at any given time?

- 1-5
  - 5-10
  - 10-20
  - 20-40
  - 40-60
  - Over 60
- 

*Display this question:*

*If Does your agency or organization currently provide or has in the past provided structural housing... = No*

Has your agency/organization/community discussed the need for implementation of structural housing options?

- Yes
  - No
-

*Display this question:*

*If Has your agency/organization/community discussed the need for implementation of structural housin... = Yes*

When do you expect to see these options offered?

- In the next year
  - 2-4 years
  - 4-6 years
  - There has been no discussion about actually offering these housing options.
- 

*Display this question:*

*If Which type of housing is (or was) offered? = Short-term Housing*

Please state, as a rough average, how long clients are (were) residing in your short-term housing.

- 1-5 days
  - 5-10 days
  - 10-20 days
  - 20-30 days
  - 1-2 months
  - Over 2 months
-

*Display this question:*

*If Which type of housing is (or was) offered? = Transitional Housing*

Please state, as a rough average, how long clients are (were) residing in your transitional housing.

- Less than 2 months
  - 2-4 months
  - 4-6 months
  - 6-8 months
  - 8-10 months
  - 10-12 months
  - 1-2 years
  - 2-3 years
  - Over 3 years
- 

*Display this question:*

*If Which type of housing is (or was) offered? = Long-term Housing*

Please state, as a rough average, how long clients are (were) residing in your long-term housing.

- Less than 1 year
  - 1-2 years
  - 2-3 years
  - 3-4 years
  - 4-5 years
  - Over 5 years
-

*Display this question:*

*If Which type of housing is (or was) offered? Text Response Is Not Empty*

Please state, as a rough average, how long clients are (were) residing in your housing specified as other

- Less than 1 month
  - 1-3 months
  - 3-6 months
  - 6-9 months
  - 9-12 months
  - 1-2 years
  - 2-3 years
  - 3-4 years
  - 5+ years
- 

*Display this question:*

*If Which type of housing is (or was) offered? = Short-term Housing*

Please give a rough percentage to represent the amount of clients that are (were) successful in finding permanent housing after residence in your short-term housing.

- less than 10%
  - 11-20%
  - 21-30%
  - 31-40%
  - 41-50%
  - 51-60%
  - 61-80%
  - 81-99%
  - 100%
-

*Display this question:*

*If Which type of housing is (or was) offered? = Long-term Housing*

Please give a rough percentage to represent the amount of clients that are (were) successful in finding permanent housing after residence in your long-term housing.

- less than 10%
  - 11-30%
  - 31-50%
  - 51-60%
  - 61-70%
  - 71-80%
  - 81-99%
  - 100%
- 

*Display this question:*

*If Which type of housing is (or was) offered? Text Response Is Not Empty*

Please give a rough percentage to represent the amount of clients that are (were) successful in finding permanent housing after residence in your other specified housing.

- less than 10%
  - 11-30%
  - 31-50%
  - 51-70%
  - 71-90%
  - 91-99%
  - 100%
-

Display this question:

*If Which type of housing is (or was) offered? = Transitional Housing*

Please give a rough percentage to represent the amount of clients that are (were) successful in finding permanent housing after residence in your transitional housing.

- Less than 10%
  - 11-30%
  - 31-50%
  - 51-60%
  - 61-70%
  - 71-80%
  - 81-90%
  - 91-99%
  - 100%
- 

Are (were) clients allowed to re-enter the program if they had already gone through it and have found themselves back to where they started?

- Yes
  - No
-

Display this question:

*If Are (were) clients allowed to re-enter the program if they had already gone through it and have f... = Yes*

As a rough estimate, what is the percentage of clients that have used the program more than once?

- Less than 5%
- 6-10%
- 11-20%
- 21-40%
- 41-60%
- 61-80%
- 81-99%
- 100%

End of Block: Housing

---

Start of Block: Block 8

What are some barriers your community is facing towards the building and implementation of low-income housing?

- Lack of funding
- Lack of space or property
- Lack of support from community which is restraining approval
- Building permits and zoning restrictions
- Lack of individuals to staff the services
- Lack of knowledge on best practices for supportive housing
- Backlog of addressing tasks and issues.
- None
- Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

End of Block: Block 8

---

Start of Block: Housing First

*Display this question:*

*If Does your agency or organization currently provide or has in the past provided structural housing... != No*

Does (did) your housing model follow the Housing First model?

- Yes
- No

End of Block: Housing First

---

Start of Block: Garden Suites

*Display this question:*

*If Does your agency or organization currently provide or has in the past provided structural housing... != No*

A garden suite is a smaller ancillary building that provides living accommodations, located in the yard of a primary detached dwelling, and have began to be implemented in Ontario. Has your community either implemented these housing options or discussed the possibility of them?

- Yes, our community has begun the implementation of these housing options.
  - Our community has discussed these suites as a potential housing option.
  - No, our community has neither implemented or discussed these.
- 

*Display this question:*

*If A garden suite is a smaller ancillary building that provides living accommodations, located in th... = Yes, our community has begun the implementation of these housing options.*

Would you say the implementation of garden suites has been:

- Successful
  - Not Successful
  - Too early to say
- 

*Display this question:*

*If A garden suite is a smaller ancillary building that provides living accommodations, located in th... != No, our community has neither implemented or discussed these.*

How supportive are the citizens of your community in integrating these garden suites?

- Very Supportive
- Somewhat Supportive
- No opinion
- Somewhat Unsupportive
- Very Unsupportive

**End of Block: Garden Suites**

---

**Start of Block: Services**

Does your agency/organization/community offer any of these services?

- Mental health services
- Addiction services
- Social reintegration services
- Program to find individuals permanent housing
- Brain Injury Services
- Employment support
- Food security support
- Medical services
- Other not specified: \_\_\_\_\_

The Provincial HSJCC provided key recommendations to improve supportive housing in their 2020 Housing and Justice Report. Select below any of these six recommendations that your community has made efforts in favour of.

- Developing mandatory anti-oppression and equity-focused education to landlords and supportive housing providers to break down barriers for justice-involved individuals
- Increased access for justice-involved individuals to community legal services to attain income security.
- Increased collaboration between community service providers and housing supports to better assist the justice-involved community.
- None of the above

---

In addition to the service-level recommendations listed above from the 2020 Provincial HSJCC Housing and Justice Report were also system-level recommendations geared towards Ministry

officials. Of these recommendations, select those that you feel have been fulfilled or maintained in terms of the effects your agency and community have felt?

Collaboration between the Ministry of Health, Solicitor General, and Municipal Affairs and Housing to make long-term investments in supportive housing and case management supports for justice-involved individuals with mental health and addiction issues.

Collaboration from the Minister of Solicitor General with community-based organizations to develop and implement a strategy for consistent and standardized discharge planning for individuals post-incarceration

Revision of the Ontario Disability Support Program and Ontario Works policies by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, to extend benefits for the period that recipients are incarcerated in efforts to prevent the loss of housing and entry into homelessness once released.

None of the above

End of Block: Services

---

Start of Block: Success

In your own opinion, please rate how successful you think your services are to your clients in improving their reintegration into society and finding safe, permanent housing. If the category is not applicable to your agency/organization/community, please leave blank.

	Not successful	Somewhat not successful	Somewhat Successful	Very successful
Short-term Housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transitional Housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Long-term Housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Garden Suites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mental health or Addiction Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Brain Injury Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Employment support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Medical Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Food security support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Some service programs are catered towards certain groups of people. For example the John Howard Society focuses on Men, E.Fry focus is on women, others are more individual-orientated or family-orientated. What demographic of people are your services more catered towards?

\_\_\_\_\_

What demographic of the population, within the justice-involved community, is most in need of these services?

\_\_\_\_\_

What age range of individuals would you say most commonly go through your program/services?

---

Is there a common education level or employment experience of individuals, attained either prior or during incarceration, that clients of your programs have, or that you require?

---

Where does your agency/programs receive their funding?

- Federal government
- Provincial government
- Municipal government
- Research grants
- Non-profit/Charity organizations
- Donations
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**End of Block: Success**

---

**Start of Block: Additional Information**

If there is any information that was not discussed in this survey that you believe is relevant to this study and are wanting to provide, please feel free to include it below.

---

**End of Block: Additional Information**

---

**Start of Block: Interviews**

Interviews are another critical part of this project. If you are interested in participating in a 30-45 minute interview via Zoom or Microsoft Teams, please contact the primary researcher, Chelsea Grundy, at [chelseagrundy@trentu.ca](mailto:chelseagrundy@trentu.ca). We are aiming these interviews to be conducted within the first two weeks of February 2025. Given the academic deadline for this research project, approximately only 5-7 interviews will be feasible. You will be contacted back if you have been chosen for an interview with additional information. Thank you!

**End of Block: Interviews**

---

## *Appendix B*

Gather initial information:

- Agency that the participant works for
- Geographical location of the agency
- Position/Job title of the participant at that agency.

What are the community/agency's current housing supports and services?

- Can you discuss the success of these supports and services?

Can you comment on your experience working to provide housing to justice-involved individuals? Both good and bad experiences.

What are some barriers to those assessing housing?

What are some barriers you face in order to implement housing?

What is the level of collaboration required between services to best aid the justice-involved individuals?

- Does your agency meet the level required?
- How do you collaborate with multiple agencies?
- What are some challenges with this?

Can you discuss the housing continuum – the movement of individuals through transitional housing to affordable permanent housing – within your services?

- What is the goal vs what is the current reality

Are there specific groups of people that your services are catered to, within the justice-involved community?

- What demographic of individuals have access to your services?

Are you able to comment on the amount of support individuals are feeling who are in contact with your support and services?

- Can you compare that to how much support these individuals need?

What is the amount of time individuals take or need to progress through your program?

With the retraction of half-way houses, what is your community using in place for stabilization phase housing?

Can you walk me through the process a justice-involved individual faces in efforts to make use of your programs/services? Start from during imprisonment or upon release if possible.

- How does your agency select individuals?
- How do they get in touch with you?

How are you addressing/combatting the gap between release from an institution and becoming involved in such programs?

Has your agency or community discussed Garden Suites and would they be feasible in your community?

- Do you think there is potential for these garden suites in communities such as Peterborough?

If we had all the resources available to us, what would be the best scenario of care? What would work best, in an ideal world?

*Appendix C*

**Table 1.** Braun and Clark (2006) Thematic Analysis coding and themes from interviews conducted in the study.

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Themes</b>
Worker role in connecting clients to support.	Connecting with the client
Getting better to keep housing	Prior program use before housing
Recreational programming for social reintegration.	Recreational programming
No transitional housing options means individuals must be able to maintain their own unit.	Transitional supports
Lack of affordable housing	Lack of available/affordable housing
Difficulty exiting the program housing	Lack of available/affordable housing
Work with service prior to applying for housing.	Prior programming before housing
Lose engagement/contact	
Housing-first provides stability	Prior programming before housing
Unfit for employment	Prior programming before housing
Programming close to clients	Proximity
Need transportation for further away	Proximity
Lack of support from community	Community support barrier
Shelters are not a stable living condition	Transitional support
Discrimination by landlords	Landlord barrier
Supports close to housing	Proximity
Unhoused to housed is a difficult transition	Transitional support
Recreational programming for support and distress	Recreational programming
Clients' journey is unique	Connecting with the client
Connections as soon as possible to get on waitlists	Connecting with the client

Nearby supports allow better communication with other agencies	Proximity
Having the right supports doesn't get rid of barriers	Barriers
Difficult for clients to contact agencies	Connecting with the client
One service per agency to have a path for clients to follow	Providing support to the client
Sometimes support workers do not even know where to go next	Providing support to the client
Clients lack abilities to upkeep	Transitional support
Pre-engagement with programs before housing	Prior program use before housing
Support for transition from unhoused to housed	Transitional support
Secluded housing is problematic	Proximity
Case management better addresses the needs	Providing support to the client
Increase support at the start of housing	Transitional support
Clients do not all have the same response to support delivery	Providing support to the client
Difficult to attend service appointments.	Connecting with the client
Need assessments to qualify for housing	
Nothing available	Lack of housing
Low-barrier activities for socialization and involvement	Recreational programming
Fear of seeking care due to discrimination	Hospital discrimination
Bring service to client	Connecting with the client
Prior engagement with programs required for housing	Prior program use before housing

Other options are available when no housing is	Lack of housing
Need more of a will to help	Connecting with the client
Tasks and appointments difficult to follow through with	Connecting with the client
Simple tasks made difficult	Connecting with the client
Unideal application process	Difficult application process
Supports do not always cover everything	Service collaboration
Lack of communication/cooperation between regions	Service collaboration
Clients get overwhelmed	Losing engagement