



# **(Draft) Encampment Outreach and Response Protocol**

**April 2025**





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## Purpose and Objective

The purpose of the Encampment Outreach and Response Protocol in Kawartha Lakes (EORP) is to outline a clear, transparent, and coordinated process to guide City of Kawartha Lakes (CKL) staff in delivering the City's response to encampments on City-owned spaces, prior to enforcing any relevant CKL By-law, policy or other law that restricts use of City-owned land. This aligns with the City's duty to accommodate under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The EORP strives to balance the need for safe, accessible public spaces with a compassionate and supportive approach to individuals experiencing homelessness. While balancing public space utilization, we recognize the complex challenges faced by our community's most vulnerable members and are committed to ensuring their dignity, health, and safety are prioritized. At the same time, we strive to maintain public spaces that are welcoming and safe for everyone. The City's encampment response focuses on providing outreach, resources, and appropriate alternatives to encampments, while working collaboratively with community agencies, and individuals to support long-term housing solutions and respect the rights and needs of all community members.

For the purposes of the EORP, an **encampment or site**, is a structure on a portion of public or private lands that is used as a dwelling, lodging, living quarters or shelter for one or more persons experiencing homelessness and includes supporting structures. Further to this, the City recognizes that the above definition applies to a small fraction of unhoused persons in the community, and we recognize that the presence of structured encampments will grow. Many unhoused persons are transient and live without a physical structure; sleeping in various spaces throughout the City. For those who are sleeping or resting in public areas, it is recommended that supportive connections are made to the City's Housing and Homelessness Outreach Team (HHOT).

The City does not consider encampments an acceptable form of shelter and is committed to helping those living in encampments transition to safer housing options. The City also recognizes that each person's journey from encampment to housing is unique, and the time spent in an encampment can vary significantly, as well as the time to secure housing.

The objectives of the EORP are to:

- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of key CKL divisions in addressing encampments including how the Housing Services Division (as the Lead) will work and coordinate with other divisions and external agencies (see Appendix A, Roles and Responsibilities of City Divisions);
- Outline how the City will support people living in encampments, with the goal of moving people to indoor space; and
- Outline the process for initiating and conducting enforcement, including the potential removal of an encampment.

## Guiding Principles

In responding to encampments, the City is committed to:

1. Using a human rights-based approach that centres on ongoing, meaningful engagement with, and participation of, people living in encampments to understand their needs, involving them wherever possible in decision-making processes that impact them.
2. Treating people living in encampments with the same dignity, respect, kindness, and compassion as it does with all residents, and applying a trauma-informed and culturally-safe approach.
3. A response to homelessness grounded in a Housing First approach that focuses on helping people find permanent housing with the supports they need to live independently.
4. Using available tools and options to help people living in encampments access to indoor spaces and support services that address their identified needs.
5. Offering a variety of service models to meet the diverse needs of people living in encampments, including people with complex needs.
6. Using a coordinated and integrated approach in responding to the needs of people living in encampments that is grounded in best practices.
7. Engaging in ongoing proactive and transparent communication with people living in encampments, service providers, community agencies, the public and other stakeholders.
8. Recognizing the knowledge and experience of, and working with, Indigenous communities to utilize culturally-based approaches to support Indigenous people living in encampments.
9. Ongoing maintenance, monitoring and review of a corporate Encampment Outreach and Response Protocol (Management Directive).

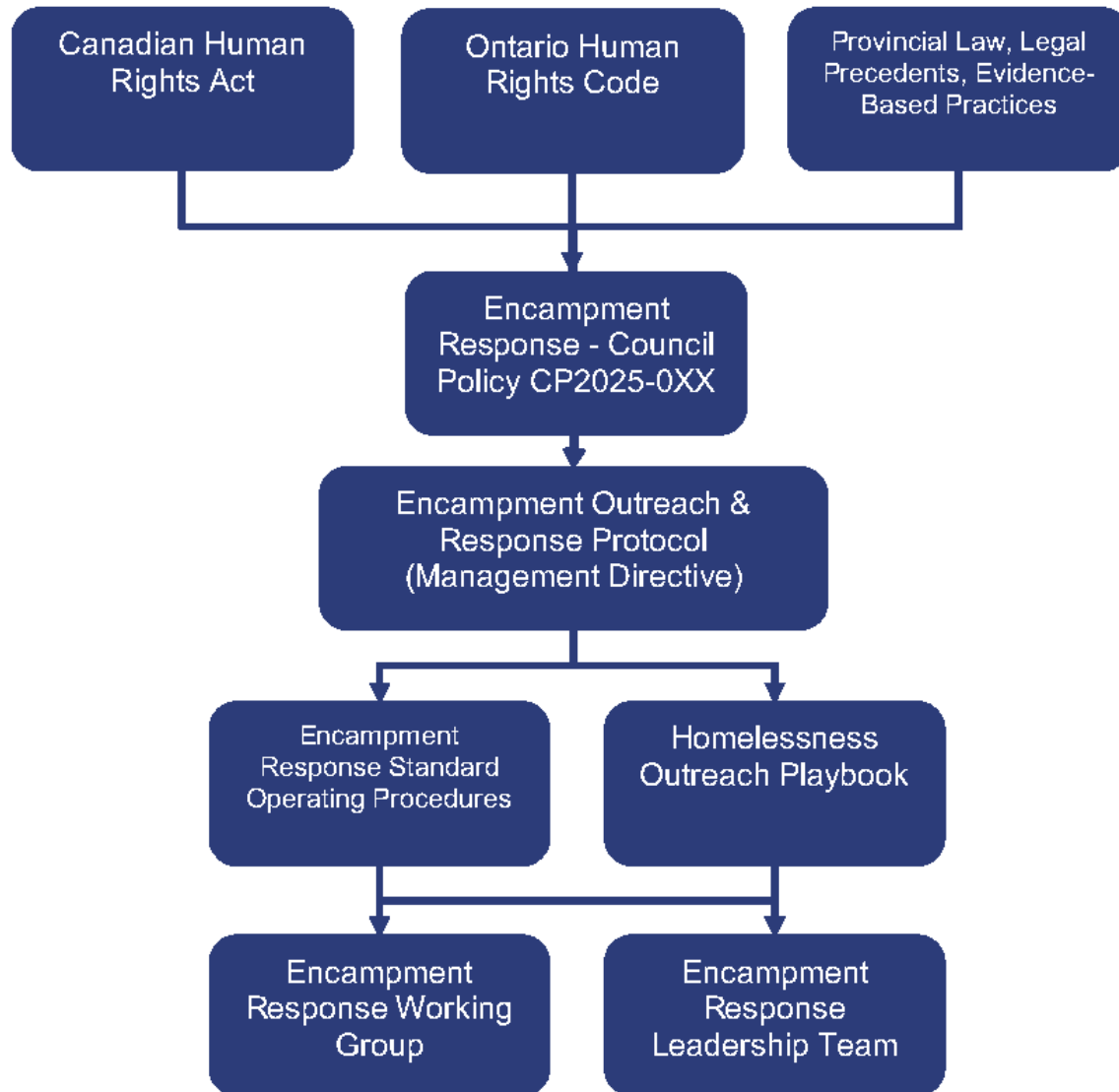
## Governance

Through Council Policy CP2025-00X - Encampment Response Policy, the EORP (acting as the Corporate Management Directive) guides the City's approach to responding to encampments.

The EORP directs the Encampment Leadership Team (as defined in Appendix A) to develop, maintain, provide oversight and implement the Encampment Outreach and Response Protocol. The Encampment Leadership Team ensures that the EORP aligns with the guiding principles and policy direction in this Policy, as well as evidence-informed best practices, relevant legal precedents and sector research and guiding documents.

The Encampment Working Group (as defined in Appendix A) coordinates the City's response to encampments, involving multiple City Departments.

### **Figure 1 : Encampment Response Governance Structure**



The City recognizes that the EORP will evolve as needed based on relevant emerging evidence-based best practices, stakeholder feedback, ongoing monitoring, legislation, and direction from Council Policy CP2025-00X-Encampment Response.

## Encampment Response Process

Encampments are a complex issue that requires a coordinated multi-divisional response. Each encampment is unique and a tailored approach and supports to meet the needs and conditions of each encampment and the people living in them is required.

## Identification, Assessment and Coordination

The HHOT will wherever possible, be the first connection to an encampment or site. HHOT will manage all reports of encampments for assessment and coordination. Encampments can be identified and reported by CKL staff or a member of the public. When an encampment has been identified, the online [reporting form](#) should be submitted. The form can be accessed on the City of Kawartha Lakes [Encampment Response webpage](#) and will collect the following:

- Number of people at site,
- Number of tents or structures
- Approximate start date
- Address, area or closest intersection
- Description or other details

Form submissions are received by the general [streetoutreach@kawarthalakes.ca](mailto:streetoutreach@kawarthalakes.ca) email account. Should encampment concerns or reports be received by telephone, email or walk-in to any CKL public office, the CKL staff should share the information through the submission of the online reporting form, as referenced above. For accessibility purposes, CKL staff can co-complete the form with a member of the public.

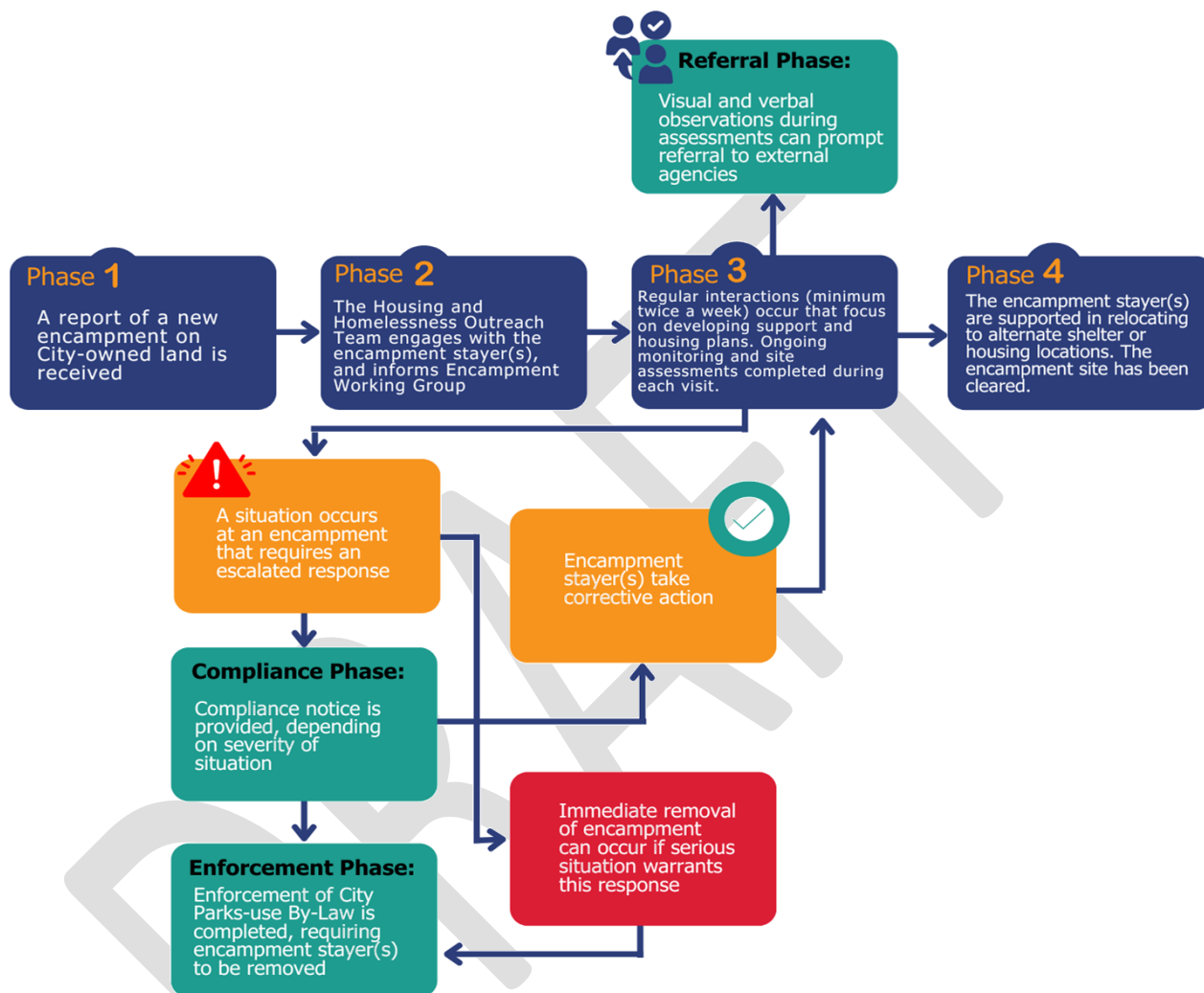
Upon receiving notification of an encampment located on City land, the HHOT will:

- Attempt to make contact and initiate outreach efforts to people living in the encampment, within three business days. Coordination of services may take more than three business days in some cases due to unique situations and complexities.
- Simultaneously, the HHOT will inform the Encampment Working Group of the presence of the encampment.
- Ongoing monitoring and assessments of encampments are completed through site visits by members of the HHOT and the Encampment Working Group.
- Site visit notes are recorded and accessed in a secured electronic platform, by members of the HHOT and the Encampment Working Group.
- It is expected that site visit notes be entered in the electronic platform by the next business day.
- Members of the Encampment Working Group can make a request or inquiry to the HHOT for specific details related to the encampment, beyond the standard information contained within the electronic platform.
- Other City staff can receive information and updates by joining Encampment Working Group meetings.



Figure 2 below provides a visual process map of the encampment response steps.

**Figure 2 : Encampment Response Process Map**



Communication between City staff, will generally include the following information:

- Physical location of the encampment
- Size of the encampment, including number of people and structures
- Presence of potential safety hazards (e.g. propane tanks, improvised heating sources, etc.)
- Incidents of violence
- Presence of weapons and criminal activity
- Vulnerability of encampment residents
- Incidents of injury or death
- Other identified public health or safety risks

- General update on level of engagement with HHOT

When absolutely necessary, limited Personal Health Information (PHI) can safely be shared, in addition to the standard information referenced above. Sharing any relevant PHI is strictly limited to City staff and for the purpose of facilitating a support plan. It is best practice for all inter-divisional partners and stakeholders, which are privy to details about encampments and those staying in them, to limit details to only those relevant to case planning, as per the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA).

## **Outreach and Supports**

Outreach services play a crucial role in the City's response to encampments, ensuring that the needs and well-being of all people living in encampments remain a priority and that people are able to participate, where possible, in decisions that directly impact them.

The HHOT, along with other community agency partners focus on building trusting relationships and meaningful engagement with people in encampments through ongoing outreach and providing culturally appropriate and relevant supports.

This will include an assessment of people's unique needs, focused outreach and housing-related follow-up supports to assist people who are experiencing homelessness in finding and keeping housing.

The HHOT will provide specialized housing and stability-based case management, as well as support connections to other community services related to basic needs, physical health, mental health and other well-being supports. The HHOT will also support referrals to shelter, assistance in obtaining identification documents and income supports, referral to harm reduction services and distribution of harm reduction supplies and providing additional wellness checks during extreme cold and hot weather alerts.

## **Health and Safety**

The City prioritizes the safety and well-being of people living in encampments, it's staff, service providers and residents accessing these public spaces. Conditions in encampments may create health and safety concerns for people living in encampments as well as residents living close by. Open fires, combustibles, proximity of structures to each other, improvised heating sources, accumulation of materials, debris, drug paraphernalia, excessive noise, unleashed pets, and illegal activity may be more

prevalent at encampments and may pose an increased health and safety risk. People living in encampments may be targets for victimization, human trafficking, violence and assault, and sexual exploitation. Those living unsheltered in encampments are also at increased risk of cold weather injuries such as frostbite and hypothermia.

The relative degree of risk at an encampment will be determined by regular assessment of factors such as but not limited to:

- Physical location of the encampment
- Size of the encampment, including number of people and structures
- The confirmed presence of potential safety hazards (e.g. propane tanks, improvised heating sources, etc.)
- Incidents of violence
- Presence of weapons and criminal activity
- Vulnerability of encampment residents
- Incidents of injury or death
- Other identified public health or safety risks

## **Individuals with Complex Needs**

The City acknowledges that it cannot force people living in encampments to accept services and supports. Through outreach, the City engages on an ongoing basis with people living in encampments to understand their shelter and individual support needs and connect them with appropriate services. People with two or more factors impacting their physical, mental, social, or financial well-being are considered to have complex needs. There may be times when people living in encampments with complex needs decline services, supports, and offers of indoor space. Outreach efforts are focused on continuing to provide caring and supportive services and facilitating access to a range of enhanced and intensive supports.

The City will intentionally invest time and resources to develop trusting relationships with people living in encampments and build partnerships with various sectors such as primary health care, mental health, and harm reduction to coordinate an integrated service response to support vulnerable people living in encampments. The City is committed to exhausting reasonable tools and options to support people living in encampments in accessing indoor space that meets their identified needs.

At all times, including if enforcement is required, these services and supports remain available and people living in encampments will be treated with dignity and respect.



## Encampment Response Escalation

The City recognizes that the Encampment Outreach and Response Protocol will be implemented first, prior to escalation resulting in the enforcement of any applicable City By-law or regulation that restricts use of City-owned land. This aligns with the City's duty to accommodate under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The City will strive to provide prior written notice in all situations requiring enforcement. When Enforcement notices are required, a minimum of 72 hours for compliance should be provided. Where a 72-hour compliance period (notification) is not feasible, the City reserves the right to issue notices with shorter compliance periods.

### Decision-Making Framework Guiding Complaints and Response Escalation

Incorporating a decision-making framework allows the City to quickly assess situations while keeping human rights and community concerns in balance, ensuring that enforcement actions are appropriate and fair.

When receiving complaints from the public, or assessing site assessments or other observations by City staff, the following steps are used by the HHOT and the Encampment Working Group to determine the appropriate response.

#### Step 1: Identify the Nature of the Complaint

- **Is the complaint related to an illegal or harmful activity?**
  - **Yes:** Proceed to Step 2.
  - **No:** Investigate alternative non-enforcement solutions (e.g., collaborative problem solving, education).

#### Step 2: Assess the Severity of the Issue

- **Is the illegal activity serious (e.g., violence, public safety threat, criminal behavior like drug dealing)?**
  - **Yes:** Proceed to Step 3 (prioritize enforcement if public safety is at risk).
  - **No:** Proceed to Step 4 (focus on supportive alternatives first).

#### Step 3: Consider Alternatives to Enforcement

- **Are there safe, non-punitive alternatives available (e.g., shelters, outreach, social services)?**
  - **Yes:** The HHOT will provide additional engagement and support services before resorting to enforcement.

- **No:** Consider enforcement, but only if the severity of the issue justifies it, and ensure that the response is proportionate.

#### **Step 4: Assess Impact on Individuals' Rights**

- **Are the individuals involved vulnerable (e.g., experiencing homelessness, mental health challenges, addiction)?**
  - **Yes:** Prioritize a supportive approach, ensuring that enforcement actions do not violate their dignity or rights.
  - **No:** Proceed to Step 5.

#### **Step 5: Evaluate Community Concerns**

- **Is there significant public concern or safety issues related to the illegal activity?**
  - **Yes:** Proceed with enforcement, ensuring it is targeted and proportionate. Prioritize a humane response.
  - **No:** Continue to monitor and explore non-enforcement options (e.g., mediation, community dialogue).

#### **Step 6: Make the Final Decision**

- **Based on the answers above, is enforcement necessary?**
  - **Yes:** Take enforcement action, but ensure that it respects the human rights of the individuals involved. Seek alternatives such as shelter placement or service referrals where possible.
  - **No:** Focus on non-enforcement actions, such as outreach, offering support services, and addressing the root causes of the issue.

### **Compliance Periods**

Situations requiring compliance are typically activated to address situations related to excessive debris, noise, pets, or other situations that pose a serious and substantiated public safety or health and safety risk to people living in encampments. Should a situation with a particular encampment be identified by the Encampment Working Group, a compliance notice will be provided by Municipal Law Enforcement and Licensing (MLE) as part of the encampment response escalation process.

Compliance notices periods will vary, but typically range from 24 hours to one week.

Should further escalation be required, the following sections outline the process to activate enforcement of City By-laws.

## Immediate Action

Whereby their nature, a public safety or health and safety concern requires immediate action, the City further reserves the right to enforce immediately and without prior written notice. Immediate action relates to active, critical situations that must be handled to minimize risk such as an unleashed pet. The Encampment Working Group, in consultation with the HHOT or any other relevant City staff, will determine when a written notice is not feasible.

## Notices of Enforcement to End the Encampment

When a notice to end an encampment is required, a Notice of Violation is given pursuant to a City of Kawartha Lakes By-law or a notice given pursuant to the *Trespass to Property Act, R.S.O. 1990 c. T21*. Before issuing a notice, the HHOT will coordinate with others such as MLE, Parks, Police, Fire and others as needed to engage with the people in the encampment to inform them of applicable regulations/policy.

The HHOT and MLE will be the primary contact with people in encampments. HHOT and MLE will engage with them to provide information related to the written notice to end the encampment, including details on the activities that are contrary to applicable legislation, the period of compliance, and the consequences for failing to do so. In all cases, the HHOT will be available to answer questions that people living in encampments may have or to direct them to available services and supports.

Throughout this process, the HHOT will continue to attend at the encampment to assist people living in encampments in accessing indoor space and appropriate supports.

Notices to end the encampment will only be issued when:

- Circumstances in an encampment or encampments pose a serious and substantiated public safety or health and safety risk to people living in encampments, other members of the public and/or immediately surrounding residents; or
- People living in encampments have been provided with enhanced and intensive supports, particularly people with complex needs, and other reasonable tools and options have been exhausted and they continue to decline indoor space or decline to meaningfully work on the development of a housing plan.



At the time of issuance of a notice to end the encampment and throughout the compliance period, the HHOT will make several attempts to meet with people living in encampments in addition to providing them with written information. The HHOT will outline what may happen on the day of enforcement, and options of services and supports, including shelter, health, and mental health supports, and storage options that are available to them up to and including the day of enforcement.

The City will use plain language and accessible modes of communicating with people living in encampments, including meeting to provide information and answer questions. If for any reason, the City decides not to enforce a notice, the decision will be communicated to people living in encampments using both verbal and written methods prior to the compliance date. Should the City decide to proceed with enforcement at a later date, a new notice and compliance date will be issued.

## **Enforcement to End the Encampment**

The City recognizes that enforcement has a significant impact on people living in encampments. If an encampment remains after the compliance period has passed, the City may proceed with enforcement. The Encampment Working Group in consultation with members of the Encampment Response Leadership Team will be responsible for making the final decision to enact and deliver 72-Hour notices to end the encampment.

Prior to enforcement:

- Through a meeting with members of the Encampment Response Leadership Team, HHOT staff will confirm whether people are declining indoor space or declining to meaningfully work on the development of a housing plan, even after they have been provided with enhanced and intensive supports, particularly people with complex needs, and that other reasonable tools and options have been exhausted; and
- HHOT staff will confirm that people living in encampments subject to enforcement were provided with written information outlining what may happen on the day of enforcement, and options of services and supports, including shelter, health, and mental health supports, and storage options that are available to them.

On the day of enforcement, the City will:

- Make available a HHOT staff member to people living in the encampment who have questions or concerns related to enforcement;

- Offer people living in the encampment a referral to indoor space, if one exists;
- Attempt to arrange on-site mental health and other support services to the people living in the encampments;
- Ask people in the encampment to leave the site. Transportation will be offered to all people living in the encampment;
- Offer storage space to store personal belongings for those who accept indoor space referral; and
- Clean up encampment site.

The City will ensure that people living in the encampment are provided with adequate time to sort and collect personal belongings on the day of enforcement. Whereby their nature, a public safety or health and safety concern requires immediate action, the City reserves the right to shorten the time to sort and collect personal belongings. In these situations, the City will communicate an alternative process.

The presence of Police may be necessary to keep the peace, to support City staff in the safe performance of their work or to assist in enforcement of City By-laws and trespass notices.

## **Storage of Personal Belongings**

The City is committed to treating people living in encampments and their belongings with respect and dignity as it does for any other residents. The HHOT engages with people in encampments to identify their storage needs and provide them with options. The City offers limited storage space for personal belongings and vital documents for people living in encampments who accept a shelter referral or will be transitioning into housing imminently. All property collected will be appropriately tagged and securely stored, if storage options are available.

## **Site Clean-Up**

The City's Parks and Recreation staff engage in routine maintenance at parks and right-of-way where encampments are located. These staff work with people in encampments to remove unwanted items and garbage and ensure that parks and right-of-way remain safe and accessible for all. Following enforcement, or an identification of an abandoned encampment, Park's and Recreation staff will remove all remaining items at an encampment site. For occupational health and safety reasons, the City may use large equipment to assist in clean-up efforts.

Parks and Recreation staff will begin clean-up at which time:

- People living in the encampments have gathered their belongings and verified that nothing they wish to retain has been left behind;
- HHOT staff have surveyed the area in and around the encampment after people have vacated, collecting, documenting and storing any items that appear to be of importance; and
- HHOT gives the Parks and Recreation staff the clearance to enter encampment site.

Site clean-up on private property is the responsibility of the private property owner.

## **Encampment Etiquette**

Encampment stayers are expected to maintain a safe, clean and respectful environment that ensures the well-being of both those living in encampments and the broader community. All sites must follow the expectations below:

- Space tents to avoid clustering and to ensure adequate access for emergency access
- There should be no more than two persons per tent or structure
- There should be one tent per person/couple (and one tarp over the tent if needed)
- Personal items/property should be contained within the tent
- Hanging of personal items (laundry, etc.) is not permitted
- Excess garbage and debris cause hazardous conditions and stayers are expected to maintain a clean area
- Damage to the environment such as trees/wildlife will not be permitted
- General respect for any persons near or within the area is expected of all stayers
- Pets are always leashed/secured

Identified issues or barriers with any of the expectations should be proactively discussed with HHOT for support and problem-solving.

## **Abandoned Encampments**

The City recognizes that abandoned sites must be prioritized for clean-up. The HHOT will assess each encampment regularly for activity. Suspicion that a site has been abandoned will be brought forward to The Encampment Working Group for review and decision-making. The HHOT will also attempt to connect with those persons known to



be at the site for confirmation. Should no activity been seen on site and no persons observed to be living at the site, a clean-up will be coordinated.

If possible, HHOT if will partner with Parks and Recreation staff for clearing of sites deemed abandoned. HHOT will document this activity and close the site in the electronic tracking system.

## Guidance for Encampment Locations

Below are guidelines outlining non-exhaustive locations where encampments can and cannot be located.

### Prohibited Places for Encampments

#### Near Hazardous Areas:

Locations near toxic waste sites, industrial zones, or areas with high levels of pollution. Proximity to high-voltage power lines, gas pipelines, active construction sites or other dangerous infrastructure that could pose a risk to health and safety.

#### Critical Infrastructure Locations:

Near sewage systems, water treatment plants, electrical substations, and other critical municipal infrastructure that may be compromised or disrupted by the presence of encampments.

#### Recreation Areas:

Highly frequented sports fields, or recreational areas that may limit access to the public for regularly scheduled recreation events (unless specific, safe areas within parks are established for encampments).

#### Active Transportation Routes:

Locations directly in the path of busy roads, highways, pedestrian walkways, bicycle lanes, or transit routes that could obstruct or impede the movement of pedestrians or vehicles.

#### Areas with High Pedestrian Traffic or Public Events:

Locations within areas frequently hosting public events, markets, or demonstrations where encampments could present safety hazards or disrupt local commerce and community activities.

### **Cultural Heritage or Protected Areas:**

Areas of significant cultural, historical, or environmental importance that are designated as protected or have strict zoning laws (such as nature reserves, cemeteries or archaeological sites).

### **Playgrounds and Schools:**

Areas immediately beside playgrounds, schools, school yards or child care centers.

### **Areas with Extreme Weather Risks:**

Locations prone to flooding where encampments could place individuals at heightened risk.

## **Non-Prohibited (Acceptable) Places for Encampments**

### **Underused or Vacant Municipal Lands:**

Properties or areas that are not designated for other specific municipal purposes (e.g., vacant lots, or unoccupied government lands). Encampments can be permitted in parks with minimal scheduled activities, but the location and density of these encampments should ensure that they do not disrupt the park's accessibility or overall use by the community. Lands that do not interfere with essential public services or that have minimal use by the general population (such as some industrial lands or land zoned for future development but not yet being actively used).

### **Areas Near to Social Services:**

Locations close to critical services like shelters, healthcare facilities, or social support centers that are equipped to meet the basic needs of encampment residents and facilitate access to long-term housing solutions.

## **Key Considerations for a Human Rights Approach to Encampment Locations**

**Safety and Dignity:** Encampments should be located in areas that protect the safety, dignity, and well-being of individuals, offering (or close to), adequate facilities such as sanitation, clean water, and emergency medical support.

**Consultation and Participation:** The City should engage with encampment residents, community organizations, and other stakeholders to determine appropriate areas and resources. This participatory approach ensures that decisions respect the needs and voices of those most affected.

**Non-Discrimination:** The approach should ensure that all individuals, regardless of their background or personal circumstances, have equal access to safe and dignified living conditions. Vulnerable populations (e.g., indigenous people, women, children, elderly individuals) may need special accommodations.

**Access to Services:** Proximity to social services (healthcare, education, food, shelter, etc.) should be a key consideration to promote the health and well-being of encampment residents.

**Long-Term Housing Solutions:** The use of encampments should not be a permanent solution but rather seen as a very brief experience resulting from the affordable housing crisis, with planning and investment strategies focused on providing long-term, affordable housing and support to people experiencing homelessness.

## Campfire and Barbecue Use

Fires, including those for cooking, are prohibited in encampments. For safety reasons, open flames are not allowed at any time. The Open Air Burning By-law 2016-110 and the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, c. 4*, which regulates open-air burning within the City, shall be complied with and will be enforced. Regulate Public Parks and Facilities By-law 2006-147 regulates Campfire and Barbeque use in City Parks.

## Engagement with Stakeholders, Partners and People Living in Encampments

The City is committed to meaningful engagement and participation of people living in encampments in decision-making processes that impact them. “Meaningful Engagement” refers to the ongoing and purposeful participation of people with lived experience that fosters genuine participation, robust collaboration, and contribution. It values the experiences and perspectives of participants, striving to integrate feedback into decision-making processes.

Meaningful engagement in the context of outreach includes working with people to build trust and allowing them to define their immediate needs. It also includes working with people to define their social determinants of health such as income and other social and health supports to meet those needs. Meaningful engagement ensures that people living in encampments are able to participate in decisions that directly impact

them. Outreach staff will provide resources and opportunities to support those decisions.

The City will continue to develop ongoing opportunities for meaningful engagement of people with lived experience of encampments in the encampment response process as well as broader strategic policy and program development work, including but not limited to:

- Expanding advisory groups
- Community engagement opportunities including place-based meetings with people living in encampments when this can be facilitated
- Service user surveys and feedback
- Street Needs Assessment survey of people experiencing homelessness
- Employing peer workers and harm reduction workers

Indigenous people are persistently overrepresented among people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in the City of Kawartha Lakes. This is the direct result of historical and ongoing colonialism, systemic racism, government policies and practices, dispossession of lands, and intergenerational socio-economic inequities and trauma. The City acknowledges that Indigenous communities are best positioned to determine the needs and solutions for the other members of their communities. The City is committed to supporting and advancing Indigenous-led solutions to unsheltered homelessness.

The City recognizes the critical role Indigenous homelessness service organizations play in supporting Indigenous people living in encampments through trauma-informed outreach and assistance to access culturally based shelter, support services and housing that meets their needs.

## **Service Providers and Community Partners**

Service providers and community partners contribute specialized knowledge based on their experience in delivering services; identify the needs and challenges of the service users they serve to help the City understand the issues on the ground; and provide specialized services and supports to people living in encampments, such as culturally appropriate supports for Indigenous, Black, racialized, 2SLGBTQ+ and other equity deserving groups.

## **Collection, Use and Disclosure of Personal Information**

In accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), at no time should personal information about individuals living in encampments be shared with the public, council members, or other staff who are not part of the Encampment Working Group. Additionally, it is best practice to limit personal identifying information within email correspondence. The City will ensure that any collection, use and disclosure of personal information in its encampment response is in accordance with legislation (i.e.: PHIPA, MFIPPA) and associated regulations, standards, and other City policies.

Limited sharing of information between City staff and Police is supported, and is further defined in a separate information sharing agreement or in accordance with processes related to By-law enforcement.

## **Communication with People Living in Encampments**

The City will use multiple communication methods, in clear and plain language, to ensure people living in encampments are informed about its encampment response. The HHOT will act as a primary source for information sharing. Information regarding notices and enforcement will be communicated to people living in encampments through both verbal and written means as appropriate. City staff will also verbally inform people living in encampments about the EORP and provide an information sheet and, if requested, a copy of the EORP.

People living in encampments who have questions and concerns can contact the City's Human Services Department to be connected to the HHOT.

## **Communication with Service Providers and Community Partners**

The City will continue to communicate updates to partner service providers and other community agencies on its response to encampments through the Kawartha Lakes website, communication bulletins, training, webinars and various community networks. The City and its outreach partners will provide an information sheet including the URL link and an outline of the EORP.



## Communication with Business Improvement Areas and the Public

Information on the City's approach to encampments will be posted on the City's website. The City may provide the following information publicly, provided it does not put the safety of staff and people living in encampments at risk:

- Roles and responsibilities of relevant City Divisions
- Services and supports available to the people in the encampments and how to access them

Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) and residents play an important role in notifying the City when an encampment is established in a nearby area. This can include safety and maintenance of encampment areas, noise, unsafe needle disposal, waste, and fire hazard removal. The City will endeavour to communicate with BIAs and residents to provide updates and resources as needed to assist them in supporting the City's response to encampments.

## Service Request Information, and Compliments

Anyone in the City of Kawartha Lakes, including residents, staff and City Councillors can report new encampments, or concerns about existing encampments, such as noise, animal welfare or waste concerns to the City by contacting Human Services or emailing the HHOT at [streetoutreach@kawarthalakes.ca](mailto:streetoutreach@kawarthalakes.ca).

The relevant City Divisions will collaborate to ensure that public complaints are received and addressed promptly.

Details on how to submit complaints and compliments on the City's response to encampments and encampment-related issues, can be found on the City's Encampment Response webpage. If it is determined that a complaint can be more effectively addressed by other City Divisions, it will be forwarded to and responded by those respective Divisions.

When responding to complaints, staff can share what the current encampment response phase is associated with the particular encampment. Further to the [Encampment Response Process](#), the following are the various phases of encampment Response:

- Phase 1 – Identification of a new encampment

- Phase 2 – Initial engagement
- Phase 3 – Ongoing engagement and monitoring
- Phase 4 – Imminent or active relocation to shelter or housing/encampment has been cleared.
- Compliance Phase – A situation occurs that requires an escalated response
- Enforcement Phase – Enforcement of City parks use By-Law has been ordered which will result in the encampment stayer being removed and the encampment cleared

If a complainant disagrees with the resolution, update or information provided, this does not constitute grounds for escalation unless the defined Customer Service Standards noted below were not met.

## Customer Service Standards

Table 1 below outlines the established Customer Service Standards, including response timelines associated with the City's encampment response activities.

Table 1: Customer Service Standards

Service or Action Item	Responsible Party	Timeline
Response to report of new encampment	HHOT	A response acknowledging the report will be provided within three business days. Initial engagement with encampment stayer(s) will be provided within two business days
Response to report of existing encampment	HHOT	A response acknowledging the report will be provided within three business days
Compliance notice provision	MLE	Notice will be provided within five business days from the day that the HHOT and Encampment Working Group deem encampment response escalation warrants compliance notice
Enforcement notice provision	MLE	Notice will be provided within five business days from the day that the HHOT and Encampment Working

Service or Action Item	Responsible Party	Timeline
		Group deem enforcement is required
Progressive engagement expectation	HHOT	Meaningful engagement towards housing or shelter goals by the encampment stayer(s) must occur within a two-week period
Clearing of abandoned encampment on City property	Encampment Working Group	Within five business days, from the initial suspected discovery of an abandoned encampment, the encampment will be cleared

## Monitoring and Review

The City recognizes that the EORP may need to evolve and adapt to emerging issues, legislative changes or through adopting new evidence-based best practices. The EORP will be maintained by the HHOT with a commitment to ongoing monitoring and periodic review and evaluation of its implementation. The HHOT, Encampment Working Group or the Encampment Response Leadership Team may, from time to time, make any necessary clarifications, refinements, minor modifications, or technical amendments to this EORP. Any modifications will be fully-communicated to the Encampment Response Leadership Team and the Encampment Working Group. The Encampment Response Leadership Team will complete changes that are more strategic in-nature that change fundamental processes.

Monitoring and evaluation are critical parts of tracking and assessing performance to identify areas for improvement and adjustments and ensuring that the goals and objectives of the City are being achieved. Key performance indicators will be developed to support ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Ongoing feedback from City staff, people with lived experience in encampments, community service providers, Indigenous people with lived experience and Indigenous service providers, and other key stakeholders will be critical for informing this evaluation. Reviews will also take into consideration any changes in any applicable legislation, Council direction, and any policy or procedural changes.

Nothing in this protocol purports in any way to limit or fetter the responsibilities, discretion, duties or powers of the Fire Chief, Medical Officer of Health, Chief of Police, Detachment Commander or any other statutory or other office or power holder in

relation to anything that may fall within their respective purview or jurisdiction, including the enforcement of any law.

## **Continued Outreach and Supports**

It is the City's intention to maintain communication with people leaving encampments who wish to remain in contact in order to provide ongoing supports and services, recognizing that some may not immediately accept support after enforcement. The HHOT will provide information on accessing City services to people leaving encampments, ensuring they have the resources available should they require assistance at any point after leaving the encampment.

The City will continue to offer supports to people who have left an encampment which may include providing information on resources, assistance in accessing temporary shelter, facilitating access to permanent housing, referrals to comprehensive case management services, and ensuring access to healthcare and mental health services.

## **Encampment Prevention and Restoration**

Encampment prevention plays a crucial role in the City's response to encampments. The most effective means of encampment prevention is the City's efforts to increase permanent deeply affordable and supportive housing with a range of support services to help people live independently and with dignity.

The City may implement prevention and restoration measures for a period of time to manage encampment growth or prevent the establishment of new encampments at identified locations to ensure that public spaces are restored and accessible to all. Measures may include fencing, re-seeding, and landscaping as well as animating public spaces. In these circumstances, the City will provide information and signage may be posted at parks or public spaces advising that prevention and restoration measures are being taken.

## **Encampments on Private Property**

Encampments, temporary shelters, or tents identified on private property are primarily the responsibility of the property owner. Where the owner has not provided consent, concerns of the owner are to be addressed by local police and will be subject to ordinary enforcement procedures in accordance with applicable laws.

Local police may seek the assistance of Municipal Law Enforcement Officers as appropriate or required in the circumstances.

Provided the property owner permits and requests, the HHOT will engage with encampment, temporary shelter, or tent residents to identify alternate sheltering options and attempt to address any barriers to shelter or housing. Additionally, HHOT will work with individuals at the encampment, temporary shelter, or tent to provide supports and referrals as needed and work towards goals in individualized housing plans.

Private property owners who discover an encampment on their property can request Street Outreach to provide outreach assistance by emailing [streetoutreach@kawarthalakes.ca](mailto:streetoutreach@kawarthalakes.ca) or completing the [online form](#).



# Appendix A: Roles and Responsibilities of City Divisions, Working Groups and Council

## City of Kawartha Lakes Council

Direct staff to develop a corporately approved Encampment Outreach and Response Protocol (as the Corporate Management Directive), along with any necessary Standard Operating Procedures to support encampment response in the City of Kawartha Lakes. These governing documents will guide the City's approach to responding to encampments, ensuring the response aligns with the principles and policy direction outlined in the Council-approved Policy, specifically CP2025-00X.

### Human Services - Customer Relations Representatives

Provides residents, businesses, and visitors with information related to Human Services programs and supports, including homelessness outreach supports, Monday to Friday 8:30-4:30pm either in-person at 68 Lindsay Street North, Lindsay or by telephone at 705-324-9870. In addition to the [streetoutreach@kawarthalakes.ca](mailto:streetoutreach@kawarthalakes.ca) email, or online Encampment Reporting Form, this team is a resource for members of the public to report encampments, or inform the City of concerns such as noise, animal welfare or hazardous waste related to encampments.

### Fire Services

Provides fire safety education and information, including how to prevent a fire from occurring, and what to do in the case of a fire to people living in encampments. Fire Services participates in fire safety assessments upon complaint or request and responds to calls for service for fires in encampments.

Fire Services will exercise its authority under the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, c. 4 to address any circumstance that may constitute an immediate threat to life. Fire Services will also attend any fire related incidents to enforce any City By-laws such as Open Air Burning By-law #2016-110 and the Regulate Public Parks and Facilities By-law #2006-147.

### Encampment Response Leadership Team

Meets to provide leadership oversight and strategic decision-making and direction on the City's encampment response. The Encampment Response Leadership Team is

chaired by a management team member from the City's Housing Services Division, and includes staff from across City Divisions to enable discussion specifically on the topic of encampments and areas impacted by encampments. The Encampment Response Leadership Team will support interdivisional collaboration and accountability with a common vision, goal, and resource plan for responding to encampments.

The Encampment Response Leadership Team includes management representatives from Housing Services, Municipal Law Enforcement, Community Services, Fire Services and Paramedic Services, as well as Police (OPP and Kawartha Lakes Police Services), along with other key City staff who can provide expertise to support the Team's work.

The Encampment Response Leadership Team will meet at minimum twice per year to review the EORP, collectively discuss and recommend any changes to the EORP, and to monitor and assess outcomes.

### **Encampment Working Group**

Meets to plan and deliver coordinated services and intensive, focused supports. The Encampment Working Group is comprised of multidisciplinary frontline staff that are tasked with encampment related response and is aligned with best practice approaches. The Encampment Working Group will meet regularly to ensure coordinated encampment engagement, including assessing safety, stability, housing plans and the needs of those living in encampments. The working group is empowered to determine situations wherein escalation is needed, based on assessments and engagement. When needed, the Encampment Working Group will initiate a meeting with specific stakeholders for consultation and to receive guidance and determine next steps.

The City's Program Supervisor for Homelessness supports the coordination of the group. Membership of the group includes members of the Housing and Homelessness Outreach Team, as well as front-line and supervisory staff from Municipal Law Enforcement, Community Services, Fire Services and Paramedic Services. Additionally, members of the Encampment Leadership Group may participate in Encampment Working Group activities as needed. Diversity in City Divisions ensures subject matter expertise and specific insights and considerations to support continual improvement to frontline encampment operations.

Additionally, the Encampment Working Group provides space for information to be shared across Divisional staff, including priority updates to support the needs of people living in encampments and ensure locations impacting public safety are addressed by all relevant Divisions. The Encampment Working Group is represented on the Encampment Response Leadership Team to ensure operational issues are brought-forward to the

Encampment Response Leadership Team and decision-making is applied and implemented at the working group level.

## **Housing and Homelessness Outreach Team (HHOT)**

The HHOT is comprised of the City's Program Supervisor for Homelessness and Outreach and Housing Assistance Workers within the City's Housing Services Division. Given the City's role as the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager, the HHOT supports homelessness outreach work within the City of Kawartha Lakes and the County of Haliburton. The HHOT coordinates shelter, housing and outreach services. Its mission is to connect people experiencing homelessness with supports and housing. The HHOT, in partnership with local emergency shelters and supportive housing programs, leads the City's response to encampments. The HHOT provides street outreach services Monday to Friday 8:30-4:30pm.

## **Municipal Law Enforcement (MLE)**

Investigates By-law complaints and issues associated notices of enforcement where appropriate. MLE works closely with the HHOT on encampment related issues. When necessary, MLE supports encampment response escalation and enforcement actions.

## **Paramedic Services**

Provides medical care and support to people living in encampments.

## **Parks and Recreation**

Parks and Recreation staff are responsive crews whose day-to-day work contributes to ensuring all parks remain welcoming for passive and active recreational use. Parks and Recreation staff also contribute towards identification of encampments in City parks and complete referrals to the HHOT.

Through coordination with the Encampment Working Group, Parks and Recreation staff remove abandoned items, garbage, debris, fire pits and combustibles identified as potential fire hazards. Parks and Recreation staff ensure that parks remain safe and accessible for all by restoring parkland and removing hazards.

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Contact information:

Email [streetoutreach@kawarthalakes.ca](mailto:streetoutreach@kawarthalakes.ca)

Phone 705-324-9870

Website [www.kawarthalakes.ca/encampmentresponse](http://www.kawarthalakes.ca/encampmentresponse)

