



Giving Hope Today

FOR INFORMATION

Date: November 23, 2017

BRIEFING NOTE

Subject: National Housing Strategy

After several years of consultations, the federal government released Canada's National Housing Strategy (NHS) on November 22, 2017. This NHS is the first of its kind in Canada. The 10 year plan sets ambitious targets around reducing homelessness and increasing housing stability with promises significant investments and new programming.

Although still very much a skeleton plan, the NHS is extremely exciting for The Salvation Army for several reasons:

- a. **Housing Rights are Human Rights**
The NHS takes a rights based approach to housing. This is a significant and fundamental shift around how housing is looked at in Canada. Generally speaking this will mean that the right to adequate housing will improve measures that are needed to prevent homelessness, address discrimination, focus policies and programs on the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in need of housing, address forced evictions, ensure security of tenure, and strengthen guarantees to adequate housing.
- b. **Stability**
The NHS is a long-term plan. The initial strategy is designed for 10 years but in addition to that the government has stated that it will introduce legislation that will require future governments to also develop housing strategies. The new legislation will require the federal government to maintain an NHS that prioritizes the housing needs of the most vulnerable.
- c. **Addressing Homelessness**
The NHS allocates \$2.2 billion to be invested over 10 years to tackle homelessness through an expanded federal housing program. The federal government is setting a target to reduce chronic homelessness by 50% in 10 years.
- d. **Focus on Affordability**
The Salvation Army, along with many of our partners, has been consistently raising concerns regarding the lack of affordable housing. Every day we see the struggles people face finding appropriate and affordable housing. The NHS attempts to address this issue in a number of ways including building new affordable housing units, repairing current affordable housing units, and the creation of the Canada Housing Benefit.

It should be noted that the NHS is an outline and much of the detail is still being developed.

Please stay tuned for more information regarding the NHS and its implication and opportunities for the Army. In the meantime, if you have questions or require further information about the NHS please contact Jessica McKeachie, Territorial Public Affairs Director or Dr. Amy Fisher, Territorial Housing and Homelessness Consultant