



News Release

For Immediate Release

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Ontario Has No Plan to Reduce or Prevent Homelessness: Auditor General

(TORONTO) Over the past 10 years, five provincial ministries have put forward at least 14 strategies related to homelessness, but the strategies are not co-ordinated or focussed on homelessness itself, says Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk in her *2021 Annual Report*.

Over the last five years, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing spent \$1.8 billion – an average of \$356 million annually – on programs related to homelessness, including the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative, Home for Good program and the Indigenous Supportive Housing Program. But there is not one co-ordinated strategy aimed directly at preventing and reducing homelessness.

“The Government of Ontario has released many strategies to expand access and supports for affordable and supportive housing, and addressing domestic violence, mental illness and substance use which are often root causes,” said Lysyk. “However, thousands of Ontarians experience homelessness every year.”

The report found that the province’s lack of support for people transitioning out of correctional facilities, health-care facilities and the child welfare system is a contributing factor to the number of people who are homeless. Various working groups and studies conducted in the last five years have outlined the need to have co-ordinated processes to prevent homelessness in these situations. However, the province has no formalized plans, processes or procedures which has resulted in people leaving these facilities and systems without stable housing.

Most of the work being done to tackle homelessness is city-specific and, as a result, there exists only a patchwork of data, often accumulated inconsistently, making it difficult to systemically understand the state of homelessness in Ontario.

“Our audit found that the province does not have a clear picture of the state of homelessness in the province,” said Lysyk. “Without a better provincial focus on the problem and co-ordination of services, many Ontarians will continue to be left out in the cold.”

The audit report contains 12 recommendations for improvement.

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Read the report at www.auditor.on.ca

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