



A Call For Public Statements Against Encampment Clearings

If you are part of a faith group, a union, the Toronto Raptors, or any group of people with a unified voice, we need you to support your unhoused neighbors. As the city ramps up its efforts to invisibilize homelessness and make life impossible for people in encampments, we appeal to you to organize your colleagues or community to issue public statements against encampment evictions.

For the past 6 months the Encampment Support Network has been crowd funding from our communities and delivering basic humanitarian aid to people living in encampments across six Toronto neighborhoods. Encampment residents are our friends and neighbours. This is a public health crisis like we've never before seen. During a global pandemic, the City of Toronto has refused unhoused people access to water, basic sanitation and survival gear, and instead made life increasingly difficult for people living in encampments. At a time when people are being asked to stay home, some encampment residents are being offered shelter in respites like the "Better Living Centre" a congregate setting for 100 people. Other encampment residents are being offered shelter hotel spots in neighborhoods hours away from their communities, places of work, family and medical supports. Some encampment residents have not been offered any shelter at all.

With the first heavy snow, the second lockdown has reared its head, and COVID numbers are rising. ESN still believes people have the right to stay in the communities of their choice, where they feel safer. It's not just us. The [CDC still recommends that encampments not be cleared:](#)

"Unless individual housing units are available, do not clear encampments during community spread of COVID-19. Clearing encampments can cause people to disperse throughout the community and break connections with service providers. This increases the potential for infectious disease spread."

And yet the City of Toronto has a new group of workers dedicated to encampment clearing. Where will people go? Out of sight, but still outside.

The city's winter plan offers only 560 indoor spots for people living outside, yet we know that over 1000 people are currently unhoused. The shelter system is at capacity, and yet more

people are being evicted every day. Meanwhile, people like [Khaleel Seivwright](#) are being targeted and intimidated for coming up with pragmatic solutions for survival, like tiny shelters. Ultimately we know that people are living in encampments because there is not enough truly affordable housing.

As encampment residents fortify their camps for winter, we need the rest of the public to stand with them. The officials hear all the time from NIMBY's and anti-poor BIA's. Let them know that you support your neighbors in encampments right to choose where they live.

Most importantly, Toronto is on stolen Indigenous land, on Dish With One Spoon territory. Many encampment residents are Indigenous people. The forcible removal of Indigenous people is ongoing colonial violence, and denies people's inherent right to live on their land.

This is an appeal to your group to issue a public statement against the City of Toronto clearing encampment addressed to:

- ◇ **John Tory: mayor_tory@toronto.ca**
- ◇ **your city councillor (find yours [here](#))**
- ◇ **General Manager of of Shelter Support & Housing Administration: Mary-Anne.Bedard@toronto.ca**
- ◇ **General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation Department: Janie.Romoff@toronto.ca**

Please write to us at report.on.toronto@gmail.com with subject line:

PUBLIC STATEMENT OF SUPPORT .

We will send you "How To Write A Public Statement" package which includes talking points, and ways to make your statement public.

#NoEncampmentEvictions

To learn more about the Encampment Support Network, check out our newsletters via our website

<https://www.encampmentsupportnetwork.com/>