

## Shelter Housing Justice Network Unprecedented Increase in Toronto Homeless Deaths

Media Alert

Date: December 14, 2021

What: Homeless Memorial adding at least 27 names this month.

When: Tuesday, December 14, 12:00 (at the Homeless Memorial)

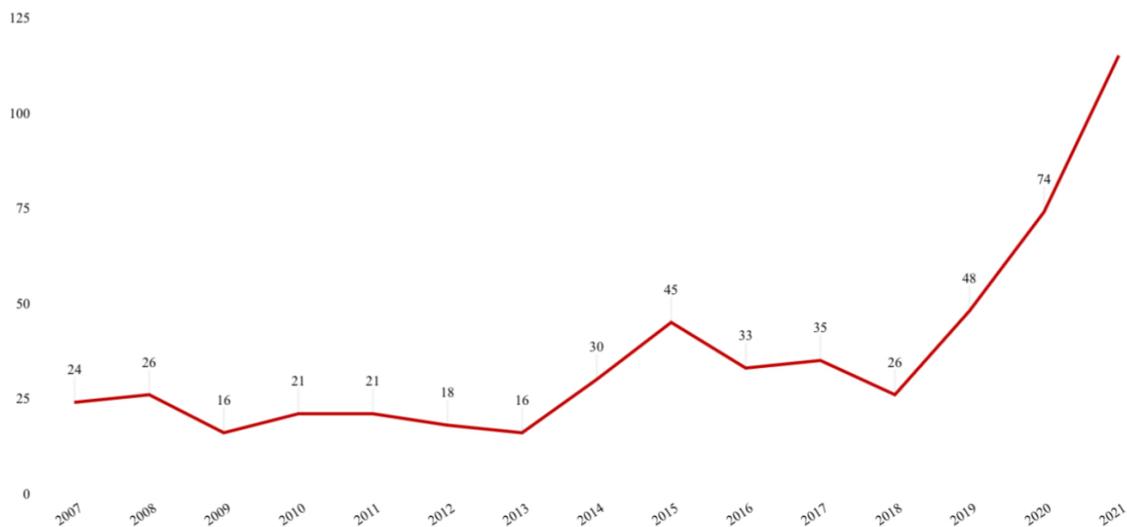
Where: 19 Trinity Sq, (by the south steps in front of the Homeless Memorial)

Important: Please wear a mask and physically distance

We will be adding at least 27 names of people who have recently died who don't have housing. 19 of those deaths took place in the month of October in the Toronto shelter system. The number of people being added to the memorial this month is almost double the number of deaths of the previous grim record. 17 people names were added in October of 2021. This is an unconscionable injustice. These are preventable deaths, and the city government must take action.

This recent spike in deaths comes on the heels of an already horrific year. Shelter resident's deaths are 78% higher in the first 8 months of 2021 over 2019. This injustice disproportionately impacts Indigenous and Black people in Toronto. 63% of all unhoused people in Toronto are BIPOC. The number of people in Toronto that die of an overdose who don't have housing keeps rising. In 2019 the number of people who died of an overdose was 10, in 2020 it was 46. As a result of sky-high rents, gentrification, lack of RGI housing and an overflowing shelter system thousands of people suffer and many die. Toronto is still in the midst of a global pandemic. Shelter outbreaks are ongoing. Many services are still suspended, and indoor space isn't accessible for hundreds who live in encampments.

### TORONTO SHELTER RESIDENT DEATHS 2007-PRESENT



*115 2021 deaths are through the end of October*

Source: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/data-research-maps/research-reports/housing-and-homelessness-research-and-reports/deaths-of-shelter-residents/>

## **Demands**

- 1. City Council must immediately strike a task force charged with taking all reasonable steps to reduce such deaths.**
- 2. Immediately expand overdose prevention, education, training and implement the recommendations of [Toronto Shelter-Hotel Overdose Preparedness Assessment Project](#).**
- 3. Immediately incorporate 2,250 permanent, non-congregate shelter beds into the system.**
- 4. Repeal the 'no camping' bylaw.**
- 5. Increase the target of newly attributed housing allowances in 2021 from 1,440 to 3,000.**
- 6. Freeze all evictions with the emergency powers of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act.**
- 7. Adopt SHJN's Winter Plan in Full <http://www.shjn.ca/winterplan/>.**

Livestream: Will be at the same link as the Toronto Homeless Memorial <https://www.facebook.com/holytrinityTO/live/>

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