
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Attorney General

Minister's statement on Homelessness Action Week

VICTORIA – David Eby, Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing, has issued the following statement in recognition of Homelessness Action Week, Oct. 10-16, 2021:

“This Homelessness Action Week, I would like to express gratitude to all British Columbians who are actively supporting our government’s commitment to bring people who have been living outside for years inside to safe shelter and ultimately, a place to call home.

“Because words are not enough to end homelessness, we must recognize the British Columbians working on the front lines to end homelessness in our province. Your bravery, dedication and strong belief in the human dignity of all members of our society are essential to the work that we need to do together to not just talk about, but actually deliver the right to dignified shelter for all British Columbians.

“Homelessness and closely associated issues of mental health and addiction have become more visible during the pandemic, as the places where those without a home find shelter temporarily closed or reduced services. Given that this increased visibility of a long-standing social issue brings a shared sense of urgency, let’s not forget to celebrate the progress made, while committing to do more. Together, all levels of government, neighbourhoods, non-profits and health workers have helped move 3,200 people into new supportive housing since we formed government.

“Major encampments in Surrey on the Whalley Strip, in Vancouver in Oppenheimer, Strathcona and Crab parks, in Victoria in Beacon Hill Park, Pandora Park and the Gorge, have been met not with force, but with an offer of dignified shelter resulting in the closure of these encampments. The vast majority of these British Columbians who were living in parks or on sidewalks – almost 1,000 people – remain housed today thanks to the work of many, many people.

“There is more to do to help those British Columbians who are still living outside to come inside, get healthy and rebuild their lives. There are another 2,300 supportive homes underway throughout B.C. right now. We will need the continued support of neighbours and cities to expand this critical work and to deliver health care to the most ill people living in our streets through our upcoming complex care program. The goal is simple: to make our communities more liveable for everyone.

“As we move forward, it has become increasingly clear that we need to prevent homelessness before it starts and ensure anyone who becomes homeless is homeless for as little time as possible. Our homelessness strategy that will be released next spring will explain how we will achieve these goals. These are ambitious goals, and we will not achieve them without the continuing support of British Columbians. So, thank you for your continuing support for this

important work for those who are the most vulnerable in your community. We've changed thousands of lives for the better, but there is much more to do. Let's keep working."

Contact:

Ministry of Attorney General
and Responsible for Housing
Media Relations
778 678-1572

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