



United Way
British Columbia

Working with communities in BC's
Interior, Lower Mainland, Central
& Northern Vancouver Island

This project is funded by
the Government of Canada.



NEWS RELEASE

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Addressing Homelessness in Nanaimo, Cowichan, and Duncan

Government of Canada invests further \$3 million to support programs

Central & Northern Vancouver Island, B.C. – United Way British Columbia – working with communities in BC's Interior, Lower Mainland, and Central & Northern Vancouver Island (United Way BC), is supporting non-profit organizations to address homelessness in their communities. Through the Government of Canada's Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy, \$3 million will be invested in services and programs offered to help people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and to access or sustain safe, stable, and affordable housing.

Homelessness is a national issue, but the solutions required to address homelessness must be customized in local communities. Locally led and driven initiatives are the ideal way to provide services to those most in need. United Way BC distributes Reaching Home funding to local non-profit organizations and agencies in Nanaimo, Cowichan, and Duncan, including Indigenous and urban communities.

"Ending homelessness in Canada is achieved one vulnerable person at a time, community by community," said the Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion. "This is why the Government of Canada is taking key actions to gather the data necessary to understand and address the unique confluence of causes, issues, and supports required within a community. Our Government is proud to partner with local organizations running vital programs to prevent and address homelessness in communities across the country. The programs we're investing in aren't just paths to a roof—they are building safer, better lives, leaving no one behind."

"We know that homelessness, in all its forms, is a growing issue for communities across BC and Canada. There are no easy solutions or answers. Reaching Home funding is crucial to addressing the unique issues and causes within a community. Who better to respond than the non-profit organizations at the forefront of service provision," said Vicky Trill, United Way BC's Reaching Home Manager. "I'm excited about these projects and working with the organizations to achieve their goals over the next two years."

Included in this round of funding are the Point-in-Time (PIT) Counts that will happen in Nanaimo and Cowichan in the next few months. Serving as a "snapshot" of the situation, PIT Counts is a measure of the number of people experiencing homelessness on a specific day. The data collected from the counts help to inform the development of programs and services.

With funding provided through Designated and Indigenous streams, programs and services are as varied and unique as the communities they serve. In Duncan, the Cowichan Women Against Violence (CWAV) Society is using Reaching Home funding to support the purchase, renovation, and operation of a women's shelter, called Charlotte's Place: a safe place of community and security for women experiencing homelessness.

"Support from Reaching Home has been instrumental in allowing CWAV to secure a stable future for both Charlotte's Place Women's Shelter and our Homelessness Prevention Program," said Jessica Lewinski, Communications and Development Director, CWAV. "The funding structure is deliberate and thoughtful,

addressing the needs of those experiencing homelessness and those needing support to prevent loss of housing. This multifaceted community-based lens is what is needed to fully address the housing crisis.”

Launched in April 2019, Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy is a community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness across Canada. This program provides direct support and funding to Designated Communities (urban centres), Indigenous communities, territorial communities, and rural and remote communities across Canada to help them address their local homelessness needs. The Strategy also supports the goals of the National Housing Strategy, in particular, to support the most vulnerable Canadians in maintaining safe, stable, and affordable housing and to reduce chronic homelessness nationally by 50 percent by the fiscal year 2027 to 2028. The Government of Canada has invested nearly \$4 billion over nine years to address homelessness through Reaching Home. This includes funding invested through the COVID-19 Economic Response Plan, the 2020 Fall Economic Statement; Budget 2021, and Budget 2022.

To learn more about the projects and Reaching Home, visit www.uwbc.ca/program/reaching-home/.

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About United Way British Columbia – working with communities in BC’s Interior, Lower Mainland, and Central & Northern Vancouver Island

United Way supports healthy, caring, and inclusive communities by strengthening vital connections that support people in need. Representing the six regions of Central and Northern Vancouver Island, East Kootenay, Lower Mainland, Southern Interior, Thompson Nicola Cariboo, and Trail and District, our organization serves a population of more than 4 million people, with a focus on kids and youth, seniors, poverty, mental health, and food security.

www.uwbc.ca

Interviews are available with Julie Rushton, Manager, CNVI Region, United Way British Columbia.

Interview Opportunities:

To coordinate interviews with local spokespeople, please contact

Pinder Rehal

Public Relations, Marketing & Communications

United Way British Columbia – working with communities in BC’s Interior, Lower Mainland and Central & Northern Vancouver Island

PinderR@uwbc.ca

Cell: 647.542.8545