




COMMUNICATION UPDATE

TO:	Mayor and Members City Council
DATE:	October 18, 2022
SUBJECT:	Extreme COLD Weather Response - Update (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
SUBMITTED BY:	Angela Burden General Manager Healthy and Safe Communities
SIGNATURE:	

With the Winter season shortly upon us, we are providing an update to members of Council regarding the City of Hamilton's Extreme Cold Weather Response protocol.

The winter season has a disproportionate impact on those experiencing homelessness or living in vulnerable situations. The Housing Services Division collaborates with other City Departments and social service agencies in operating services and supports which provide options for warm spaces and programming throughout the winter season to enhance available spaces, as well as enacting specific protocols during extreme cold weather periods.

Under the City of Hamilton's existing Extreme Weather Protocol, existing services and programs offer supports which operationalize when a Cold Alert is activated by Hamilton Public Health Services. A Cold Alert is triggered when weather conditions are at or below minus 15 degrees Celsius (-15°C) and/or the temperature feels like minus 20 degrees Celsius (-20°C) with wind chill.

During a Cold Alert, these social service agencies and the homelessness serving system respond to the needs of homeless and vulnerable residents by expanding service hours, easing service limitations/caps, and ensuring locations offer a welcoming location for individuals to access space out of the cold. In addition, specific City of Hamilton buildings operate as warming locations.

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

It is important to note that for the 2022/2023 Winter season the City's response will be consistent with the usual pre-pandemic response. As you may recall, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Hamilton was able to utilize opportunities under the Emergency Order which allowed for the activation of expanded/additional temporary services, including activating warming centre locations in City facilities staffed by redeployed City of Hamilton staff members. In addition, pandemic related funding through the Provincial Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF) provided funding opportunity to cover the expense of these expanded/additional operations. Given the Emergency Order has been lifted and pandemic related funding has been exhausted, these responses will not be available moving forward.

Specific details on the Extreme Cold Weather protocol can be found on the City of Hamilton's website under the following path: www.hamilton.ca/cold.

Should you have additional questions, please contact Rob Mastroianni, Manager, Homelessness & Housing Supports at Rob.Mastroianni@hamilton.ca