



Emergency Shelters Update: November 2023

In December 2020, we embarked on a project to put our faith into tangible action. We began the Emergency Shelter Project (ESP). Through this project, we provide temporary emergency shelter for those facing homelessness. Through the generosity of many people, twenty crisis emergency shelters went up at parishes across our Archdiocese in six short weeks! As the project and need grew, the diocese hired a full-time Shelter Coordinator in the spring of 2021. Thanks to her commitment and the support of many people, including generous and compassionate parish volunteers, we have made a real difference for many people living the realities of the housing crisis. Almost three years later, the project continues and has evolved to directly assist the ever-changing needs of those experiencing home insecurity in our province. Some of the 2023 milestones include:

- As of November 2023, we have moved 15 occupants from a shelter into an apartment.
- Five new shelters are under construction and will be in place before winter 2024.
- A dedicated diocesan staff person allows us to expand into further outreach work that connects people experiencing homelessness with support.
- We have gained a better sense of the life cycle of the Emergency Shelter Project. As we can, we are expanding our support and assistance to people we help house. We are developing an outreach team to work with people to aid their transition to being housed.
- In November, our Shelter Coordinator, Lindsay Minsiner, and staff members from parishes hosting shelters attended the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness conference at the Convention Centre.
- We received a grant from the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia to support counseling services for occupants.
- Technical partners have helped us set up WiFi extenders in parishes that host shelters and provide Chromebooks to our occupants, allowing them to search for apartments and jobs, take courses, etc.
- We are working on a partnership with NS Works to assist shelter occupants who want to work.
- We continue to seek apartments to help some of our longer-term occupants find a more permanent home.

We continue to build relationships and partnerships with our broader community to respond to the growing need in our province. We are only able to do this work with help. We are grateful to the parishes that host emergency shelters, the countless volunteers, groups, and organizations that provide direct support to the shelter occupants, and all who have provided in any way to make this project happen.

And we need your help to continue serving the community in this way. As the Christmas season approaches, we ask you to consider making a gift to the Emergency Shelter Project. Your gift can significantly impact some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. To support the Emergency Shelters Project, visit www.halifaxyarmouth.org/shelters and click "Donate Now." Thank you!