



Canadian  
human rights  
commission

Commission  
canadienne des  
droits de la personne

Housing

# **UPHOLDING DIGNITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS: THE FEDERAL HOUSING ADVOCATE'S REVIEW OF HOMELESS ENCAMPMENTS**

**The Office of the Federal Housing Advocate's Presentation at the CAEH 2023  
8 November 2023**

# Review of Homeless Encampments

**February 2023**

**Review Launched**

**February – August 2023**

**Engagement**

- Events in Montréal, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Toronto, Calgary
- Meetings with National Indigenous Organizations and local organizations
- Partnership with The Shift and local groups to encourage submissions
- Launch of the online submission tool
- Engagement with duty-bearers from different levels of government

**October 2023**

**Release of Interim Report**

**October - December 2023**

**Engagement on recommendations**

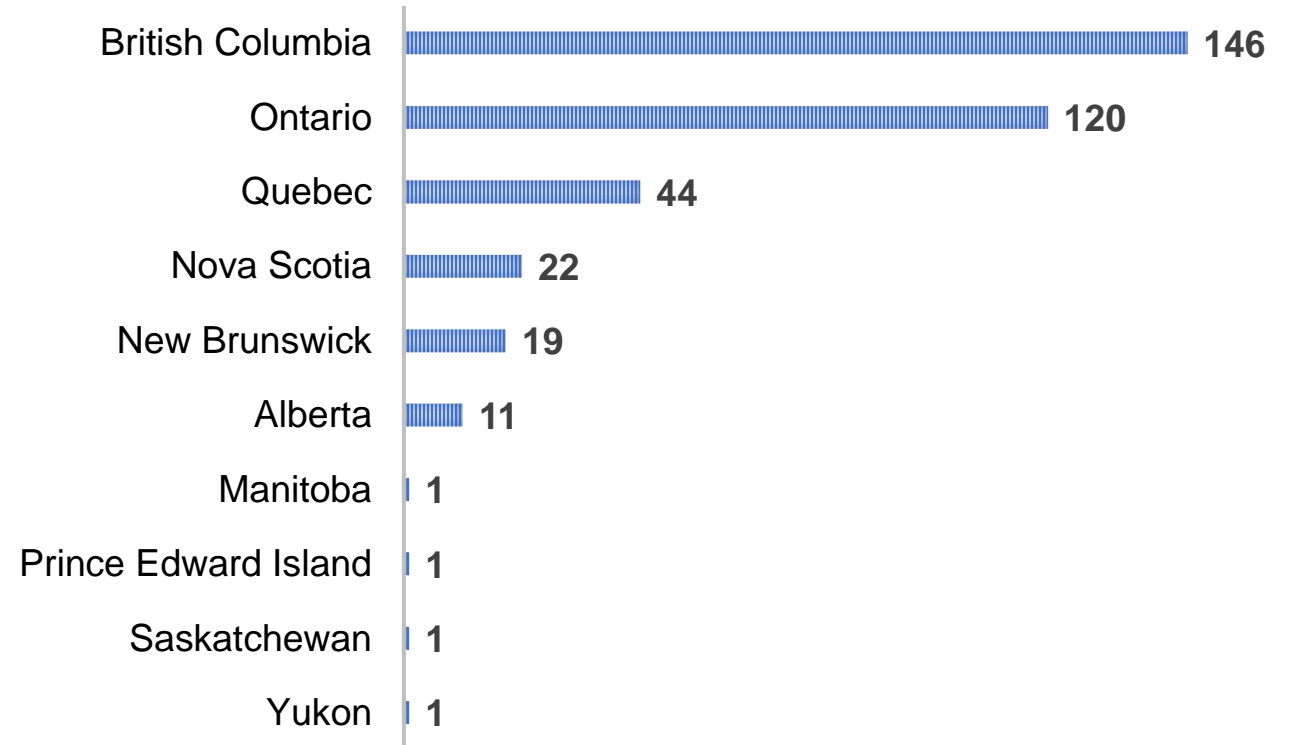
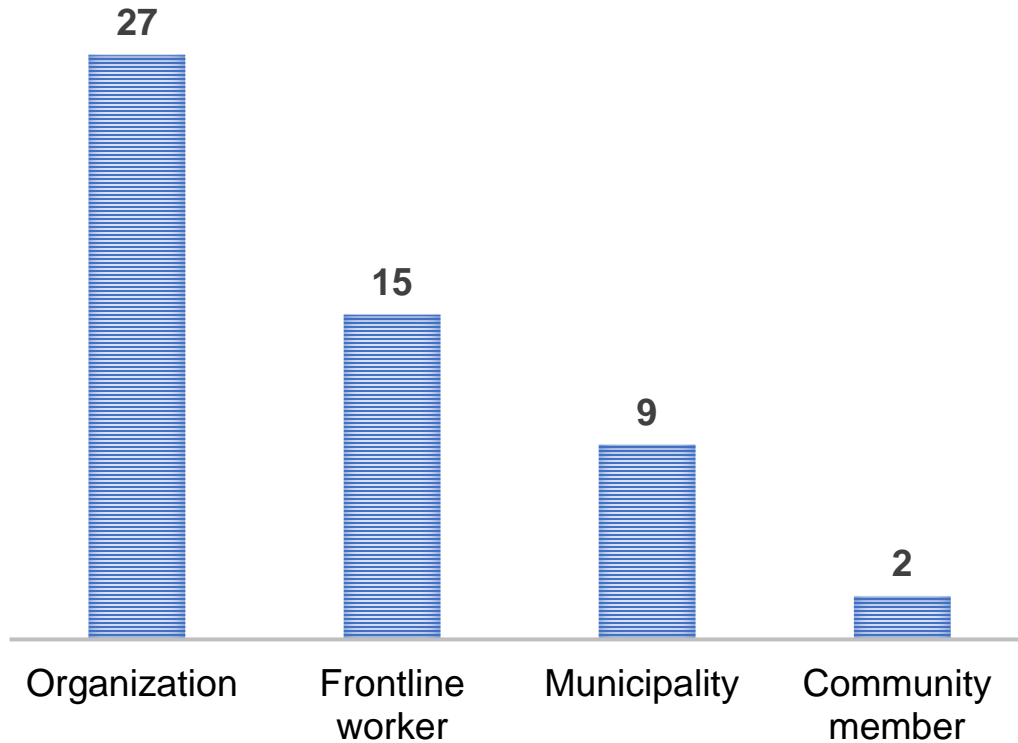
- Local partners, CASHRA, BCMC & FCM, CAEH Conference, NAFC

**End of Jan 2024**

**Final Report and recommendations**

# Online Submission Tool – Encampment Review

- 366 submissions – 313 from individuals / 53 from organizations



# What We Heard: Human Rights Concerns

## HOMELESSNESS CRISIS

- Barriers to secure housing
- The homelessness crisis for Indigenous Peoples
- Inadequate program funding for community services
- The need for human rights-based action and more accountability
- Inadequate emergency shelters

## ENCAMPMENTS

- Encampment evictions and clearances
- Violence, stigma, increased isolation and risk of harm
- Unmet basic needs of encampment residents
- Gendered experiences in encampments
- Safety and security risks in encampments alongside peer support
- Absence of services and supports

## What We Heard: Potential Solutions

1. Ensure human rights-based action and greater accountability
2. Meaningfully engage with encampment residents
3. Treat encampment residents with dignity and respect
4. Uphold the rights of Indigenous Peoples
5. Provide for encampment residents' basic needs
6. Uphold encampment residents' right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental
7. Improve encampment safety and security for all residents
8. Prioritize long-term right to adequate housing solutions
9. Improve emergency shelter conditions and access

# Discussion

- What are the pros and cons of designating sites for encampments? What would need to be done to ensure designated encampments provide enhanced human rights protection for residents?
- What kind of supports/services/infrastructure are needed by encampment residents? How can local organizations be better equipped to provide support to encampment residents?
- What is working around changing the narrative? What kind of public education is needed? How?
- Good practices that are worth emulating?

# Thank you

## The report:

EN: <https://www.housingchrc.ca/en/publications/advocates-review-homeless-encampments>

FR: <https://www.housingchrc.ca/fr/publications/examen-des-campements-de-personnes-en-situation-ditinerance-de-la-defenseure>

## The Advocate's news release:

EN: <https://www.housingchrc.ca/en/federal-housing-advocates-report-on-encampments-in-canada-details-human-rights-concerns-and-solutions>

FR: <https://www.housingchrc.ca/fr/rapport-de-la-defenseure-federale-du-logement-sur-les-campements-au-canada-decrit-les-preoccupations-et-les-solutions-en-matiere-de-droits-de-la-personne>