



*Realizing the
Right to Housing*
**criminalized
women and
gender-diverse
people**

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HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
COORDINATOR

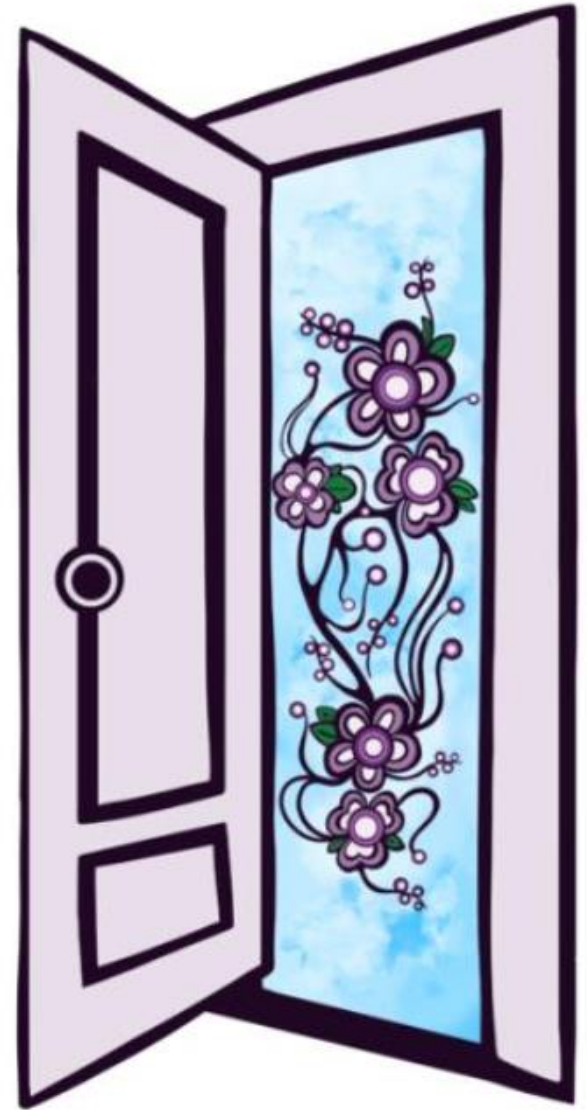


CAEFS

Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies

Agenda

- 🏠 CAEFS housing team
- 🏠 National housing portrait
- 🏠 Systemic barriers to housing
- 🏠 Developing key resources and strategies





***CAEFS and
national
housing team***

The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies is a national member-driven organization comprised of 24 self-governing local societies.

Statement of purpose

CAEFS works to address the persistent ways in which women and gender-diverse people impacted by criminalization are denied humanity and excluded from community

CAEFS Vision

A world without prisons with strong and well-resourced communities for everyone.

CAEFS Housing Team

Housing Development Coordinators

Sarah Gelbard

Nat Pace

Housing Liaisons

Amelia Reimer

Erica Harrison

Project supervisors

Darlene MacEachern

Jackie Omstead

Our mandate (Fall '21 to present)

Co-development of rights-based housing principles, resources, and advocacy to:

- 🏠 better respond to the distinct needs of criminalized women and gender-diverse people;
- 🏠 disrupt the cycles and systems of criminalization and homelessness;
- 🏠 contribute to the meaningful co-creation of thriving communities without prisons.



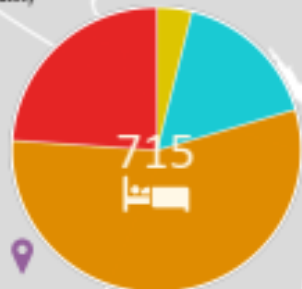
*How are member societies
currently involved in the
direct provision of housing
and housing-related
programs and supports?*

CAEFS NATIONAL HOUSING PORTRAIT

Housing Programs and Services Offered by Members of the Canadian Association Of Elizabeth Fry Societies

PACIFIC

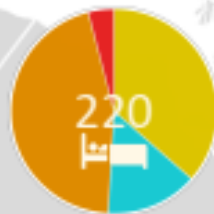
Kamloops & District Elizabeth Fry Society
 Prince George and District Elizabeth Fry Society
 Central Okanagan Elizabeth Fry Society
 Elizabeth Fry Society of Greater Vancouver
 The South Cariboo Elizabeth Fry Society
 Archway Society



Most CAEFS members are directly involved in enabling women and gender-diverse people to obtain and/or retain housing, either through direct provision of housing or housing-related services.

PRAIRIES

Elizabeth Fry Manitoba
 Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan
 Elizabeth Fry Society of Calgary
 Elizabeth Fry Society of Northern Alberta



ONTARIO

Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa
 Elizabeth Fry Society of Peterborough
 Elizabeth Fry Toronto
 Elizabeth Fry Simcoe Muskoka
 Elizabeth Fry Peel Halton
 Elizabeth Fry Society of North Eastern Ontario
 Elizabeth Fry Society of North Western Ontario
 Elizabeth Fry Society Southern Ontario
 Elizabeth Fry Kingston

QUEBEC

Société Elizabeth Fry Québec



ATLANTIC

Elizabeth Fry New Brunswick
 Elizabeth Fry Society of Cape Breton
 Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia
 Elizabeth Fry Society of Newfoundland and Labrador

- 528** **SUPPORTIVE:**
 Long-term, rent-reduced units with flexible and/or voluntary support services
- 198** **EMERGENCY:**
 Short-term housing, immediate access, often 24/7 support
- 158** **TRANSITIONAL:**
 Temporary stabilizing accommodation with supports.
- 108** **HYBRID:**
 Multiple bed types in same residence. May include market rate and subsidized units

14/24 ELIZABETH FRY SOCIETIES OPERATE PHYSICAL HOUSING PROJECTS

PROVIDING NEARLY **1000** **beds**

44 HOUSING PROJECTS

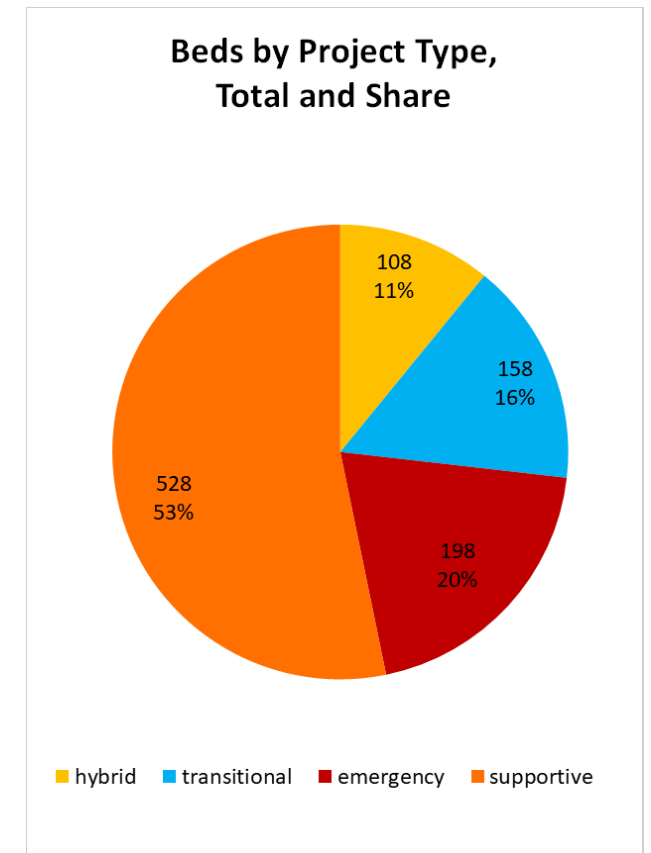
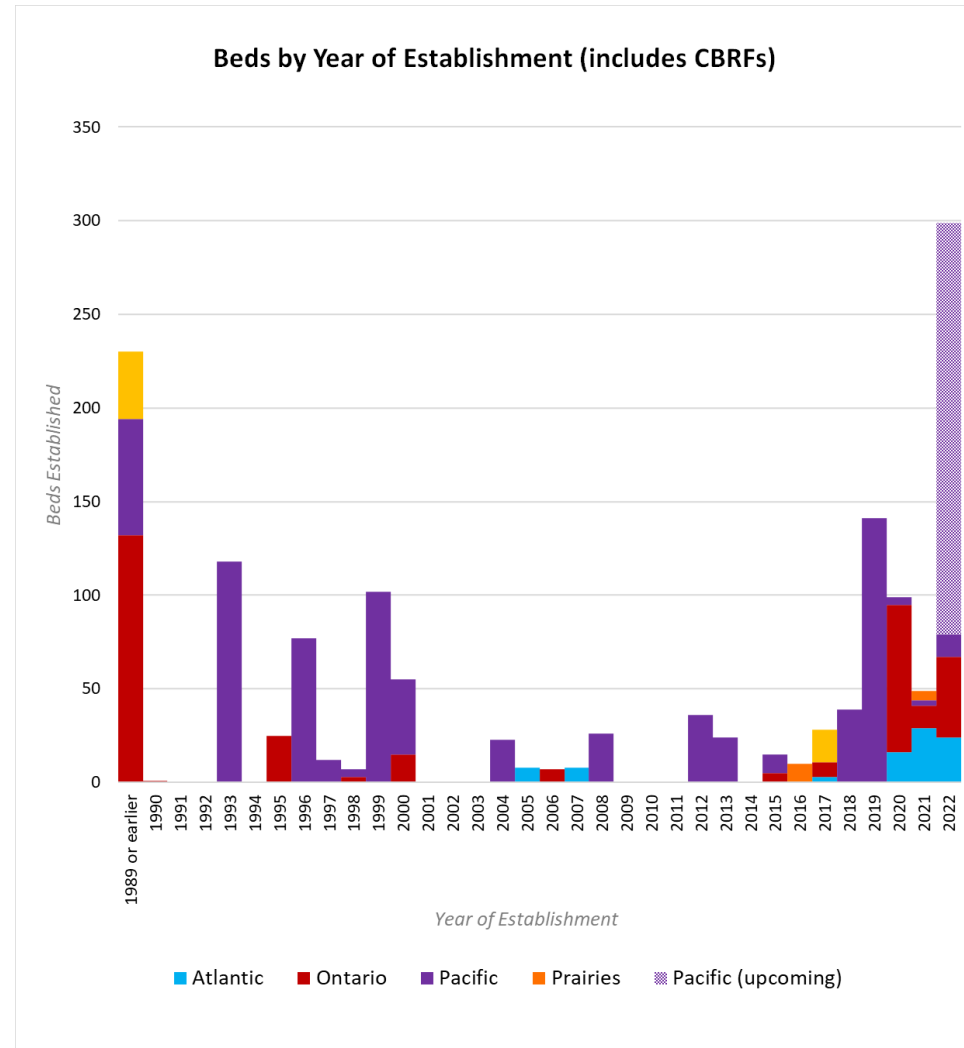
17 COMMUNITY-BASED RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES

PROVIDING OVER **200** **supervised beds**

9/25 COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES DESIGNATED FOR PEOPLE EXITING WOMEN'S INSTITUTIONS IN CANADA ARE OPERATED BY CAEFS MEMBER SOCIETIES

CAEFS National Housing Portrait

- a network-wide scan of existing housing and residential programs offered by members societies
- informed by interview with executive directors and housing support workers across the membership (December 2021 to April 2022)





What would a rights-
based strategy to
intersectional feminist
and **abolitionist** housing
be like?

Abolition and housing

The carceral continuum reaches beyond prisons and jails into the places we live and take refuge (e.g. emergency shelters)

“the modern prison is a central but by no means singularly defining institution of **carceral geographies**.”

“abolition geography starts from the **homely premise that freedom is a place**.”

“[prison] means people **extracted from communities**, and people **returned to communities** but not entitled to be of them...”

Ruth Wilson Gilmore (2017). “Abolition Geography and the Problem of Innocence.”



So is this Actually an Abolitionist Proposal or Strategy?

A collection of resources to aid in evaluation and reflection

Compiled by *Interrupting Criminalization, Project Nia & Critical Resistance*



- Does it provide material relief?
- Does it improve our capacity to provide material relief through improved housing options?
- Does it respect and advance the rights of criminalized women and gender-diverse people?
- Does it legitimize or expand the carceral system we're trying to dismantle?
- Does it preserve existing power relations?
- Does it undermine efforts to organize and mobilize the most affected or most marginalized?
- How does it help us build power?

Source: [Interrupting Criminalization](#)

Preliminary housing rights assessment

Review of other claims submitted to the Federal Housing Advocate

[The Crisis Ends With Us](#) (WNHHN, June 2022)

[Homeless on Homelands](#) (NIFHWG, June 2022)

“Women and gender-diverse people are facing widespread, systematic violations of their right to housing and their right to substantive equality. These violations all derive from a common systemic issue: the invisibilization of our unique circumstances, needs, dignity, and rights as women, girls, and gender-diverse people.”

“The patriarchal, colonial, racist, and ableist frameworks that guide Canadian housing policy continue to prioritize profit over our right to a dignified life, to security, and substantive equality. We disproportionately bear the consequences [...] but those of us who suffer most are rarely at decision-making tables or understood as rights-holders.”

Preliminary housing needs assessment

Housing Reports and Literature Review

Review of existing reports and studies produced by CAEFS and EFrys (2012 to present)
CAEFS, Halifax, Vancouver, Thunder Bay, Toronto, Calgary

Common housing-related barriers, needs, and experiences of criminalized women and gender-diverse people

- Role of housing in the “revolving door” of incarceration
- Series of concurrent risk indicators
- General lack of affordable housing
- Discrimination and systemic barriers
- Missing community/family support

Common issues in providing housing & housing-related supports

- Underfunding
- Downloaded responsibility
- Conflicting client needs and release conditions
- Traditional transitional housing model is not appropriate

Issues related to site-specific context, sub user group need, time-sensitive issue

- Zoning restrictions
- Access to wrap-around services
- Accommodating residents with children, fleeing violence, etc.
- Adapting to Covid-19

The factors and risk indicators for both criminalization and housing insecurity...

Marginalized identities

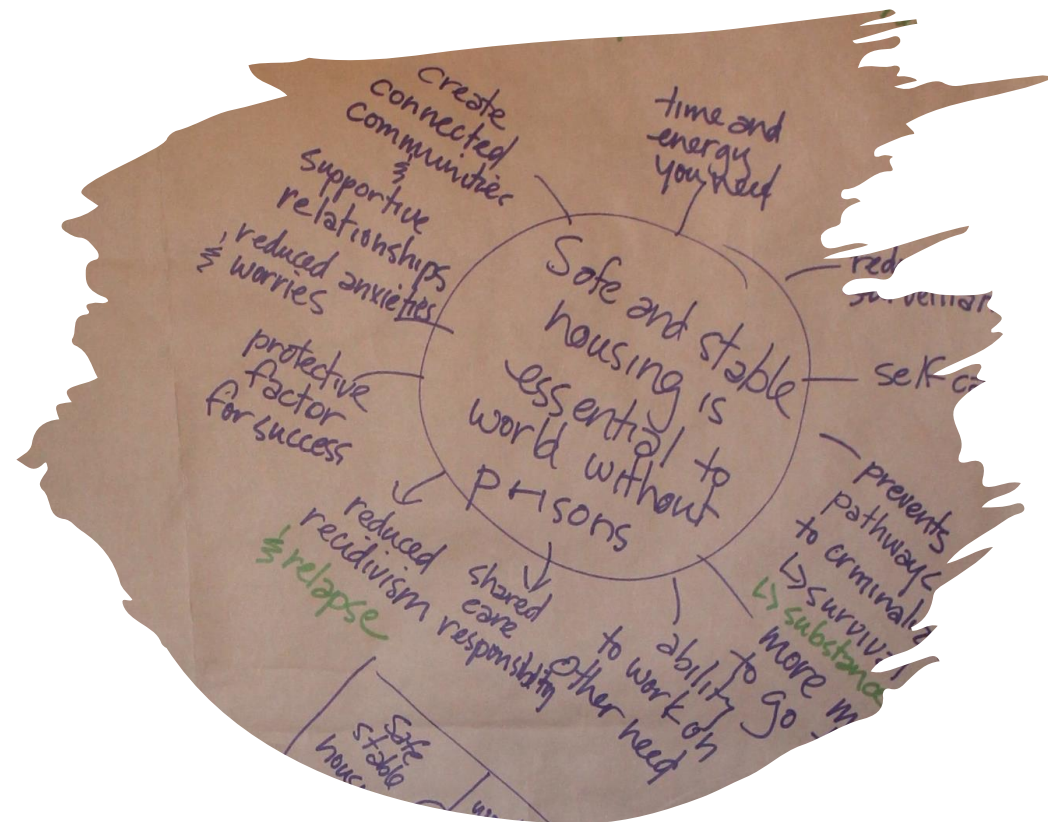
- Indigenous people
- Women
- 2SLGBTQ* folk
- Black folk
- People of colour

Conditions and experiences

- Mental health
- Substance use
- Disability
- Violence and trauma
- Poverty

... are systemic, intersecting, and compounding.

- + criminalization of homelessness, poverty, survival strategies
- + barriers and discrimination faced because of the economic, social, spatial, and institutional marginalization of women and gender-diverse people exiting prison



CAIEFS Housing Summit

SEPTEMBER 24-25, TIOHTI:ÁKE - MONTRÉAL

Objectives: Community Residential Options

1. MAP COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL OPTIONS

Develop a systems map framework for navigating and evaluating the available options for community residential facilities.

2. EVALUATE THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL OPTIONS

Identify what opportunities and/or barriers exist in realizing safe and stable housing through available community residential options.

3. SET KEY STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVED COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL OPTIONS

Identify priority areas for improving community residential options in the short and long term.

Objectives: Housing strategy

1. CO-DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAEFS HOUSING PRINCIPLES

Articulate shared housing principles and accountability frameworks for housing and housing-related programs across the CAEFS membership.

2. SET KEY STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS & PRIORITIES FOR BUILDING NETWORK CAPACITY

Identify priority areas for building capacity for the provision of housing and/or housing-based services through knowledge exchange, resource development, funding opportunities, and collaborative partnerships.

3. SET KEY STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIES FOR HOUSING ADVOCACY

Identify priority advocacy areas in protecting the rights of criminalized women and gender diverse people by seizing new opportunities under the National Housing Strategy Act and strategic partnerships with other housing rights organizations and advocates.

Developing Housing Principles

HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT 	EVERYONE - REGARDLESS OF THEIR RACE, CLASS, ABILITY, SEX, GENDER, STATUS, AND CRIMINAL HISTORY - SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO SAFE AND STABLE HOUSING
JAILS AND PRISONS ARE NOT SAFE OR STABLE HOUSING	
	SAFE AND STABLE HOUSING IS MORE THAN A PHYSICAL SPACE, IT IS BEING PART OF A COMMUNITY.
SAFE AND STABLE HOUSING FOR ALL IS ESSENTIAL TO WORKING TOWARDS A WORLD WITHOUT PRISONS	

draft

Considerations in revising principles

- Consistency with CAEFS vision & purpose
- Language around “safe and stable/adequate” housing
- Language around “everyone”
- Naming the problem that connect criminalization and housing insecurity (i.e. systems of oppression)
- Naming source of solution (i.e. well resourced communities)
- What role should CAEFS and member societies play in improving access to and quality of the housing and housing-related supports they provide?
- What role should CAEFS and member societies play in advancing the right to housing?

Setting priorities and building capacity

Thinking collaboratively about the full range of housing options and housing-related programs:

How can we work together to mobilize across our network on this key issue?

- What knowledge, supports, and resources *do you need? can you offer?*

How can we work together to mobilize the social, political, and financial movement around the right to housing to address this key issue?

KEY ISSUES

1. Advocacy & community organizing
2. Cultural and gender identity responsive/inclusive supports
3. Funding opportunities for housing projects
4. Direct support funding opportunities
5. Addressing operational challenges
6. Rethinking the housing model: innovative care-based & community-led options

Areas identified for development

- Address gaps in knowledge, resources, and service
- Capacity building tools and resources
- Alternative models based on continuum of care and housing in community
- Internal network collaboration
- External community partnerships
- Advocacy around right to housing
- Submission to Federal Housing Advocate

Thank you

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