

# United Counties of Leeds and Grenville

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**SUPPORTIVE CABINS INITIATIVE**

**December 2024**





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## INTRODUCTION

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville (UCLG), in partnership with the John Howard Society of Kingston and District, and the City of Brockville, is proud to introduce the Supportive Cabins Initiative.

Located at 1805 County Road 2 East, Brockville, this innovative initiative is designed to address chronic homelessness in our community by providing short-term stabilization with 24/7 support services.

Our goal is to create a safe and supportive environment where individuals experiencing homelessness can find stability, access essential services, and prepare for a transition into long-term housing solutions.

For information as it becomes available, frequently asked questions and more, please visit [www.leedsgrenville.com/supportivecabins](http://www.leedsgrenville.com/supportivecabins)

## ABOUT THE SUPPORTIVE CABINS INITIATIVE

### Cabins and Their Purpose

The Supportive Cabins Initiative will consist of 25 individual cabins, each equipped with essential amenities to provide residents with a comfortable and secure place to live. The cabins are part of a broader strategy to reduce homelessness in Leeds and Grenville by offering a pathway to more permanent housing solutions.

### *Key Features*

- **Individual Cabins:** Each cabin will provide a private space for residents, including basic living amenities.
- **24/7 Supervision:** The site will be managed by the John Howard Society of Kingston and District, ensuring round-the-clock supervision and support for residents.

Homelessness is a complex issue that affects individuals and communities alike. The Supportive Cabins Initiative is a critical step towards providing immediate relief to those in need while addressing the root causes of homelessness. By offering a safe and supportive environment, this initiative aims to improve the overall well-being of our community.

### *Addressing Concerns*

- **Safety:** With 24/7 supervision and security measures in place, the initiative is designed to be a positive and secure addition to the neighborhood. Emergency services (Brockville Police, Brockville Fire Department, Leeds Grenville Paramedic Service) have been part of on-going discussions to ensure the site is safe for residents and the community.
- **Community Collaboration:** We are committed to working closely with local emergency services and community organizations to ensure the initiative's success and address any concerns that may arise.

## THE SERVICE PROVIDER - JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY

The John Howard Society of Kingston and District (JHSKD) has been serving the greater Kingston area for more than 60 years; with a focus on service provision for individuals who are currently involved or at risk of involvement with the justice system. JHSKD entered the service landscape in Leeds and Grenville in 2017 with the establishment of the Bail Supervision program, engaged in significant program expansion, and subsequently brought the Connect Youth program under the umbrella of services following a merger in 2023. Our agency now offers a full spectrum of services from early intervention/proactive through to crisis response and management for clients in Leeds and Grenville ages 12 through end of life.

Our agency's commitment to addressing homelessness in this district is long standing; with our community residential facility having been operational in Kingston since 2012 providing accommodation and support to conditionally-released male federal offenders. The primary objective of this facility is to provide residents with a stable, structured, and supervised independent living environment as they reintegrate back into the community. The learnings from this facility have been applied to our housing program in Leeds and Grenville, which currently includes 9 short term case management beds for youth ages 16-24 who are experiencing homelessness. Staff are adept at providing intensive case management for clients with a multitude of barriers, interfacing with a wide range of community partners, and transitioning clients into long term sustainable housing. All housing programs in Leeds & Grenville are operated in alignment with UCLG's coordinated access approach.

Our commitment to addressing homelessness in our community was solidified with our \$1 million capital investment in Brockville at 125 Stewart Blvd. This investment, made possible with support from Reaching Home (Employment and Social Development Canada), was used to create a new office space with dedicated programming areas and an additional six residential units on site for clients requiring intensive case management supports. Our talented staff possess a wide range of relevant post-secondary education along with specific trainings including Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training, Mental Health First Aid, Situation Table, Violence Threat Risk Assessment, and more. Our Leeds and Grenville team is managed by Executive Director Julie Langan and Assistant Director Robyn Holmes, who have a combined 40 years of experience in social services and managing complex dynamic teams. JHSKD has made strategic investments in our internal systems, having developed, and strengthened policies relating to financial reporting, human resources, and staff wellbeing.

Our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion is embedded in our practices and highlighted in our recent hiring of a Native Liaison Officer dedicated to supported Indigenous inmates at Quinte Detention Centre; a position which provides culturally supportive programs, services and activities aimed at promoting Indigenous healing and wellness. The Native Inmate Liaison Officer Program addresses the unique needs of Indigenous clients within the “healing continuum” through support and services that promote healthy functioning with all aspects of their lives and their communities

With support from our provincial body, as well as resource sharing and development opportunities with our 19 John Howard Society affiliate offices across Ontario, our agency is positioned on a solid foundation on which we can continue to expand our client services, with evidenced based practices, research, and policy reform. Our staff credentials, internal systems, and proven record of accomplishment combine to position us as an ideal service provider for the Supportive Cabin Initiative in Leeds and Grenville.

## **Their Role**

JHSKD will be responsible for the administration of case management services for residents of the local cabin community. As the lead agency, we will offer a 24/7 supportive living environment for residents, which will include offering them structure, supervision, support (for addictions and mental health, for instance), and life skills to become more independent. Staff will be responsible for maintaining resident safety, resolving interpersonal conflict, resident management, scheduling activities for the tenants and facilitating group workshops in conjunction with external agencies.

In alignment with these best practices, case management services provided on-site for cabin residents would be inclusive of the following approaches:

- Person-Centred
- Flexible
- Designed to promote independence, growth, and dignity
- Connect People with their community and promote inclusion

**Examples of supports and programming offered by on-site staff will include:**

- *Life Skills Training:* Programs that teach essential life skills such as cooking, budgeting, time management, and personal hygiene.
- *Educational Workshops:* Workshops on topics like financial literacy, job readiness, computer skills, and educational opportunities facilitated with our community partners.
- *Employment Support:* Assistance with job searching, resume building, interview skills, and access to job training programs with local employment service provider the Employment and Education Centre.
- *Health and Wellness Programs:* Initiatives promoting physical and mental health, including fitness classes, nutrition education, stress management, and substance abuse counseling with agencies such as Lanark, Leeds and Grenville Addictions and Mental Health, Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, Brockville General Hospital, and more.
- *Peer Support Groups:* Groups where residents can share experiences, provide mutual support, and learn from each other.

**Examples of supports and programming offered by on-site staff will include:**

- *Recreational Activities:* Facilitation of activities such as arts and crafts, sports, outings, and community events to foster socialization and leisure.
- *Cultural and Community Engagement:* Programs that celebrate diversity, cultural heritage, and community involvement.
- *Housing Stability Support:* Assistance with housing searches, eviction prevention, and landlord-tenant mediation.

Collaboration is at the heart of our practice, with our staff utilizing a systems navigation approach for service delivery. Systems navigation refers to the process of helping individuals or groups navigate complex systems of services, resources, or bureaucracies to access the support they need effectively. It involves guiding people through various institutions, such as healthcare systems, social services, education systems, legal processes, or government agencies, to ensure they understand their options and access appropriate services or benefits. Implementation of the Supportive Cabin Initiative will involve continuation of our current collaborative practices, while striving to advance local objectives in terms of long-range plans to address homelessness.

## Message from the JHSKD Leadership Team

John Howard of Kingston and District, a leader in social justice and community safety, is proud to announce a bold new initiative to tackle homelessness in Leeds and Grenville. The Supportive Cabins Initiative, aims to provide sustainable short-term housing solutions and support services for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Julie Langan, Executive Director of JHSKD, emphasized the importance of this initiative, stating, “homelessness is one of the most pressing challenges our community faces today. As leaders, it is our responsibility to take meaningful action. This initiative is not just about providing shelter, but about restoring dignity, offering hope, and creating pathways to stability for those who need it most.”

*The initiative will focus on several key areas:*

1. **Affordable Housing Development:** Partnering with United Counties of Leeds and Grenville and developers, we will create new affordable short-term housing units specifically for individuals at risk of or currently experiencing homelessness.
2. **Comprehensive Support Services:** In collaboration with community organizations, we will offer a range of support services, including job training, mental health counseling, and addiction recovery programs, to help individuals transition into permanent housing.
3. **Emergency Assistance:** Immediate support will be provided through temporary shelters and essential services to those in urgent need, ensuring no one is left without a safe place to sleep.

Robyn Holmes continued, “This initiative is a testament to our commitment to making a tangible difference in the lives of those who are most vulnerable. We believe that by working together with our partners and the community, we can create a city where everyone has a place to call home.”

John Howard Society of Kingston and District invites the community to follow us in the journey on our social media. For more information on how to get involved or to support this initiative, please visit <https://johnhoward.on.ca/kingston/> or contact [cabins@jhskd.ca](mailto:cabins@jhskd.ca)

## SECURITY AND SUPERVISION

JHSKD has experience developing comprehensive policies and procedures for our programs, many of which have been developed specifically for our residential programs. These policies are developed in consultation with our provincial body and other John Howard Society affiliate offices to ensure they are responsive to best practices.

The Supportive Cabins Initiative site will be staffed 24/7 by a combination of program managers, case managers, support staff and contracted security personnel. Physical site design has been established with consideration of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principals and will feature fully fenced controlled access.

Procedures for the cabin initiative will be specifically designed to meet the needs of the residents and physical site plan and will include extensive input from local emergency services (Police, Fire, Paramedic Service). On-site training and ongoing consultation have been arranged with existing cabin administrators to ensure their learnings can be embedded in our practice.

At JHSKD, we are committed to ongoing professional development and on-site staff will engage in extensive continued training regarding emergency preparedness and response.

### **Resident Rules and Guidelines**

Residents of the cabins will be required to engage in a participation agreement with John Howard Society of Kingston & District. The participation agreement actively engages residents in individualized goal setting and outlines reciprocal expectations for both residents and staff in terms of program delivery.

JHSKD is in the process of developing resident guidelines which are specifically tailored to the Supportive Cabins Initiative. Resident rules for this program will be respectful of the intricacies of a communal living environment and be designed to promote safety and inclusivity of all staff and participants.

Resident rules will be inclusive of topics such as violence & harassment, resident restrictions, curfew, substance use, and contraband.

Violations of resident rules will result in the administration of infractions which are issued utilizing a tiered system. Level one (minor) infractions will result in the issuance of a warning, whereas level three infractions (immediate risk to person or property) result in immediate eviction of the resident(s).

# MAP OF LOCATION



-  Cabins Location
-  Cooperative Care Center
-  Brockville Water Pollution Control
-  Chartwell Rosedale Retirement Residence
-  Brockville Mental Health Centre
-  St. Lawrence Lodge Long-Term Care Home
-  Public Transit Stop

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Your feedback and questions are important to us. If you have any concerns, suggestions, or need more information about the Supportive Cabins Initiative, please reach out to us.

We are committed to transparency and open communication throughout the development and operation of the Supportive Cabins Initiative. Thank you for your support as we work together to create a stronger, more compassionate community.

For frequently asked questions, and information as it becomes available, please visit our website at [www.leedsgrenville.com/supportivecabins](http://www.leedsgrenville.com/supportivecabins)

### United Counties of Leeds and Grenville

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- Phone: 613-342-3840

### John Howard Society of Kingston and District

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## Upcoming Public Information Session

We invite you to join us for a Public Information Session where we will provide detailed information about the Supportive Cabins Initiative and answer any questions you may have.

**Date:** October 30, 2024

**Time:** 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

**Location:** Brockville Memorial Centre, Community Hall

This session is an opportunity for you to learn more about the Supportive Cabins Initiative. Officials from the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, the City of Brockville, the John Howard Society, Brockville Police Services, Brockville Fire Department, and Leeds Grenville Paramedic Service will be available for questions.



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