

Sex Trade Housing Support Program (STHS)

Questions & Answers for Referral Agency

What is the program about?

The Sex Trade Housing Support Program (STHS) provides support to individuals and families who are involved in or affected by the sex trade to maintain long term housing stability through voluntary, coordinated and unique individual and group focused support services designed to increase their social, life, and employability skills.

Who is eligible?

This program assists male, female, and transgender sex trade workers in the Durham Region who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness and is inclusive of: youth, adults, persons with disabilities, persons with addictions and mental health issues, persons involved with the criminal justice system and victims of domestic violence. An individual who occasionally trades sex for cash, shelter, etc may not view themselves as "a sex trade worker." This person is still eligible for the program.

What are the components of the program?

The main program components include:

- **Outreach:** The Support Worker will be visible in the community and available to individuals on a flexible basis, as well as will partner with community agencies to provide services to sex trade workers. Services may be provided in a variety of community settings: coffee shops, restaurants, public libraries, employment resource centres, community centres, and locations of other community partners
- **Housing:** The Support Worker will assist with mitigating the risks to tenancy; landlord disputes, managing anti-social behaviours, conflict resolution with other tenants, securing housing placement; assistance to access rent supplements, RGI applications, applying for last month's rent and moving costs, accessing furniture, income supports, landlord advocacy, and any other applications/forms, provide workshops/information on landlord/tenant rights and responsibilities, assistance and referrals for legal consultation including accompaniment to the Landlord/Tenant Tribunal
- **Pre-Employment Supports:** The Support Worker will assist individuals with: seeking opportunities and connecting to meaningful daily activities of their choosing, coaching and support with respect to employment opportunities

- **Education and Training:** The Support Worker will provide the following: referrals for skill assessments, assistance to obtain records of previous educational achievements, help to access to educational opportunities
- **Life Skills:** Group psychoeducational programming will be provided which focus on budgeting, meal planning, grief and loss, healthy relationships, communication skills, and self-esteem. Additional life skills support will be offered on an individual basis including: assistance to establish regular daily and weekly routines, assistance to obtain basic needs, parenting support, money management, accompanying and providing referrals to doctors, counsellors, addiction and mental health services, family and criminal court support, and other community resources
- **Social Support:** The program will promote social integration through the exploration of opportunities to connect with the community, eg support groups identified by the individual (eg parent support groups, AA/NA), accessing local community centres, general interest or special interest groups, as well as family members, church groups, peers and trusted friends.
- The program will promote social integration through the provision of recreational activities; may include introduction of and encouragement to attend local community centres and support groups identified by the individual (ie. Parent support groups, general interest groups, AA/NA, YMCA fitness program). The Support Worker will also explore with participant opportunities to connect with natural supports in the community; family members, church groups, special interest groups, peers and trusted friends, colleagues/coworkers

How is the program funded?

The Sex Trade Housing Support Program is funded by the Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy Outreach Communities Initiative, through the United Way of Durham Region

When does the program run?

Referrals are being accepted now. The program runs approximately one year according to the needs of the individual.

Please have a look at the Referral Form in this package and think about individuals you know who would benefit from this program. We look forward to your referrals!

If you want more information please contact Glenda Leahey, Housing Outreach Worker
905-579-8482 ext. 225 or 905-244-2602

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