



john  
howard  
society

Toronto



Strategic Plan  
2024 to 2026



## VISION

A safer Toronto where individuals in conflict or at risk with the law have access to resources, enabling them to choose a different path.

## MISSION

John Howard Society of Toronto provides tools and supports to empower individuals involved in the criminal justice system to create meaningful change in their lives.

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# THREE-YEAR VISION NARRATIVE

## 1.

### STRENGTHEN AND IMPROVE PROGRAM QUALITY, MANAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

John Howard Society of Toronto continues to focus on the reduction of recidivism by giving clients the tools, resources and skills to rebuild their lives and contribute positively to society. We are client-centred and committed to promoting dignity in all that we do. Ultimately, we create safer communities by fostering individual wellbeing.

Over the coming three years, John Howard Society of Toronto (JHST) will extend and improve inclusive, individualized and evidence-based services that successfully reintegrate people into the community.

#### **Focus on what we do best.**

We are subject matter leaders in reintegration. This work involves serving adults and youth, aged 18 to 24 years of age, through a medley of services that promote positive change and provide people with second chances. We offer Youth Programs, Adult Programs, Reintegration Services, Institutional Services, and Harm Reduction.

Going forward, we will incrementally strengthen and expand our core programming and services. Through ongoing program reviews and assessments, we will evaluate current service and program models to ensure strategic focus and sustainability, while improving the outcomes for the individuals we serve.

We will ensure greater internal integration across programs, stronger community referrals and partnerships, and expanded programming, pending new funding opportunities. We will also actively leverage alliances, community assets and resources for our clients. Lastly, we will examine ways to create efficiencies across our services, programs and operations.

We will continue to embed diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) principles and strategies into our services to promote individual and community belonging. We will be responsive to the needs of culturally diverse communities, including Black, Racialized and Indigenous people who are significantly over-represented in the criminal justice system.

We will prioritize professional development and build an organizational culture that values and integrates DEI practices into operations and services. We will monitor and report on our success in this area with the goal of continually embedding a DEI lens into work.

## Advance a housing agenda.

A place to live is essential to stability. We have the experience and expertise to help individuals involved in the criminal justice system find a home – a need that is not being met in our community! As we strengthen our core services, we will increasingly meet the housing needs our clients.

Building on our housing experience, we will explore a variety of solutions. We will undertake a feasibility study to expand our Community Residential Facility (CRF) so that we can provide more beds for federal parolees. We have the relationships and capacity to increase the number of clients accessing these facilities. We will pursue these opportunities with the federal government.

We are additionally exploring the opportunity to build transitional housing units or to increase beds with the support of the provincial government. This will also require feasibility work and, if successful, will result in a plan of action and a resource development strategy to support new housing.

Finally, we will also examine creative ways to increase clients access to post-incarceration housing through alliances with partners, stakeholders and landlords.

## Measure our impact.

In the next three years, JHST will strengthen program evaluation to ensure our services are evidence-based and demonstrate impact. We will establish an organization-wide evaluation plan and build an improved system to better measure our long-term outcomes and impact.

We will improve our data systems to more effectively monitor and enhance services and programs, while fostering an organizational culture of continual improvement. We will examine best practices and learn from partners and allies to enhance our approach to monitoring and evaluation.

JHST will also establish decision-making criteria for examining and analyzing new service opportunities to ensure alignment to core competencies and capacities.

Committed to collaboration, we will continue to work in partnership with others to strengthen our service outcomes, while enhancing JHST's impact, reach and visibility.

Going forward, our three-year strategies to strengthen programs are:

1. Focus on what we do best.
2. Advance a housing agenda.
3. Measure our impact.



## 2.

### INCREASE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, PARTNERSHIPS AND MARKETING

We have a great story to tell. We will educate the public about the importance of investing in just, humane and effective responses to crime as fundamental to both creating safer communities and providing second chances to individuals.

#### **Showcase our impact.**

We will increase our organizational visibility and presence by highlighting the important role we play in the criminal justice system. By implementing an external communications strategy, we will create more awareness of our work and leverage new opportunities, programs, partnerships, and responses. We will promote the impact of our services and highlight the significant cost savings that community-based services provide as an alternative to incarceration.

#### **Build strong alliances.**

Our success relies on broadening and strengthening our connections and relationships with funders, policy makers, community leaders and justice partners to build safer and more resilient communities and to champion positive change within the criminal justice system.

As trusted leaders in the criminal justice community, we will participate in planning tables and coalitions to build community capacity to respond to current and emerging needs. We will also support better systems coordination and client navigation to improve services. Along with working collectively with local partners, we will amplify our efforts with the eighteen other John Howard Societies across the province.

As a local affiliate of John Howard Society of Ontario (JHSO), we will utilize the provincial Centre of Research and Policy to access research, analysis, policy work, and best practices to better inform our program development and delivery.

We will also work with JHSO to examine the complexity of housing needs in Toronto to devise evidence-based responses to housing. This will support JHST's housing work over the coming years while providing best practices more broadly for the sector.

We will additionally join forces with John Howard Society of Canada to lend our voice in support of their important role in public education, community service and in pressing for reform in the criminal justice area. We will work with them to leverage national responses and solutions to the current housing shortage nation-wide.

Our three-year strategies to champion criminal justice responses are:

1. Showcase our impact.
2. Build strong alliances.



### 3. STRENGTHEN AND IMPROVE LEADERSHIP (GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS) AND PEOPLE RESOURCES

John Howard Society of Toronto's ability to provide responsive and inclusive services depends on the organization's capacity and resilience. We will continue to grow our organizational capacity and systems to support organizational excellence.

#### **Centre our people.**

Our people are at the heart of this. We will invest in our Board, staff, volunteer teams, and student placements and support them to learn, grow and excel in their roles.

We will provide an inclusive, safe and supportive work environment that promotes engagement and belonging. We will foster an organizational culture of respect, collaboration, innovation, adaptability and continual improvement. We will promote a culture of learning and engagement built on staff wellbeing and belonging.

Over the next three years, we will strengthen our recruitment, orientation, retention and succession strategies. Staff will be supported with mentoring, leadership development, promotional enhancement, and team building opportunities. We will improve internal communication to support inter-departmental connectivity and service integration. We will create professional development opportunities to ensure our staff have the skills and expertise to succeed at their work, while building capacity across teams for succession planning.

A culture of two-way feedback is key. We will provide staff with timely and consistent supervision and performance feedback while inviting them to provide regular input to enhance the organization's performance. This will require an investment in our human resource systems and structures including a review of our organizational structure for greater efficiency and team-building. It also involves integrating proper change management strategies into day-to-day operations.

We will prioritize positive labour relations. We will work collaboratively with the union to sustain a mutually beneficial working environment. This means early and open communication, leadership support and staff empowerment to increase productivity, employee engagement and enhance job satisfaction.

### **Optimize operational processes.**

We will continually assess our organizational systems, platforms and policies to ensure we have the operational infrastructure and communication systems to achieve our service and operational goals. This includes modernizing our HR platforms, undertaking ongoing policy review, and enhancing internal and external communications protocols. It also includes building internal structures and systems that support a more robust evaluation process for the organization and its services.

Additionally, we will strengthen the organization's long-term financial planning processes with a focus on maintaining and optimizing our capital assets and real estate.

Our three-year strategies to foster a resilient, sustainable, and high-performing organization are:

1. Centre our people.
2. Optimize operational processes.





# 4.

## ENHANCE REVENUE, FISCAL RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

### **Widen our funding sources.**

JHST's ability to achieve its mandate rests on access to funding. Going forward, we will increase our financial sustainability by diversifying revenue sources that align with our vision for impact.

We will focus on building our long-term financial stability by identifying new and alternative funding sources, while actively stewarding relationships with current funders and donors. We will continue to explore and expand government funding opportunities at all three levels of government to grow programming and strengthen organizational capacity.

We will undertake prospect research and secure new dollars from targeted corporations, foundations, associations and service clubs. One area of development for JHST includes encouraging bequests and major gifts from people positively impacted by reintegration services.

### **Leverage strategic efficiencies.**

In order to optimize efficiencies, JHST will develop strategies to increase service and operational integration across its many services and departments.

Current programming will be realigned and consolidated for greater efficacy and impact. We will also continue to monitor best practices and innovations within the sector and apply them, resulting in greater impact and value. Lastly, we will undertake in-depth financial analysis to inform program priorities, decisions, and operational approaches.

Our three-year strategies to build long-term financial sustainability are:

1. Widen our funding.
2. Leverage strategic efficiencies.

