

YOUR IMPACT

SUMMARY REPORT 2023-2024



Meeting the Need

In a period of unprecedented challenges for our community, The Mission continues to meet the needs of increasing numbers of vulnerable people.



Over four years after City Council declared a homelessness emergency in Ottawa, homelessness has returned to catastrophic levels. The chronic lack of affordable and supportive housing, post-pandemic mental health distress, substance use, job loss, and continuing inflation for food and rent, have pushed The Mission's capacity to cope to the limit.

In 2023, the number of asylum seekers arriving at The Mission increased significantly. Given the lack of available emergency dorm beds and chapel mats (and no beds elsewhere, since all shelters in Ottawa are full), on average, **27 people slept on chairs in our lounge each night**. Housing workers, who normally work to find housing for clients, are busy helping these arrivals navigate registering as refugees. And **our meal numbers**, which doubled during the pandemic and topped over one million last year, **climbed even higher to over 1.1 million this year**.

Many refugees report receiving no government support and turning to us for necessities, since many organizations that deal with refugees are also at overcapacity. In November, The Mission wrote to the federal Ministers of Housing and Immigration to express our concern, noting the severity of homelessness in Ottawa and also that the City cannot solve this problem on its own. We urged the federal government to come forward with immediate supports for refugee claimants in Ottawa.



**Your support helps vulnerable people to reclaim their lives.
On behalf of our clients, thank you.**



A handwritten signature of Peter Saunders.

Peter Saunders
CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
THE OTTAWA MISSION



A handwritten signature of Peter Tilley.

Peter Tilley
CEO,
THE OTTAWA MISSION

How The Mission is feeding hope and changing lives

The Ottawa Mission is working at maximum capacity to address the damaging effects of food insecurity and homelessness by feeding and housing increasing numbers of people in need, fueled by mental health distress, substance use, job loss, high costs for essentials such as food and rent, and now significant numbers of newcomers.

Despite the chronic lack of affordable and supportive housing in Ottawa, our amazing case managers successfully housed 270 clients. **An affordable home for every client is a core goal of our case managers**, who go the extra mile to ensure that clients have permanent homes.

Thanks to our generous donors, we've been able to expand our services in an attempt to meet the overwhelming need for hunger relief in Ottawa. However, we can only do so much.

This is why we continue to advocate to all three levels of government to address the reasons why people across our community and our country are increasingly turning to food-support programs like ours just to survive.

We need to address the root causes of why people are turning to these programs, including poverty, lack of meaningful adjustments to income support programs, a continuing lack of affordable and supportive housing, and much more.



This past year our meal numbers served at our shelter and across Ottawa through our food truck program shattered the one million mark, serving an average of **3,100 meals daily**.



Our **Mobile Mission Meals** program has also expanded rapidly: with two trucks and **over 7,800 meals served per week at a total of 38 stops**.

Why I turned to The Mission for help...



Mehal couldn't find an entry point into a career. While searching for volunteer opportunities, she found a path forward with the FSTP.

Through this no-cost and flexible program, she could train alongside chefs, all while working an external job to make ends meet.

"Without this program, I'm not sure how I would've broken into the food service industry."



Despite attending residential school, **James** persevered in life. But when the pandemic hit, he lost his job and couldn't afford his rent. We helped him find an affordable apartment.

Now, James returns to the shelter to perform smudging ceremonies to help foster a more inclusive environment for our Indigenous clients.

"This is what I've always wanted to do: help others."



Newcomers staying at The Mission have filled our 'English Club' at *MCA Ottawa Stepping Stones Learning Centre*. There, **Guillaume** and others work on their English to prepare for work and life in Canada. Guillaume has since found a job and moved into his own place!

"We're all from different countries, but we're like family."



While we helped Siegfried find housing, he also visited our *DYMON Health Clinic's* eye clinic, where he was referred for cataract surgery.

Siegfried has since found housing, but still returns for regular check-ups!

"It's a relief to know that I can find help and treatment here. My vision has improved greatly."



A difficult youth put **Mike** on a path of substance use and struggle before he sought help. At LifeHouse, he became a mentor to other clients. Now, he wants to help others.

"I had a safe environment to shed my tears. LifeHouse has so much to offer to someone who wants to change their life."

2023-2024 OUTCOMES + IMPACT

FOOD SERVICES TRAINING PROGRAM



72 graduates

54 graduates employed at graduation

342 graduates since 2004

91% of graduates employed in the food industry at graduation

HOUSING SERVICES



270 clients successfully housed

49 clients diverted to alternative accommodations

1,014 unique clients served by housing case managers

28 Second Stage participants

CLIENT SERVICES



71 MCA Ottawa Stepping Stones Learning Centre students

72 Discovery University grads

105 clients helped with resumes

267 unique clients served by Client Services case management

HEALTH SERVICES



44 new Hospice admissions

3,490 DYMON Health Clinic patient encounters

130 Ophthalmology and Optometry Clinic consults

407 dental care patient visits

ADDICTION & TRAUMA SERVICES



27 Hope Program graduates

56 Stabilization graduates

22 LifeHouse graduates

467 addiction counselling sessions with community clients



Why I support The Mission... **ACTON**

We couldn't offer our programs and supports without the help of both our volunteers and donors. Acton qualifies as both.

A military career saw Acton working in Ottawa on and off throughout the years. It was back during an Ottawa posting in the early '90's that he first volunteered with The Mission.

After he retired and settled in Ottawa, Acton returned to the fold as a Mission volunteer. He was inspired to see just how much The Mission had evolved since his time volunteering in the '90's.

"It's wonderfully enabling here; the programs and staff that help people get their IDs, get their bank accounts set up, all these services that help people get back on their feet, including unique facilities like the health centre and the hospice."

His duties include bringing meals from our shelter kitchen up to the hospice. To keep the food warm, meals are placed inside a mobile warming cabinet. After experiencing malfunctions with the aging appliance, Acton purchased and donated a new one to The Mission.

Acton understands how helpful a little bit of compassion, understanding, and charity can be. ***"We're only an arm's reach away from where a client might be. Often, they've led lives quite similar to ours, but a little trip or hiccup knocked them off course. If you can give someone in need a sense of stability and an opportunity to take a step forward, it can make all the difference."***

Thank you for helping our clients take that step forward, Acton!

About **The Ottawa Mission**

Since 1906, The Ottawa Mission has been serving those who are homeless, hungry, and vulnerable by providing food, clothing, shelter, and skills.



In 2023–2024, The Mission provided emergency shelter to an average of **187 people every night** and served an average of **3,103 meals every day.**

The Mission also provides primary, dental, and eye care services, mental health and addictions treatment programs, hospice care, housing services, educational and employment support, job training, spiritual care, and clothing to thousands of people in need.



Visit ottawamission.com to learn more.

