




+
the ottawa
mission
more than a shelter

IMPACT REPORT

2024-2025



"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

MT 11:28

Welcome to Our Annual Impact Report

It has been another challenging yet impactful year at The Ottawa Mission, where the dedicated support of our donors is the main reason why we're able to meet the growing need.

Hunger and food insecurity continue to surge to the point where we've once again set a new high in total meals served over the course of the year. All our shelter beds, overflow sleeping mats, and many of our waiting room chairs remained occupied each and every single night.

While we continue to meet the need in the here and now, we're encouraged by the progress we're making in also addressing the long-term and systemic factors that contribute to hunger and homelessness through many actions and achievements, including:

Housing more people than beds available.

Yes, our 179 emergency shelter beds and nine overflow mats were always full, but, through the dedicated work of our client case managers, we also helped 270 total people find housing.

Advocating for change.

Since we cannot solve the homelessness and food insecurity crises on our own, we've advocated for help and meaningful policy changes from all levels of government to lead us out of this emergency.

Our Advocacy program continues to gain momentum, and over this past year, we ran two successful letter writing campaigns where a record number of Ottawa Mission advocates wrote to their respective provincial and federal election candidates, asking for solutions.

We'll continue to expand our advocacy efforts, running training sessions and sharing educational information about how, together, we can spur on governments to take meaningful action.

Skills, practice, and employment through our new job training program.

Inside ***Chef Ric's*** on Rideau Street, the site that he'd donated to The Mission, Lalit Aggarwal stood with us and watched the hustle and bustle of employees and ***Food Services Training Program*** students buzzing around the kitchen. We were witnessing job training and solutions to poverty and homelessness in action.

That's when Lalit leaned over and mentioned that there was a great shortage of building superintendents and maintenance technicians in the city. And so, the genesis of the ***Maintenance Services Training Program*** (MSTP) was born.

This fiscal year, we officially launched the MSTP. In a successful pilot class, 5 people gained the trades-based and custodial skills, accreditations, and work experience they needed to launch careers in the building maintenance and superintendent fields. You'll learn more about how we plan to grow this transformative program to help even more people.

New heights reached by our original job training program.

Not to be outdone, Chef Ric's and the Food Services Training Program continues to grow. We graduated a record 84 total students into culinary careers over the past year!

Without you, none of this would be possible. We encourage you to read on and learn just how impactful your support is.

On behalf of our clients and those in need, thank you.



Peter Saunders

Peter Saunders
CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
THE OTTAWA MISSION



Peter Tilley

Peter Tilley
CEO,
THE OTTAWA MISSION

MEETING THE NEED

In 2024, The Ottawa Mission issued our No More Waiting report concerning shocking levels of homelessness and food insecurity. In 2025, things are even worse.

- Homelessness in Canada has **increased by 20%** since 2018.¹
- **Over 80,000 Ontarians are homeless**, a 25% increase since 2022. Without significant intervention, homelessness could triple to almost 300,000 by 2035.²
- **23% of Canadians are food insecure**, including 2.1 million children.³
- Major Ontario cities have declared **food insecurity emergencies**.⁴

Government investments in homelessness are insufficient to meet the overwhelming need:

- While \$561 million is currently invested federally in homelessness, a 50% reduction in chronic homelessness requires an additional \$3.5 billion annually.⁵
- While Ontario has invested in housing, an additional \$13 billion over 10 years is needed to end chronic homelessness.⁶

Government income security policies can address food security, but are insufficient to meet the staggering need for food:

- Federal old-age pensions have reduced the risk of food insecurity, but recipients must be age 65 or older. And while the *Child Tax Benefit* reduces the risk of severe food insecurity for recipients, it does not decrease their overall risk.⁷
- **Almost all income support rates across jurisdictions in Canada are insufficient**; those dependent on disability and other supports live in deep poverty.^{8,9}
- Minimum wage level enhancements also protect against food insecurity,¹⁰ but **Ontario's minimum wage remains below the threshold to meet basic needs**.¹¹

And in Ottawa:

Homelessness has grown 13% since 2021* to almost 3,000 people, with 500+ living outside. Certain populations bear a greater burden of homelessness.¹²

**see graph 2*

Food insecurity has risen from one in seven to one in four households.¹³



1 in 4



Our shelter has been at over 100% occupancy since 2017.

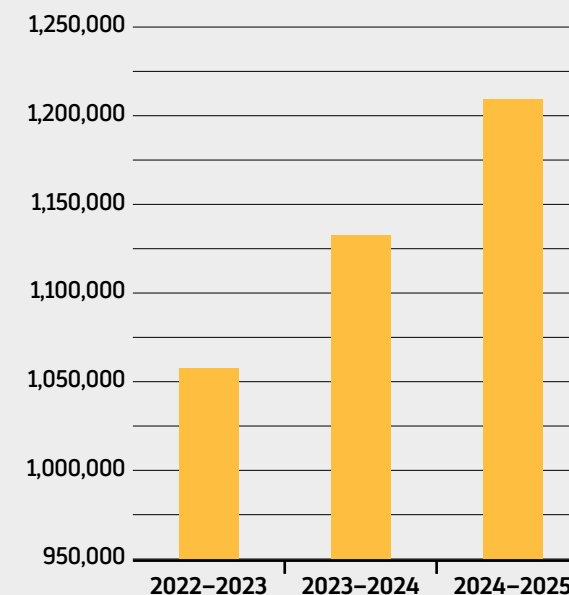
The only exception to this was during the pandemic when we diverted clients to overflow shelters to promote social distancing. Since then, we have returned to overcapacity, with clients sleeping in our chapel and our lounge.¹⁴

1,200,000+

The Mission served over 1.2 million meals to vulnerable community members.¹⁵

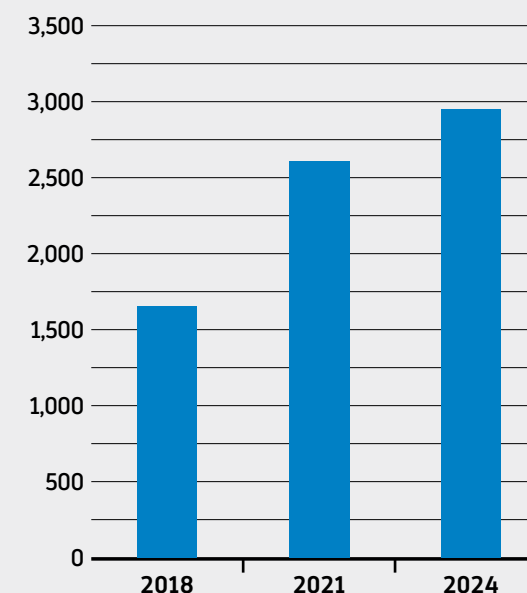
GRAPH 1

ANNUAL NUMBER OF MEALS SERVED BY THE OTTAWA MISSION



GRAPH 2

NUMBER OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS AT POINT IN TIME COUNTS 2018, 2021, AND 2024



Tragically, in January 2025, a homeless Indigenous man and a newcomer grandmother with untreated mental illness died after exposure to bitter cold.^{16,17}



Later this spring:

- The City of Ottawa's Auditor General reported that while the City receives capital funding for supportive housing, upper levels of government do not provide funds for health services and other operational costs. As a result, the City must scramble to find funds to operate supportive housing.¹⁸
- The City's 2024 *Housing Needs Assessment* report stated that if additional funding isn't put into building homes, shelters and transitional housing, homelessness in Ottawa could increase 58% over the next decade.¹⁹

Failures by governments to address growing poverty and income erosion, vanishing affordable housing, inadequate supportive housing, food inflation, and other causes have caused this crisis.

Until these factors are meaningfully addressed, things will get even worse.



more than a shelter

At The Ottawa Mission, we support clients to enhance the quality of their lives.

We nourish the body, mind and spirit of those who seek our help, and enable people in crisis to heal and build hope for the future.

We provide a full range of services and programs to help shelter residents and community members in need. These include:



EMERGENCY FOOD & SHELTER

including shelter guest and community meals, and frontline services



HOUSING SERVICES

including placement, diversion away from the shelter, and outreach



CLIENT SERVICES

including employment and educational support, mental health services, and clothing



HEALTH SERVICES

including primary, dental, eye, and palliative care



ADDICTION & TRAUMA SERVICES

including day programs, stabilization, and residential treatment



FUNDRAISING

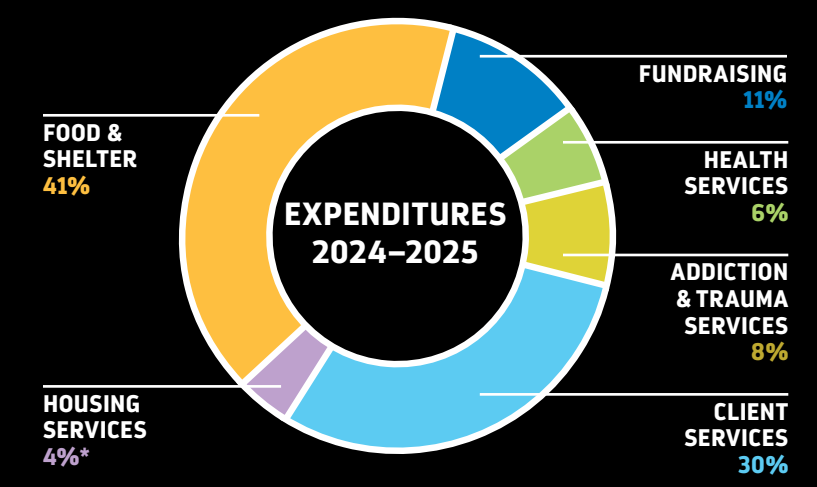
making all our services possible!!

Each of these programs is supported by a wider team that includes volunteers, partner agencies, spiritual support and operational support.

Our direct costs are categorized based on program outputs and are grouped into 6 main categories as displayed in this pie chart.

These costs also include volunteer services, community engagement, and a full-time chaplaincy department which are allocated to programs based on estimated time spent on each.

Further information is available at ottawamission.com/foundation-reports-and-impact/



*While the housing department comprises 4% of the OM's overall budget, case management services, which includes finding housing for clients, are spread across different departments such as housing, client services, and health services.

FOOD

We give hope to so many people in need in our community by providing nutritious food through our shelter's kitchen, our food trucks, and Chef Ric's, our social enterprise.



From our shelter, Chef Ric's, and food truck kitchens, our 42 full-time and 24 part-time staff members and 55 volunteers prepare and serve delicious meals every day so that no one in our community goes hungry. Behind the scenes, they maintain a clean and safe kitchen, working hard to ensure **meals are always available and served with kindness.**

We couldn't serve over 1,200,000 meals without the incredible support of partners, for which we're very grateful.

FOCUS

Food insecurity continues to rise, stretching resources thin

To be food insecure is to be constantly worried about running out of food, having to choose cheaper, nutritionally deficient food over healthier options, or to have no choice but to skip meals altogether.



Sadly, **1 in 4 Ottawa households now experience food insecurity.** More people are now relying on community agencies like The Ottawa Mission and the *Ottawa Food Bank* to avoid going hungry.²⁰

This increased need, plus rising food costs, led the Ottawa Food Bank to announce that they'd be cutting donations to 98 food programs by up to 50% in 2025.²¹ As one of the food programs that receives donations from the Food Bank, we've felt the effects of those cuts.

Our kitchen is adapting to these new challenges: seeking out new food sources, forging new community partnerships, and adjusting menus to meet the need. **As always, the vital support of our donors ensures that we don't let anyone go hungry.**



Why we volunteer with The Mission... THE PATTERSONS

Our special holiday meals are dynamic occasions where the faces of thousands of people in need pass through our doors for a warm meal, a sense of belonging, and community connection.

Holly, her husband Mark, and their son Caiden Patterson, have seen tens of thousands of faces come in hungry and leave happy, and that's because they've volunteered at our special dinners for an astounding 17 years and counting!

Colin, one of our community clients shares: *"People look forward to this meal. Not just for the food, but for the sense of friendship and community."*

Holly feels the same way: *"What these holiday dinners are really about is helping people feel that they are not forgotten, that they do matter, and that they are cared for. These small moments of joy can bring light to even the darkest of days."*

Why we turned to The Mission food trucks for help...

Before our food trucks even arrive at stops, a lineup usually forms. The lineups are always diverse: seniors with walkers, a mom holding an infant in one arm and a toddler in the other, young students, and more.

At a stop on St. Laurent Blvd, we spoke to people as they waited for meals.

"I'm a senior, right? My mobility is restricted. I'm lucky this stop is close. These meals help me survive." — ROGER

"I pay \$925 to rent a room with my partner. We're on welfare and hardly have any money left over. Chef Ric and The Mission are my saviour." — GILLES

There's a young boy who comes regularly. He's about 10 years old. He'll get meals to bring home to his family." — JOAN, A STOP VOLUNTEER



2024–2025 OUTCOMES + IMPACT

3,312*

average number of meals served daily

1,208,935**

meals served last year

88,750

grocery bags handed out

599,689

annual number of meals served by the food truck program

11,532

average number of food truck meals served weekly

40

food truck stops

* at The Mission: **1,669**
+ from the food trucks: **1,643**

** at The Mission: **609,246**
+ from the food trucks: **599,689**

SHELTER

We provide a clean, warm and safe place for those who need emergency shelter.



Our frontline team of 20 full-time and 30 casual staff are the first point of contact for people who have nowhere else to turn. They are available 24 hours a day to respond to the needs of our clients, and they ensure our guests have comfortable shelter at night.

Frontline staff are trained in **non-violent crisis intervention** and **First Aid** to deal with a variety of situations. They ensure that everyone at The Mission is safe and secure, and they help clients access **basic emergency supports** like food, toiletries, warm clothing and connections to wraparound services.

FOCUS

Protecting clients during extreme weather

Ottawa’s climate presents a unique challenge of protecting those experiencing homelessness.

Whether it is extreme heat, freezing temperatures, snowstorms, wildfire smoke affecting the air quality, or tornado warnings, our Frontline team dutifully monitors the neighbourhood to ensure the safety of those exposed to the weather.

Every 60 minutes, Frontline complete their rounds: *a walk through the shelter and around The Mission’s block to methodically check on the safety of everyone and everything.*

When extreme weather hits, they increase the frequency and scope of their rounds.

Depending on the extreme weather, Frontline will carry water, mittens, toques, light clothing, and other supplies to hand out.

No matter the weather, all clients are invited to come inside to our shelter waiting room, where chairs and climate-controlled conditions offer them safety and relief.



Why I work for The Mission...
GUY

As one of the first faces clients see when they come through our doors, Frontline prioritize building rapport with clients to best support those who are seeking help.

Establishing empathy and trust can lead to the most rewarding and most challenging aspects of working Frontline. Guy, who’s been a member of our Frontline team since 2023, shares two distinct types of interactions that illustrate this:

“I’ve been riding the bus and have had former clients recognize me. They’ll say hi, express their gratitude, and be excited to share with me how they’re now housed and doing better.”

For Guy, these types of interactions are up there with the best parts of the job. But hope and progress aren’t linear for all our clients.

“It can be challenging to see someone you’ve gotten to know who’s been doing better, but then they might have a mental health setback or a relapse. They can feel guilty or embarrassed about it.”

If Frontline see a client who is struggling, they make an effort to reach out. Guy recalls a recent interaction:

“A client was in tears, saying he was tired of what he was going through. I tried my best to remind him that no one was judging him and show him that we’re there to listen and provide further help.”

Many Frontline staff members are trained in *Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)*, along with other mental health intervention training.

Frontline will invite clients who are reaching out for help to join them in a private area where they can talk one-on-one. Depending on the time of day, they’ll use our dining room if we’re not serving a meal, or an unoccupied office, jumping on a computer to look up any resources based on the needs of the client.

To help get through the challenging moments and on towards those uplifting ones like he’s experienced on the bus, Guy is thankful for the support of his Frontline coworkers.

“The friendships and bonds we form on Frontline are important. We all look out for each other.”

2024–2025 OUTCOMES + IMPACT

1,248

unique individuals sheltered annually

187

individuals sheltered nightly on average

242

individuals sheltered nightly on average in all programs

100%

of overflow mats went down

105%

shelter and mat occupancy rate

HOUSING

At The Mission we believe that housing is a human right and vital for wellness, dignity, and a wholesome life.



We work hard to find safe, appropriate and affordable housing for our clients and help them to live independently. Our 8 full-time staff and 1 part-time peer support worker **help vulnerable people on their housing journey**, including the one-on-one support they need to either find new housing or to stay in their existing homes.

Diversion & Placement

When clients first arrive, we work with them to explore immediate alternative housing arrangements, helping them access the resources needed to secure more permanent housing.

If no alternative housing is available, we provide case management support to ensure clients are document-ready with the focus of finding secure, affordable homes based on their needs.

Outreach

Our staff support clients who have moved into their own homes.

The goal of outreach is to ensure that individuals moving into their own homes have access to different community resources that will help them live independently and stay housed.

Property Management

We operate two *Second Stage* homes for men who have completed our *LifeHouse* program or similar live-in addiction treatment programs.

They are supported in their recovery for up to one year after treatment.

The Mission owns two apartment buildings that combine market-rent units with subsidized units as well as a refurbished rooming house for people who are part of the programs we offer. Additional support (e.g., counselling) for people living in these properties is available upon request.

FOCUS

Keeping clients housed with our Rapid Housing Caseworker

For those grappling with long-term homelessness, getting the keys to a new home can be daunting. Sometimes, people unfortunately lose the housing they’ve just worked so hard to acquire if they don’t have any transitional support.

We’ve partnered with the City of Ottawa on a new position that helps with that transition. Clients who’ve spent 180 days or more in a shelter but have since signed a lease or otherwise found housing can now be assigned to our Rapid Housing Caseworker.

From there, our caseworker provides the client with support: connecting them with community resources, responding to their needs, and helping ensure their transition to housing is an overall success.

A unique quality of this new role is that our new rapid housing caseworker can support people after moving out from any Ottawa-area shelter! From *Cornerstone Housing for Women*, to *Shepherds of Good Hope*, and beyond, we’re excited to assist in successfully rehousing those in need.



Why I turned to The Mission for help...
JOHN

John stands beaming inside his new, modest 1-bed, 1-bath apartment. He shares that most of his furniture is from the *Furniture Bank*. It’s all standard stuff, but to John, who was homeless for nine years due to the profound trauma of losing his wife and child, its safety, security, and luxury.

After going through two of The Mission’s addiction programs, John’s housing caseworker Brandon helped place him in a Mission-owned and subsidized apartment.

As John rebuilds his life with plans to attend college and launch a new career, he’s thankful for The Mission’s continued support even though he’s now housed, with Brandon checking in on him week to week.

“I’ve never met a worker in my life who’s gone to bat for me like Brandon. He helped me get all this furniture and my clothes. He brought me food from the Food Bank when I was sick... I now have the safety and security to start over.”



Why I turned to The Mission for help...
SHAWN

Shawn stands proudly at his graduation from our *Food Services Training Program (FSTP)* and shares:

“I was living on the streets last year at this time... just right across the road.”

But Shawn wasn’t someone who had just recently fallen into hard times, only needing a job or an affordable place to lift himself out of homelessness. For many years, he was on and off the streets, in and out of jail, and grappling with substance use.

So, Shawn joined and completed *Stabilization* and *LifeHouse*, two of our abstinence-based addiction programs. Feeling like he had regained some solid footing, he was then ready to move into a place of his own, and our staff placed him into a Mission-subsidized apartment.

Thanks to your support, Shawn had all the resources he needed to find success in housing.

“I’m so glad I was given this chance. Thank you.”

2024–2025 OUTCOMES + IMPACT

270
clients successfully housed²²

24
households diverted to alternative accommodation²³

1,116
unique clients served by housing case managers

29
Second Stage housing participants

60
Veterans received Case management support

CLIENT SERVICES

We help clients access the resources they need to improve their lives and build their futures.



Our team of 6 full-time staff support homeless, low-income, and marginalized individuals to access services, resources, and paths to empowerment to improve their quality of life and build their futures. Our services include:

Employment Support

We help people find work by supporting them with resume writing, job searches, practice interviews, job-related training and appropriate workplace attire.

Educational Support

Our in-shelter teacher and educational partners help people to improve their lives through attaining their educational goals. The Mission’s MCA Ottawa Stepping Stones Learning Centre helps people obtain high school diplomas, complete post-secondary education, learn a trade or improve their literacy skills.

And in partnership with University of Ottawa, Carleton University and Saint Paul University, our Discovery University program provides free, non-credit university courses for people living on low incomes.

Mental Health Services

In partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association and The Royal, we ensure our clients have access to any needed psychiatric and psychological supports, including crisis intervention, assessment, relapse prevention, and coping strategies.

Case Management

Our case managers help clients meet their self-identified goals, which may include housing, education, employment, finances, substance use, health, and so much more.

FOCUS

Collaborating with tax experts to support our clients



Tax services are a lesser-known resource that can provide critical aid to those grappling with homelessness.

For a variety of reasons, many Mission and community clients might not have filed their taxes in recent years or have let their file with CRA grow out-of-date. Fortunately, Client Services collaborates with amazing volunteers like Rob Binotto, and a team from H&R Block to help clients file their taxes.

Rob hosts a weekly tax clinic at The Mission, where he helps unlock the funds, credits, and rebates crucial in lifting clients out of homelessness and back into financial stability.

Once taxes are filed, clients are issued a Notice of Assessment (NOA), which our case managers need to apply for subsidized housing on behalf of our clients. Our tax experts unlock these NOAs quickly, meaning our clients can be housed that much faster!



Why I turned to The Mission for help...
KRISTEN

When Kristen learned about our MCA Ottawa Stepping Stones Learning Centre, she was staying in a local women’s shelter after having spent some time living in a tent.

She connected with our in-shelter teacher Kathy a couple of years ago, which proved to be the start of an inspiring educational journey that soon saw her set to graduate from Algonquin College’s Law Clerk Program as part of the Dean’s List.

Kathy worked with Kristen to complete any outstanding high school credits, before helping her plan a potential future career and apply to college.

“I was given a chance to finish school, to go to college, to have the opportunity from being homeless to having a future.”

Thanks to your support, we’re able to give people a second chance at stabilizing and thriving in their lives!



Why we turned to The Mission for help...
REBECCA AND JAN

Discovery University provides access to post-secondary non-credit courses. It also provides an invaluable sense of community, purpose, and confidence, where DU students can experience higher learning — a privilege which is often only accessible to some.

Rebecca and Jan are two Discovery University students who have taken multiple courses in the program across different years.

Rebecca first heard about the program when she and her son were grappling with homelessness. A friend told her that a photography course was available free of charge, and Rebecca saw a chance to find purpose and pursue higher education on a subject that was always near and dear to her heart.

For her part, Jan is thankful for the education, but also the sense of community DU fosters.

“I find that the whole atmosphere of having accessible, free education a total benefit to anyone needing connection.”

2024–2025 OUTCOMES + IMPACT

EDUCATION

91
MCA Ottawa Stepping Stones Learning Centre students

2
high school graduates

1
college graduate

44
Discovery University graduates²⁴

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

19
clients engaged in CMHA-Transitional Case Management

46
clients referred to The Royal

CASE MANAGEMENT

397
unique clients served by Client Services Case Management

CLOTHING

34
individuals on average used the clothing room each day it is open²⁵

FSTP

We give people the training and work experience needed to start their culinary careers.

For those looking to change their lives, our team delivers a four-month job training program to teach the required skills to work in a commercial kitchen. **Program applicants must demonstrate only one qualification to be accepted — a strong desire to change their lives for the better.** Students pay no costs, and we make sure they have all the tools they need to succeed.

Our *Food Services Training Program* is located at Chef Ric’s, our social enterprise at 384 Rideau Street, which allows us to train even more people in need. Students graduate with newfound confidence and pride, and with credentials that allow them to be self-supporting. Their training includes:



Knife Skills



Culinary Theory



Occupational Health & Safety



Food Handler’s Certification



First Aid/ CPR

Students also gain significant experience working storefront and catering at Chef Ric’s, as well as shifts in our Mission kitchen and in our *Mobile Mission Meals* food trucks, and also a 40-hour unpaid placement in kitchens at many establishments throughout the city. Graduates of the program are employed all over the city.

FOCUS

The FSTP is still growing, even after 20 years

In the fall of 2004, Chef Ric launched the FSTP as a way to pay it forward. Culinary mentorship had allowed him to escape homelessness, and he knew that many others could be helped in a similar way.

20 years later, **over 400 people have graduated from the FSTP into stability, employment, and opportunity**, and class sizes have grown from 5 to 35.



To ensure the success of so many students, we’ve added an FSTP Support Worker. In her role, Romida builds out weekly student schedules, marks schoolwork, updates transcripts, and more.

Overall, and most importantly, however, Romida is there to help students succeed. Whether it’s guiding students on how to translate lessons if English isn’t their first language or rearranging schedules so students can make housing or medical appointments, we strive to remove all barriers to success.



FOUR months TO A FRESH start



Why we turned to The Mission for help...
JANINE & CURASA

It’s fitting that Janine and Curasa were selected as co-valedictorians of an FSTP graduating cohort. Not only did they become friends within the program, but they had also travelled a similar road beforehand.

Both were new to Ottawa and looking for fresh starts. Janine was changing careers and knew her future lay in cooking, but didn’t have the experience, nor resources to pursue it. Curasa had a similar passion for cooking, and having just finished a local addiction treatment program, was looking to restart her life. They both found the FSTP.

After 4 months, they stood tall at their graduation. But their parallel paths wouldn’t diverge after that day: both planned to attend Algonquin College to further their culinary studies.

“I am so thankful that you have something here for people who are starting over in life.” — CURASA



Why I turned to The Mission for help...
RAVEN

Thanks to donors like you, we can offer our FSTP free of any barriers that might typically prevent those in need from obtaining transformational job training:

“I’m a single mom.” Raven shares. *“I don’t think other programs would allow me to work around my schedule of caring for my daughter, but the FSTP did.”*

One of Raven’s course highlights was preparing Indigenous cuisine at our Country Food Feast. Raven is Ojibwe, from Whitesand First Nation, so cooking for the Indigenous community was one of her culinary career goals.

Upon graduation from the FSTP, Raven was hired by The Mission and Chef Ric’s, so she’s been able to achieve that goal, by continuing to cook and serve our Indigenous clients, and the community at large.

“I’ve been given the opportunity to find stability for my children, and for that, I’m so thankful.”

2024–2025 OUTCOMES + IMPACT

3 full-time sessions

84 graduates

72 graduates employed at graduation²⁶

400 graduates since 2004

90% of graduates employed in the food industry since 2004²⁷

ATS

Addiction and Trauma are often linked.



Many sink into addiction to cope with pain from trauma. Our team works with clients to break this cycle so they can take the first step to recovery. The journey to wellness comes through harm reduction and live-in treatment, gradually moving towards abstinence and independence. Treatment is tailored to each person’s needs.

Day Program

A drop-in group focused on peer support and educational topics. Group topics include relapse prevention, emotional regulation and trauma.

Hope Program

A 3-month live-in program focused on harm reduction that offers clients a safe environment to explore their goals and change their lives through daily groups and individual counselling.

Stabilization

An abstinence-based live-in treatment program for clients who are ready to address their substance use or who are at risk of relapse. Clients work to stabilize their lives and develop healthier lifestyles through daily groups and support from a primary counsellor.

LifeHouse

A 5-month off-site live-in treatment program for clients to overcome addiction and trauma and prepare for future employment, volunteer work or educational pursuits.

Clients attend weekly counselling sessions and daily groups that focus on anxiety, trauma, relapse prevention, spirituality and creative healing strategies.

After Care

Individual counselling and group treatment are available for clients who are housed through Ottawa Mission programming and clients living in the community for up to one year.

FOCUS

The importance of harm reduction at The Mission

With the provincial government passing legislation that closed various supervised consumption sites throughout Ontario, harm reduction services have been diminished.

At The Ottawa Mission we continue to provide client-centered care that supports diverse pathways to recovery. Within our Hope Program, participants have the option to practice harm reduction; meaning they don’t have to stop substance use as a condition of support.

This year, 52% of Hope clients practiced abstinence, while 43% used harm reduction strategies. 31% of our Hope graduates then went on to join our abstinence-based Stabilization program. Additionally, 54% of Hope graduates went on to secure stable housing, a major achievement highlighting the program’s broader impact on long term wellbeing.

Harm reduction can build trust, stability, and readiness for abstinence. At the same time, we recognize harm reduction itself as a valid and empowering from of recovery. Many clients managing their substance use have also made meaningful changes in their mental wellbeing, housing and community engagement.



Why I turned to The Mission for help... RANDY

Stuck in a life dictated by addiction and encounters with the law, Randy joined our abstinence-based *Stabilization* treatment program as a condition of his bail.

His Mission caseworker Laura shares: *“I sensed apprehensiveness in Randy when he first got here. But then we built up a sense of security and comfort, and he took the brave step of trusting not only us, but himself.”*

Randy next moved on to *LifeHouse*, our 5-month live-in program. He was beginning to believe in himself.

“I was so used to quitting... so used to it. But here at The Mission I felt like I had what I started calling ‘Team Randy’, I had so many people on my side.”

Completing these two ATS programs provided a foundation from which Randy could flourish. Today, he holds numerous college diplomas, has a successful career, and is raising his young son.



Why I turned to The Mission for help... RICARDO

“At that time, I was ignorant about mental health. If I saw someone with anxiety or depression, I just thought work hard like me, and you’ll be fine.”

Ricardo was stretching himself thin between work and family life, so he began to drink as a way to destress. But things began to unravel, and after a DUI and losing his job, he found his way to The Mission.

Finally understanding that he had issues with alcohol, Ricardo completed our *Hope* and *Stabilization* programs. He also connected with Kathy, our on-staff teacher.

Now in a much better headspace, Ricardo worked with Kathy to apply for college. Two years later, he graduated from their *Electrical Engineering Technician* program and into a new life and career.

“The Mission was everything for me. It gave me a bed, a shower, food, education... everything.”

2024–2025 OUTCOMES + IMPACT

26

Hope Program graduates

58

Stabilization graduates

23

LifeHouse graduates

161

Naloxone kits given out

HEALTH SERVICES

To meet the needs of people who are homeless or precariously housed with little or no access to care, we provide primary care, dental services, eye care, and palliative care on site.



DYMON Health Clinic

Our team of health care providers offer medical care to the most vulnerable people in our community. To reduce barriers, the DYMON Health Clinic is open Monday–Friday, with clients registering and then seen on a first come first serve basis. It also provides specialized Clinics on-site.

Valued partners such as *The Ottawa Hospital, Bruyère Hospital, The Royal, and Community Health Care Practitioners* volunteer in the clinic to offer essential services including: Vascular Physicians, Family Medicine, Chiropractor, Infectious Disease Specialists, and Psychiatry.

The Dental Clinic, located in the DYMON Health Clinic, is led by Dr. Harle and a Dental Hygienist, and supported by a number of volunteers from the dentistry community. Together, they provide preventative and restorative dental care at no cost to the homeless and at-risk population.

The Eye Clinic, led by Dr. Maberley at The Ottawa Hospital and supported by other Ophthalmologists, consult with our clients and treat eye health problems and illnesses. The Eye Clinic team also consists of a 3rd partner at *Essilor* who provide our clients with prescriptive eye glasses and readers, at no cost.

Diane Morrison Hospice

The Diane Morrison Hospice provides chronic and terminal palliative care to those who are homeless and at risk of homelessness, frail, and need support.

The Hospice team comprises three main partners:

- *Ottawa Inner City Health (OICH)*, who provide nursing and medical care;
- *Carefor Home and Community Services*, who offer Client Care Workers;
- The Ottawa Mission, who support people with Spiritual Care, Volunteer Services, and Housekeeping Services, within a setting that is safe, compassionate, and dignified.

FOCUS

Managing grief and supporting wellbeing through expressive arts therapy

Receiving chronic or terminal palliative care can be an understandably heavy and distressful reality.

Our team of OICH nurses, Carefor workers, Ottawa Mission staff, and volunteers provide compassionate and empathetic support to help our clients navigate their hospice care, and we’ve since added another resource to supplement that support.

Darlene, a registered psychotherapist with a PHD in expressive arts therapy, leads our new weekly hospice art program. This program is funded by *Ontario Health East* to deliver more Grief and Bereavement services to our clients.

There, **hospice clients may gather and express themselves, sharing their feelings about grief, loss, and wellbeing in a safe environment. Clients tap into their creativity while engaging in these healing discussions, with sessions organized around drawing, painting, decoupage, pottery, carving, music, and so much more.**



Why I turned to The Mission for help...
PAUL

“I lost my job, my place, my soul, my being.”

Paul suffers from complex post-traumatic stress disorder due to several different events in his life. Left unchecked, his condition deteriorated and eventually lead him to The Mission.

Paul was assigned a housing case manager who helped remove hurdles impeding him from securing affordable housing, like helping him qualify for a city rent-supplement program.

But the key support element Paul received was access to our DYMON Health Clinic. Paul was seen by Lesley, an OICH nurse practitioner who prescribed the medication that stabilized Paul’s condition and changed his life.

With this, all the supports Paul received clicked together.

Today, Paul is still in his home you and The Mission helped him find, still living the life you helped him recapture, and still visiting our clinic for all his health needs.



Why I turned to The Mission for help...
DAN

“This clinic saved my life.”

Dan had never even heard of our DYMON Health Clinic. Living on a fixed income and looking for help to make ends meet, he was visiting our Mission dining room for a community meal when he noticed our clinic next door.

Dan decided to book an appointment and as part of a general check-up, his high blood pressure raised a red flag.

Dan was asked to come back in for some follow-up tests, and, unfortunately, they soon determined that he had lung cancer. But within about a month, he was in surgery and the cancer was removed.

Now cancer free, Dan happily relies on the clinic for all his health needs: he’s received additional treatment for his kidneys, and our eye clinic even connected him with an ophthalmologist, after which he underwent successful cataract surgery!

2024–2025 OUTCOMES + IMPACT

HOSPICE

34
new Hospice admissions

11
deaths in Hospice

9
Hospice memorials

2
internments at Beechwood

DYMON HEALTH CLINIC

3,469
primary care patient consults²⁸

9,445
Administration (lab results, medical records, prescriptions)²⁹

502
Outreach / Community Health Services

SPECIALTY CLINICS

395
Dental³⁰

22
Mobile Ultrasound³⁵

85
Ophthalmology and Optometry³¹

550
Chiropractor³⁶

206
Family Medicine (complicated health & minor procedures)³²

73
Foot Care³⁷

153
Stop Smoking³⁸

12
Vascular³³

29
Mental Health³⁹

40
Infectious Disease³⁴

3
Plastic Surgery⁴⁰

SUPPORT SERVICES

We count on several different departments to seamlessly support and enrich our programs to benefit our clients.

HOUSEKEEPING

Housekeeping provides clients with a clean and comfortable place to call home.



Services are delivered by 17 full-time staff, who keep seven on-site buildings and three off-site buildings spotless.



Housekeeping is also responsible for sorting gift-in-kind donations and for setting up spaces for hospice client memorials and student graduations.



Housekeeping works with several partners, including:

- **Furniture Bank** for furniture donations for clients moving into their own homes.
- **Hardy Mattress** to guard against pests through vinyl mattress coverings.
- **'Breast Cancer of Fund of Canada**, which takes clothing donations we are not able to use, and turns them into funds.
- **Complete Purchasing** — a buyer's group that helps us get the best available pricing for essential shelter needs like toilet paper, chemicals and other housekeeping products.



MAINTENANCE

Maintenance ensures that all buildings and systems are in proper working condition through regular preventative and corrective measures, as well as planning and upgrading systems to reduce the need for costly repairs.

Maintenance is also responsible for renovations and expansion projects both at the downtown shelter and at our offsite buildings.

Services are delivered 24/7 by 7 full-time staff and a Vehicle Coordinator.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

maintains IT systems for staff across locations in a 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week environment

IT staff work closely with our different departments and our social enterprise, Chef Ric's.



VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SERVICES

Our staff engage individuals, businesses and community groups to provide care, hope and dignity to people in need.

Volunteers also act as community ambassadors for The Mission.

They enhance services to clients, taking part in:

- linen folding
- sorting donations
- helping with special events
- supporting Hospice patients
- supporting food services in The Mission's kitchen and at Chef Ric's

962
active
volunteers

~200
volunteers
per week⁴¹

CHAPLAINCY

Our Chaplaincy team brings God's love, mercy and compassion into many areas of our work.



The Chaplain's office offers connection and listening.

People receive spiritual resources, encouragement, prayer and a friendly check-in.



The Chapel offers an encouraging message.

There are daily chapel services, Bible studies, prayer groups, spiritual discussions for staff and memorials for Hospice patients.



The Chaplaincy brings a spiritual component to our treatment programs.

Through counselling and group meetings, strong relationships and supportive connections form through their recovery.



The Chaplaincy helps Hospice clients find rest and peace in their final days.

Chaplains support each person to understand their life, and they offer grief support to families, friends, staff and loved ones.

2,962
individuals attended
Chapel Services
(non unique)

9
individuals on average
attended Chapel
Services daily

985
individuals received
spiritual care at
our Drop-in
Chaplaincy office
(non unique)

1,120
hospice visits
by Chaplaincy

737
clients attended
spiritual formation
classes
(non unique)

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

THE MAINTENANCE SERVICES TRAINING PROGRAM: *Doubling Down After a Successful Launch*

Job training and education provide those who are either homeless or on the brink of homelessness with the tools they need to find gainful employment, stability, and independence.

Inspired by the 20+ years of success of the *Food Services Training Program* (FSTP) in relaunching careers and lives, and thanks to seed funding from the *Ontario Trillium Foundation*, we started the **Maintenance Services Training Program** (MSTP) in January 2025.

The no-cost program provides participants with the practical and academic instruction needed to find meaningful, long-term work in the building maintenance and superintendent fields.



Our inaugural class of five students: Abraham, Willis, Gloria, Leo, and Ronald, had diverse backgrounds with hardly any trades or building maintenance experience between them. But what they did share was a drive to learn and change their lives for the better.



Over a period of about 4 months, the students received:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Training in minor repairs and maintenance (plumbing, electrical, carpentry, drywall, painting) | Workplace Hazardous Materials Information Systems (WHMIS) accreditation |
| Fire Safety Planning accreditation | Occupational Health and Safety accreditation |
| Training in janitorial services and general complex care | Lockout Tagout training ⁴² |
| | Work placements with local organizations |

It was with great pride that we celebrated the graduation of all five of our students from the program. **Four graduates were hired by their placement partners or within the industry, with the final graduate continuing to receive support from our program coordinators to secure employment.**

Thanks to the support of our donors and program partners, we're looking to build on the MSTP's early success and will double our student intake to 10 people for our fall 2025 class!

We remain committed to addressing the long-term and systemic factors that contribute to homelessness, while exploring new and innovative ways to better serve our current clients.

GROWING THE FSTP, and Our Own Leafy Greens

With help from a donation from RBC to the *Ottawa Community Foundation*, we'll soon operate two hydroponic vertical farm units, within which, we can grow up to 20,000 pounds of fresh leafy greens each year!



The modular units are manufactured and supplied by *Growcer*, a company founded on the principles of addressing food insecurity and empowering communities to grow their own produce.

This new initiative will not only supply our own food programs with fresh, locally grown leafy greens year-round, and reduce our costs, it'll also add a vertical farming and urban agriculture component to our *Food Services Training Program*, where students will visit the farms to learn from the experts growing the greens.



A NEW CHEF RIC'S LOCATION

Chef Ric's is expanding!

We have opened a new location within the *YMCA of the national Capital Region*.

A companion operation to Chef Ric's on Rideau Street, this new location will play a pivotal role in providing its community with healthy, delicious, culturally appropriate, and affordable food.

Community housing residents at the YMCA, comprised mainly of newcomers and other vulnerable community members, will also be able to purchase healthy meals for themselves and their families at the new Chef Ric's location.

SPOTLIGHT

Next year, The Ottawa Mission’s classroom, the MCA Ottawa Stepping Stones Learning Centre, will mark two decades of providing barrier-free education.



A handful of dusty files in our database provide a window into the birth of our very own classroom inside The Ottawa Mission:

“Our research shows that 6 out of 10 men at The Ottawa Mission who have not graduated high school say they would like to receive more education. In light of this statistic, The Ottawa Mission has hired a full time-teacher to develop and provide clientele with education programs. This resulted in the creation of MCA Ottawa Stepping Stones Learning Centre (SSLC).”

In almost two decades since, SSLC has given hundreds of people in need the opportunity to better their lives through education. This has included Ottawa Mission clients, at-risk men and women living in our shared communities, people staying in other local shelters, newcomers to Canada, and more.

Looking back into those old files, our records show that a man named Ron was our very first student. Responses on his intake form are indicative of the school struggles that many of our SSLC students went through:

What’s the highest level of education you’ve completed?
Three years of Grade 6 (after being held back twice), and two years of Grade 7.

When was the last time you were in school?
When I was 15.

In a follow-up, it’s noted that Ron was an enthusiastic, yet apprehensive student. At first, he expressed fear about starting up school again in his 40s, but through the one-on-one instruction style he received at SSLC, he overcame the barriers that had previously held him back. Ron’s story is similar to hundreds of SSLC students who would follow in his footsteps. And while SSLC’s core aim of removing those barriers to education has remained constant, our small but mighty classroom has evolved over the years.

In the beginning, SSLC operated as a satellite study and tutoring program. Our students were often enrolled at another school or institution and used our resources and space to pursue secondary school credits or equivalencies, through schoolwork assigned by an external teacher.



This continued for about a decade, until 2015, when the *Ottawa Carleton District School Board* (OCDSB) and The Ottawa Mission forged a new partnership, one where our SSLC classroom would be run by an OCDSB-qualified teacher.

This meant that going forward, students would be taught, assigned work, and evaluated all within the SSLC classroom — no external class nor teacher needed!

This is when Kathy first assumed the lead of our classroom, both as our SSLC teacher, and as an OCDSB-certified teacher. In over a decade under her caring oversight, and along with the help of many dedicated volunteers, SSLC:

- **Maintains its independent study program**, where students can obtain their English, Social Studies, and Guidance Studies secondary school credits;
- **Tutors students** from our *Food Services Training Program*, helping with textbook work and overcoming any English language barriers;
- **Operates an English Club**, where dozens of newcomer clients learn and practice their English each year;
- **Assists students with applying to post-secondary education programs**;
- **Sponsors students** to help cover the costs of these programs;
- **Collaborates with our addiction and trauma programs** to offer *Bibliotherapy*⁴³ and employment support;
- **Continues to have an open-door policy** for anyone who needs a quiet space to study or read a book, access to a computer, and much, much more.



For some students, it’s about rekindling a love of learning. For others, it’s about finally finding a supportive environment where a love of learning is fostered for the first time.

Since Kathy began at SSLC in 2015, we’ve helped 16 people graduate from high school, sponsored 4 students to obtain college diplomas or certificates, and from 2020–2025, 244 different people have used SSLC and our educational resources in some way to enrich their lives, tap into their intellect, express their creativity, and forge an educational path to a better tomorrow.

Thank you for supporting such an impactful program!



REVENUE

2024–2025



Why I support The Mission... JOHN

For John Schultz, supporting The Ottawa Mission runs in the family!

He fondly recalls how his mother Eileen and her friend Mireille Hallarn would volunteer at The Mission every Friday and make what he describes as a boatload of sandwiches to be provided to those in need.

Family tradition is also strong in John's line of work, where he is the owner of *Boss Electric*, a company started by his father in the '80s. And when Boss Electric was looking for worthwhile ways to give back to the community they serve, we were top-of-mind.



John and Boss Electric are now proud participants in our 100 Meals a Month Club, where they make a monthly donation that purchases 100 meals to be handed out within communities in need across Ottawa, through our food truck program.

There's added personal meaning behind John's support, having had a family member who struggled with homelessness for a time.

Through his line of work, John has seen the need to help as he criss-crosses the city completing jobs:

"We do a lot of work downtown, and just seeing people out there in the wintertime... It's good to know that they have a place to sleep, to warm up, to get a meal."

John is a big believer in providing additional supports to help people in need exit homelessness:

"I'm also big on the importance of mental health, and I know The Mission has great supports for that."

In a moment of serendipity, John also has a personal connection to the founding of our food truck program. He is friends with Jim Foster and the Foster family, having grown up on the same Ottawa street. Jim Foster is the owner of Pelican Seafood Market and Grill, who so generously donated the original food truck that kicked off our food truck program.

This was a partnership that was meant to be!

We're so thankful that thoughtful people like the Schultz family and organizations like Boss Electric are helping our fellow neighbours in need. Together, we're able to make a difference in our communities.



Thank You!

Without our donors, volunteers, supporters, and partners, none of this would be possible.

Thank you for being there for our community in need.



1

Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer. Federal Spending to Address Homelessness, May 22, 2024.

2

Association of Municipalities of Ontario. Municipalities Under Pressure: The Growing Human and Financial Cost of Ontario's Homelessness Crisis, January 9, 2025.

3

PROOF, University of Toronto. New data on household food insecurity in 2023, April 26, 2024.

4

Global News. Kingston becomes latest Ontario city to declare food insecurity an emergency, January 25, 2025.

5

Ibid.

6

Association of Municipalities of Ontario, op.cit.

7

PROOF. What can be done to reduce food insecurity in Canada? (No date).

8

Maytree and Caledon Institute. Welfare in Canada, 2023, July 2024.

9

In Ontario, despite recent enhancements, those relying on Ontario Disability Support and Ontario Works payments are living up to 60% below the poverty line, meaning they don't have enough income to meet their basic needs. See: PROOF Food Insecurity Policy Research and Food First NL. The Minimum Wage: A Powerful Tool to Reduce Food Insecurity Submission to the Minimum Wage Review Committee, March 2022.

10

PROOF Food Insecurity Policy Research and Food First NL. The Minimum Wage: A Powerful Tool to Reduce Food Insecurity Submission to the Minimum Wage Review Committee, March 2022.

11

Ontario minimum wage levels remain below what is required to meet basic needs. See: A Time for Urgent Action. The 2024 Report of the National Advisory Council on Poverty, 2024.

12

Of these 3,000 people, more than 500 are living on the street. City of Ottawa Point in Time Count dashboard results, February 2025.

13

Ottawa Public Health. Food Affordability in Ottawa: The 2024 Nutritious Food Basket, October 2024.

14

Ottawa Mission. No More Waiting: A Call to Action Against Homelessness and Food Insecurity, 2024.

15

This the third consecutive year that our shelter has served over one million meals, with just over one million in 2022 – 2023, and 1.1 million in 2023 – 2024.

16

CTV News Ottawa. "Homeless man found 'frozen to death' in downtown Ottawa, councillor says," January 7, 2025.

17

CBC News Ottawa. "'Maman Tawembi': Newcomer, advocate dies after being found outside in the cold," January 27, 2025.

18

Office of the Auditor General City of Ottawa. Supportive Housing Audit. Tabled June 6, 2025.

19

"Homelessness in Ottawa has reached a record high. What can be done about it?" Ottawa Citizen, June 29, 2025.

20

See endnote 13.

21

Ottawa Food Bank. Statement from the CEO on Changes to Food Assistance, January 10, 2025.

22

Number of clients successfully housed includes clients served by Housing Services, Client Services, and ATS programs.

23

Number of diversions includes clients served by both Housing Services and Client Services programs.

24

This statistic covers the Summer 2024 and Fall 2024 semesters of Discovery University only. The Winter 2025 semester was cancelled due to staff leave of absence.

25

This statistic has changed from previous years to better account for the variation in open hours across the fiscal year.

26

86% of 2024–2025 graduates.

27

Overall average since 2004.

28

• Direct care (clients seen in person and telephone appointments) → 3

• NP's → 3,466

29

Tasks include: reviewing patient lab results, medical records, consultation reports from specialists; processing prescription refills and med renewals; completing ODSP and Ontario Works forms; and charting clinic patient encounters.

30

• Clients/consults → 395

• Volunteers:

– Dentists → 18

– Hygienists → 7

– Students → 11

– Assistants → 4

31

Dr. Maberley → 85 consults

• Provided 538 pairs of reading glasses to clients.

32

Dr. Tomy & Dr. Saunders with interns at Bruyère.

33

Dr. Jetty & Dr. Malnis, The Ottawa Hospital.

34

Dr. Varghese, Queensway Carleton Hospital.

35

Canadian Diagnostic Network (CDN).

36

Dr. Michelle Corriveau, Curavita Health Group.

37

Volunteer nurse.

38

NP led consults.

39

Dr. Moran from The Royal — consults.

40

Dr. Ying.

41

Average number — fluctuates between about 180–215. These numbers don't include individuals from groups or holiday meals who helped once and didn't join our roster.

42

The term *lockout/tagout* refers to specific practices and procedures to safeguard workers from the unexpected energizing or start-up of machinery and equipment, or the release of hazardous energy during service or maintenance activities.

43

Bibliotherapy, also referred to as *book therapy*, is a therapeutic approach that uses books and other literature to promote healing and well-being.

more than a shelter

OPEN
24
HOURS
A DAY
365
DAYS
A YEAR

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