

Media Release



Giving
Hope
Today

The Salvation Army and City of Victoria Expand Emergency Shelter Capacity with 13 New Beds

New Short-Term Engagement Program (STEP) brings total shelter beds at Victoria ARC to 66

VICTORIA, BC (April,13,2026) – The Salvation Army Victoria ARC and the City of Victoria are pleased to announce the expansion of emergency shelter services in Greater Victoria, with the addition of 13 new beds through a two-year funding partnership running from April 1, 2026, to March 31, 2028.

The expansion brings the Victoria ARC's total emergency shelter capacity from 53 to 66 beds and will be delivered through the newly launched Short-Term Engagement Program (STEP) — a recovery-oriented model designed to provide individuals experiencing severe housing insecurity with immediate, safe shelter while connecting them to longer-term housing solutions. STEP participants will have access to a full complement of support staff to assist with securing long-term housing, pursuing recovery options, and connecting with specialized services to help break the cycle of homelessness.

"This expansion means 13 more people in our city won't have to worry about where they'll sleep tonight or where their next meal will come from — they'll be welcomed into a dignified space with the support they need to move forward. A sober-living environment makes all the difference. Getting sober is literally a life-or-death struggle, and our commitment is to make the ARC a refuge — a place where people can remove themselves from constant triggers and be surrounded by a community working toward the same goals." — Jonathan Hopkins, Executive Director, Victoria ARC, The Salvation Army

"Our partnership with The Salvation Army expands much-needed emergency shelter beds in the community and supports their STEP program's sober-living, substance-free approach," said Mayor Marianne Alto. "This initiative, focusing on safety, stability and pathways to housing, aligns with the City's Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan, and is funded by Council's initial \$10.35 million investment in the plan."

The partnership reflects a shared commitment between The Salvation Army and the City of Victoria, supported by BC Housing's ongoing investment in shelter and housing solutions across the region, to address homelessness in a meaningful, dignified way.

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About The Salvation Army:

The Salvation Army is an international Christian organization that began its work in Canada in 1882. In Bermuda, the Army has been at work since 1896. Today, it is the largest non-governmental direct provider of social services in the country, offering hope and support to vulnerable people in 400 communities across Canada and Bermuda and in more than 130 countries around the world.

We believe in the transformative power of a helping hand—empowering people to move forward, no matter where they're starting from. With open doors, open minds, and open hearts, The Salvation Army

provides practical, personalized support to those facing poverty, homelessness, addiction, food insecurity, and other complex challenges.

Our services include hunger relief through food banks and meal programs; shelter and housing support; addiction rehabilitation; long-term and palliative care; and life-skills development such as budgeting and cooking. We also offer children and youth programming, including after-school activities, camps, school nutrition, and Christmas assistance such as food hampers and toys.

Supported by generous donors, volunteers, and community partners, The Salvation Army meets people in their moment of need—and stays with them for the journey ahead. When you give to The Salvation Army, you're investing in renewed hope, restored dignity, and a stronger future for overlooked individuals and families in your community.

SalvationArmy.ca

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