

MEDIA RELEASE



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Hope
Today

Temporary Shelter Allows Safe Physical Distancing Measures

Maple Ridge, B.C. (May. 12) – In an emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a temporary Capacity Expansion Shelter has opened at 22239 Lougheed Highway with 25 spaces to allow further safe physical distancing by reducing crowding.

With this initiative, BC Housing and Fraser Health together with The Salvation Army hope to prevent the spread of the virus and mitigate the demand on our health care system. In keeping with Dr. Bonnie Henry's guidelines and recommendations, similar temporary shelters are opening across the province.

"The harsh reality is that not everyone has a home or even a safe place to call their own. Many experiencing homelessness are living in situations where COVID-19 can spread rapidly," says Ridge Meadows Ministries Executive Director, Mark Stewart. "We are working with our partners at the city and health authority, and other key stakeholders to allow for further safe physical distancing measures."

This temporary Capacity Expansion Shelter will provide a safe, supportive space, with daily meals, as well as access to showers, washroom facilities and hand washing stations. Staff will be on site 24/7 to support clients, manage operations both inside and outside to ensure everyone's safety and security. Like the current building, this shelter will not be for individuals who are symptomatic or tested positive for COVID-19.

"It is important to note that this temporary shelter is not creating any new spaces. There are no busses arriving with additional people from other communities," explains Stewart. "We will still only have capacity for 60 vulnerable residents of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows, however it will allow safe physical distancing measures to thin out the population of the current building."

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About The Salvation Army:

The Salvation Army's Ridge Meadows Ministries has been serving in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows communities since 1990. The Army is an international Christian organization that began its work in Canada in 1882 and has grown to become one of the largest providers of social services in the country. In over 56 communities in B.C. and 400 communities across Canada and over 130 countries around the world, we share the love of Jesus Christ, provide practical, compassionate support to meet basic human needs and work to be a transforming influence in the communities of our world. With your support, we give people hope today ... and every day.

SalvationArmy.ca

For more information:

Michelle Boileau

Divisional Manager, Communications and Marketing

604.341.2810 | michelle_boileau@can.salvationarmy.org