



COMMUNICATION UPDATE

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| TO: | Mayor and Members City Council |
| DATE: | February 3, 2022 |
| SUBJECT: | Update on Winter Service Plans for Homeless System and Community Cold Response |
| WARD(S) AFFECTED: | City Wide |
| SUBMITTED BY: | Angela Burden General Manager Healthy and Safe Communities Department |
| SIGNATURE: | |

Hamilton's Winter Service Plans for the homeless system and Community Cold Response continues to evolve based on available resources such as staffing, funding, and the reopening of City facilities.

Earlier in January, when City-funded agencies were unable to secure the requisite staff to provide an overnight warming centre during the first Cold Alert, the City operationalized an overnight warming centre at the Bennetto Recreation Centre. To date, this facility has been activated overnight for nine nights across five Cold Alerts and has been operated by City staff who have been redeployed from their regular duties across the Healthy and Safe Communities Department.

With the impacts of the fourth wave lessening, our funded agencies are now better positioned to secure staff. Beginning February 4, 2022 and onward during Cold Alerts, Wesley will extend hours of operation providing an overnight warming centre at Wesley Day Centre (52 Catherine St. N., Hamilton, ON). Accordingly, the City's temporary emergency response at the Bennetto Recreation Centre (450 Hughson St. N., Hamilton, ON) during Cold Alerts will no longer be activated.

The initiation of a Cold Alert activates [Hamilton's Community Cold Response](#), which is put into effect by the City of Hamilton and a number of community agencies. This response currently includes:

- Opening four select recreation centres as community warm places from 12 p.m. to 7 p.m.

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- Overnight warming centre at the Wesley Day Centre from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. during a Cold Alert (beginning Feb. 4, 2022)
- Extension of drop-in hours at The Hub on Vine Street from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. during a Cold Alert
- Access to Hamilton Public Library locations during operating hours

With the phased reopening of recreation facilities beginning February 7, 2022, Hamilton's Community Cold Response will continue to adapt and evolve to provide expanded drop-in spaces for community members to access warm spaces at Recreation Centres during regular operating hours.

In keeping with the Cold Alert communications process, these service updates and operating hours will be updated on the City website (www.hamilton.ca/cold), will be included on social media and shared in a media release when a Cold Alert is issued. In addition, this information is shared with agencies that work with people that are vulnerable and experiencing homelessness.

Residents can learn more about Hamilton's Community Cold Response and access a complete list of drop-in locations and hours of operation by visiting www.hamilton.ca/cold.

For more information about winter response for the homelessness system please contact Edward John, Director, Housing Services Division at (905) 546-2424 ext. 4860 or by email at Edward.John@hamilton.ca