



Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board

450 Scott Street
Fort Frances, ON
P9A 1H2

Ph: (807) 274-5349
Fax: (807) 274-0678
Toll Free: 1-800-265-5349

- Children's Services
- Land Ambulance
- Ontario Works
- Social Housing

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Homelessness Count Underway Across District

The issue of homelessness has been gaining attention in the Rainy River District. The Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board (RRDSSAB), in partnership with over 40 service agencies across the district, is conducting a count of homelessness over two weeks between April 5th and April 18th.

This count is part of a province-wide effort to gain a better understanding of homelessness in communities across the province. Sandra Weir, Integrated Services Manager (Housing Lead) at the RRDSSAB said, "This count will allow not only the RRDSSAB, but all service agencies across the district be able to learn more about and respond to the issue of homelessness in the Rainy River District."

The method being used to collect the information was one designed for Rural and Northern communities as it casts a wider net, known as a Period Prevalence Count. The method relies on involvement from all service providers who serve the homeless and at-risk homeless population. Surveys will be available at agencies across the district where respondents will be offered a pre-survey asking "Where are you sleeping tonight?"

Anyone not sleeping in their own house or apartment will have the opportunity to complete the survey, in addition to those whose current housing feels unsafe or are one unexpected bill away from homelessness. The survey is voluntary, confidential and respondents will receive a gift card to local grocery stores.

"The survey is designed not to be a simple headcount of homelessness, but to dig deeper in understanding patterns and reasons why. The results will help us plan services to meet the needs of the community," notes Weir.

The homelessness count will take place province-wide every two years, beginning spring 2018 and results will be made publicly available in the months following the count. Individuals or families who are currently homeless or at risk of homelessness are encouraged to visit the RRDSSAB at 450 Scott Street in Fort Frances, Rawn Road Centre in Atikokan, visit www.rrdssab.ca or call 807-274-5349 to learn what supports may be available.

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For more information, please contact Sandra Weir, Integrated Services Manager at sandraw@rrdssab.on.ca or 807-274-5349 ext. 230.