



April 30, 2025

Reference: 185576

Kasari Govender,  
Human Rights Commissioner

Marie-Josée Houle  
Federal Housing Advocate

Dear Kasari Govender and Marie-Josée Houle:

Thank you for your correspondence of March 14, 2025, calling for a human rights-based approach to allocating the Unsheltered Homelessness and Encampments Initiative (UHEI) investment in BC communities.

The bilateral agreement between the Province and the Government of Canada supports the continued implementation of the Homeless Encampment Action Response Team (HEART) and the Homeless Encampment Action Response Temporary Housing (HEARTH) programs, two key initiatives in Belonging in BC (BiBC), the Province's homelessness response plan.

Under BiBC, the Province takes a Housing First approach to address homelessness by prioritizing shelter as an authentic gateway to permanent housing for people experiencing homelessness.

The Province recognizes that, in the absence of adequate shelter, people may find shelter or community in encampments, but encampments are not a safe or suitable form of permanent housing for the people living in them, and for the larger community. The Province responds to complex encampments through integrated coordination with Ministries, communities, Indigenous partners and local governments.

Provincial encampment response prioritizes a person-centred approach that includes providing outreach to encampment residents and matching them with available shelter or temporary housing spaces. In addition, provincial and local partners assess the unique needs of the individuals and adjust responses as local resources are available, such as the provision of additional storage units or inclusive pet policies.

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The commitment of the Province to continue to implement BiBC and the plan's guiding principles remains a priority. The UHEI investment and partnership with the federal government provides additional resources to implement the BiBC priorities of HEART and HEARTH programs. HEART delivers integrated supports and services to people sheltering in encampments in collaboration with multiple ministries and agencies; HEARTH focuses on rapidly deploying shelter and temporary housing options as interim solutions while permanent options are underway.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Ravi Kahlon  
Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs

CC: Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager, City of Vancouver