



Homelessness System - Winter Warming Update

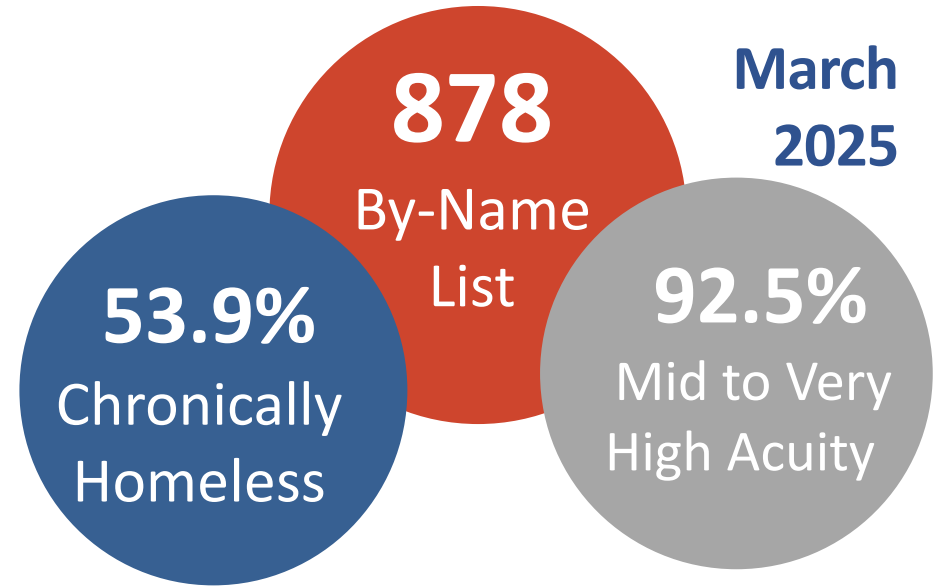
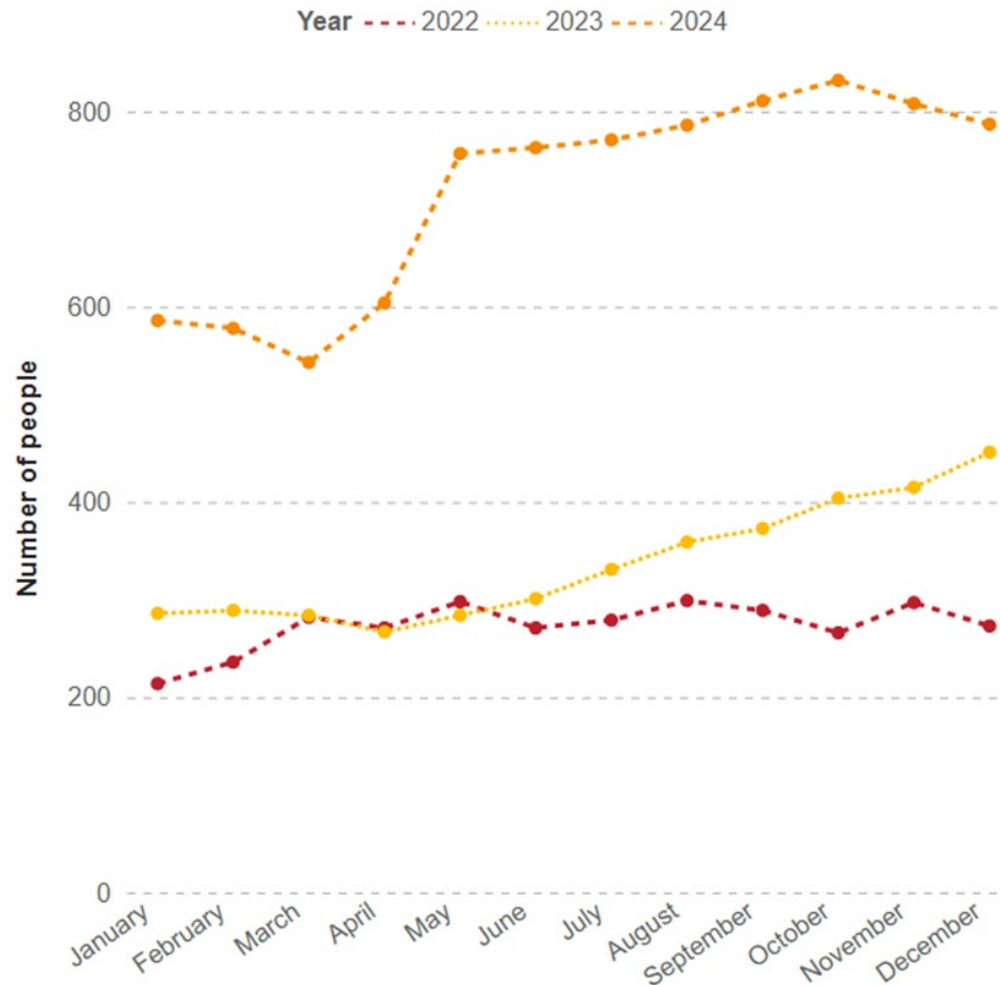
Sahar Foroutani
Manager, Homeless System Management
Income, Employment & Homelessness Supports

Presented to: Health and Social Service Committee
May 8th, 2025



Durham Region Homelessness Numbers

Annual Number of People on the By-Name List 2022 – 2024



Municipality Breakdown: Actively Homeless March 2025

Ajax: 185
Clarington: 70
Brock: 5
Scugog: 7
Uxbridge: 8
Oshawa: 435
Pickering: 36
Whitby: 122
*Other/Unknown: 10



Homelessness System – 2024 Snapshot

Gender Identity

38% of people identified as Female

61% of people identified as Male

1% of people identified as Transgender, Other or Unknown

Age

14% of people were youth (aged 16-24)

76% of people were Adults (aged 25-59)

10% of people were Seniors (aged 60+)

Indigenous Status

5% of people identified as First Nations

0.05% of people identified as Inuit

2% of people identified as Métis

5% of people identified as Non-Status

Household Type

86% of people were Single

14% of people were Families

Winter Warming Initiative

Winter Warming operated from December 1, 2024, and had its last night on March 31, 2025. Most sites provided pet-friendly services to individuals experiencing homelessness, helping them seek protection during the winter months by offering:

- warm, safe place to stay overnight
- hot meals, snacks, beverages, blankets, and warm clean clothing
- access to a bathroom, shower and laundry services on site
- information and referrals to social services, mental health and addiction support, and other community resources



The Durham Region Street Outreach Team provided transportation to and from Winter Warming sites/overnight drop-in hubs to individuals as needed through taxi cabs and bus tickets.



Durham Region - Winter Warming Sites

Pickering

- Dedicated Advocacy Resource Support (DARS)
 - Peace Lutheran Church
 - 25 cots
 - 18+, all genders, pet-friendly

Whitby

- Christian Faith Outreach Centre (CFOC)
 - Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church
 - 20 cots
 - 18+, all genders, pet-friendly

Clarington

- Do Unto Other (DUO)
 - 181 Liberty Street South (old Clarington Tourism building)
 - 10 cots
 - 18+, all genders, pet-friendly
 - Shower on site

North Durham

- Community Living Durham North (CLDN)
 - Motel Program

Oshawa

- Do Unto Other (DUO) Out of the Cold Winter Warming
 - Cornerstone Gym
 - 20 cots
 - 18+, all genders
- Back Door Mission (BDM)
 - Clinic clients of Mission United
 - 15 medical beds
 - If space was available, it would be offer on a first-time bases

Durham Region – Overnight Drop In

Ajax

- Christian Faith Outreach Centre (CFOC) Ajax Hub 24 hours Drop
 - 50+ spaces
 - 18+, all genders, pet-friendly

Oshawa

- Do Unto Other (DUO) Overnight Drop-In
 - 50 to 70 spaces
 - 18+, all genders



Winter Warming Statistics

Durham Winter Warming 2024/2025	Municipality	Number of Individuals
Dedicated Advocacy Resource Support (DARS)	Pickering	212
Christian Faith Outreach Centre (CFOC)	Whitby	234
Do Unto Other (DUO) Out of the Cold Winter Warming	Oshawa	180
Back Door Misson (BDM)	Oshawa	102
Do Unto Other (DUO)	Clarington	51
Community Living Durham North (CLDN) – Motel Program	North Durham	9
TOTAL		788

* Ajax Hub and DUO overnight drop-in accommodated another 50+ spaces each nightly and shelters made sitting or mat space available too during extreme cold weather alters.



Partnerships and Collaborations

Durham Region Street Outreach Team (DRSOT)

- Modified schedules to support increased service delivery at Winter Warming sites
- Collaborative engagement to ensure daily wellness checks, and referrals and transportation to services and supports
- Coordination with PCOP to ensure access to primary care and mental health and addiction supports

Primary Care Outreach Program (PCOP)

- Offer primary care and mental health and addictions counselling for Winter Warming participants
- Ensuring continuity of care and connection to broader supports

Donations

- Community donations through warm clothing, hygiene items, snacks and offers to pay for meals



Key Challenges

Insufficient Resources

- Not enough cots for overnight stays to support the population
- No on-site showers at all sites, limiting hygiene access for patrons
- Lack laundry facilities

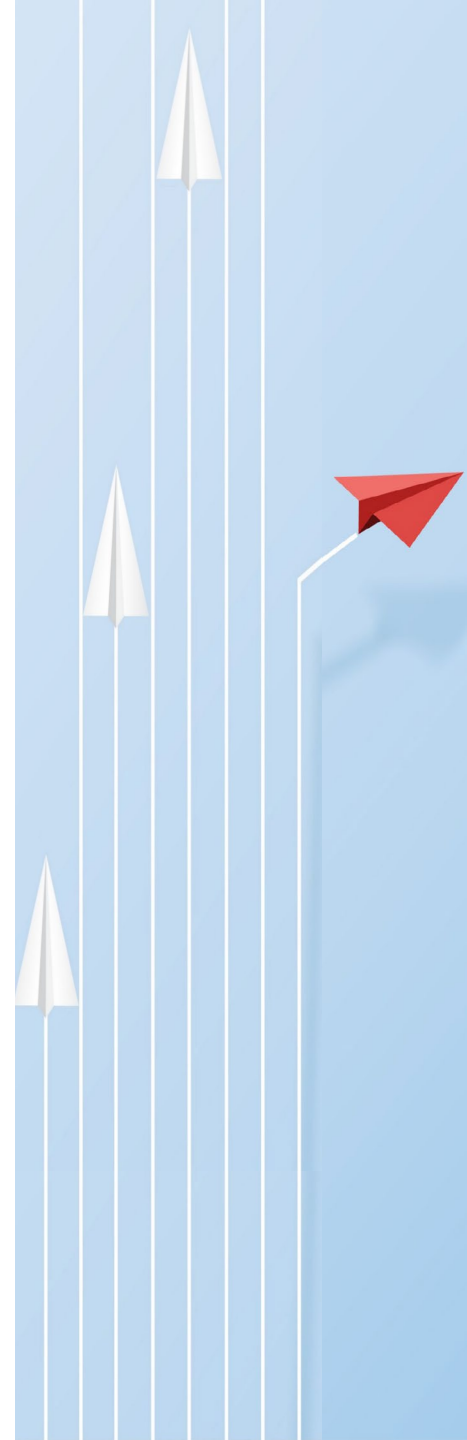
Inconsistent Hours

- Irregular opening and closing times created confusion
- Difficult for patrons to plan around access
- Lack of day supports

Awareness and Education Gaps

- Misinformation or lack of understanding of purpose and scope of Winter Warming

Addressing these challenges will help strengthen future responses and better serve those in need.



Success Stories

6 individuals housed directly through Winter Warming

- Stable housing connections made possible through on-site engagement and follow-ups

16 individuals transitioned to shelter

- Ensuring safe, temporary accommodation with pathways to further supports

Several individuals onboarded to the By-Name List (BNL)

- Creating lasting connections to housing services and case management

No turn-aways

- Durhams coordinated access system worked collaboratively to connect individuals to alternative locations when one site reached capacity

A demonstration of strong partnerships, seamless coordination, and a shared commitment to care.



Integrated Community Outreach Network in Clarington (ICONIC)

- Collaborative Network Includes:
 - Clarington residents
 - Community organizations
 - Local charities
 - Bowmanville library
 - Members from the Municipality of Clarington and Durham Region
- Create an integrated community of care for the unsheltered population in Bowmanville through awareness and programming
- Discuss community needs, share resources, and developed outreach programs
- Drop-in programming for those in need every day of the week in Bowmanville to support those using winter warming





Future Planning and Recommendations

Enhanced Security & Enforcement

- Strengthening collaboration with police and bylaw to improve response times at warming sites.
- Clear patron conduct policies in place, with alternative plans for individuals with repeated disruptive behavior.

Education

- Working with the Regional Communication team to increase awareness and understanding of homelessness services and support.
 - Winter warming is a necessary program to bring people in out of the cold. It is not a shelter.
 - Based on legislation, homelessness services and supports are deemed voluntary, we cannot force someone to access services or stay indoors.

Expanded Daytime Service Coordination

- Partnering with local area municipalities to identify additional daytime safe spaces and possible future host sites for winter warming sites

Increased Staffing and Support Services

- Stronger mental health and addiction partnerships to ensure on-site support is available where needed.



Questions

Sahar Foroutani

Manager, Homeless System Management

Income, Employment & Homelessness Supports

Region of Durham

durham.ca

[@RegionofDurham](https://www.instagram.com/RegionofDurham)

