



Community Safety & Wellbeing Toolkit for Toronto BIAs

SafeTO BIA
2024-2025





Community safety and well-being are critical to the city's overall quality of life. Both crime and lack of care on our mainstreets can significantly impact businesses, from financial losses to damage to their reputation and employee morale. This can lead to a decline in the community's economic growth and health. Communities need to focus on both decreasing crime and investing in our mainstreets, not only to protect their financial interests but also to ensure a safe and thriving community for everyone.

This toolkit outlines how BIAs and their memberships can increase public safety in their businesses and on our mainstreets and in public spaces. This toolkit is designed to provide clear guidance for businesses of all sizes to better protect and secure their staff and assets. We hope this toolkit **can create a safer and more prosperous environment for businesses to operate, attract new investments and improve the quality of life for residents.**

Note - some processes are neighbourhood-specific, for example, some BIAs may already have reporting processes in place. When available, always connect with **BIA Staff or other community supports first**. By consolidating this information, we hope to provide a clearer path to the appropriate response.

Table of Contents

1. Key Service Providers	03
2. Make the Right Call	04
3. Additional Supports; Toronto Police Services, Homeless, housing & shelter, City On-streets issues	05 - 07
4. BIA, Wards & Police Divisions	08
5. CPTED Strategies	09-10
6. How to Support Vulnerable Populations in your Community	11- 17





Is it an emergency?

(violence, crime, medical emergency)

WHAT?

Situations where the safety of people or property are at immediate risk.

EXAMPLES

- Fire
- Medical emergency including suspected overdose
- Crime in progress
- Hate crime
- Incidents of violence

**Call
9-1-1**

Is it a mental health crisis?

(someone in distress or a community crisis)

Toronto Community Crisis Service (TCCS) is a consent-based and community-based city-wide service of crisis workers who respond to mental health crises.

- Concern with someone having thoughts of hurting themselves
- Crisis response
- Person is disoriented with delayed responses, extremely anxious, paranoid or aggressive

**Call
2-1-1**

Is it a non-emergency?

For situations that require police assistance or support from local service providers but is not an emergency situation.

- Damage to property
- Fraud
- Theft (vehicles & bicycles)
- Abandoned belongings
- Damage to property or vehicle
- Harassment
- Public Intoxication & urination
- Uttering of threats and/or violent language
- Noise from people acting disorderly
- Illegal parking
- Hate-motivated graffiti

**Report Online
or
call (416) 808-2222
or
Contact your NCO's
or local social service
provider**

Do you have on-going, non-emergency issues?

For situations that are re-occurring and are non-emergency

- Trespassing (private property)
- Nuisance issues
- (see all issues above)

**Contact your
TPS Division
or local
social service
provider**

Do you have city, on-street issues?

311 provides residents, businesses and visitors with access to non-emergency City services, programs & information **24 hours a day, seven days a week**. 311 can offer assistance in more than 180 languages.

- Graffiti removal (non-hate related)
- A-frame removal/ portable sign removal
- Sidewalk repairs
- Noise complaints
- Litter on street/sidewalk
- Overflowing garbage bin
- Encampment/people sleeping outdoors - ask for Streets to Homes

**Report through
the 311 App
or
Call 311**

Do you have Neighbourhood Officers (NCOs) or Community Response Unit (CRU)?

NCOs are divisional and they work in partnership with local residents and community-based organizations to address crime, disorder and community safety issues.

- Crime prevention
- Build partnerships with community

**Contact
your
Division**

<https://www.tps.ca/neighbourhood-community-officer-program/>



Concern for well-being

I'm concerned about someone living outside, in a bus shelter, park or in public space

311
Ask for Streets to Homes

I'm concerned for someone sleeping on my property

311
Ask for Streets to Homes

I'm concerned about a person's well-being and they may be in crisis

211
or your local service provider if available

I'm with someone who I think is overdosing

911

Illicit substance abuse

I observed a drug deal

Call your local Police Division or
416 - 808-2222

My local park is attracting a lot of drug and alcohol abuse

Call your local Police Division

Break & enter

My business was broken into and no one is here

416 - 808-2222 or
report it online

My business was vandalized and I suspect it was someone specific

416 - 808-2222 or
report it online

Someone is in my business or I'm unsure if they are still here

911

Landlord & tenant issues

My landlord has turned off my heat

311

My landlord sent me a text threatening to hurt me

416 - 808-2222

My landlord is banging at my door armed with a baseball bat

911

Graffiti

I have found hate-related graffiti on my property

416 - 808-2222

Have graffiti removed from City of Toronto property (example: traffic sign or city park)

311

I can see someone currently spray painting graffiti on my property

911

Noise

My neighbour is often playing loud music

311

My neighbour is having a big, noisy party

416 - 808-2222

There's a big fight at my neighbour's party

911

For more scenarios, please check with your NCO or visit the TPS website below.

<https://www.tps.ca/contact/make-the-right-call/>



This Community Safety & Well-Being toolkit provides additional information for **non-emergency issues** in a BIA community. In this 3 pager there is information on:

- Crime Data
- CRU & NCO's
- Trespassing
- Toronto Parking Authority
- Warming Centres
- Drop-Ins
- Respite Centres
- Shelters & Streets to Homes
- Housing and Encampments
- Toronto Police Forms
- Toronto Hydro
- Astral Media
- BIAs

Neighbourhood Specific Crime Data

Toronto Police has public data such as fatal collisions, calls for service, theft, break and enters etc for neighbourhoods across the city.

For more specific crime data, you can contact your division's Crime Prevention Analyst.

**For crime data in
your area, visit**

[https://
www.tps.ca/my-
neighbourhood/](https://www.tps.ca/my-neighbourhood/)

Community Response Unit (CRU) vs Neighbourhood Community Officers (NCOs)

CRU officers are responsible for everything from responding to crimes in a certain area and patrols, to working on issues such as prevention. They also respond to events like demonstrations and festivals in a specific community. ([Division 51](#), [52](#) & [14](#) only)

Similar to the CRU, neighbourhood officers are community-based **but** are posted for at least 4 years to get to know the community better. They are chosen more deliberately for specific skills set and are only in target communities.

**Check here to
see if you
have NCOs**

[https://www.tps.
ca/neighbourho
od-community-
officer-
program/](https://www.tps.ca/neighbourhood-community-officer-program/)

Toronto Police Forms

The Form Centre allows users to search all forms relating to the Toronto Police Service. They include collision reports, community complaint form, paid duty request, vulnerable sector check etc.

**To learn more
go to**

[https://www.tps.ca/
services/form-
centre//](https://www.tps.ca/services/form-centre//)

Tresspassing

You cannot call the police for trespassing on public property and police do not trespass people. "Trespassing" as an offense if the property owner, manager etc. verbally requests the person leave. If the person refuses, THEN it is trespassing and is an offense.

The best way to manage trespassing issues is to contact your Division or NCOs to understand the process. Depending on how severe the trespassing issues, you can develop a plan with TPS to address the issues.

**For more
information,
visit**

[https://www.o
ntario.ca/laws/
statute/90t21](https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90t21)



This Community Safety & Well-Being toolkit provides additional information to support those experiencing homelessness or other complex issues, for more information please see the [City of Toronto's Website for Homeless Help here](#).

Warming Centres	Warming Centres are part of the City's Winter Services Plan for people experiencing homelessness . The City activates Warming Centres when temperatures reach minus five degrees Celsius and/or when Environment and Climate Change Canada issues a winter weather event warning.	<u>Map of Warming Centres</u>
Drop in Programs	Drop-ins provide a range of services that may include food, healthcare, showers, laundry, information and referrals, and social and recreational activities to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.	<u>See Toronto Drop in Network</u> OR <u>Map for Drop-in locations</u>
24-Hour Respite Sites	24-Hour Respite Sites prioritize ease of access to the following services for individuals experiencing homelessness: resting spaces, meals, service referrals 24-hour Respite Sites operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week and are pet friendly.	<u>Map of Toronto Respite centres</u>
Encampment Outreach & Response	The City uses a multi-divisional approach to respond to the complex needs of those living outdoors. Outreach efforts focus on engaging with individuals to build trusting relationships, help address immediate health and safety needs and find permanent housing.	Contact 311
Housing Help	The Housing Help Centres listed in the link provide non-profit agencies that help people find and keep housing and avoid eviction. Housing help services are available in most shelters and many drop-ins as well.	<u>Housing Help Map</u>
Shelters	Shelters provide temporary accommodation and related support services that assist people to move into housing. All locations are staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, & provide wrap-around supports, including: meals and laundry access to harm reduction , mental & physical health supports, counsellors/case managers, assessments and referrals to other community services.	For emergency shelter, call 311 or Central Intake at 416-338-4766 for assistance
Streets to Homes Outreach & Support Program	Streets to Homes (S2H) is 24/7 provides street outreach and housing-related follow-up supports to assist people who are experiencing homelessness and sleeping outdoors in finding and keeping housing. This includes outreach to individuals living in encampments , shelter referrals and wellness checks.	Contact 311 & indicate the location and why the person may need support



Toronto Hydro

Toronto Hydro delivers electricity to residential, commercial, and industrial customers in Toronto and includes the provision of street lighting and expressway lighting services in Toronto.

To report damaged hydro street lamps

<https://www.toronto-hydro.com/streetlight-map>

Astral Media

Astral Media is responsible for the manufacturing, installation and maintenance of 25,000 street furniture elements, including transit shelters, litter bins, benches, publication box corrals and more.
More information here

To report issue, email
quality@astral.com

Toronto Parking Authority (TPA)

TPA manages on-street parking, off-street spaces, facilities with automated and partially automated lots and garages, spaces for Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), Exhibition Place, Toronto Community Housing Corporation and Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division and Manages Bike Share Toronto.

To report issue, email
greenpcs@toronto.ca

What are BIAs Responsible for?

BIAs are responsible for overseeing the maintenance of municipally-owned land, buildings and structures, maintaining BIA-initiated streetscaping capital assets and offering graffiti and poster removal services. Depending on the neighbourhood, some BIAs may also have to support community safety and well-being issues - working together with the Toronto Police Services and other key partners in their unique community.

Some examples of what BIAs work on are, but not limited to are:

- Branded streetlights
- Pedestrian streetlights
- Street banners
- Strategic Plans
- Streetscaping/Masterplans
- Events
- Community engagement strategies

For Municipal Code, Chapter 19, visit

https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/municode/1184_019.pdf

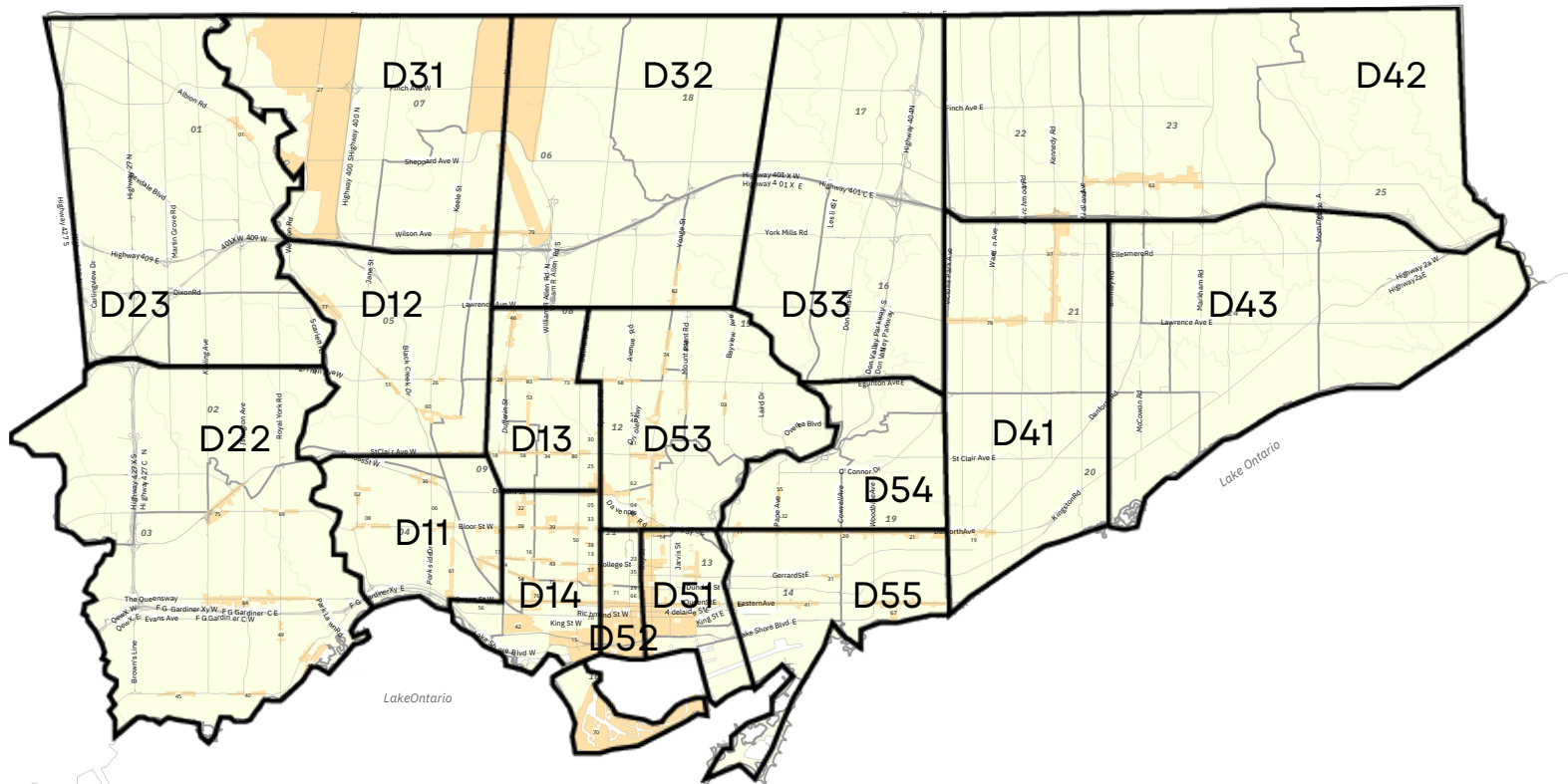
Check for training dates here

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/o/city-of-toronto-economic-development-culture-30949674731>

Online De-escalation Training

Downtown Yonge BIA & The City of Toronto

In this webinar, the training explores using supportive communication and de-escalation skills with individuals who may be displaying agitated behaviours in your business or who may be street-involved.



North East (Ward 22, 23, 21)

78. Wexford Heights
63. Sheppard East Village
37. Kennedy Road

North- West (Ward 1, 6, 7)

01. Albion Islington Square
24. Duke Heights
27. Emery Village
79. Wilson Village

Toronto South - West (Ward 3)

40. Lakeshore Village
48. Mimico by the Lake
49. Mimico Village
45. Long Branch
64. Shop the Queensway
75. Village of Islington
69. The Kingsway

Midtown (Ward 8 & 12)

03. Bayview Leaside
22. Dovercourt Village
25. Dupont by the Castle
30. Forest Hill Village
34. Hillcrest Village
46. MarketTO District
47. Midtown Yonge
51. Mount Dennis
52. Mount Pleasant Village
53. Oakwood Village
58. Regal Heights Village
62. Rosedale Main Street
68. The Eglinton Way
73. Upper Village
74. Uptown Yonge
80. Wychwood Village
81. Yonge & St.Clair
82. Yonge & Lawrence Village
83. York - Eglinton

Toronto East (Ward 14, 19, 20)

11. Broadview Danforth
20. Danforth Mosaic
21. Danforth Village
31. Gerrard India Bazaar
32. Greektown on the Danforth
41. Leslieville
55. Pape Village
59. Riverside District
67. The Beach
19. Crossroads of Danforth

Toronto West (Ward 4, 5 & 9)

02 Baby Point Gates
06. Bloor by the Park
08. Bloor West Village
10. Bloordale Village
17. College West
18. Corso Italia
26. Eglinton Hill
28. Fairbank Village
36. Junction Garden
56. Parkdale Village
61. Roncesvalles Village
77. Weston Village
60. Rogers Road
65. St. Clair Gardens
76. West Queen West

Downtown (Ward 13, 10, 11)

04. Bloor Yorkville
05. Bloor Annex
09. Bloorcourt Village
12. Cabbagetown
13. Chinatown
14. Church-Wellesley
15. City Place & Fort York
16. College Promenade
23. Downtown Yonge
29. Financial District
33. Harbord Street
38. Kensington Market
39. Korea town
43. Little Italy
42. Liberty village
44. Little Portugal on Dundas
50. Mirvish Village
54. Ossington Ave
57. Queen St West
66. St. Lawrence Market
Neighbourhood
70. The Waterfront
71. Toronto Downtown West
72. Trinity Bellwoods
76. West Queen West
07. Bloor Street*
35. Historic Queen East*



Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a strategy that aims to reduce crime by influencing the design and management of the physical environment. It focuses on creating spaces that discourage criminal activity and promote a sense of safety through principles such as **natural surveillance, territoriality, and access control**. There are several benefits associated with CPTED that will ensure that businesses can thrive, including:

Source: Navigating Crime & Safety in your Businesses, Arvada Resiliency Task Force



Improved security

By implementing CPTED principles, businesses can deter criminal activity and reduce the likelihood of theft, vandalism, and other crimes. This is achieved through natural surveillance, access control, and target hardening.



Improved aesthetics and maintenance

CPTED encourages good building maintenance and attractive design, which can enhance the overall appearance of the business and attract more customers.



Enhanced customer and employee safety

CPTED measures create a safer environment for customers and employees, making them feel more secure while on the premises. This can lead to increased customer satisfaction and employee retention.



Community involvement

CPTED often involves collaboration with local law enforcement and community members, fostering positive relationships and a shared commitment to safety.



Reduced liability & Lower insurance costs

By taking proactive steps to prevent crime, businesses can potentially reduce their liability for negligence claims, both real and fraudulent. : Implementing CPTED measures can help reduce insurance rates by as much as 20 percent, helping to offset the initial investment over time.



Increased natural surveillance

By designing spaces with clear sightlines and good visibility, businesses can make it easier for employees and customers to spot and report suspicious activity.

For businesses that are eager to utilize CPTED, please reach out to their local TPS Division. The customized approach from TPS is meant to address immediate security concerns but also promotes a long-term, sustainable crime prevention strategy for the business.



Natural Surveillance

This involves designing spaces that maximize visibility and observation, making it easier for people to see and be seen. This concept enhances security by increasing the likelihood of potential criminal activity being noticed and deterred.

Tips To Increase Natural Surveillance:

- Encouraging pedestrian use of sidewalks and nearby public spaces
- Using see-through barriers such as low picket, glass walls, and large windows
- Having blinds, curtains, and shutters at least partially open decks, balconies, and front porches that encourage people to spend time outdoors
- Keeping valuable items, checkout counters, and cash registers in plain view and easily visible from outside Placing security cameras where customers, employees, and passers-by can easily see them



Territoriality

This principle emphasizes the creation of clearly defined and well-maintained boundaries within a space to foster a sense of ownership and responsibility among its users. In doing so, territoriality contributes to crime prevention by promoting vigilance and discouraging potential offenders. Considerations when assessing territoriality could be; is my property being used as a shortcut? does my property ever have an unkempt appearance, are there seldom-used parts of my property where people loiter?

Examples of Territoriality

- Uniform facades on a commercial corridor
- Special neighbourhood street signage
- Special banners or flags attached to businesses



Access Control

This principle involves regulating and managing entry to spaces to reduce opportunities for criminal activity. By carefully controlling points of access and designing environments to guide people through designated routes, this principle aims to enhance security and deter unauthorized individuals.

Examples of Access Control:

- Clearly defined spaces
- Main entrance is marked and visible
- Areas not allowing access are landscaped to deter entry



Homelessness is a complex societal issue with many underlying causes like job loss, lack of affordable housing, mental illness, substance abuse, and more. Many individuals experiencing homelessness want to work but face significant barriers to employment. It's important to avoid stigmatizing or criminalizing homelessness itself.

Homelessness can present unique challenges for businesses, from concerns about safety and property damage to wanting to respond with compassion. This section guides business leaders on interacting with individuals experiencing homelessness, while protecting their operations. Also find more context, community resources, and applicable action steps that businesses can take to navigate challenging situations. The following information is summarized from **OBIAA's Homeless Response Toolkit**. The 32 page OBIAA Toolkit has been summarized into 6 pages for key notes and quick tips specifically for Toronto BIAs.

Please see the OBIAA toolkit for more in depth information and for glossary of terms, and terms to avoid when addressing vulnerable community members.



“Why can’t people that are homeless in the BIA just be taken to a place that can help them?”

Customers, patrons and BIA members can be upset, bothered, concerned, or worried about people experiencing homelessness in the BIA.

Here is some key facts to note:

- Services for people experiencing homelessness **are voluntary**.
- There is **no legal mechanism** to force people to go to a service, use a service, or stay inside a homelessness-serving facility.
- Being homeless is **not illegal**.
- Some of the behaviours exhibited by people experiencing homelessness or activities required for day-to-day survival **may be subject to other laws or by-laws**, but simply being without a permanent place to live **does not render a person without rights, nor does it nullify the Canadian Charter**.
- If the person experiencing homelessness is a clear danger to themselves or others. **The Mental Health Act** sets out the powers and obligations of psychiatric facilities in Ontario. The Act also outlines the powers of police officers and Justices of the Peace to make orders for an individual - who has to meet certain criteria - to undergo psychiatric examination by an appropriate mental health professional.

4 Tips on How to Get Up-to-Speed on Homelessness In Your Community

1. **Talk** to non-profits that deliver homelessness and/or Housing Stability Services
2. **Read** Municipal Council Reports
3. **Talk** to your local Municipal Councillor
4. **Talk** to your NCO’s or Community Response Unit (if available)



What can my BIA do?

1. Be informed

2. Create a Local “Who To Call” List (see OBIAA Toolkit for more details)

- Street Outreach or Crisis Team (211)
- Needles & Sharps (311)
- Human Waste (311)
- Harm Reduction Team (local service provider)
- Neighbourhood Community Office or Community Response Unit (if available)
- Any other important contacts

3. Create or get copies of A Local Services Resources Guide

A map of availability in and near the BIA can be helpful. Some of the services may change hours of operation or even the location of services during the year. Focus on sharing the information and being able to update it regularly rather than a glossy product that may become outdated not long after printing.

Services to include are:

- Location of shelters and how to access the shelters (*ex: do people just show up or do they need to go through a centralized intake point?*)
- Location of meal programs by day(s) of the week and/or other resources that make food available
- Location of drop-in centres and hours of operation
- Location of housing help resources and/or Coordinated Access points
- How to contact street outreach providers
- Location of public washrooms
- Location of public showers and hours of availability
- Location and operating hours of warming/cooling centres
- How to access harm reduction supplies and/or where a safer injection site is located

4. Other Tips

- **Community Collaboration** - Homelessness impacts entire communities, so a collaborative approach is most effective
- **Participate in local business associations or task forces** addressing homelessness
- **Support or advocate for affordable housing** and homelessness initiatives.
- **Consider hiring or training homeless individuals** ready for employment
- **Post "No Trespassing"** signs clearly
- **Secure** trash enclosures and reduce concealment areas
- **Install lighting** in dark areas
- **Consider landscaping** to control access and ensure avoiding concealment spaces
- **Implement security patrols** or cameras if needed
- **Businesses can navigate homelessness compassionately** while protecting their operations by taking proactive security measures, communicating respectfully, connecting to resources, and collaborating communitywide.



People displaying behaviours that lead you to believe they may have a mental illness (e.g. Auditory Hallucinations)

- **Contact** a local crisis intervention team or **211** (city-wide)
- **If the person is in extreme distress**, and you are worried they may harm themselves or others - **call 911**.
- **Educate yourself and fellow BIA members on the Mental Health Act** to better understand when, and under which conditions, the Act can be used, and what happens when it is used.
- **For future prevention explore if a partnership with the non-profit sector and/or the municipality**

If you feel safe, and a crisis response is not necessary, but you are still concerned, consider the following:

- Ask the person if they are okay or need help.
- Get the person a cup of water and perhaps a snack.
- Ask if there is anyone you can contact for them.
- Ask a bystander or coworker to stay with you

Damage to property/business and/or theft

- **If theft is directly related to procuring items for day-to-day existence**, work with local non-profits and the Service Manager to organize how those items can be made available to people that are street involved in ways that the individual does not need to interact with a business to get the item.
- **If you actively see a person damaging a property or building, or engaging in theft**, take the same measures you would take if any person did the same thing, regardless of housing status.
- **Work with your NCO's or CRU team to outline your concerns about damages and theft.**
Ask what they can do to enhance their response and help stop this from occurring.
- **If there are certain areas like back alleys being vandalized**, consider whether or not there are other security measures like cameras or lighting that can better protect the property. An audit with police or other safety professionals can often assist in this regard.

Overdoses in the BIA

- **If someone is actively overdosing**, unconscious, or it looks to be a health emergency, **call 911 immediately**.
- **Advocate to local elected officials**, and/or, Public Health for a safer consumption site where people can use while being supervised and supported.
- **Consider organizing Naloxone training for fellow BIA members** including how to administer it.
- **Prepare or request a resource guide on supports for people** that use substances, from harm reduction programming in or near the BIA, to treatment and recovery options.
- **Request overdose data** from first responder engagement in or near the BIA to understand the full extent of the issue.
- **Consider, if resources allow, and overdoses are a massive issue in the BIA**, requesting that harm reduction or addiction experts integrate with street outreach resources or do their own street outreach in the BIA.



Encampment establishing or growing in the BIA

Encampments are very diverse, as are the people that live in them. A one-size-fits-all approach is unlikely to yield sustainable, long-term results.

- **Ask local non-profits, or other social service agency in the BIA** whether or not shelters are currently full as it may be prompting people to sleep outdoors.
- **If shelters are full, join the advocacy efforts** to increase temporary shelter space for people.
- **Distribute the resource guide or a map** outlining which services are available within or in proximity to the BIA.
- **Ask your Councillor if there are established, council-approved protocols** for responding to, assessing, and resolving encampments that encompasses all stakeholders.
- **If the encampment is on private property**, property owners can exercise their rights related to trespassing, if necessary.
- **Avoid a tendency to sweep out the encampment** and have people moved along. This doesn't resolve their homelessness or the issue of encampments.
- **If you are concerned about dangerous or unlawful behaviours in the encampment**, work with street outreach, law enforcement, and municipal enforcement to develop a response strategy.
- **If there are public or physical health concerns regarding people residing in the encampment**, include public health and other health providers in your convening of a meeting to talk about response and community protocols.

Bathroom access & human waste

- **Map out the locations of every publicly accessible bathroom in and near the BIA and the hours each of the bathrooms are available.** Government offices, libraries, recreation centres, community centres - even police stations, parks, and arenas in some communities - provide access to public restrooms. Consider making this information available to everyone in the BIA - businesses, patrons, and people experiencing homelessness.
- **Convene a broader community meeting about public restroom access.** Don't do it just as a homelessness response, though that should be part of it. Involve your local Councillor, municipal staff, businesses, and other stakeholders in the discussion of "How can we increase the number of public restrooms available to all people?"
- **Establish a port-a-potty pilot project.** Provide one or more portable toilets in the BIA for a period of 60-90 days and track whether or not having one results in reductions of human waste or creates other issues.
- **Speak with non-profit service providers like shelters and drop-ins** that are near or in the BIA about bathroom access for people that dwell or recreate in the BIA.
- **Explore whether a partnership with the non-profit sector and the municipality** makes sense to offer mobile hygiene facilities.
- **Ask your local Councillor what the municipal policy and process is for removing human waste from public spaces.** Determine how to activate that response whenever needed. Track every time it is encountered so that the municipality understand the extent to which it is an issue.



How to support vulnerable people in your BIA

Street Involved Behaviour in the BIA (ex. panhandling, drug dealing & needle disposals)

- **Get copies of, or create, a resource guide** that can be distributed
- **If there are clearly illegal activities** like drug dealing, work with NCO's or CRU (if available)
- **If there are activities that seem to violate local by-laws**, work with your municipal enforcement
- **Host a forum for fellow BIA members** to engage in conversation with service providers, first responders, and people experiencing homelessness in the BIA to discuss your concerns
- **Hire BIA ambassadors** that are people with lived experience to engage with people that are participating in street involved activities to have empathetic, peer-to-peer conversations about what is happening, why, how it impacts others, and what can be done.
- **Ensure there are bio-hazard containers readily available throughout the BIA**, and in public restrooms in or near the BIA. Your local public health department, harm reduction service providers, street outreach providers, or a peer recovery program can often help with this, as can your local Councillor.
- **Map out all of the locations in or near the BIA** where there is safe needle disposal. Sometimes people just don't know where to go to put used needles.
- **If you have a clean-up crew** that involves people with lived or living experience, make sure they have the knowledge and equipment to safely pick up and dispose of needles found in the BIA.
- **Host a harm reduction seminar or workshop for your BIA members** with the help of public health or a harm reduction service provider.

Using private business to get out of the elements

- **Know where local drop-in centres, warming centres, or cooling centres are located** and share that information with people experiencing homelessness.
- **Know the locations of public buildings in or near the BIA** where people experiencing homelessness can be redirected.
- **Ensure that people have transportation to get to where they can be inside.** If an outreach van is needed, or people need a bus ticket, work with service providers to make that possible.
- **Develop a decision-matrix of the extent of the weather situation**, what constitutes an emergency, and whether there are any weather circumstances, especially those that are temporary in nature (e.g. a tornado warning) where you may allow or even encourage people experiencing homelessness in the BIA to come into one or more of the business buildings in the BIA.



How to support vulnerable people in your BIA

Trash in your BIA

- **Create a social purpose enterprise with a local non-profit.** They hire people to do trash collection and clean-up in the BIA on a daily or regular basis. People get meaningful work. You get a cleaner BIA.
- **Host regular BIA clean-up days at set intervals (e.g., every two weeks)** to do a deeper dive into cleaning up the BIA. For people experiencing homelessness or are street involved in the BIA, invite them to participate.
- **Provide equipment to take care of trash to people experiencing homelessness or are street involved in the BIA.** It is hard to take care of trash if you don't have a garbage bag, a broom, or know which dumpster or trash receptacle to put the trash in, once cleaned up.
- **Ensure there are a sufficient number of trash cans or dumpsters in the BIA** that are accessible to people that need to get rid of trash.
- **Work with your local municipal Councillor and municipal staff to discuss trash issues,** the frequency of publicly funded trash clean-up and pick-up in the BIA, and whether or not it is sufficient for the BIA.
- **Work with non-profit service providers in the BIA to collectively create a Good Neighbour policy** that includes routine examination of trash, its impacts, and what needs to collectively be done to keep the BIA cleaner.
- **Involve municipal enforcement if there is an ongoing issue with illegal dumping or trash scattered** in the BIA and determine what solutions they recommend to decrease or resolve the issue.

If personal belongings seem to be abandoned in the BIA, consider how long they have been abandoned

A couple of hours without seeing a person with their belongings may just mean the person is currently elsewhere. However, abandoning items for a day or more can be a sign that the person has moved on. Work with street outreach to determine if the person is coming back, (for example, if the person is currently hospitalized or incarcerated for a short period of time). If no one knows the whereabouts of the person and the belongings have been left behind for 48 hours or more, considering implementing a multi-stakeholder protocol.

Steps in that protocol may include:

- Street outreach or another service provider scan belongings (without touching the belongings) for personal effects and valuables like money, medication, or identification that is in plain sight.
- Often these services will store items like these for a temporary period of time. It is also possible another service organization like a drop-in centre may store items of value on a temporary basis.
- Once personal effects and valuables have been scanned for items of value in plain sight, consider having a notice posted by municipal enforcement or the service provider that the belongings are considered abandoned and if not claimed within 24 hours will be removed on or after that time.
- Then, it is up to various municipal departments and enforcement to take care of removing the belongings that have been abandoned, subject to local by-laws and policies.
- If storage can be provided for a period of time after cleaning up all remaining belongings, that is recommended.