

TORONTO SHELTER BULLETIN

Bulletin No.: 2026-05

Date Issued: May 19, 2026

Bulletin Type: **General Update**

Subject: **Heat Warnings & Extreme Weather Standards**

Bulletin: Please post this bulletin in a conspicuous area accessible to all relevant shelter staff.

Shelter providers are required to follow Extreme Weather Standards whenever Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) issues a Heat Warning. For the most up-to-date information, providers are encouraged to download the [WeatherCan mobile app](#), or visit the ECCC website for information on the [local forecast](#).

A list of Extreme Weather standards are outlined in Section 8.7 of the [Toronto Shelter Standards](#), and Section 6.5 of the [24-Hour Respite Site Standards](#).

During a Heat Warning it is imperative that shelter, respite and 24-hour Drop-in providers make every reasonable effort to not turn away individuals who are looking for shelter or a place to come inside from the heat, while adhering to health and safety and other regulations.

The City will work with partners to open additional contingency spaces (Alternate Space Program) at existing shelter sites and dispatch additional street outreach staff to connect with people living outdoors.

Programs should temporarily suspend all service restrictions except in circumstances where the individual poses an immediate threat or danger to others.

It is essential that information in SMIS regarding vacant beds is as up-to-date and accurate as possible. The information in SMIS is critical in connecting people looking for referrals to a cool space.

To assist in ensuring an effective system flow this Bulletin highlights key sections of the Toronto Shelter Standards and system guidelines for staff to employ:

- Ensure that the service queues are clear of "stale" intakes, by using the "closeout" drop down option if clients are no longer being served in your programs.

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- Complete intakes in SMIS in real time for every client; this allows for better management of the system and the ability to ensure requests for shelter beds are prioritized appropriately.
- Do not hold beds for clients referred to your shelter longer than two hours. Providers may grant extensions beyond the maximum queue/hold time under extenuating circumstances (e.g., lengthy travel time to site), as per Toronto Shelter Standards.
- Make vacant beds available for use as soon as practical in order to facilitate new admissions.
- Make sure clients are aware of and adhere to curfew times, and work with counsellors should accommodations need to be documented in an individual's case plan. All spaces must be fully maximized given ongoing demand.
- Emergency shelter beds that are vacant as a result of an approved Leave with Permission should be treated as an available bed and assigned to clients seeking shelter.
- Notify the TSSS Duty Office immediately of any and all planned service disruptions.

In order to assist with managing capacity demands, please also ensure the following:

- Report serious occurrences immediately to the TSSS Duty Office and document them in SMIS within 12 hours.
- Document incidents in SMIS using the SMIS incident reporting module as soon as possible but no later than 12 hours after the incident.

Individuals looking to get in from the heat can also visit one of the City-funded daytime drop-in programs listed at www.toronto.ca/homelesshelp. Alternate Cool Spaces (i.e., community centres, libraries, etc.) can also be found on the City's interactive map at www.toronto.ca/keepcool.

Resources:

[Funding Submissions, Directives & Bulletins – City of Toronto](#)

[Toronto Shelter Standards](#)

[24-Hour Respite Site Standards](#)

[Cool Spaces Interactive Map](#)

**Contact
Information:**

For more information about this Bulletin, please contact your ARO.