



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): Bernard Grandmaître Physical Distancing Centre (PDC)

The City will be transitioning the temporary Heron Road Physical Distancing Centre (PDC) to the Bernard Grandmaître Arena in April 2023 to support the continued need for additional community shelter space for single men.

The Bernard Grandmaître PDC is intended to be short-term, until mid-August, as the City continues to plan for medium-long term sustainable housing options including new supportive housing units. A report outlining these strategies and next steps will be brought to Committee and Council in Q2 2023.

1. When is the Heron PDC closing?

Plans to transition the Heron PDC to Bernard Grandmaître Arena are currently underway with the full transition to be completed by the end of April 2023.

2. Why is the Bernard Grandmaître arena being transitioned into a temporary PDC?

There has been a rising demand for community shelter space due to the impacts of COVID-19 and unsheltered residents accessing shelter in cold weather. This increase is impacting the community shelter providers' ability to support residents unhoused while continuing to support public health measures due to COVID-19. Physical Distancing Centres were identified as an interim solution while medium-long term sustainable options are being explored. The location was selected as it best responds to logistical and safety needs for use as a Physical Distancing Centre due to their configuration and onsite facilities such as washrooms, showers and eating area. Other considerations in selecting facilities were based on:

- Balancing impacts on other services and systems
- Feasibility of accessing and operationalizing within the required timelines
- Fiscal implications

3. Who will be accessing the City operated Bernard Grandmaître PDC?

The Bernard Grandmaître PDC will serve up to 76 overflow single men, aged 18 years and older with low support needs, from the Ottawa Mission, Shepherds of Good Hope, and Salvation Army community shelters. Clients with higher needs will be supported at other community shelter locations.

4. Are community shelters continuing to serve clients?

Yes, the community shelters continue to support those in need, however, their permanent bed capacity is full, and overflow mechanisms are being activated to accommodate placement requests. Community shelters have a need to adhere to the public health guidelines and recommendations which have impacts on the number of



clients that can be served at each site. Physical Distancing Centres are a temporary extension to the existing community shelter system and only one component of the community response to the pandemic and its impact on people experiencing homelessness.

5. What amenities and support are available at this location?

The Bernard Grandmaître PDC offers food, bathrooms, showers, sleeping area, and Wi-Fi. Staff will also provide individuals with general case management support on site that includes housing search and applications, social assistance applications, coordinating medical appointments and supporting employment search where needed.

6. Do clients have to leave the premises during the day?

No. Clients are allowed to remain on site during the day.

7. How do clients access service at this site?

To make a request for placement, please call the City of Ottawa at 3-1-1 or Toll-Free at 1-866-261-9799.

8. Will there be staff and/or security on site?

Yes, there will be 24/7 staff and security on site monitoring the perimeter of the building.

9. What else is the city doing to support people who are experiencing homelessness?

In addition to Physical Distancing Centres, there are several initiatives underway to support people experiencing homelessness, and those sleeping unsheltered, including:

- Working with residents to support more permanent housing options such as private or subsidized housing.
- Enhanced housing supports including two new housing benefit programs introduced, and 180 new supportive housing units scheduled for completion in mid-2023 to early 2024
- Making referrals to community partners for additional supports (mental health, addictions, etc.)
- Integrated isolation strategies providing the ability for clients with CoVid 19 to isolate in place
- Continued enhancement of street outreach services to people sleeping unsheltered to provide supplies (such as cold weather gear) and connect to emergency shelter if desired
- Collaborating on an extreme cold response coordinated by Ottawa Public Health



10. Is the Ottawa Police Service aware of the Physical Distancing Centre opening at Bernard Grandmaître arena?

Yes, Housing Services has been in contact with both the Ottawa Police Services, Paramedic Services and By-law and Regulatory Services to inform of plans and collaborate with the safety and security of the site.

11. Who do I contact if I see suspicious activity at the Bernard Grandmaître PDC?

For non-urgent police-related issues please call Ottawa Police Services at 613-236-1222 ext. 7300

For urgent police-related issues:

- Call 9-1-1

For non-police related issues:

- Call 3-1-1 and your call will be directed to the appropriate person
- Call the onsite Supervisor at Bernard Grandmaître at 613-806-7291 who will support and/or triage accordingly.
- Email - Raynor Boutet, Community Liaison at raynor.boutet@ottawa.ca

12. Are clients allowed to consume drugs on site?

No, the Centre is not designated as a safe consumption site. Clients are not permitted to use on-site (inside or on the property) and will be re-directed to designated safe consumption sites in the community. Individuals whose needs go beyond our scope of care may be referred to an alternate community shelter for additional support.

13. What do I do if I find a needle?

- Call 311 to report it – they will send the request to Needle Hunters and track the complaint
- Send an email to needlereporting@ottawa.ca
- There is a needle drop box at 309 McArthur (CMHA)

14. Is Bernard Grandmaître accepting clothing donations?

No.

- Clients in need of clothing are referred to local community agencies.
- Residents who would like to donate clothing or other items are referred to local community agencies, such as Gifts in Kind or the Salvation Army.

15. When is the Bernard Grandmaître PDC closing?



The closure date of the Bernard Grandmaître PDC is planned for the mid-August 2023, at which time work will begin to prepare the facility for regular recreational fall programming.