



YOUTH HOUSING NAVIGATOR INFORMATION GUIDE



www.woodgreen.org/programs/youth-housing-navigator

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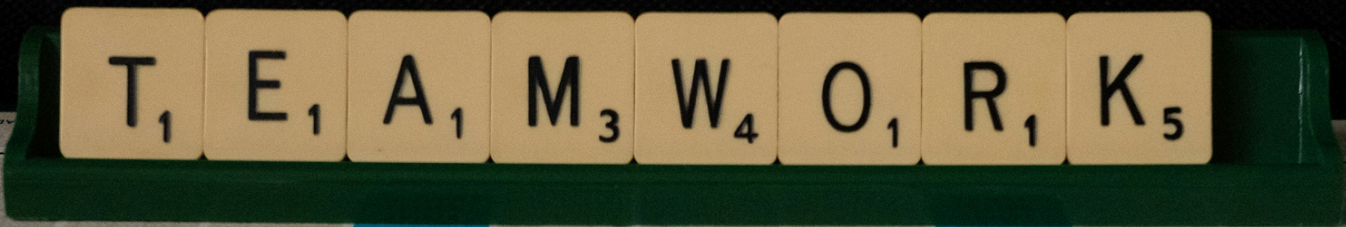


At WoodGreen Community Services, the Youth Housing Navigator (YHN) program is here to help if you're experiencing homelessness, facing eviction, or living in precarious or unsafe conditions. We support young people aged 16–30 in Toronto by working with you to understand your financial situation and employment status to find safe, affordable housing. If eligible, we offer short-term subsidies to ensure your housing stays affordable, based on your income and the cost of the unit.

Beyond just finding a place to live, we're here to support you as you build the skills and confidence to manage your housing on your own. Through our housing literacy and education supports, you'll learn about your rights and responsibilities as a tenant. Our goal is to help you feel confident and empowered, so you can thrive both in your new home and life over the long-term!

WELCOME





MEET THE TEAM



Erik Wexler

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“Everything that is real was imagined first” - Velveteen Rabbit

Will McCarty

Youth Housing Navigator

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"I've never failed, i've just found 10,000 ways that don't work." - Thomas Eddison



Brenda Wathoni

Housing & Life Skills Facilitator

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“Be as you wish to seem” - Socrates



PLEASE READ

What is the YHN Program

The Youth Housing Navigator (YHN) program at WoodGreen Community Services is designed to meet the needs of youth experiencing significant safety and housing precarity issues, as well as situational, episodic and chronic homelessness. We offer comprehensive case management and navigation support in identifying, securing and sustaining short-and-long-term housing solutions. Whether street homeless, navigating a transition from shelter, moving through the evictions process, or dealing with an unsafe housing environment, the YHN can support you. Examples include housing searches, completion of applications, viewing and unit inspections, lease review, landlord engagement, RTA literacy and education, and advocacy with the Landlord Tenant Board (LTB). Once part of the YHN program, clients can apply for access to rent subsidy. Being a YHN client does not mean that an applicant is eligible for rent subsidy as a result of their status in the program. For more information about access to rent subsidy, please speak with your worker or the housing navigator for more details.

What the YHN Program is Not

The YHN Program is not a residential program. We do not offer direct access to housing, neither market rent nor transitional or supportive housing. The YHN program is also not a financial subsidy program. Although we do offer rent subsidies, these funds are allocated to clients who meet eligibility criteria, have completed additional financial health assessments, met our documentation requirements, in transition from homelessness or precarious housing which have been identified as unsafe or unsustainable by both the young person and program. The program does not intake clients seeking financial support to sustain school or to offset financial burdens as a result of a transition from another subsidy program or the loss of employment.



ELIGIBILITY

The eligibility requirements listed below can also be found in the YHN application form. If you have any questions regarding eligibility, please contact either the YHN navigator or the program manager.

- 01 Youth between the ages of 16–30 years old; **and**
- 02 Living in Toronto or the inner-city suburbs of the GTA; **and**
- 03 Street homeless; **or**
- 04 In transition from shelter; **or**
- 05 In transition from transitional/Supportive Housing; **or**
- 06 Precariously housed (in transition from housing because of an eviction or unsafe living conditions)



PROGRAM PATHWAY

01

Screening

The screening process helps determine if the program is the right fit for you. We'll ask about your living situation, finances, and employment to identify suitable housing options and assess the support you may need. This helps us ensure the program meets your needs before moving forward

02

Intake/Goals

Intake is a goal-setting process where we work with you to identify your housing needs and set clear steps toward finding a safe, affordable solution. This ensures the support is tailored to help you achieve long-term stability

03

Search

The housing search process helps you find safe, affordable options based on your needs and budget. We assist with navigating listings, attend viewings, demonstrate good inspection techniques and connect with landlords to ensure a good fit

04

Secure

We help secure housing by advocating for you, ensuring your application meets landlord requirements, facilitate communication and demonstrate what to ask. We also assist with lease agreements to make the process smoother and to ensure that you know your rights as a tenant

05


Sustain

We help you to sustain your new apartment by offering ongoing support with budgeting, rental payments, and help to resolve emergent conflicts with landlords before they result in evictions. We also provide resources on tenant rights, responsibilities, and connect you to additional community services as needed

06

Graduation

After graduating from the YHN program, you'll have the skills to maintain your housing independently. Ongoing support is available through the YHN program as an alumni. You can also visit us during drop-in hours, whether it be to talk, get advice, access community resources, get support with an application or referral, or simply make new connections with other youth



WORK in PROGRESS

RESPONSIBILITIES

You are expected to actively engage in the housing process, communicate openly about your needs, work toward financial independence, and follow through on agreed-upon steps. This includes attending meetings, providing necessary documentation, participate in trainings if asked and work towards the goals set during intake. By taking responsibility for your part in the process, you help ensure a successful housing outcome

- 01 Active & Consistent Engagement**
Youth receiving support must meet at least once every two weeks to follow up on service plans, access resources, and ensure progress toward stability
- 02 Goal Setting & Financial Independence**
Youth are expected to actively search for work throughout the contract period, with employment goals tailored to individual needs, aiming for financial security and independence
- 03 Housing Literacy & Education**
All youth who request subsidy support will automatically be enrolled in a one-time mandatory housing seminar or workshop run by the program.
- 04 Documenting Progress**
It is expected that every young person in the YHN program will engage with the navigator to create a Service Plan. This plan helps establish clear goals and a sense of purpose, defining a path toward your desired destination



RENT SUBSIDY

Rent subsidy is designed to provide temporary financial relief while you secure your new housing and stabilize your income. It is expected that during this period of relief, you are identifying sustainable sources of income, with a focus on employment. YHN rent subsidies are a short-term, solution focused financial aid. Access to rent subsidy is determined through a Financial Health Assessment once intaked into the program and should not be understood as guaranteed based on ones status as a client.

- 01 Rent to Income Ratio**
Youth accessing the rent subsidy must pay between 30% and 60% of their income on rent, unless otherwise approved by the program manager
- 02 Required Documentation & Proof of Income**
Youth must provide proof of identity, 3 months of payment stubs or bank statements, and a signed lease or Intent to Rent. Monthly rent receipts may also be requested, with matching signatures on the lease and receipt.
- 03 Duration of Subsidy**
Subsidies are assessed in three (3) month intervals based on existing income and expenses. Duration of support is designed as short term but can be extended up to one (1) year with manager approval
- 04 Expectations and Subsidy**
Clients must complete an assessment, goal plan, and meet with a navigator two (2) times per month. As you stabilize, meeting frequency and subsidy may decrease. All youth requesting subsidy must attend mandatory training at least once



QUESTIONS?



Have questions? Read something that peaked your interest or you're unsure about? Its all good. We are here to help. Reach out and let us know your question. Hope to hear from you!

Thank you!



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