



a community that honors the inherent dignity of all, where individuals, especially the most vulnerable, are safe, respected and included

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Kelowna's only congregate site housing first program closes doors**

The Inn from the Cold (IFTC) housing first residence located out of the Chandler Street property will permanently close its doors after the lease expires on June 30, 2017.

"We find ourselves in a very difficult situation and, due to a loss of funding, we are unable to continue to lease the Chandler House," explained Jan Schulz, Executive Director of IFTC. "We are committed to keeping our residents housed and our immediate goal is to find an alternative housing solution so no one is left out on the street."

Since its inception in 2014, IFTC's Chandler Street housing program has provided shared accommodation for eight individuals who have experienced chronic homelessness. The program follows the philosophy of the Housing First Approach, which promotes the idea that providing housing is the first step to transitioning out of homelessness, not the last.

"We recognize this is very difficult news for our residents, staff, volunteers, and donors. I would like to say thank you everyone who has done so much for our organization and the people we serve," says Schulz. "For three years we have been able to provide housing for people who were in great need and I'm touched by all the community support we have received."

The annual funding of \$66,000 to support Chandler House has been discontinued as of March 31, 2017, leaving IFTC with no choice but to end the housing first program.

"We've done everything we can to stretch our dollars, but this is a significant loss of funding to our already limited budget," said Schulz.

IFTC will continue to be exhaustively searching for an alternative permanent housing location in the coming months. The month of June will see clean up and minor repairs at Chandler House before the keys are handed back to the landlord on June 30, 2017. The Chandler House Free Store will also close and administration offices currently in the building will move to an undetermined location.

"We are optimistic that this difficult time ahead will be brief and the future will bring new opportunities of growth for our small organization," said Mark Dixon, IFTC Chairman of the Board. "We continue to advocate for permanent, sustainable government funding and seek new opportunities for supportive housing, as well as collaborate with other organizations with a similar vision to end homelessness."

IFTC is operating at limited capacity and consumed with managing this change. Offers to provide financial assistance can be made to the IFTC donation page at <https://www.canadahelps.org/dn/8486>, by attending one of the [fundraising events](#), or by [volunteering](#).

#### Media Contact:

Jan Schulz, Executive Director  
250.448.6403

[info@innfromthecoldkelowna.org](mailto:info@innfromthecoldkelowna.org)  
[www.innfromthecoldkelowna.org](http://www.innfromthecoldkelowna.org)