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Ottawa's IHAP Wind-Down and Hotel Funding Cut Put Refugees at Risk; BCHAT Calls Alignment with Minister Diab and Support for Black-Led Housing

[Blackhousing.ca](https://blackhousing.ca)

Founded: 2021

About: We are a coalition of social service and housing providers, developers, planning experts, government and community leaders who aim to eliminate housing inequity for Black residents across the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA).

Vision: To eliminate housing inequities and support access to improved outcomes for Black residents.

Mission: BCHAT's mission is to support the development of permanent housing solutions for Black residents in the GTHA through the creation of a more equitable, culturally appropriate, and well-funded Black housing sector.

(TORONTO) - The Black Community Housing Advisory Table (BCHAT) is calling on the Government of Canada to restore refugee shelter funding for Toronto and to partner with Black led developers through Build Canada Homes. The federal Interim Housing Assistance Program (IHAP) is scheduled to end in 2027, and Toronto has been funded at only ~60% of its 2025–2027 request. As of September 30, 2025, the federal government ceased paying for hotel spaces, leaving organizations scrambling to find placements for people still in hotels. Many of the refugee claimants and asylum seekers affected are Black (from Africa and the Caribbean).

A significant portion of those who are homeless identify as Black, and in Toronto over 50% of those in homeless shelters are refugees. There is declining safety around the world, across Canada, Black communities are more likely to rent, and within the housing industry there is a lack of support for Black-led development. Together this contributes to the significant volume of Black people experiencing ongoing homelessness across our country.

"Needs are rising while supports are winding down. Without stabilization and a plan for strengthening Black communities, people will be pushed from shelter lines to sidewalks," said Diane Walter, BCHAT Co-Chair. "We don't want to see more people dying on our streets as a result of homelessness. As a coalition, we have the skills and experience to rapidly build temporary and permanent housing. We supported hundreds of refugee claimants in 2023, leveraging our expertise, and we continue to advance housing solutions. Let's align our efforts with the national housing agenda, including the \$1 billion in transitional and supportive housing through Build Canada Homes."

"Backstopping shelters while backing Black-led housing supply is a value-for-money solution," added Cheryll Case, BCHAT Co-Chair. "Our sector is ready to help deliver transitional and supportive housing that relieves pressure on shelters and creates lasting homes, in full alignment with federal priorities."

What BCHAT is asking for — practical steps that match federal priorities

- Restore and stabilize refugee shelter funding for Toronto so beds remain open and people are not left outdoors, including interim accommodations for those exiting hotel placements.
- Back Black-led housing development by:
 - Prioritizing Black-led non-profit and community proponents within federal affordable-housing financing streams;

- Identifying suitable federal public-lands sites for Black-led affordable housing in Toronto and the GTHA;
- Providing application navigation and pre-development supports so Black-led projects can move quickly.
- Aligning Build Canada Homes' commitment to deploy \$1 billion for transitional and supportive housing for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Cutting or capping refugee-shelter supports while demand surges increases both human and fiscal costs - driving people into ERs, transit, and encampments. Restoring funding now and partnering with Black-led developers through Build Canada Homes will reduce shelter pressure and add long-term affordable homes where they are needed most, with wrap-around supports that help people stabilize and thrive.

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