

Causes of Homelessness

A. **Structural Factors** - economic and societal issues that affect opportunities and social environments for individuals

1. Lack of adequate income (working poor)
2. Access to affordable housing
3. Access to adequate health, mental health and addiction supports
4. Experience of discrimination

B. **Poverty** - Poverty means life is tenuous --> a person can be "one accident, or paycheque away from living on the streets." Homelessness and poverty are inextricably linked. Poverty often means people are unable to pay for necessities such as:

1. Food
2. Childcare
3. Healthcare
4. Education

C. **Housing**

1. There is a critical shortage of affordable, safe and stable housing
2. Lack of housing creates more barriers to employment and further stigmatizes people.

D. **System Failures**

1. Difficult transitions from childcare and the foster care system.
2. Inadequate plans for people being discharged from hospital, corrections facilities and mental health and addictions facilities.
3. Lack of support for immigrants and refugees.

E. Personal Circumstances and Relational Problems

Personal Circumstances:

1. Traumatic events in someone's life
2. Personal crisis
3. Mental health and addiction challenges
4. Physical health issues and disabilities

Relational Problems:

5. Family violence
6. Addictions of family members
7. Mental health issues of family members
8. Extreme poverty

F. Domestic Violence

1. Family violence can force individuals and families to leave home suddenly, without proper supports in place.
2. Violence can in the form of sexual, physical or psychological abuse.