



Connect: Warming Centre - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness is committed to ensuring all residents have a safe, warm place to go during the day – especially over the cold winter months. During the winter season our homeless population have a hard time staying dry and warm. This could be a threat to their overall well-being, and they also could be facing a substantial risk to their lives or health. Having a space to go during the day also decreases loitering, criminal activity and other risky behaviours improving the health of the downtown core for all.

1. What is a Warming Centre? Who is it for?

The Connect Warming Centre will provide a safe, welcoming space for vulnerable individuals experiencing or at-risk of experiencing homelessness. It is a space where people can escape inclement weather, temporarily store or dry out belongings, access washrooms, light refreshments, and other supports.

The Connect Warming Centre provides a place to safely get out of the cold weather during the day, giving respite to other local community spaces, such as the Courtenay library and the Lewis Recreation Centre which often act as informal warming centres. The Salvation Army Pidcock shelter has spaces for people to sleep overnight

2. Who is operating the Warming Centre?

The Connect Warming Centre is operated in partnership between the Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness and the Comox Valley Transition Society.

3. Where is the Warming Centre located? What are the hours of operation?

The Connect Warming Centre is located at **685 Cliffe Ave. Courtenay**

Opening day is **Monday January 13, 2020** and the current hours of operation are **Monday-Friday 1-5pm** (with potential expansion of hours dependent on funding)

4. What programs and services are offered at the Warming Centre?

In addition to a space where people can escape inclement weather, the Connect Warming Centre will also provide onsite outreach workers to assist with:

- access to housing opportunities
- filling out income assistance, supportive housing applications, and other forms
- assistance with ID replacement
- administering Vulnerability Assessments
- referrals to social service agencies
- access to living supports
- literacy and education or volunteer opportunities
- scheduled workshops/trainings/activities
- visits from other social service providers

5. Safety

A behavioural code of conduct is expected within the warming centre and in the immediate surrounding area. Consideration of our neighbours will be of utmost importance and we are dedicated to open communication and education. There will be zero tolerance for the use of drugs, alcohol or cannabis; the dealing of drugs; weapons; violence, abuse or threats. There will be no hesitation to call the RCMP when the situation warrants it or there is presence of criminal activity.

The RCMP have been briefed on this project. The Connect Warming Centre will provide an opportunity to build relationships between RCMP and our homeless population

7. How is it funded?

The Connect Warming Centre is funded by multiple partners including: Homelessness Partnering Strategy – Rural & Remote (Federal funding), City of Courtenay (provision of the building), United Way Central & Northern Vancouver Island, Comox Valley Community Foundation and Coldest Night of the Year fundraising (programming, staff and operational costs).

8. Can the public drop off donations for the homeless at the Connect Warming Centre?

We thank you for your consideration, but we cannot accept donations at the warming centre. If you have donations that you think would be of value to those experiencing homelessness, please contact us at comoxvalleyhousing@gmail.com

The Coalition to End Homelessness would like to thank the City of Courtenay for supporting a space where our most vulnerable community members can get warm and access supports.

For more information on the Connect Warming Centre or the Coalition to End Homelessness, please email Andrea Cupelli, Coordinator at comoxvalleyhousing@gmail.com

Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness

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