

Richard Greer
BFC YSL Hostel Coordinator
Brandon Friendship Housing Authority
836 Lorne Avenue
Brandon, Manitoba, R7A 0T8

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City of Brandon Planning and Buildings Department
410 9th St
Brandon, MB R7A 6A2

Dear City of Brandon,

Subject: Notification of Operation of a 24-hour SAFE SPACE within the BFC Youth Hostel at 450 12th St, Brandon MB

We write on behalf of the Brandon Friendship Housing Authority to formally notify the City of Brandon Planning and Buildings Department of our operation of a 6-bed Youth Hostel/Shelter in Brandon, MB.

Details of Operation:

- Address: 450 12th St, Brandon MB
- Operation Hours: 24 hours
- Demographic: Ages 16–26
- Size: 27.76 square meters

Purpose and Services:

The BFC YSL Hostel was designed to act as a safe and supportive space for young individuals in our community during all hours of operation. We provided essential services, including shelter, warmth, and basic amenities 24 hours a day, to address the needs of youth aged 16–26.

In addition to the SAFE SPACE, this location hosted a transitional housing program and a 6-bed temporary shelter dedicated to female youth aged 16–26.

This integrated model, combining a shelter, safe space, and transitional bedrooms, proved to be crucial in our community for several reasons:

- **Addressing Diverse Needs:** It supported individuals experiencing homelessness, unsafe living conditions, or those requiring transitional support, effectively meeting a wide range of needs.
- **24-Hour Accessibility:** Continuous access ensured that youth could receive support at any time, responding to unpredictable circumstances.

- **Reducing Homelessness:** Indigenous youth, who experienced higher rates of homelessness due to systemic barriers, benefited from both immediate shelter and pathways to long-term stability.
- **Holistic Approach to Well-being:** The program supported mental health, healthcare access, and recreational opportunities, promoting resilience and overall well-being.
- **Education and Employment Opportunities:** Residents were connected to education and vocational supports, improving long-term outcomes.
- **Community Integration:** The program fostered a sense of belonging and encouraged positive community connections.
- **Cost-Effective Solutions:** Integrating services streamlined resources and ensured coordinated care.
- **Preventing Recidivism:** The model reduced returns to homelessness by offering sustained, individualized support.
- **Collaboration with Local Resources:** We worked alongside local social services, educational institutions, and employment supports to strengthen outcomes for residents.

This integrated approach provided a comprehensive and adaptive response to the complex challenges faced by young individuals, addressing immediate, transitional, and long-term needs while supporting stability and independence.

Compliance with Regulations:

We ensured that all operations adhered to relevant regulations and guidelines set forth by the City of Brandon and the Government of Manitoba. The safety, security, and well-being of participants and the surrounding community remained a top priority.

Community Engagement:

As a responsible organization, we maintained positive relationships with the community by engaging with neighbours, addressing concerns, and providing regular updates through open communication.

Our primary objective was to create a safe and secure environment for youth aged 16–26. We recognized that changes within a neighbourhood could raise concerns and addressed this through a comprehensive safety approach.

Security Measures:

Ensuring the safety of residents, staff, and neighbours remained our highest priority. The location contributed to safety, being approximately 400 meters from the Brandon Police Service and 50 meters from Victoria Avenue, a major thoroughfare.

Additionally, we implemented the following measures:

1. Camera surveillance systems were installed to monitor the premises and deter potential issues.

2. A minimum staffing level of two personnel was maintained at all times to ensure a responsive and supervised environment. Staff were trained in Non-Violent Crisis Intervention, Violent Threat Risk Assessment, and CPR/First Aid.
3. Emergency panic buttons were installed throughout the facility to allow immediate response to emergencies.
4. Monitored fire alarm and suppression systems were installed in compliance with Fire Code regulations.
5. Secure storage areas were provided for residents' belongings to ensure safety and prevent exposure to risks.

We appreciated the guidance and support of the Planning and Buildings Department in ensuring compliant operation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your collaboration in supporting a safer community for youth.

Sincerely,
Richard Greer
BFC YSL Hostel Coordinator
Brandon Friendship Housing Authority