

### CLMA Social Worker Co-op Project

#### Focus/Issue

The Clarington Library, Museums & Archives (CLMA) has partnered with Trent University's Faculty of Social Work and will be welcoming two Social Work students for eight months, from September 2024 to April 2025. The 21-hours per week placement will be focused on supporting members of the public who need community services, shelter, employment and other social determinants of health.

#### Background/Context

- In September 2023, five Durham lakeshore Libraries hired consultants from Hume-McKenna Associates to conduct a four-month review of services, policies, and spaces as they related to serving vulnerable and marginalized populations.
- In January 2024, the report from Hume-McKenna was finalized and the recommendations and Action Plan were approved by the Clarington Public Library Board and shared with the Municipality's Deputy CAO, Public Services.
- One of the recommendations was to create placement opportunities for Social Work students or to hire a Social Worker. The CLMA is uniquely able to support placement opportunities for social work students as the Director, Neighbourhood Services has the requisite social work education credentials and work experience to supervise the students.
- In January 2024, a Winter Warming Centre opened in Bowmanville at St. Paul's United Church. In March 2024, the Clarington Public Library Board was advised that the CLMA experienced a 50% increase in incidents when compared to 2023, including suspected overdoses inside the Bowmanville Library as well as repeated incidents in the Courtice Community Complex and Courtice Library by local high school students.
- In March 2024, the Municipality of Clarington procured a security guard for the MAC and the Bowmanville Library.
- CLMA was successful in obtaining two student placements for the September 2024 to April 2025 period. The students will be placed at Bowmanville and Courtice Libraries, the two co-located libraries in municipal facilities that experience the most incidents.
- The Social Work student in Courtice will work to create collaborative opportunities between the library and the Courtice Secondary School staff to engage students in accessing services and using the Courtice complex facilities appropriately. The Social Work student in Bowmanville will help residents access food supports and social services.

#### Key messages

- The Clarington Public Library Board is committed to providing welcoming and safe spaces for staff and community members.

## Council Briefing Notes

- CLMA and the Municipality work closely and collaboratively to ensure that residents have access to the supports they need to thrive.
- Social Workers in library and public spaces have been successful in de-escalating and preventing incidents and connect individuals with social services in other urban centres.
- The CLMA is uniquely able to support students due to the social work background of a senior leader, where otherwise CLMA would be ineligible to host students from the Trent University Faculty of Social Work.

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