

**Emily Lutz**

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**From:** AMO Policy <policy@amo.on.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 12 December 2024 12:23 pm  
**To:** Emily Lutz  
**Subject:** AMO Policy Update – Homelessness Encampments Legislation

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## **AMO Policy Update – Homelessness Encampments Legislation**

Later today, the government will table bills to introduce the *Safer Municipalities Act* and the *Restricting Public Consumption of Illegal Substances Act* that focus on increasing enforcement around encampments and public drug use. AMO will be closely reviewing the legislation when it is tabled.

The province also announced other measures intended to assist municipalities to address homelessness encampments:

- \$75.5 million in provincial and federal funding for housing and homelessness supports, including \$5.5 million to increase the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB), \$20 million for emergency shelters and temporary accommodation, and \$50 million for ready-to-build affordable housing projects.
- Additional requirements for municipal service managers to report back to the province on the number of individuals moved from encampments into new accommodations and to submit spending plans for Homelessness Prevention Program funding for MMAH approval.

AMO has called for provincial guidance that clarifies municipal enforcement powers around encampments. The lack of shared understanding of municipal authorities across municipal Councils, police services, and community members has led to divisive local confrontations and undermined effective responses to encampments.

Enforcement alone will not effectively address encampments. Only serious investments and coordinated action on transitional, supportive and community housing, mental health, addictions and social services, and income supports can address the impacts of decades of provincial policy.

*“AMO shares the province’s perspective that the 1400 homeless encampments across Ontario must be addressed. Municipalities appreciate every dollar that the province puts towards homelessness. But more is needed. Only provincial investments in housing, health and social services can truly address encampments.”* Robin Jones, AMO President and Mayor of Westport

*“Encampments are not a justice or policing issue, they are a social safety net issue. The 1400 homeless encampments in Ontario today are the result of decades of provincial under investments in income security, mental health and addictions services, and deeply affordable housing. Provincial leadership and resources are needed to solve this crisis that is undermining Ontario’s prosperity and quality of life.”* Brian Rosborough, AMO Executive Director

More information about AMO’s position is found in [Homelessness Encampments in Ontario: A Municipal Perspective.](#)

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155 University Ave Suite 800 | Toronto, ON M5H 3B7 CA