

Escalating Crisis at 81 Elizabeth Street Warming Centre: Violence, Crime, and Public Safety Failures

Produced By The Elizabeth Street Safety Committee And Shared With IntegrityTO

Updated: Tuesday, May 20, 2025

A Data-Driven Analysis Based on *AG-2024-03250 Incident Report*, *AG-2024-03251 Service Restrictions Report*, *AG-2025-00607 RC Incident Report*, Comprehensive Reports via 111 Elizabeth Street's Property Management, and Several Other Detailed Reports

Introduction

The *AG-2024-03250 Incident Report*, *AG-2024-03251 Service Restrictions Report*, and *AG-2025-00607 RC Incident Report* via the City of Toronto, and a recent Toronto Auditor General report confirm that the 81 Elizabeth Street Warming Centre is an escalating public safety disaster and an extraordinary financial burden on taxpayers.

Despite offering fewer services and amenities than traditional shelters, warming centres have proven to be the most expensive form of emergency housing, costing taxpayers a staggering \$359 per person per date, comparable to a stay in a luxury downtown hotel.

Beyond the financial waste, the Warming Centre has brought an unprecedented level of crime, violence, and disorder to the community, creating an environment that is unsafe for everyone, from local residents to students, business owners, and families with young children.

The 81 Elizabeth Street Warming Centre is a low-barrier facility that does not require ID from its clients, meaning that individuals with extensive criminal records, including violent offenders and those convicted of sexual crimes against children, may be housed at the facility. There is no way to screen for such individuals, putting the surrounding community, including a University of Toronto residence housing international students and a daycare centre less than 75 meters away, at serious risk.

Moreover, the 81 Elizabeth Street Warming Centre has repeatedly failed to abide by its operational mandates by remaining open even when temperatures have risen well above the threshold for extreme cold weather conditions.

Despite its intended purpose as an emergency response to life-threatening cold, the centre has continued to operate when temperatures have reached as high as 6°C, well beyond the point where frostbite or hypothermia risks justify its use.

This prolonged and unjustified operation has **transformed the facility into an unregulated hub for problematic individuals**, fostering **drug use, violence, and crime** rather than serving its intended function as a temporary emergency shelter during dangerously cold weather.

Key Issues Plaguing the Community Due to the Warming Centre

- **Physical and verbal assaults on local community members, causing lasting trauma, with no justice served.**
- **Daily emergency responses, with 1 to 3 first responder visits per date, costing taxpayers up to \$5,500 per date.**
- **Widespread and open drug use**, with the Warming Centre's smoking area turning into an **unofficial supervised consumption site where crack, fentanyl, and methamphetamine are used daily.**
- **Drug paraphernalia, vomit, and human feces litter the area for months, creating significant public health and sanitation hazards.**
- **Banned individuals continue to loiter near the centre, harassing residents, openly using drugs, and escalating the risk of violent encounters.**
- **The proximity of the Warming Centre to vulnerable populations, including:**
 - **A University of Toronto student residence is directly across the street, where many domestic and international students pay a premium rate for housing that assumes a safe environment, but instead are exposed to assaults, drug use, and crime.**
 - **A daycare centre located less than 75 meters away, with an outdoor playground where toddlers are now at risk of witnessing drug use, encountering aggressive individuals, or stepping on hazardous waste like used needles, especially during the late winter and early spring.**

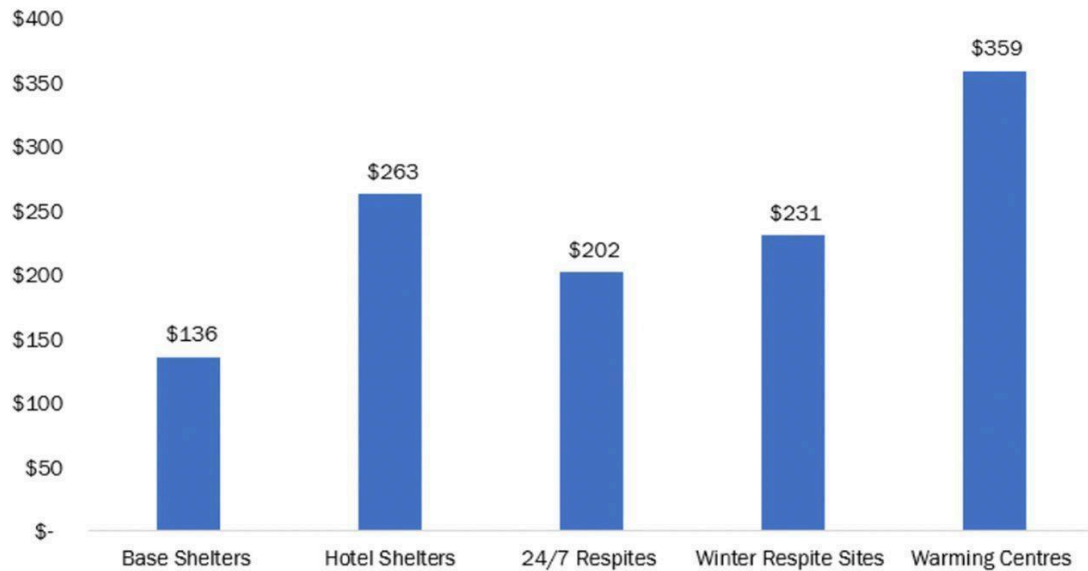
This report presents:

- **A detailed breakdown of violent incidents, overdoses, and criminal activity at and around the Warming Centre.**
- **An analysis of the financial burden on taxpayers, including the cost of first responder visits.**
- **A comprehensive extrapolation of what will happen if the Warming Centre remains in the community or, worse, becomes permanent.**

1. Financial Mismanagement: Warming Centres Cost More than Luxury Hotels

A recent report from the Toronto Auditor General found that warming centres cost **\$359 per person per date** to operate, **more than double the cost of a base shelter bed (\$136 per date)** and higher than a night in many downtown hotels, including the Chelsea Hotel, the Hyatt Regency, and One King West.

Figure 3: Average Cost per Bed Night for Key Types of Programs, 2023/24 Winter Season¹²



Prepared by the Auditor General's Office; source of data: TSSS (numbers for base shelters, hotel shelters, and 24/7 respites are unaudited).

Despite these costs, warming centres:

- Offer fewer services and amenities than base shelters.
- Frequently operate below full capacity, yet are still budgeted as if running at maximum occupancy.
- Fail to provide stable, long-term solutions for those using them, keeping people in a cycle of emergency dependence.

Instead of investing in permanent housing solutions, the City has wasted millions on a deeply flawed and unsustainable model that has failed both Warming Centre clients and the communities forced to host them.

2. First Responder Costs: The Hidden Financial Burden

2.1 Volume of Emergency Calls

According to multiple sources and firsthand accounts, **the 81 Elizabeth Street Warming Centre requires 1 to 3 emergency responses per date it is open**, involving:

- Toronto Fire Services (fire trucks dispatched to overdose and medical calls).
- Toronto Paramedic Services (EMS responses to overdoses, injuries, and drug-related medical emergencies).

- **Toronto Police Services (responses to violent incidents, threats, and weapons-related altercations).**

2.2 Cost Breakdown

According to **City of Toronto budget estimates:**

- **A single fire truck dispatch costs approximately \$1,500 per hour.**
- **An EMS unit dispatch costs between \$500 and \$1,000 per call.**
- **A Toronto Police unit response costs approximately \$300 to \$500 per call.**

2.3 Estimated Costs per Date

With **1 to 3 first responder visits per date**, the **cost to taxpayers per date** ranges from:

- **LOW: \$2,300 per date (one fire truck, one EMS unit, one police unit).**
- **HIGH: \$5,500 per date (two fire trucks, two EMS units, one police unit).**

2.4 Seasonal Cost Estimate

Assuming the Warming Centre operates for **four months in a typical winter season**, the **total seasonal cost for emergency responses alone** would range from:

- **\$138,000 to \$330,000 in taxpayer-funded emergency response costs.**

This is in **addition to the \$359 per person per date operating costs**, meaning the total financial impact is **far greater than what has been publicly acknowledged.**

3. The Warming Centre as a Breeding Ground for Crime, Drug Use, and Violence

- **Drug use and overdoses happen inside and outside the facility daily.**
- **Security is insufficient, and violent individuals often return after being banned.**
- **Public intoxication, aggressive panhandling, and harassment of residents, students, and business owners have become common occurrences.**



Brief Summary: Most Egregious Documented Incidents (From AG-2024-03250 Incident Report, AG-2024-03251 Service Restrictions Report, AG-2025-00607 RC Incident Report via the City of Toronto & Local News Sources)

Incident ID	Date	Description
HOMICIDE	Feb 27, 2024	50-year-old Gregory Lawrie fatally assaulted outside the Warming Centre by 25-year-old Taylor Harker.
399687	Nov 28, 2023	Overdose in a bathroom stall, Naloxone administered, transported to hospital.
399797	Dec 3, 2023	Unresponsive client found in bathroom, CPR administered, transported to hospital.

402912	Feb 19, 2024	Client overdosed on fentanyl, EMS called twice, transported to hospital.
401881	Jan 25, 2024	Knife threat inside the Warming Centre, panic ensued.
402621	Feb 12, 2024	Unprovoked attack on a security guard, head injury sustained.
414740	Jan 11, 2025	Service user physically assaulted a neighbouring client without provocation while sleeping.
415006	Jan 14, 2025	Unconscious client found in smoking area due to possible overdose; CPR and two doses of naloxone administered; client refused hospital.
415043	Jan 15, 2025	Client found in smoking pit with blue lips and shallow breathing; CPR and naloxone administered; client refused hospital care.
415269	Jan 19, 2025	Client unresponsive in upstairs washroom with shallow breathing and blue lips; 3 doses of naloxone administered; transported to hospital and possibly died.
415552	Jan 23, 2025	Client found unconscious and not breathing in men's washroom; naloxone and CPR administered; client revived before EMS could assess.
415745	Jan 26, 2025	Client overdosed near smoking pit; CPR and two naloxone doses administered; client refused transport after regaining consciousness.

4. Systemic Failure in Incident Reporting: Correspondence Between 111 Elizabeth Resident and City Staff

A significant revelation emerged in a formal exchange between **Sherry Robertson**, a long-time resident of **111 Elizabeth Street**, and **Quincy Akande**, an Access & Privacy Officer with the **City of Toronto's Employment & Social Services Department**. This exchange occurred on **April 11, 2025**, regarding Freedom of Information (FOI) request **AG-2025-00607**, which pertains to incident reports at the **Fred Victor Warming Centre at 81 Elizabeth Street**.

Key Details:

- Sherry Robertson had requested **complete incident documentation** from the City tied to the operation of the Warming Centre.
- Quincy Akande confirmed via e-mail that **incident reports were missing** from several dates during the timeframe in question.
- According to Akande, Toronto Shelter and Support Services (TSSS) **failed to file mandatory incident reports**, despite the existence of policies requiring documentation of *all* incidents.
- TSSS staff were subsequently **reminded of their legal obligation** to file such reports.

Excerpt from Official City E-mail (April 11, 2025):

“TSSS has advised us that there were several dates when they did not file an incident report. This is contrary to their policies and procedures. TSSS staff have been reminded that they must create an incident report for all incidents.”

— Quincy Akande, Access & Privacy Officer, City of Toronto

From: Quincy Akande <Quincy.Akande@toronto.ca>
Date: April 11, 2025 at 3:06:24 PM EDT
To: sherry reid <justbehappy@live.ca>, "Pauline P. W. Lam" <Pauline.Lam@toronto.ca>
Subject: RE: FOI - 81 Elizabeth Street

Hello Sherry,

I have sent you the additional responsive records for FOI request AG-2025-00607 via our secure messaging system. These records represent all the responsive records that Toronto Shelter and Support Services (TSSS) have for the date range of your request.

TSSS has advised us that there were several dates where they did not file an incident report. This is contrary to their policies and procedures. TSSS staff have been reminded that they must create an incident report for all incidents.

We apologize for the inconvenience.

Best regards,

Quincy Akande
Access & Privacy Officer
City of Toronto | Employment & Social Services
Client Services and Issues Management Unit
416-392-4955
Quincy.Akande@toronto.ca

Implications:

- This admission further **undermines public trust** in the City of Toronto's oversight of the Warming Centre and its commitment to transparency.
- It raises legitimate concerns that **additional violent, medical, or criminal events were never documented**, thus escaping public scrutiny or proper follow-up.
- These omissions suggest a **pattern of negligence or cover-up** that may have contributed to escalating violence, including overdoses and at least one homicide.
- The City's failure to enforce its reporting standards until after an FOI request was submitted reveals a **reactive, not preventative, safety culture** within TSSS.

Conclusion:

This exchange highlights a **systemic breakdown** in accountability at 81 Elizabeth Street. Without full, accurate, and timely documentation of incidents, neither the public nor decision-makers can effectively evaluate the safety risks posed by the Warming Centre. Sherry Robertson's persistent advocacy and formal FOI efforts uncovered a gap in basic governance—one that has likely allowed dangerous behaviour to go unaddressed and unpunished.

5. 111 Elizabeth Street (One City Hall): A Building Under Siege

Since the reopening of the 81 Elizabeth Street Warming Centre, 111 Elizabeth Street, otherwise known as One City Hall, has become a **direct target of crime, drug use, and escalating violence**. The situation has deteriorated to the point where residents and property management are under constant threat. **If this crisis is not immediately addressed, the security, safety, and livability of 111 Elizabeth Street will continue to erode, possibly with fatal consequences.**

5.1 Security and Criminal Activity Will Continue to Escalate

- **Residents on the first six floors, especially those whose units face the Warming Centre, are experiencing severe distress** due to **unrelenting noise pollution, criminal activity, and violent disturbances**.
- **Daily and nightly break-ins and break-in attempts have become a regular occurrence.** Property Manager Marelba Fushekati has **extensive documentation of these incidents**, including unauthorized individuals entering the building and damaging property.
- **Clients from the Warming Centre have begun entering the building's entrance to smoke crack and other illicit drugs**, bringing the dangers of open drug use inside 111 Elizabeth Street.

- The parking garage is routinely breached, allowing **unauthorized individuals access to private property, leading to theft and vandalism.**
- **Warming Centre clients have had psychotic episodes in the entranceway of the building,** creating a hostile and unpredictable environment for residents.



Anonymous member

19h · 🌐



Hey all,

Just a few minutes ago the conceirge had to verbally force someone who was smoking drugs out of our building again. With big credit to her, she did not stop until he left but this is a huge imposition towards the safety of those who live here. I have been in touch with management but there needs to be more action taken for this. I couldn't re-enter the building until he was removed as I was scared for my own safety. I hate that I have to say this, but please be vigilant when you are outside.

*picture taken from when he was finally leaving, holding his pipe



5.2 Physical and Verbal Assaults Will Increase

- Residents of 111 Elizabeth Street have already been physically and verbally assaulted on Elizabeth Street and nearby side streets.
- Those who live on the first floor consider the situation a travesty; several will be moving soon, as their balconies are frequently trespassed upon by clients of the Warming Centre.
- Screaming, fighting, and the presence of emergency responders throughout the night have turned their homes into a war zone.
- The frequent emergency responder visits, including fire trucks, ambulances, and police, are particularly distressing for those living closest to the ground level.
- Many residents no longer feel safe using their balconies or opening their windows due to aggressive individuals loitering directly outside their homes.
- The lack of enforcement has emboldened perpetrators; residents are being forced to live in fear, knowing that there are no consequences for the violent and aggressive behaviour exhibited by Warming Centre clients.
- Notably, an elderly male resident was physically assaulted by an individual coming from the Warming Centre, sustaining injuries. The perpetrator was not detained, illustrating the ongoing risk to vulnerable residents.
- In a separate incident, a female tenant was chased inside 111 Elizabeth Street by a trespasser attempting to break into her unit. She managed to lock her door just in time, while the intruder remained outside, banging on the door for several minutes before being removed by security.

Arash Rezaia [Author](#)

I am going to bear this nonsense til the 15 of April, if it comes back in November I am gonna move out of this place. My place looks directly at the shelter and the noise is becoming too too much

...

5.3 The Residential Livability of 111 Elizabeth Street Will Be Destroyed

- Public areas are no longer safe; residents cannot enter or exit their building without risk of harassment or confrontation.
- The mental and emotional toll on residents is immeasurable, as they are forced to live in a state of fear, anxiety, and uncertainty about their safety.

- **Many residents are now actively planning to move out** due to the **dangerous and unlivable conditions caused by the Warming Centre.**
- **The constant presence of drug users and aggressive individuals has turned the entranceway into a danger zone.**

5.4 The Situation is Critical: Someone Could Die Soon

- **The continued inaction by the City of Toronto is placing lives at risk.**
- **The conditions at 111 Elizabeth Street have deteriorated to an unsustainable and unacceptable level.**
- **Immediate intervention is necessary before a fatal incident occurs inside or around the building.**



Umair Suhail

I lived in this building for 4 years till I had to move out last August. This was one of the most peaceful streets in downtown and its sad to see what it has become

6. Firsthand Accounts from 111 Elizabeth Street Residents

As the crisis surrounding the 81 Elizabeth Street Warming Centre worsens, **residents and business owners in the area have come forward with harrowing accounts of violence, harassment, and public disorder.** Below are firsthand testimonies detailing the severe impact on their safety, well-being, and quality of life.

6.1 Jennifer: A Community in Fear

"I have lived at 111 Elizabeth Street since 2008. I used to feel safe walking my dog at night. Now, I have been chased, threatened, and subjected to racial slurs multiple times right in front of the Warming Centre. My husband doesn't even want me walking on Elizabeth Street anymore."

Jennifer, a longtime resident, describes how the Warming Centre has transformed the area into a dangerous environment. **She recounted being chased out of a nearby park by a man threatening to kill her and her dog last winter.**

The increase in visible meth, crack, and other illicit drug users using needles littering the streets, and the fatal stabbing outside the Warming Centre last winter have shattered her sense of security, and she is significantly traumatized to a degree that has required therapy (which she pays for out of pocket).

She also highlights the broader impact: *"There is a daycare and university residence in the immediate vicinity. Medical professionals and students walk through here daily. This is not just a local issue; it affects the entire city."*

6.2 Sherry: A System That Enables Harm

Sherry Robertson, **a former worker in Toronto's homelessness sector for approximately 20 years**, shared her deep concerns regarding the centre's operation and lack of oversight.

"I spoke with an employee at Fred Victor, and she admitted that when the centre is at full capacity, it becomes a complete 'war zone.' People who have been banned from CAMH and other shelters end up here. The lack of control over who is admitted creates a breeding ground for violence."

Most disturbingly, **Sherry described an encounter in the smoking area of the 81 Elizabeth Street Warming Centre at the beginning of March 2025, where she discovered that some Warming Centre clients had been injecting their dogs with illicit drugs for entertainment.**

A severely neglected puppy she found at the beginning of March 2025 in the Warming Centre's smoking section, described by Sherry as dehydrated and malnourished, was reportedly in the possession of a homeless couple.

Given the conditions, Sherry suspects that the animal did not survive, despite her attempts to give the homeless couple food and water for the puppy.

They were simply too high and dissociated to notice that Sherry was attempting to help the puppy.

The Warming Centre is not just failing the community; it is actively complicit in criminal and abusive behaviour, including **the abuse of vulnerable animals**.

During a conversation with an employee **at Fred Victor** in March 2025, Sherry learned about a shocking incident at the **Better Living Centre's low-barrier respite** (195 Princes' Boulevard), which closed in 2024.

"A homeless guy showed up at the Better Living Centre with an assault rifle, an AK-47," the employee told her.

Sherry, stunned, asked whether they had found the weapon in the man's bag.

"Oh no, we're not allowed to check their bags," the employee responded.

According to the staff member, the **only reason no one was harmed was that the man was openly carrying the assault rifle at his side, making it visible to others**. Had he concealed it and entered the shelter with **400 people inside**, the outcome **could have been catastrophic**.

Though the man was **arrested**, he was likely **released under Canada's catch-and-release policies**, which have repeatedly allowed violent offenders back onto the streets with no meaningful consequences.

Where do these individuals end up?

Due to the **lack of screening** at Toronto's warming centres, individuals **with violent criminal records, including those caught with firearms, can simply walk into 81 Elizabeth Street without any ID checks or background screening.**

- **There are no bag searches**, meaning someone **could walk in with a weapon just as easily as they could at the Better Living Centre.**
- **There is no vetting of criminal history**, so individuals **with past convictions for violent crimes, sexual offences, or gun-related charges can be placed among other vulnerable individuals without oversight.**
- **There is no meaningful security presence to prevent an armed individual from entering.**

The **recklessness and negligence** displayed by the **City of Toronto officials and councillors responsible for this Warming Centre** is beyond incompetence; it is a **dereliction of duty that should result in criminal charges.**

6.3 Marelba Fushekati: The Relentless Strain on Property Management

As the **property manager of 111 Elizabeth Street**, Marelba has compiled extensive documentation of break-ins, vandalism, and security threats tied to the Warming Centre.

"Since November 2024, we have recorded at least 37 serious incidents, including break-and-enters, fire alarm activations, and individuals trespassing onto balconies to sleep or use drugs. The frequency of these incidents has made it impossible for our residents to feel safe."

Despite ongoing communication with City of Toronto officials, Marelba feels that property management's concerns have been dismissed.

"We are constantly told that 'changes are being made,' yet the problems are only getting worse. How many more violent assaults and overdoses need to happen before real action is taken?"

6.4 Security and Criminal Activity Will Continue to Escalate

Residents on the first six floors, especially those whose units face the Warming Centre, are experiencing severe distress due to unrelenting noise pollution, criminal activity, and violent disturbances. The ongoing security crisis has led to:

- **Daily and nightly break-ins** and break-in attempts, with trespassers frequently gaining access to residents' balconies and communal spaces. One report documents an

individual who **jumped onto the balcony of Unit 108** and had to be forcibly removed.

- **Intrusions into private property**, including parking garages, have been **routinely breached** by unauthorized individuals engaged in theft, vandalism, and drug use.
- **Open drug use within the building's premises**. Individuals have **entered 111 Elizabeth Street to smoke crack cocaine and other illicit substances in the building's entranceways and stairwells**.
- **Weaponized violence near or inside the building**. In multiple cases, trespassers have carried knives or blunt objects, making entry into the property a direct and immediate danger.
- **Theft of personal property from residents' balconies and storage areas**. Items have been reported missing from several units, with trespassers attempting to gain access through windows and fire escapes.
- **Fire hazards**. A trespasser **pulled the fire alarm on December 16, 2024**, causing an unnecessary emergency response and further straining city resources.
- **Psychotic episodes and violent behaviour**. Warming Centre clients have been documented **entering the residential building while under the influence, screaming, or behaving erratically** in ways that have threatened resident safety.

Despite ongoing reports to the authorities and City of Toronto officials, these incidents continue to increase in frequency, indicating a lack of effective deterrents and enforcement.

6.5 Open-Air Drug Market and the Threat of Armed Dealers

Residents of 111 Elizabeth Street have reported and documented **a growing criminal enterprise surrounding the 81 Elizabeth Street Warming Centre**. What was once an emergency shelter has become an open-air drug market, putting the entire neighbourhood at risk.

Key issues include:

- **Frequent and visible drug transactions occur in and around the Warming Centre. Residents have observed multiple dealers openly exchanging cash and illicit substances near their homes, including on sidewalks, in parking garages, and even directly outside windows.**
- **Photographic and firsthand evidence confirm that drug dealers operate without fear of law enforcement or intervention from shelter staff.**

- The Warming Centre serves as a magnet for traffickers, given its concentrated population of vulnerable, addicted individuals. **The area has become a reliable source of customers for local dealers.**
- **Dealers are likely armed. Given the volatile behaviour of many clients and the high-stakes nature of the drug trade, many dealers are believed to carry knives or firearms for self-protection, increasing the risk of violent encounters.**
- **No meaningful deterrents have been introduced. Despite consistent reports and visible trafficking, there are no significant police patrols, security reinforcements, or interventions from the City of Toronto.**
- The danger is amplified by proximity to children and students, with a daycare and university residence within steps of these ongoing criminal activities.

By failing to intervene, City officials are enabling a crisis that places vulnerable shelter clients, residents, and the public at large in direct danger. The longer this is allowed to continue, the greater the likelihood of violent altercations, overdoses, or fatalities in the immediate vicinity.



7. Longo's Employees Traumatized by Crime and Disorder

The Longo's grocery store on Elizabeth Street at 111 Elizabeth Street, like many other businesses in the area, has become a direct casualty of the escalating crisis caused by the 81 Elizabeth Street Warming Centre. Employees have **repeatedly witnessed traumatic incidents**, including:

- **Break-ins and thefts** committed by Warming Centre clients.
- **Individuals smoking illicit drugs** inside the store during business hours.
- **Aggressive panhandling** has intimidated customers and employees alike.

- **Psychotic episodes and violent outbursts** force staff to abandon their duties to ensure their safety.

Longo's employees are **not trained or qualified to deal with such situations, nor does their job require them to**. The store does not have the security personnel necessary to handle drug use, mental health crises, or criminal behaviour regularly.

The result has been **an unsafe working environment, ongoing psychological distress for employees, and a worsening shopping experience for customers**. If these conditions persist, it is only a matter of time before a Longo's employee or customer is physically harmed.



8. Documented Rise in Violence at Toronto-Based Homeless Shelters

Toronto has seen a sharp increase in violent incidents linked to its shelter and respite system. According to Toronto Police Service data and the City's Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA):

- **From 2018 to 2023**, violent incidents in City-funded shelters rose by **over 550%**, from 195 recorded incidents in 2018 to over **1,300 incidents in 2023**.
- A **2023 report** by the Office of the Toronto Auditor General noted that more than **60% of emergency shelter workers** surveyed had personally witnessed physical assaults or violent altercations within the last year.
- The **Better Living Centre**, a former low-barrier site, saw **72 recorded violent incidents** in just 6 months before closing in 2024, including stabbings, group fights, and armed confrontations.
- Incidents of **weapons possession** have increased in proportion to the rise in violence. In 2022, there were **only 22 reports** of weapons in shelters; by late 2023, there were **over 140**.

The evidence points to an alarming trend: violence within shelters, especially low-barrier facilities, has moved from rare and isolated to daily and systemic.

9. Rising Drug Use and Overdoses Among Toronto's Homeless Population

The drug crisis in Toronto's homeless population has escalated into a full-blown public health emergency. The most recent data paints a disturbing picture:

- The **Toronto Overdose Information System** recorded **685 fatal overdoses** in 2023 alone, with nearly **40% occurring in shelters, drop-ins, or nearby public spaces**.
- Overdose-related **EMS calls in shelters increased by 76%** between 2020 and 2023, according to the **Toronto Drug Strategy Secretariat**.
- Substances involved in overdoses include **fentanyl, heroin, methamphetamine**, and **crack cocaine**, all of which are widely used in and around warming centres.
- During the winter of 2024-2025, **81 Elizabeth Street alone** experienced at least **19 documented overdoses**.
- Open drug use has become normalized in low-barrier shelters. Staff at multiple sites report **daily naloxone administration**, clients **injecting in public areas**, and **peer-to-peer substance trading** on-site.

Projections: What the Future May Hold if the Current Trends Continue

Advancements in drug production and delivery methods are likely to intensify this crisis even further:

- **Synthetic drug innovation is accelerating.** As chemical engineering technology improves, **cheaper, more potent analogues of fentanyl** and methamphetamine are expected to emerge. These new compounds could be even harder to detect and reverse with naloxone.
- **Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS)**, also called "designer drugs", are being engineered to **evade regulation and standard testing**. These compounds can induce psychosis, aggression, or seizures and may be cut into Toronto's street supply without warning.
- **Drug delivery methods will evolve.** Inhalers, patches, and aerosolized formats of opioids and stimulants may reach the street level within the next five years, increasing ease of use and lowering the threshold for addiction.
- **AI-assisted drug synthesis** could make it easier for clandestine labs to design substances that are more addictive, faster-acting, and harder to regulate. Black market networks could leverage these tools to produce drugs that are **lethal even in microdoses**.

Predictions for Toronto's Homeless System and Institutions Like 81 Elizabeth Street

If the City of Toronto continues down its current path with underregulated low-barrier sites:

- **Overdose deaths will increase year over year**, with more fatalities occurring indoors at shelters and warming centres than on the streets.
- **Violence, psychosis, and trauma-related incidents will spike**, as newer, more potent synthetic drugs exacerbate erratic behaviour and aggressive outbursts.
- Facilities like 81 Elizabeth Street will become **unofficial consumption sites without any of the safeguards** of actual supervised injection programs, placing staff, clients, and residents at even more renowned risk.
- The absence of robust medical screening, mental health services, and proactive security will ensure that **public safety deteriorates**, even as harm-reduction rhetoric is used to justify continued inaction.

Without a major shift in strategy, one that includes treatment infrastructure, security reform, and strict oversight, the trajectory of Toronto's homeless shelter system is unsustainable and potentially catastrophic.

10. Extrapolation: What Will Happen if the Warming Centre Remains in the Community?

If the **Warming Centre remains operational or, worse, becomes a permanent fixture**, the situation will **escalate beyond control**.

11.1 Public Safety Risks Will Worsen

- Increased risk of homicides and violent assaults.
- More residents, students, and business owners will be harassed, attacked, or victimized.
- More weapons will be present, increasing the likelihood of fatal altercations.

11.2 Public Health Risks Will Surge

- Continued spread of biohazards, including used needles, vomit, and human feces.
- Increased risk of disease outbreaks due to unsanitary conditions.

11.3 Toronto's Emergency Services Will Be Further Overwhelmed

- Police, fire, and EMS resources will be increasingly tied up at this location.
- Slower emergency response times for the rest of the city.

11.4 The Area Will Decline Further

- Businesses will close, and property values will plummet.
- More families, students, and professionals will abandon the area.

12. Conclusion: The Warming Centre Must Be Relocated: A Total Violation of the "Good Neighbour" Policy

The AG-2024-03250 Incident Report, AG-2024-03251 Service Restrictions Report, AG-2025-00607 RC Incident Report, Comprehensive Reports via 111 Elizabeth Street's Property Management, Several Other Detailed Reports, the Toronto Auditor General's report, and firsthand accounts from residents, business owners, and property managers provide undeniable proof that the 81 Elizabeth Street Warming Centre is an ongoing public safety disaster.

This facility **directly contradicts the City of Toronto's so-called "Good Neighbour" policy**, which claims that warming centres and homeless shelters should **operate in a manner that minimizes harm to surrounding communities**. The realities at 81 Elizabeth Street expose this policy as a **meaningless, empty promise**.

12.1 The Good Neighbour Policy: A Broken Promise

The City of Toronto's **Good Neighbour policy** asserts that:

- Warming centres should be **good community partners**, working with residents and businesses to mitigate disruptions.

- Proper **security measures** should be in place to **ensure the safety of both clients and local residents**.
- Facilities should be **responsive to concerns** from the community and make ongoing improvements.

The situation at 81 Elizabeth Street demonstrates that these principles are **entirely ignored**:

- **Instead of safety, residents are subjected to violence, break-ins, and open drug use.**
- **Instead of mitigation, crime and disorder have increased dramatically in the area.**
- **Instead of accountability, the City has ignored complaints, dismissed concerns, and continued failed policies that endanger the public.**

This is **not** a case of isolated incidents or growing pains; this is a **long-term failure that has escalated into an urgent public crisis**.

12.2 The Escalating Dangers: No More Delays

With the **addition of firsthand testimony**, the **shocking revelation of an AK-47 being brought into a low-barrier respite**, and the **confirmed presence of drug dealers operating outside the facility**, the **urgency for action is greater than ever**.

Leaving the Warming Centre in this location **all but guarantees** that:

- **Violence and fatal incidents will continue.**
- **Local businesses like Longo's will suffer ongoing trauma and financial losses.**
- **Armed and dangerous individuals will remain unchecked in a facility with no security screenings.**
- **Drug trafficking will continue unabated, creating an open-air drug market just steps from a daycare and university residence.**

12.3 Immediate Actions Needed

The **only acceptable solution** is the **immediate closure and relocation of the 81 Elizabeth Street Warming Centre** to an area **with the infrastructure and security to handle such a facility responsibly**.

If relocation is not undertaken immediately, at a minimum, the following must be enforced:

1. **Mandatory ID checks** to prevent known violent offenders from entering the facility.
2. **Bag searches at entry points** to prevent weapons, drugs, and contraband from being brought into the Warming Centre.
3. **24/7 police presence** outside the facility to deter criminal activity.
4. **Zero tolerance for loitering, trespassing, and open drug use** outside the Warming Centre.

5. **Transparent and public safety audits, with regular updates provided to local residents.**

12.4 Holding City Officials Accountable

By placing a **low-barrier facility with no security measures near children, students, and professionals**, the **City of Toronto has created an indefensible public safety hazard.**

City officials and councillors involved in maintaining this **reckless operation** should face **serious accountability, up to and including criminal charges**, for enabling a **facility that endangers the public** and violates the most **basic expectations of governance.**

12.5 Final Statement: The Warming Centre Cannot Stay

This is not a debate. This is not an issue that can be ignored any longer.

The 81 Elizabeth Street Warming Centre must be relocated.

If immediate action is not taken, **it is only a matter of time before another tragedy occurs.**