



## **COALITION FOR JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS' INJUNCTION APPLICATION AGAINST THE CITY WILL BE HEARD ON JANUARY 11, 2024**

Edmonton, Alberta – November 2, 2023 - The Coalition for Justice and Human Rights' (the "Coalition") application for a temporary injunction against the City of Edmonton's encampment displacement policy will be heard on January 11, 2024. The day before, the City will bring several preliminary applications before the Court.

The Coalition is disappointed with the delay in the hearing. There is a need for an immediate hearing before the coldest winter months, when displacements put unhoused Edmontonians at a heightened risk of injury, illness, and death as we saw in [2021-2022](#). While there were Court dates available between late-November and mid-December that the Coalition proposed, the Court granted the City's request that the injunction application be heard January 11, 2024 to give the City more time to prepare its defense.

"We are disappointed that the injunction hearing was scheduled for mid-January and another holiday season will pass while the City continues to regularly displace unsheltered people," said Coalition President Sam Mason. "The last two winters, the City displaced hundreds of encampments despite knowing there was not enough safe, accessible shelter space. This likely contributed to a record number of unsheltered Edmontonians with amputations due to frostbite. We are not asking for financial compensation but for the Court to stop displacing encampments. Until that happens, the City will continue putting displaced people at risk of serious harm."

Today, the Coalition is sharing seven of the affidavits filed in support of its injunction application, including three affidavits from unhoused witnesses and four from expert witnesses. The Coalition encourages Edmontonians to read their affidavits, which provide important perspectives about the impacts of encampment displacements.

The City has yet to file and serve any evidence in response to the Coalition's evidence. The Chief of Police for the Edmonton Police Service, who was granted limited intervenor status in the injunction application, has also yet to file and serve any evidence. They have until end of day on November 10, 2023 to do so. The Coalition expects their evidence to point to public health and safety risks associated with encampments. In response, the Coalition will demonstrate that encampment displacements do little or nothing to reduce those risks and instead relocate and amplify them and make it unnecessarily difficult for displaced people to survive.

"The Coalition's legal action does not pit the constitutional rights of unhoused Edmontonians against the safety of housed Edmontonians," says Coalition co-counsel Chris Wiebe. "Instead, it challenges the constitutionality of a policy that makes no one safer and puts the lives, limbs, and essential personal property of unhoused Edmontonians at unnecessary risk."

The frequency with which the City of Edmonton has displaced encampments since 2021 makes it exceptional among Canadian cities, according to [recent reporting by Le Devoir](#).

"There are much more humane and dignified ways to respond to safety issues in encampments than displacing them," says Coalition for Justice and Human Rights Director Renee Vaugeois. "These people have nowhere else to go. The City's encampment displacement policy puts displaced people in a continual cycle of struggling to meet their own basic needs."

"Our pro bono legal team appreciates your support," said Mason, "Donate to our litigation fund at [www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/coalition-for-justice-and-human-rights](http://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/coalition-for-justice-and-human-rights) to help cover our legal action's out-of-pocket expenses."

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