

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Downtown Eastside Women's Centre increases safe spaces for women**

**(Xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C** – Responding to the lack of available safe spaces during COVID 19 restrictions, the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre (DEWC) has opened two additional shelters, each operating 20 hours per day.

These sites provide basic needs, services, safety, and supports to women in the Downtown Eastside community. DEWC is also pursuing a third drop-in location.

Since 1978, DEWC has provided essential services, respite, and resources to women and children in need in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver. Pre-COVID, the DEWC Drop-in Centre hosted up to 450 women per day while the Shelter saw more than 150 women daily.

COVID-19 restrictions have impacted DEWC's ability to provide services to women resulting in many women losing access to basic need resources and a place of safety. Women have had very limited resources available to them in the Downtown Eastside as the pandemic rages on.

To meet the demands of the community during the pandemic, DEWC's two new spaces will function as additional low-barrier shelter spaces. These locations will help restore the ability to provide women with shelter, advocacy and outreach programming, and a sense of safety and dignity during these times, while ensuring physical distancing.

"We must continue to meet the needs of women in the Downtown Eastside for safe, indoor spaces- which are more elusive than ever during the COVID-19 pandemic," stated Andrea Glickman, DEWC Board member. "With community centre closures, capacity limits on warming spaces, and the dramatic increase in violence against women and gender-diverse people, additional spaces are desperately needed to fill these service gaps."

DEWC is asking for assistance to support these safe spaces and the women and children who utilize them.

To learn more about the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre, or to donate, please visit:  
<https://dewc.ca/>

**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

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**PHOTOS OF SPACES**

