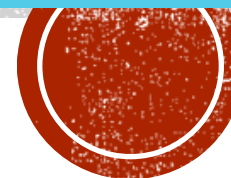


# ADVOCATING FOR HOUSING RIGHTS



# Key Topics



5W's of Advocacy:  
What, Who, Why,  
When and Where



Defining Housing  
Rights including  
Indigenous Rights



Government  
Responsibilities



Gaps in Housing  
Legal Framework



Holding  
Government  
Accountable



Strategies for  
Advocacy



Preparing for  
Advocacy

# LETTER/EMAIL TEMPLATE

Dear Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities The Honourable Gregor Roberston:

I write as a [member/researcher/advocate, lived expert] of [name of your riding] to ask that you use your position as minister to promote housing rights and address the record levels of homelessness in our community. Despite the National Housing Strategy (NHS) Act commitments to the progressive realization of housing rights in Canada, over 2.5 million people still live in core housing need, those in greatest need are most impacted, chronic homelessness continues to rise in our community—to 64% in 2024 up from 59% in 2022—and homelessness has tripled since 2022 to 1,499 individuals.

We call on you as the Minister of Housing to ensure investments in the construction and maintenance of social housing and co-operative housing that meets the acceptable housing standards and is truly affordable at less than 30% of before-tax income.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[your name]



# OP-ED TEMPLATE

## Saskatoon Community Members Come Together to Advocate for Housing Rights

In the context of a housing crisis and record homelessness in Saskatoon, a community conversation on February 26 (10:00 am-2:00 pm) at Station 20 West designed by the Lived Expert Advisory Council at Community-University Institute for Social Research and funded by two SSHRC-CMHC Partnership grants discussed how community members can collectively work towards ensuring housing rights for all.

Although housing rights are recognized by international instruments ratified by Canada and by Canada's own National Housing Strategy Act (2019), it remains unclear how effectively different levels of government fulfill their obligations to uphold those rights. Whereas the federal government must show leadership, all levels of government have a responsibility to ensure "measures to prevent homelessness, prohibit forced evictions, address discrimination, ensure security of tenure for all, and help guarantee that everyone's housing is adequate," according to the Canadian Human Rights Commission. Housing adequacy means meeting seven basic conditions: secure, affordable, habitable, provide basic services, in a location close to employment and services, accessible, and culturally appropriate.

We challenge all levels of government to live up to their obligations

- To ensure "measures to prevent homelessness, prohibit forced evictions, address discrimination, ensure security of tenure for all, and help guarantee that everyone's housing is adequate."
- To address the homelessness crisis as a violation of the human right to adequate housing and commit to a rights-based approach to programs and policies as well as better coordination and collaboration and ongoing monitoring and assessment.



# SUBMISSION TO NATIONAL HOUSING ADVOCATE

- You may target a systemic barrier, an eviction crisis, or policy reform in a request for a formal review.
- Your elevator pitch is useful here in clearly articulating who you are, what the systemic issue is, why it is important, and where and how the National Housing Advocate can help.
- The Advocate may complete her own review and recommend to the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities for response within 120 days.
- Alternatively, the Advocate can ask the National Housing Council to set up a review panel and hold a hearing and present recommendations to the Minister.





# SUBMISSION TO NATIONAL HOUSING ADVOCATE (2)

- Complete the online form with pdf attachment detailing the systemic issue you are facing  
(see the template provided) explaining:
  1. The systemic housing issue
  2. What government can do, what you have already done/where you have received help, and whether you have lodged a formal complaint to an authority (legal, administrative, etc.)
  3. Your history of housing and homelessness
  4. Your personal information

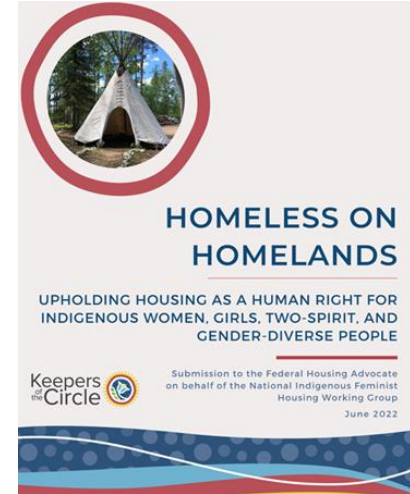


# SUBMISSION TO NATIONAL HOUSING ADVOCATE (3)

Or an organization may modify this order:

1. Give examples of lived experience of the systemic housing issue
2. Describe related human rights obligations
3. Explain how the issue violates human rights norms, link root causes to government policy/failure to respect right to adequate housing using relevant and rigorous data
4. Recommend how to address the violations of the right to adequate housing

The CCHR cites an example of a long, formal organizational submission that could be useful: The National Indigenous Feminist Housing Working Group's submission (at [Indigenous-Housing-Claim-June-15-2022.pdf](#)) on the systemic issues experienced by Indigenous women, girls, two-spirit and gender-diverse people.



# Resources

- The Canadian Lived Experience Leadership Network (CLELN) at <https://cleln.ca/>
- [CCHR-ImplementingTheR2H-Toolkit-for-Tenant-Leaders-UpdatedSept2023.pdf](#)
- The Tenant Leaders' Toolbox: Resources for Housing Rights Advocacy
- [Homepage - Canadian Centre for Housing Rights](#)
- Biss, M., Porter, B., Raze, S., & Desbaillets, D. (2022). *Progressive realization of the right to adequate housing: A literature review*. Prepared for the National Housing Council. The National Right to Housing Network. [https://housingrights.ca/wp-content/uploads/NHC-Progressive-Realization-Paper\\_EN.pdf](https://housingrights.ca/wp-content/uploads/NHC-Progressive-Realization-Paper_EN.pdf)
- [Housing as a human right | Canadian Human Rights Commission](#)
- [A-National-Protocol-for-Homeless-Encampments-in-Canada.pdf](#)
- [UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples | OHCHR.](#)
- [Universal Declaration of Human Rights | United Nations\)](#)
- [Treaty Land Entitlement](#)
- [Saskatchewan Treaty Land Entitlement Act <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/S-4.3.pdf>](#)
- [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada : calls to action.: IR4-8/2015E-PDF - Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca\)](#)
- [Call for Justice 1.7 Final Report.](#)
- [The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in PDF](#)