

# Navigating Housing Solutions: A Resource Guide by Families Matter Cooperative

Created by [Families Matter Cooperative](#)

Funded by [The Ontario Caregiver Organization](#)

This collection of resources and links for families in the developmental disabilities community provided below has been curated as a result of a panel discussion event hosted by Families Matter Cooperative, in collaboration with Developmental Services Ontario Eastern Region. This initiative wouldn't have been possible without the invaluable contributions of Martha Beach, Olivia Thomas, Jean-Francois Bérubé, Mike Bulthuis, as well as the insights shared by Janelle and Isabelle Bata.

The collaborative effort aimed to explore accessible housing solutions and affordable options, particularly for adults with a developmental or intellectual disability. The diverse expertise and perspectives shared during the panel discussion have enriched the selection of resources, ensuring a well-rounded approach to supporting housing seekers.

Furthermore, we extend our gratitude to The Ontario Caregiver Organization for their generous funding, which made this project possible. Their support has been instrumental in facilitating access to information, resources, and empowering individuals and families in their search for suitable housing solutions.

From developmental services to community housing initiatives, portable housing benefits, and innovative housing models, this curated list reflects the collective commitment to fostering inclusive communities and addressing housing challenges. Whether you're navigating through various housing options or seeking practical guidance, we hope these resources provide valuable insights and support on your journey towards finding a home that meets your needs.

## **Resources and Informational Links**

### **Developmental Services Ontario Housing Toolkit**

This toolkit is a library of housing resources put together by DSO staff, with input from people in similar situations, to help you create a housing plan. The toolkit content topics include Exploring and understanding housing needs and wants, Reviewing housing options and locations, Financing the plan, Managing housing supports, Building a plan that will support change, and Learning from others.

[A Guide to the DSO Housing Toolkit | DSO \(dsontario.ca\)](#)

## **The Canada Ontario Housing Benefit**

The Canada Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) program provides households with a portable housing benefit to assist with rental costs in the private housing market which includes Below Market Rent housing.

COHB applicants must be on the centralized waitlist for social housing and agree to be removed from it once receiving the COHB.

The COHB pays the difference between 30 per cent of the household's income and the average market rent in the area. For recipients of social assistance, the COHB will pay the difference between the shelter allowance and the household's rent and utilities costs. The program is administered by the Province of Ontario and the benefit amount is reviewed every year.

To apply please contact Olivia Thomas, Housing Navigator for the Eastern Region at [othomas@dsoer.ca](mailto:othomas@dsoer.ca).

## **Subsidized Housing**

The City's Housing Services Branch administers and funds social housing in Ottawa. There are approximately 22,500 community housing units. Rental rates for those in receipt of Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) assistance within social housing are typically set according to the renter's income, with households paying no more than 30 per cent of their income towards rent. There are 51 independent non-profit housing organizations that operate social housing across the city. The demand for social housing is much greater than the supply. There are approximately 10,000 households on the Centralized Wait List for social housing. Wait times for social housing in Ottawa can be up to five (5) years or more.

[Subsidized housing | City of Ottawa](#)

## **Passport Program**

Funding for your community participation services and supports. The reimbursement program that helps adults with developmental disabilities in Ontario access services and supports.

[Passport Program | Homepage \(passportfunding.ca\)](#)

## **Ottawa Community Land Trust (OCLT)**

Ottawa Community Land Trust (OCLT) is a social enterprise pursuing innovative ways of preserving housing affordability in the national capital region. We acquire existing rental properties and turn them into non-profit affordable housing; we secure vacant land to develop various types of affordable housing in the future. We work with other local groups—from housing providers to developers—that are committed to keeping housing affordable – forever.

[Ottawa Community Land Trust – Affordable community housing. \(oclt.ca\)](http://oclt.ca)

## **Centretown Affordable Housing Development Corporation (Cahdco):**

Cahdco is a non-profit real estate developer that is focused on increasing Canada’s affordable housing by developing projects, consulting, knowledge sharing, and network-building.

[About Us - Cahdco](#)

## **Coach Houses**

A coach house is a small accessory apartment located in a small freestanding building detached from the principal dwelling and located on the same lot as the principal dwelling. This type of infill housing is a discreet way to achieve affordable housing and increased density in existing neighbourhoods where existing services and infrastructure are in place.

How to plan your COACH HOUSE IN OTTAWA-

[https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents/files/how\\_to\\_coach\\_en.pdf](https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents/files/how_to_coach_en.pdf)

City of Ottawa- Adding a Coach House (Secondary Dwelling Units in an Accessory Structure)-  
<https://ottawa.ca/en/planning-development-and-construction/building-and-renovating/do-i-need-building-permit/adding-coach-house-secondary-dwelling-units-accessory-structure>

## **Secondary Units:**

A self-contained secondary unit, living space located on the same property as a primary residence. These units are designed for independent living and typically include their own kitchen, bathroom, and entrance. Secondary units can be used for various purposes, such as providing housing for family members, generating rental income, or accommodating guests. They are often smaller in size compared to the primary residence and are subject to local zoning regulations.

City of Ottawa: Adding an apartment (Secondary Dwelling Units)- [Adding an apartment \(Secondary Dwelling Units\) | City of Ottawa](#)

Service Ontario: Guide to help homeowners plan and build a second unit within their house- [Add a second unit in your house | ontario.ca](#)

## **Tiny Homes:**

A tiny home is a compact dwelling typically ranging from around 100 to 400 square feet in size, designed to maximize functionality and minimize living space. These homes often feature clever space-saving solutions and are built with the intention of reducing environmental impact and promoting a simpler lifestyle.

An innovation guide under More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan- [Build or buy a tiny home \(ontario.ca\)](#)

Tiny Homes Canada- [Tiny Homes in Canada - Canadian Tiny House Builders and News](#)

## **City of Ottawa Affordable Housing Plan:**

Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan- [Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan | Engage Ottawa](#)

Update to the Housing and Homelessness Plan- [City of Ottawa 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan 2020–2030](#)