



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MARCH 30, 2020**

## **24 HOUR - EMERGENCY HOMELESS SUPPORT SHELTER TO OPEN IN NORTH BAY**

*North Bay, ON* – The District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board (DNSSAB), Nipissing Mental Health Housing and Support Services (NMHHSS), the City of North Bay and the Nipissing District Housing Corporation (NDHC) are working together to open an Emergency Homelessness Shelter at the YMCA, 186 Chippewa Street in North Bay by Wednesday.

The main gymnasium, with access to bathrooms and showers will be used to provide shelter 24/7. This site will allow for a maximum of 40 people, including staff. As part of the COVID-19 protocols, there will be four staff and one security person on site for 24 hours, and entry will be permitted only to essential services providers and people using the site. A single point of entry, appropriate fire exits, protocols including social distancing, hygiene and isolation will be in place. Isolation rooms will be available for suspected cases of COVID-19.

“We’re pleased that we’ve been able to work collaboratively in our community to find a site and system that will work with all the necessary protections in place to prevent further spread of the virus,” say DNSSAB Chair, Mark King.

“Those who experience homelessness may be at higher risk of contracting COVID-19 or developing complications due to COVID-19, as they may not be able to access and use traditional services and standard resources. These circumstances may affect their ability to follow public health advice, such as being able to effectively isolate or self/isolate from others and perform proper hand hygiene,” says Mary Davis, Executive Director of NMHHSS.

“We know that the most vulnerable in our community need our help. This site is extremely important for the health and safety of our homeless population,” says NDHC Chair, Dave Mendicino.

Further updates are posted regularly on the DNSSAB website at [www.dnssab.ca](http://www.dnssab.ca)

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