

2020 was a challenging and unprecedented year for everyone around the globe. Action Housing was not immune to the impacts of the pandemic. We were among the first community organizations to prioritize safety by closing our offices to the public, and quickly modifying our service delivery approach to continue to meet the needs of our clients as best as possible. Despite working with fewer clients over this past year, we have been far from idle. Client needs over the past few years have become more complex and require more time and deeper interventions.

Action Housing moved offices at the end of July, which required extra planning and co-ordination due to the pandemic. We look forward to showing off our new home once most of the Ottawa population is vaccinated and we are able to offer in-person service again.

We kept abreast with all the changes related to the *Residential Tenancies Act*, Service Manager directives to the affordable housing providers, the rent freeze, the multiple eviction moratoriums and the modified operations of the Landlord and Tenant Board. Not only were we on the forefront of this information as the ground shifted beneath our feet, we ensured to be the vector to inform other organizations of these changes as well as their impact by sending emails and by giving presentations to front-line workers across the City. We also kept in touch with community partners across the province, often translating information bulletins, and ensuring our website contained the most recent housing-related information possible.

Action Housing was also involved in many housing-related research projects, and focused on multiple advocacy initiatives. Marie-Josée wrote letters and presented many deputations on behalf of Action-Housing at the Municipal and Provincial level related to housing issues. She was also involved with a few initiatives at the Federal level through the Canadian Housing Renewal Association and the National Right to Housing Network.

Action Housing would like to thank our community partners who are always available to discuss greater systemic issues and brainstorm solutions. Thank you to the Housing Services branch of the City of Ottawa for their leadership and tireless work in fighting for and making COVID-related grants available to community agencies across the city. We are also grateful for their openness and availability to allow us to report and offer possible solutions for COVID-related challenges that threatened our clients' housing.

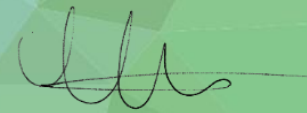
We are also grateful for our supportive Board of Directors who trusted us to quickly pivot with our service delivery, and to put various COVID-related plans in place.

Finally, we are proud of our colleagues for their courage, tenacity and adaptability over the past year as they continued to provide services while prioritizing the safety of our clients and our team. Doing social work is difficult at best, never mind over the phone, during a pandemic and while everyone is experiencing a level of chronic anxiety. It is always an honour to serve with you. Many, many thanks!

Looking forward, there are still so many unknowns. One thing is clear, Action Housing will continue to be at the forefront, doing whatever is possible in terms of service delivery and advocacy to address this housing crisis and fight the many inequities further exposed and amplified by this pandemic that our clients face every single day.



Jean-Michel Rousseau,
President



Marie-Josée Houle,
Executive Director

ABOUT ACTION HOUSING

Since 1989, Action Housing has been offering bilingual services pertaining to affordable housing and homelessness prevention in Ottawa, in partnership with Community Health and Resource Centres and many other organizations serving the community.

OUR MISSION

Action Housing is a charitable organization devoted to helping and providing the necessary tools to low- and moderate-income individuals and families to access and maintain safe, adequate and affordable housing.

SERVICES

- ✓ Housing loss prevention services;
- ✓ Tools and coaching to assist with housing search;
- ✓ Subsidized housing applications;
- ✓ Assistance in dealing with housing problems (e.g. eviction, maintenance, illegal rent increase, discrimination);
- ✓ Information about tenants' rights and responsibilities;
- ✓ Information on emergency shelters;
- ✓ Housing search drop-in centre available during open hours, no appointment necessary;
- ✓ Free advertisement of vacant units through our Housing Locator Program.

KEY FUNCTIONS

Intervention and Prevention:

- Advocate for tenants by focusing on safety, health and sustainability to prevent housing instability and housing loss; acting as intermediary to resolve landlord-tenant issues.

Counselling and Support:

- Providing tools and coaching for housing search on the private market.

Affordable Housing Applications:

- Assistance with the application process, including support with priority requests.

Facilitating Access:

- To emergency shelters, safe houses for the homeless or individuals fleeing domestic violence.

Paralegal Services:

- For tenants appearing before the Landlord and Tenant Board, the Internal Review Panel and other adjudicative bodies.

Partnerships:

- With key organizations for a multi-faceted approach to homelessness intervention.

Advocacy:

- By sitting on a variety of committees addressing current issues related to affordable housing and homelessness prevention.

BY THE NUMBERS

\$1,420	Average market rent for a 1-bedroom apartment in Ottawa
\$1,710	Average market rent for a 2-bedroom apartment in Ottawa

Average monthly market rent prices, according to the CMHC Average Market Rent Report (2020)

390\$	Single individual
642\$	Family with one child
697\$	Family with two children
756\$	Family with three children

Ontario Works: Monthly housing allowance paid to cover rent, utilities and insurance (Last Update: September 2018)

497\$	Single individual
781\$	Family with one child
846\$	Family with two children
918\$	Family with three children

ODSP: Monthly housing allowance paid to cover rent, utilities and insurance (Last Update: September 2018)

\$14.25	Minimum wage hourly rate (Since October 1 st 2020)
4.8	Percentage of cost increase for overall private market rent
3.9%	Vacancy rate

Most of these vacancies are in the Sandy Hill area, and are the result of student exodus during the pandemic.

BY THE NUMBERS (cont.)

12,571	<p>Number of people on the Social Housing Registry waiting list (Last available data: December 31st 2020)</p> <p><i>The Social Housing Registry manages the centralized waiting list for the majority of the approximate 22,500 social housing units in Ottawa and surrounding areas. Wait times for social housing can be up to five years or more.</i></p>
13	<p>Number of Action Housing employees</p> <p>Housing Caseworkers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eddy Francillon • Alida Kaneza • Chantal Pitre • Nadège Kamariyagwe • Yarlie Telfort (also paralegal) • Amanda Van der Kooij <p>Supervisor, Housing Caseworker and Paralegal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anne Smith <p>Frontline Workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Santiana Mahwane <p>Support Personnel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maya Larch (Receptionist) • Émilie Courchesne-Minduik (Administrative Assistant) • Debbie LeBlanc (Bookkeeper) • Serge Maheu (IT Technician) • Marie-Josée Houle (Executive Director)
6	<p>Number of languages spoken by our employees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English • French • Kinyarwanda • Swahili • Kirundi • Creole
7	<p>Number of our service locations in Ottawa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vanier – Main office • Lowertown Community Resource Centre • Orleans-Cumberland Community Resource Centre • Rideau-Rockcliffe Community Resource Centre • Eastern Ottawa Resource Centre • Carlington Community Health Centre • Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre <p><i>Since the onset of the pandemic, we have only provided services over the phone and internet, and we continue to serve clients who access help through our satellite offices.</i></p>

BY THE NUMBERS (cont.)

574	Number of case files in 2020
14	Number of legal cases handled
19	Number of legal cases on which we sat as members of the Internal Review Panel
2,889	Number of non-clients who received our services (referrals, information, etc.)
47	Percentage of our clients defined as « family » (counted as one client in our statistics)
44	Percentage of our clients who require services in French
65	Percentage of our clients who are women
23	Percentage of our clients who are Ontario Works recipients
36	Percentage of our clients who are ODSP recipients
23	Percentage of our clients who are low-income workers
7	<p>Maximum number of directors who can serve on our Board</p> <p>The Board of Directors currently includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jean-Michel Rousseau - President <i>Jean-Michel has been working in community development for almost 13 years. His ties with the community and with community organisations are invaluable to the Board of Directors and Action Housing.</i> • Pierre Claver Ngenzebuhoro – Vice-President <i>Pierre works as a French professor at the FrancoLangues School. He also teaches for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.</i> • Jean-Michel Bédard – Treasurer <i>Jean-Michel works in administration for parliamentary committees at the House of Commons. His past work experience with a social housing provider has shown him the importance of housing-related matters.</i> • Gladys Kaneza – Secretary <i>Gladys currently works as Registry Officer for the FPSLREB. Other than her contribution to Action Housing's Board of Directors, she is involved in a number of community activities with other community organizations.</i>

BY THE NUMBERS (cont.)

2	<p>Number of regular funders</p> <p>Many thanks to our main funders, who make it possible for Action Housing to offer its programs and services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The City of Ottawa</i> • <i>The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing's Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI)</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roméo Eric Mbourangon - Administrator <i>Romeo works and has practical experience in several different fields: law, teaching, business. His goodwill and his dedication to the community attest to and shape his passion for public service and fundamental rights.</i> • Magalie-France Houle - Administrator <i>Magalie works as a youth worker for the Youth Services Bureau (YSB) in emergency shelters and at the Drop-In, and also works for the FESFO (Fédération de la jeunesse franco-ontarienne.)</i> • Geoffroy Lambrecht - Administrator <i>Geoffroy began his career in the field of international development and humanitarian aid in Africa and in Asia. He is currently working in federal administration and he looks forward to using his experience to support Action Housing's work.</i>

FINANCIAL REPORT

SOURCES OF FUNDING

Grants: \$840,459	Self-generated: \$7,057
TOTAL: \$847,516	

EXPENDITURES

Salaries and benefits: \$697,427	Miscellaneous: \$32,265
Office supplies and fees: \$9,193	Insurance: \$14,731
Professional fees: \$19,920	Training: \$1,581
Telecommunications: \$15,909	Rent: \$62,358
Customer service: \$5,928	
TOTAL: \$859,312 (excess of expenditures over revenues: \$11,796)	

Appreciate our work? Please consider donating.
Every amount counts:

