

Faces of Homelessness in Richmond

Everyone needs a home.

Homelessness is usually the result of many factors including lack of adequate income, access to affordable housing and medical services, experiences of discrimination, traumatic events and personal crisis, physical health problems or disabilities and mental health concerns. The following stories are testimonials from clients of The Salvation Army Richmond House Emergency Shelter (Richmond House).



Mike

Mike has been living in a tent in Richmond for many months. Thanks to the Richmond House Emergency Shelter, he was still able to access showers and meals during this time. He is now a resident of the shelter and is employed as a temporary labourer.

"I turned to Richmond House when a family member took some money from me and left me homeless. Richmond House welcomed me with open arms and has helped me in many ways, from three full meals a day to support from amazing staff. If it wasn't for Richmond House, I'm not sure I would even still be alive."



Robbie

Robbie has struggled with addiction, but is currently sober. While staying at the Richmond House Emergency Shelter, he has started a new full-time job and is working towards saving money to rent his own place.

"I came to Richmond House after leaving a detox centre and have found great support at the shelter and in the community. Richmond House has helped me a great deal by offering me accommodation, support and directing me to other community resources."

Rahn

Rahn arrived in Richmond as a refugee from Iraq. During his time at Richmond House, he has been referred to the supportive services for refugees including Legal Aid and has received a work permit. Rahn now plans to make Canada his permanent home.

"Richmond House gave me a safe place to stay upon my arrival to Canada. Staff eased my fears and gave me the support and direction I needed with kindness and respect."

Don

Don struggles with mental wellness, which prevents him from working full-time and makes it difficult to secure permanent housing. Richmond House has provided a safe environment for him to rest and recover from his mental illness and reduce his symptoms. Richmond House has helped Don access mental health resources, which have assisted him to get 'back-on-track' and secure part-time employment and his own rental accommodation.

"I met nice people at Richmond House – no one judged me and everyone really tried to help. After a few days I started to feel at home. Having a place to stay and three meals a day was a God-send to me."

Jeremy

Jeremy turned to alcoholism to cope with personal tragedies. He came to Richmond House as a last resort. Despite continuing to struggle, Richmond House staff were able to connect him with the necessary supports and now he is undergoing treatment for his addiction and feels positive about the future for the first time in years.

"Without Richmond House I'd be dead. No doubt about it! I needed to be around positive people who could show me that my life wasn't over. I will always be grateful for the staff at Richmond House."