

Shelter Movers Southwestern Ontario

Woolwich Council Presentation



Courtney Waterfall, Chapter Director August 27th, 2024

Our Mission

Shelter Movers is a national, volunteer - powered charity that provides moving and storage services at no cost to survivors fleeing abuse.

In collaboration with local businesses and community agencies, we support families transitioning to a life free of violence.

The only national provider of this service.





Growth in Southwestern Ontario

June 2020 : Shelter Movers Waterloo Region is created.

December 2020 : We launch our chapter and complete our first move.

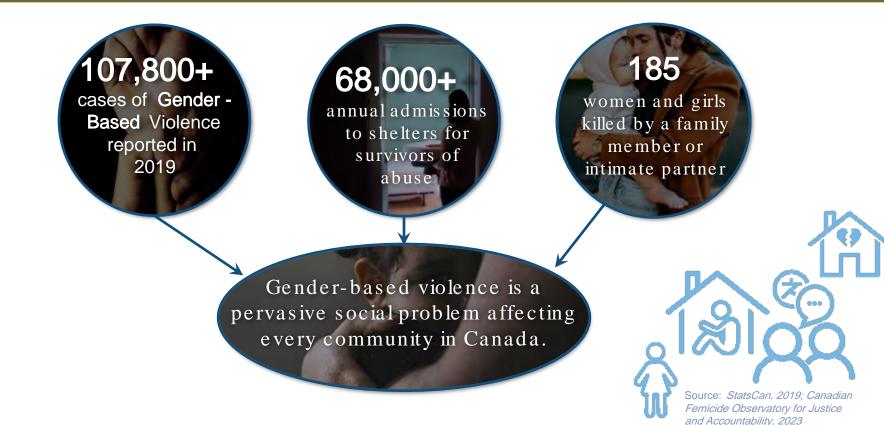
January 2022 : We celebrate our 100th move.

July 2023 : Our chapter expands to serve all of Southwestern Ontario.

April 2023 : We celebrate our chapter's 500th move as Shelter Movers Southwestern Ontario.



GBV - By the numbers



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Our impact to date



We move ~145 families per month across 9 chapters across Canada, ~20 families per month in Southwestern Ontario.



+7,400 moves completed since 2016,+580 in Southwestern Ontario since Dec.2020.



Beyond moving (free to clients):

- storage
- security personnel
- police escorts
- language interpreters
- pet fostering





Removing Barriers to New Beginnings

Leaving an abuser is fraught with risk and obstacles:



EMOTIONAL: Loss of precious items and keepsakes, normalcy for children.



FINANCIAL: High cost to move, store, or replace belongings (furniture, clothes, appliances).



SECURITY: Elevated risk of violence, including femicide, in the 6 months following the end of the relationship.

The most dangerous place for women and girls in Canada is in their home.





Our Moving Services

Urgent Exit Moves



Trained volunteers and security personnel transport clients and children from the abusive household to confidential, safe locations (primarily shelters)that have agreed to receive them. Furniture and items are stored securely at no cost.



Escorted Moves

Clients are escorted back to they former home with volunteers and security / police to retrieve their belongings. Furniture and items are stored securely at no cost.



Resettlement Moves

Volunteers transport the client, children, pets, and stored belongings to their new home.





Our Volunteers

Powered by 1,200+ incredible volunteers nationally, with 150+ in Southwestern Ontario, ranging from 18 to 84 years old Varied backgrounds and skill - sets Administrative & Operational roles Opportunity for men to serve as allies

Recruitment, Training and Monitoring

- → Enhanced police reference check
- → Screening interviews
- → Trauma-informed orientation
- → Specialized training as appropriate
- \rightarrow In-field supervision
- → Regular education & workshops
- → Mental health counselling



About our clients

Primary requirements - experiencing gender - based violence / living the effects of violence, and has a safe place to go.

All are welcome, though women comprise 99% of clients.

Shelter Movers operates by referral, for example:

- emergency women shelters
- sexual assault centres
- friendship centres
- newcomer settlement services
- police / victim services
- physicians, public health, social workers

No financial threshold to access service

On average, 18 - 55 yrs old, pregnant or with at least one child under 8







Courtney Waterfall

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"You found the courage to leave, we'll find the hands to help" sheltermovers.com/southwesternontario

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