



PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN TOOLKIT



West Central
Women's Resource Centre



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The development of this toolkit was generously funded by the Department for Women and Gender Equality Canada. It was developed by Kirsten Bernas, at West Central Women's Resource Centre, in partnership with The Right to Housing Coalition in Manitoba.

Since 2005, The Right to Housing Coalition has advocated to federal, provincial, and municipal governments for the expansion and preservation of social housing for low-income renters. The ideas and approaches outlined in this toolkit are grounded in the organizing and advocacy work that the coalition has done over many years.



Right
to Housing



PURPOSE OF THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit is designed to support community members and organizations in taking coordinated, effective action to influence public policy. It is best suited for developing campaigns focused on public policy changes that are likely to require sustained advocacy and political pressure to advance.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Assemble Your Advocacy Team	p. 2
Create a Backgrounder to Communicate Your Issue and Campaign Ask	p. 3
Take Stock of Your Supporters	p. 5
Develop and Execute Campaign Tactics	p. 6
Schedule and Host Campaign Events	p. 11
Schedule Your Tactics and Events into a Campaign Plan	p. 12
Sample Campaign Materials	p. 14

ASSEMBLE YOUR ADVOCACY TEAM

Advocacy is often most effective when it is collective. The people you bring together will shape not only what your campaign does, but how impactful it can be. Building a strong group early on can help ensure your campaign is credible, coordinated, and sustainable, while also allowing responsibilities to be shared across individuals and organizations.

Strong advocacy starts with the right group of people working together. Before developing and launching a campaign, it's important to identify the group who will help shape and carry out the work. These are the people you will collaborate with to define your campaign ask; develop your strategy, materials, and messaging; build your support base; identify and implement tactics; and adapt your strategy over time as opportunities and challenges emerge.

When assembling your advocacy team, it can be helpful to be intentional about who is included. Consider who needs to be at the table, not just who is easiest to reach. Bringing together diverse perspectives, skills, and expertise – such as project coordination, research, writing, policy analysis, communications, media relations, outreach, organizing, and knowledge of how government processes and decision-making work – can help ensure your campaign is well-informed and effective. Center people with lived experience related to your issue, as they bring essential insight and credibility to the work. It can also be helpful to clarify roles early, establish regular communication, and begin with a focused, committed group that can grow over time.



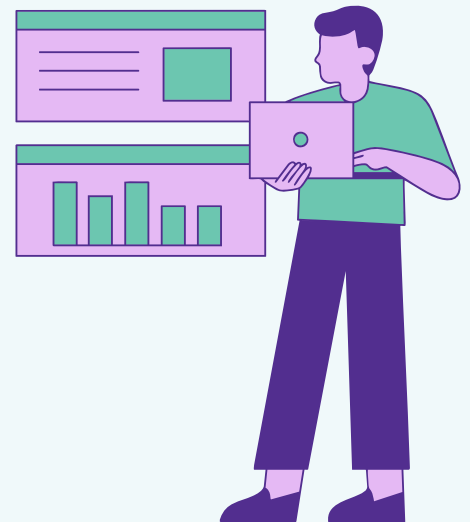
CREATE A BACKGROUNDER TO COMMUNICATE YOUR ISSUE AND CAMPAIGN ASK

It can be useful to create a brief backgrounder (1–4 pages, with 1 page often being ideal) that outlines the issue you are addressing, the policy change you are seeking (your campaign “ask”), and why it matters (see p. 14). The goal is to create a tool that helps a broad audience quickly understand your campaign without requiring too much reading. This backgrounder can be shared with potential supporters to help engage them in your campaign, with media as part of a press release to provide additional context, or with decision-makers to offer a clear overview of your campaign. Keeping it concise can increase the likelihood that it will be read and used.

You might also consider formatting it in a more engaging way, such as a zine or visually designed document (see p. 15). If you would like to provide more detailed information, it can be helpful to create a second, longer document that interested audiences can choose to explore.

OTHER USES

Content from your backgrounder can often form the basis of other campaign materials and messaging. For example, if you develop a letter template for a letter-writing campaign, you will likely draw from your backgrounder. Similarly, when speaking with media, you may repeat key messages from your backgrounder. Using the same core content across materials can help ensure consistency in your campaign messaging.



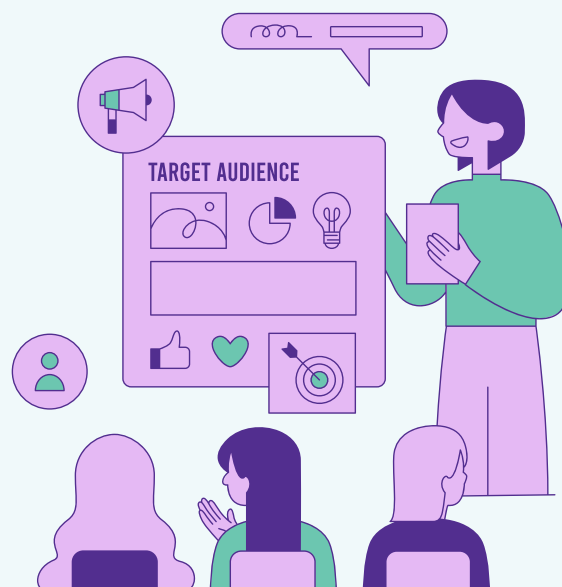
DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGN ASK

Grounding your campaign ask in research and evidence can strengthen both your credibility and your impact. Decision-makers are often more likely to engage with recommendations that are supported by data, policy analysis, demonstrated need, and proven solutions. Evidence can help show the scale and urgency of the issue, strengthen your case for action, and position your campaign as informed and solutions-oriented. It can also help you respond to questions or pushback from decision-makers, media, or other stakeholders.

It is also important to consider whose experiences and perspectives are reflected in the evidence and framing of your campaign ask. Applying an appropriate analytical lens, such as intersectional gender-based analysis, an Indigenous lens, or other equity-based frameworks, can help ensure your ask reflects the realities of those most impacted by the issue and does not unintentionally exclude or overlook key groups. This can strengthen the relevance and legitimacy of your campaign ask.

It can also be helpful to draw on the concept of **SMART** goals when developing your campaign ask. A **S**pecific and **T**imely ask can help ensure that decision-makers and the public clearly understand what you are calling on government to do, and by when. In some cases, it may be useful to align timelines with key political moments. For example, you might call on the government to implement your campaign ask in the next budget or as part of the release of an upcoming government strategy or action plan. An **A**chievable and **R**ealistic campaign ask can strengthen your credibility and make it more difficult for decision-makers to dismiss or discredit your proposal. A **M**easurable campaign ask often includes clear targets or defined outcomes. This allows you to evaluate the government's response against clear benchmarks, making it easier to track progress, identify gaps, and hold decision-makers accountable.

Finally, it can be more effective to focus on a small number of campaign asks and keep each one as clear and concise as possible. As the number and complexity of asks increases, it can become more difficult to communicate them effectively to media, decision-makers, and the public. This can make it less clear what action is being requested and create space for governments to respond in ways that appear supportive without fully delivering on the changes being called for.



TAKE STOCK OF YOUR SUPPORTERS

Demonstrating broad support for your campaign can make it more difficult for decision-makers to ignore your campaign ask, as it signals that the issue has visibility, legitimacy, and potential political cost if not addressed. If you do not already have a strong support base, your backgrounder can be a useful tool to help build one.

One approach is to share your backgrounder widely with potential supporters and invite them to formally endorse the campaign. This can help convert general interest into a visible list of support that can be used in advocacy efforts. You might also follow up with more direct outreach, such as one-on-one conversations or emails, which can sometimes be more effective than mass emails in generating responses and securing commitments.

Depending on your strategy, you may choose to collect support from individuals, organizations, or both. Lists of individual supporters can demonstrate widespread concern but often need to reach into the hundreds or thousands to be seen as compelling, while a smaller number of organizational endorsements can carry similar weight with decision-makers. The approach you take may depend on your capacity to gather and maintain endorsements, the relationships you already have, the time available, and how quickly you need to build visible momentum.

OTHER USES

Your list of supporters can be mobilized to participate in campaign tactics, which are actions designed to pressure decision-makers to implement your campaign ask. Decision-makers may be more likely to respond when pressure comes from a broad base of individuals and organizations using a range of coordinated tactics to call for a specific policy change.

In some cases, it can be especially effective to engage supporters in ways that allow them to take action within their own constituencies.

Decision-makers are often more responsive to pressure from their own constituents. When building your supporter list, it is helpful to collect the information needed to stay in touch and understand where supporters are located (e.g. email, phone number, postal code).



DEVELOP AND EXECUTE CAMPAIGN TACTICS

Campaign tactics are actions intended to encourage decision-makers to implement your campaign ask. It can be helpful to think about these as either internal or external tactics.

Internal tactics focus on engaging directly with decision-makers and government processes. These approaches can create opportunities to influence policy from within and ensure decision-makers are aware of your campaign ask and receive the information you want them to use to inform their decisions. However, these actions might depend on your ability to access decision-makers and are less visible to the public, which can make them easier for decision-makers to ignore.

External tactics focus on engaging people outside of government. These approaches can help build public awareness, demonstrate support, and create pressure for decision-makers to act. They can increase the visibility of your campaign and signal political risk or opportunity. However, their effectiveness often depends on your ability to mobilize large numbers of people and engage the media to cover your campaign. Internal and external tactics are often most effective when used together.

INTERNAL TACTICS

PARTICIPATE IN GOVERNMENT PROCESSES

Governments sometimes create opportunities for the public to provide input into decision-making processes. This may include consultations, written submissions, or presentations to committees.

These opportunities allow you to put your campaign ask on the public record and ensure decision-makers formally hear your recommendations. Some processes occur regularly, follow established procedures, and can be anticipated well in advance (such as annual budget cycles – see p. 16 and 17 – or the development and passage of legislation). Others are more ad hoc and tied to specific initiatives, such as the development of a new government strategy or action plan, each with its own timeline.

Familiarizing yourself with various government processes and their timelines can help you identify when and how to participate effectively.

MEET WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS, POLITICAL STAFF, AND SENIOR BUREAUCRATS

You may choose to request meetings with elected officials, political staff, and senior bureaucrats whose portfolios relate to your campaign ask. In some cases, it can be helpful to engage political staff and senior bureaucrats early in your campaign as you develop your backgrounder and messaging. They may be able to share information that helps you build a more informed campaign, including insight into government processes and practical considerations related to your ask. Political staff, in particular, may offer insight into how your campaign aligns, or does not align, with the government's current political priorities. This information can help you refine your campaign ask and messaging, making them more credible and more likely to resonate with elected officials when you meet with them.



Ideally, you would have access to all of these decision-makers and influencers, but this is not always the case. Even when you do have access, the quantity and quality of information you receive often depends on who holds those positions and whether they are champions for your issue.

If you are unable to secure meetings with elected officials, political staff, and senior bureaucrats, it can still be useful to keep them informed by sharing updates about your campaign over time.

EXTERNAL TACTICS

ENCOURAGE SUPPORTERS TO PARTICIPATE IN GOVERNMENT PROCESSES

You can inform supporters about opportunities to engage in government processes (see p. 6 for more on government processes) and provide materials to support their participation. Sharing submissions or key messages that your campaign has already prepared can help ensure consistency while making it easier for supporters to take part.

It may also be helpful to create ways to track participation, such as asking supporters to notify you when they have submitted input. This can help you monitor uptake and assess the effectiveness of this tactic.

ENCOURAGE SUPPORTERS TO CONTACT DECISION-MAKERS DIRECTLY

Decision-makers may be more likely to respond to your campaign ask if they perceive a broad base of individuals, organizations, and constituents urging them to act and paying attention to how they will respond. Here are some examples of actions you can coordinate supporters to take to apply direct pressure:

Send a postcard to the target

You can develop postcards for supporters to sign and send, with space for personal messages (see p. 18). You might also encourage your supporters to distribute postcards within their own networks to reach a broader audience. Supporters can send their postcards to the target on their own or you can collect the signed postcards so you can deliver them to the target in a strategic way. For example, you might consider coordinating delivery at regular intervals or over an extended period to maintain consistent visibility and pressure.



Send a letter to the target

There are multiple ways to help supporters send a letter to your target. You can provide supporters with a template letter (see p. 19), key messages, or the option to write their own. Some people will appreciate the ease of a template letter, while others will prefer the ability to personalize their message. Some online tools (often for a fee) can streamline this process by automatically emailing the letter to the target after supporters enter their basic contact information in a form. This can be particularly effective when encouraging individual supporters to take action. If you are coordinating organizational supporters, it may be more effective to provide a letter template that organizations can place on their own letterhead and send directly to the target.

Phone the Target

You can create a succinct phone script that supporters can personalize to make it easier to call the target's office. It can be useful to identify a specific time period (e.g. a day or week) so that calls are concentrated, creating a noticeable volume of contact and sense of urgency. This action can be repeated multiple times throughout the course of a campaign to keep the issue on the target's radar. Phone calls can be a high-impact form of direct engagement because they require immediate staff interaction, which helps make it more apparent that the issue is actively being monitored.



A NOTE ON CONTACTING DECISION-MAKERS

It can be useful to offer multiple ways for supporters to contact decision-makers so they can choose the actions they are most comfortable taking. Depending on the length of your campaign, you may decide to implement all three of the actions proposed above. Either way it is important to select an appropriate target. Often this is the decision-maker that has the greatest influence over your issue and campaign ask. In cases where there are multiple targets, you might choose to focus each action on a different target. For example, if your campaign is focused on an investment you'd like to see in a government budget, you might send postcards to the elected official responsible for the budget and coordinate phone calls to the elected official responsible for your issue area.

Some argue that template messages to decision-makers are less impactful compared to personalized messages, but their strength lies less in the uniqueness of each individual message and more in their volume and repetition over time. This helps keep the issue on the target's radar and signals that a large number of people care about it and are paying attention.

ENGAGE THE MEDIA TO COVER YOUR ISSUE AND CAMPAIGN ASK

Traditional Media

Media coverage can help you reach a wider audience, shape public understanding of your issue and campaign ask, and signal to decision-makers that their actions are being closely watched. This tactic can be used in different ways depending on the moment in your campaign.

Media can help generate positive coverage when governments take action aligned with campaign goals. This can reinforce progress, maintain supporter engagement, and encourage further action. Media can also be used to highlight problems, policy gaps, or harmful decisions, which can create pressure and urgency for decision-makers to respond in order to avoid negative public perception. In both cases, the goal is to shape public perception in ways that either support government action or make inaction more difficult to sustain.

In practice, engaging the media might involve inviting journalists to campaign events (see p. 20), issuing statements to ensure your perspective is included in coverage of relevant developments, or submitting opinion pieces or letters to the editor. It can also include building relationships with reporters who regularly cover your issue area.

Media engagement is often more effective when it is consistent over time and reinforces clear, repeated messaging. However, media attention can be limited and can shift quickly. Building sustained coverage may require adapting your messaging, identifying new angles, and responding to emerging developments to keep your issue relevant and newsworthy. It can also be useful to identify multiple spokespeople in order to bring a diversity of voices to the issue and avoid relying on the same person repeatedly. This helps maintain credibility and sustained media interest over longer campaigns.

Social Media

Social media can be a useful tool for expanding the reach of your campaign beyond your direct supporter base, as it makes it easy for others to share and amplify your content. Over time, it can also help shape public understanding of your issue by consistently reinforcing key messages and campaign priorities.

It can be used to mobilize supporters, for example, by encouraging them to contact decision-makers, attend events, or participate in other campaign tactics. It can also help maintain momentum by keeping your issue visible when other tactics are not actively underway. You might share updates, amplify media coverage, and create ongoing opportunities for supporters to engage with your campaign.



SCHEDULE AND HOST CAMPAIGN EVENTS

Campaign events can provide opportunities to attract media attention and engage supporters. Depending on the length of your campaign, it might be useful to schedule multiple events over time to provide regular opportunities for media coverage and supporter engagement.

Events can take many forms, including campaign launches, rallies, press conferences, public forums, or more targeted actions such as postcard drop-offs or letter-writing sessions. Some events may also incorporate creative or visual actions designed to attract attention and illustrate the issue in a compelling way.

To strengthen the impact of your events, it can be helpful to incorporate clear messaging and strong visual elements that can be easily captured by media. Identifying spokespeople for the event in advance can also support effective communication. These might be individuals already involved in your campaign. They might also be guest speakers who are strategically invited to bring a specific perspective to your messaging, or to represent a specific community that is likely to capture the attention of decision-makers.

Finally, events can be an effective moment to encourage immediate action. Providing opportunities for attendees to participate in campaign tactics on-site, such as signing postcards or writing letters, can help translate engagement into concrete action.



SCHEDULE YOUR TACTICS AND EVENTS INTO A CAMPAIGN PLAN

Once you have identified your campaign ask and a general timeline, it can be helpful to map out your tactics and events within that timeframe. This can support coordination, ensure sustained activity, and help your campaign build momentum over time.

You may want to consider when your campaign should launch in relation to key decision-making moments. Launching too early can make it difficult to garner and maintain momentum, while launching too late may limit your ability to influence outcomes. Finding a balance can help ensure your campaign remains both relevant and effective.

Spacing out tactics and events over the course of your campaign can also help maintain visibility and pressure. Rather than concentrating all activity in one moment, a more sustained approach can keep your issue on the radar of both the public and decision-makers.

In some cases, it may be useful to set targets or goals for specific tactics or events. For example, the number of attendees at an event or the number of letters sent. Targets can help clarify what success looks like, guide planning, and allow you to assess whether your efforts are building the level of engagement and visibility you need to influence decision-makers.

Public policy advocacy campaigns do not always end when your initial timeline concludes. If your campaign ask is not addressed, or only partially addressed, you may choose to continue your efforts. This can include establishing a new timeline, reassessing your strategy, adjusting tactics, and building on what you have learned. Advocacy often requires sustained effort over time to achieve meaningful change.





FINAL NOTE

There is no single path to a successful public policy advocacy campaign. The strategies and tactics in this toolkit can be adapted and combined in different ways depending on your goals, timelines, and capacity. Some campaigns will rely more heavily on internal tactics, while others will focus on building public pressure through external actions and media engagement.

What matters most is that your campaign has a clear ask, a coordinated approach, and sustained activity over time. Together, these help keep your issue visible to both the public and decision-makers and contribute to building the pressure needed for change.

SAMPLE CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

The following pages include samples of campaign materials that were used by The Right to Housing Coalition's Gendered Housing Working Group for its 2026 Provincial Budget Campaign. While these examples are drawn from a housing campaign, they can help illustrate how similar materials can be developed and adapted for a wide range of advocacy campaigns

SAMPLE BACKGROUND



SAFE HOMES FOR WOMEN AND GENDER-DIVERSE PEOPLE IN BUDGET 2026



THE ASK - Create a dedicated, multi-year funding stream in Manitoba Budget 2026 to develop and support social housing for women and gender-diverse people.

This funding would help non-market housing providers build new social housing, buy and renovate existing buildings, keep rents affordable through operating subsidies, and provide tenant support to ensure long-term housing stability.

Funding could support housing that prioritizes or is designated for women and gender-diverse people, with features such as proximity to caregiver services (schools, healthcare, childcare, and family supports); access to trauma-informed, gender-responsive support workers, caretakers, and landlords; safety features like well-lit common areas and secure buildings; and larger units for families.



WHY THIS MATTERS - Women and gender-diverse people face higher risk of housing insecurity and homelessness due to lower incomes, gender-based violence, discrimination in the rental market, and caregiving responsibilities. Many are forced into dangerous situations due to the lack of safe, affordable housing.

Safe, affordable housing supports health, dignity, strong families, and full participation in community life. Without intentional, gender-responsive housing investments, women and gender-diverse people are less likely to experience these outcomes.



A GAP IN MANITOBA'S HOUSING FUNDING MODEL - Manitoba's social housing programs are not designed to address the specific needs of women and gender-diverse people. A multi-year fund allows for long-term investment in housing that responds to their safety, affordability, and inclusion needs. A dedicated funding stream ensures this housing is consistently planned, funded, and integrated into Manitoba's housing system - not treated as an afterthought or left to compete with general programs.



ALIGNED WITH MANITOBA'S PRIORITIES - This investment supports Manitoba's commitments to expand social housing, end chronic homelessness, and build safer communities, while ensuring these efforts don't leave out women and gender-diverse people. It also generates public savings by reducing pressure on emergency shelters, health care, child welfare, and justice systems.



EVERYONE DESERVES A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE - With the right investment in Budget 2026, Manitoba can ensure women and gender-diverse people are not left behind in housing policy, and instead have safe, affordable homes built for their needs.

SAMPLE ZINE-STYLE BACKGROUND

WHY THIS MATTERS

Women and gender-diverse people face higher risk of housing insecurity and homelessness due to lower incomes, gender-based violence, discrimination in the rental market, and caregiving responsibilities. Many are forced into dangerous situations due to the lack of safe, affordable housing. Safe, affordable housing supports health, dignity, strong families, and full participation in community life. Without intentional, gender-responsive housing investments, women and gender-diverse people are less likely to experience these outcomes.



Funding could support housing that prioritizes or is designated for women and gender-diverse people, with features such as proximity to caregiver services (schools, healthcare, childcare, and family supports); access to trauma-informed, gender-responsive support workers, caretakers, and landlords; safety features like well-lit common areas and secure buildings; and larger units for families.

A GAP IN MANITOBA'S HOUSING FUNDING MODEL

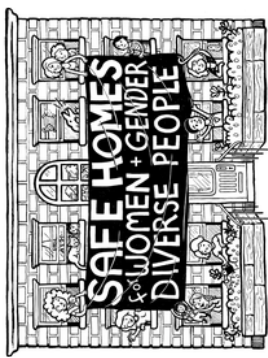
Manitoba's social housing programs are not designed to address the specific needs of women and gender-diverse people. A multi-year fund allows for long-term investment in housing that responds to their safety, affordability, and inclusion needs. A dedicated funding stream ensures this housing is consistently planned, funded, and integrated into Manitoba's housing system - not treated as an afterthought or left to compete with general programs.

THE ASK - Create a dedicated, multi-year funding stream to develop and support social housing for women and gender-diverse people.

This funding would help non-market housing providers build new social housing, buy and renovate existing buildings, keep rents affordable through operating subsidies, and provide tenant support to ensure long-term housing stability.

ALIGNED WITH MANITOBA'S PRIORITIES

This investmentsupports Manitoba's commitments to expand social housing, end chronic homelessness, and build safer communities, while ensuring these efforts don't leave out women and gender-diverse people. It also generates public savings by reducing pressure on emergency shelters, health care, child welfare, and justice systems



EVERYONE DESERVES A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE

With the right investment in Budget 2026, Manitoba can ensure women and gender-diverse people are not left behind in housing policy, and instead have safe, affordable homes built for their needs.



SAMPLE BUDGET SUBMISSION - PAGE 1/2



Budget 2026 Submission to the Government of Manitoba

Establishing a Dedicated Funding Stream for Social Housing for Women and Gender-Diverse People

The Policy Ask

Budget 2026 Commitment

The Government of Manitoba should:

- Establish a dedicated, multi-year funding stream to develop and support social housing for women and gender-diverse people
- Ensure the funding is available for: new construction; acquisition and renovation of existing buildings; operating subsidies to keep rents affordable; and tenant support that promotes long-term housing stability
- Ensure the fund is accessible only to non-market housing providers
- Commit to predictable, multi-year funding to enable long-term planning and development

Funding could be used to develop housing that prioritizes or is designated for women and gender-diverse people. It could also ensure features such as proximity to caregiver services like schools, healthcare, childcare, and family supports; access to trauma-informed, gender-responsive support workers, caretakers, and landlords; safety features like well-lit common areas and secure buildings and units; and larger units for families.

Why This Investment Is Needed

Gendered Housing Risk

Women and gender-diverse people face a disproportionately high risk of housing insecurity and homelessness driven by lower incomes, gender-based violence, discrimination in the rental market, and caregiving responsibilities. Survivors of violence, Indigenous women, single mothers, and gender-diverse people are overrepresented among those impacted. Many are forced into dangerous situations due to the lack of safe, affordable, and appropriate housing.

SAMPLE BUDGET SUBMISSION - PAGE 2/2

Gaps in Manitoba's Current Housing Funding Model

While Manitoba has made important investments in housing, existing programs are not designed to address the specific needs of women and gender-diverse people. A multi-year fund allows for long-term investment in housing that responds to the specific safety, affordability, and inclusion needs of women and gender-diverse people across Manitoba. A dedicated funding stream ensures this housing is not overlooked or forced to compete in general programs.

A dedicated funding stream ensures that housing for women and gender-diverse people is planned for, funded consistently, and treated as a core part of Manitoba's housing system, not an afterthought.

Outcomes and Public Value

Increased access to safe and affordable housing prevents people from cycling through shelters, emergency health care, child welfare, and the justice system while generating cost savings for both individuals and government. Moreover, it reduces exposure to violence and exploitation, and supports health, dignity, strong families, and the ability to participate fully in community life. Without intentional, gender-responsive housing investments, women and gender-diverse people are less likely to benefit from these outcomes.

Alignment with Manitoba Government Priorities

This proposed investment directly supports Manitoba's commitments to expand social housing, end chronic homelessness, and build safer communities - while ensuring those efforts reach women and gender-diverse people facing the greatest housing risks.

Conclusion

With the right investment in Budget 2026, Manitoba has the opportunity to show leadership by ensuring that women and gender-diverse people are not left behind in housing policy, and instead have safe, affordable homes built for their needs. A dedicated, multi-year funding stream for gender-responsive social housing will save lives, reduce public costs, and strengthen communities across the province.

We urge the Government of Manitoba to make this commitment in Budget 2026 and to work with community partners on implementation.

SAMPLE POSTCARD



TO THE GOVERNMENT
OF MANITOBA

SIGNATURE

ADDRESS

We call on the Manitoba Government to create a dedicated, multi-year funding stream to develop and support social housing for women and gender-diverse people.

This will ensure that housing for women and gender-diverse people is planned for, funded consistently, and treated as a core part of Manitoba's housing system - not an afterthought.



Artwork by Kelly Campbell

SAMPLE LETTER TEMPLATE



Dear XX:

I am writing to urge the Manitoba government to include a dedicated, multi-year funding stream in Budget 2026 for social housing for women and gender-diverse people.

This funding would support non-market housing providers to build new social housing, purchase and renovate existing buildings, keep rents affordable, and provide tenant support to ensure long-term housing stability.

Funding could be used to develop housing that prioritizes or is designated for women and gender-diverse people. It could also ensure features such as proximity to caregiver services like schools, healthcare, childcare, and family supports; access to trauma-informed, gender-responsive support workers, caretakers, and landlords; safety features like well-lit common areas and secure buildings and units; and larger units for families.

While Manitoba has made important investments in housing, existing programs are not designed to address the specific needs of women and gender-diverse people. A dedicated funding stream ensures that housing for women and gender-diverse people is planned for, funded consistently, and treated as a core part of Manitoba's housing system, not an afterthought.

Women and gender-diverse people face a disproportionately high risk of housing insecurity and homelessness due to lower incomes, gender-based violence, discrimination in the rental market, and caregiving responsibilities. Many are forced into dangerous situations because they have nowhere safe to go.

Investing in gender-responsive social housing is both the right thing to do and cost-effective. Safe, stable housing reduces pressure on healthcare, emergency services, child welfare, and the justice system, while supporting safety, health, and family wellbeing.

This investment directly supports Manitoba's commitments to expand social housing, end chronic homelessness, and build safer communities - while ensuring women and gender-diverse people are not left behind.

I urge you to make this commitment in Budget 2026.

Sincerely,
XX

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 5, 2026

New Campaign Calls for Dedicated Funding to Address Housing Crisis Facing Women and Gender-Diverse People

Winnipeg, MB — Winnipeg's 2025 Housing Needs Assessment confirms women, single mothers, and gender-diverse people face significant barriers to safe and affordable housing. In response, The Right to Housing Coalition is launching a new campaign calling on the Manitoba government to create a dedicated, multi-year funding stream in Budget 2026 for social housing that meets the unique needs of these groups.

When: Thursday, February 5, 2026 | 11:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m. (lunch to follow)

Where: 590 Victor Street, Winnipeg, MB

Women and gender-diverse people face some of the highest risks of housing insecurity and homelessness in Manitoba. Contributing factors include lower incomes, gender-based violence, discrimination in the rental market, and caregiving responsibilities. Despite these realities, Manitoba's housing funding model does not consistently plan for or invest in housing that meets their specific needs.

"This campaign is about closing a clear gap in Manitoba's housing system," said Janis Ducharme, More Than 4 Walls Case Worker at the West Central Women's Resource Centre and member of The Right to Housing Coalition. "Without intentional, gender-responsive investment, women and gender-diverse people are often left without housing options that meet their safety, affordability, and long-term stability needs."

"As a queer person who has moved through many different housing situations, I feel a very deep disconnect when it comes to securing safe, affordable housing. It is incredibly hard and inaccessible. Gender-diverse people deserve safe, social housing options. It not only keeps us productive in communities, it also saves lives," said Luca Gheorghica, member of The Right to Housing Coalition's Gendered Housing Working Group.

The campaign calls for a dedicated funding stream to support housing that prioritizes women and gender-diverse people, with access to caregiver services (schools, healthcare, childcare, and family supports); trauma-informed and gender-responsive support workers, caretakers, and landlords; safety features like well-lit common areas and secure buildings; and larger units for families.

Advocates say such a fund would ensure housing for women and gender-diverse people is consistently planned, funded, and treated as a core part of Manitoba's housing system — not an afterthought. The fund would also support provincial commitments to expand social housing, reduce homelessness, and build safer communities.

The campaign launch brings together community members, advocates, and service providers to outline the campaign proposal, hear from people with lived and frontline experience, and share opportunities for public action in the months leading up to Budget 2026.

"The Province has made important investments in social housing, but without a focused approach, women and gender-diverse people continue to face elevated risks of homelessness and housing insecurity. Budget 2026 is a critical opportunity to invest in housing that truly works for everyone," added Ducharme.

Media are invited to attend and speak with campaign organizers, housing workers, and people with lived experience following the launch.

Media contact:

Kirsten Bernas, Provincial Chair of the Right to Housing Coalition
provincial@righttohousing.ca, 204-XXX-XXXX