



## A SAFE HAVEN FOR WOMEN IN DIFFICULTY

Founded in 1977, Chez Doris is a day shelter that offers a range of services and programs to meet the most basic and immediate needs of vulnerable women and homeless women. The only women's day shelter in Montreal offering 24/7 service, Chez Doris welcomed 1,465 unique women and served 29,528 meals in 2020-21. By providing personal hygiene products, health and mental services, housing placement, and more, the organization meets their needs in an inclusive and non-judgmental environment.

"I have enough to eat at Chez Doris, and it's a warm and comforting place where I feel safe."

Natalie G,  
Chez Doris client

"Chez Doris allowed me to get out of the streets and shelters and find a subsidized apartment, which allowed me to regain my dignity and live a more normal life. With this subsidized apartment, I'm able to return to the job market in terms of my ability."

Anne\*,  
Chez Doris client  
\*pseudonym

# CHEZ DORIS IS EXPANDING!

[chezdoris.org](https://chezdoris.org)

**On September 14**, Chez Doris launched the public phase of its largest-ever major fundraising campaign, "Chez Doris, Day & Night". **The funds raised from this campaign will be put toward building and managing two of our new essential service points for a growing number of women in need.**

THANK YOU to our major private sector partners to date for their phenomenal support of our major campaign!



## Chez Doris Day Shelter

Founded in 1977, Chez Doris is in the west of downtown Montreal and provides a safe haven for all women in difficulty in a welcoming and nonjudgmental environment. It offers comprehensive services and programs to meet the most basic and immediate needs of women facing homelessness, poverty, mental illness and/or addictions. As the only day shelter for women in Montreal open seven days a week, Chez Doris' services include breakfast, lunch, and dinner; access to showers, hygiene products and a clothing room; respite beds; a financial management program; an Inuit assistance program; housing search assistance and placement; as well as physical and mental health services, tax and legal services, and socio-recreational activities and programs. It also provides a women's night shelter with 40 individual rooms based out of a hotel during the pandemic.



PROJECTED LAUNCH DATE: 2022

## Chez Doris Emergency Night Shelter

Chez Doris' emergency overnight shelter will offer a secure environment with comfortable beds for homeless and vulnerable women in crisis situations to ensure they have a safe place to sleep at night. The shelter will have 22 beds, shower and laundry facilities, a sobering room, a counselling room as well as a dining room, kitchenette, and common room. Upon completion, the new emergency overnight shelter will benefit women referred by our day shelter as well as those referred by other shelters and correctional facilities, and women brought in by police escort.

## Chez Doris Housing Program

Since November 2020, Chez Doris' housing department has expanded and now counts eight employees. Once our clients are housed, our staff supports them to live autonomously and acquire valuable life skills, such as improved grocery shopping and cleaning habits, accompaniments for banking, medical, legal, and other purposes, and connecting clients with additional community resources.

## Alexandra, Housing Program Team Leader



Alex is our Housing Program Team Leader, having initially started her journey within the organization in February 2020 as a frontline worker. *"In November of last year, I was encouraged to apply to be a housing program intake worker. During my interview, I learned that 30 women needed help to find housing in a very short time. As someone who is always up for a challenge, I immediately agreed to take on the role and do my best to meet their needs."* The housing department not only met this objective, but surpassed it, placing 45 women in housing by June 30.

*"Since starting my new position, I've enjoyed helping my fellow caseworkers and offering them guidance based on the intervention experience I've acquired over the past eight years,"* Alex says. In her new role, Alex still accompanies caseworkers during client home visits, which allows her to maintain a connection with the women she built relationships with as a caseworker: *"It brings me great joy to witness a woman's progression on her personal journey."*

Despite the rewards that her position provides, it also presents challenges: with demand exceeding supply, many vulnerable women—and their families—continue to wait for affordable housing.

*"Chez Doris' housing program helped me find an apartment. Now, I can act more rationally in stressful situations. When I think about the future, I am less overwhelmed: I take things one day at a time. I have acquired the ability to reach my goals."*

Veronica N., Chez Doris client



**PROJECTED LAUNCH DATE: 2022**

### Chez Doris De Champlain Permanent Residence

To address the shortage of affordable housing options for homeless and at-risk women, Chez Doris and the Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal (SHDM) have partnered to launch a permanent residence with affordable studio units. The residence, located near La Fontaine Park, will provide 26 studio apartments for vulnerable women. In addition to managing the building, Chez Doris will select the tenants—including those with chronic mental health problems who are particularly at risk of homelessness—and will provide support services. Nineteen tenants will be eligible for rental subsidies through the Office municipal de l'habitation de Montréal, and their rent will be set to a maximum of 25% of their income.



**PROJECTED LAUNCH DATE: 2022**

### Chez Doris Saint-André Permanent Residence

In addition to the two new points of service for which Chez Doris's major campaign is raising funds towards, an opportunity presented itself in the fall of 2020 to purchase and renovate a former auberge thanks to funding from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) as well as a generous donation from a couple. This residence will provide housing for an additional 20 vulnerable and/or formerly homeless women, offering individual rooms with bathrooms along with common areas including shared kitchens in a safe and secure building in The Village.

## YOUR GIFT MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

### Individual support for our expansion

Chez Doris is grateful to be able to count on its many individual donors who steadfastly support our mission. We are hoping that many of you will consider supporting Chez Doris this year with an annual donation.

### Impact of your donations

When you donate to Chez Doris, your gift provides a meaningful difference in the lives of vulnerable and homeless women, many of whom come to us for help during times of crisis. The following dollar amounts help illustrate what your generosity represents:

- \$80 covers the cost of moving services for a woman in our housing program
- \$140 provides a welcome kit for newly housed clients containing necessities for apartment living
- \$250 provides 35 clients with one return bus fare for transportation to appointments
- \$500 provides 125 nutritious meals

## THANKS TO THE GENEROSITY OF DONORS LIKE YOU, IN 2020-21, CHEZ DORIS PROVIDED:



**29,528**  
HEALTHY  
MEALS



**3,306**  
SHOWERS



**5,354**  
HYGIENE  
KITS



**3,384**  
OVERNIGHT  
STAYS



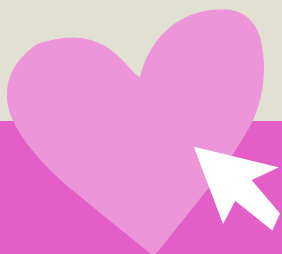
**6,539**  
EMERGENCY  
CLOTHING KITS

### Will Power

Thanks to the support of The Doggone Foundation, Chez Doris is proud to be included in the Will Power initiative, a national movement composed of charities, financial advisors, and legal professionals across the country, working together to show Canadians that they have the power to make a difference through their Will.



To learn more about how you can leave a lasting impact on Chez Doris through your Will, visit: [willpower.ca/charities/chez-doris](http://willpower.ca/charities/chez-doris)



**DONATE AT CHEZDORIS.ORG USING OUR ONLINE DONATION FORM  
OR BY RETURNING THE DONATION CARD INCLUDED WITH THE NEWSLETTER.**





Photos: Jean-François Paré

## A message from the President & Executive Director

Long before the arrival of the pandemic, Chez Doris understood that the needs of homeless and at-risk women were not being adequately met by existing resources. In 2018, Chez Doris received a surprise major donation of \$1 million from a retired 95-year-old businessman seeking to leave his mark on the city and who was convinced that more needed to be done to help homeless and vulnerable women. His gift was earmarked for a bricks and mortar project and acted as a catalyst for our current major expansion.

It is in this context that Chez Doris began evaluating how best it could expand to address the lack of access to both emergency and permanent housing for vulnerable women and provide lasting solutions. As a result, in addition to operating its day shelter, Chez Doris developed an expansion plan that now includes operating a permanent emergency night shelter with 22 beds and two new permanent residences that will provide long-term housing for 46 homeless or at-risk women and an enhanced housing placement program. These new points of service are now expected to be operational within the next year. Additional projects are in the pipeline.

To fund this expansion, Chez Doris formed a steering committee tasked with selecting a consulting firm to carry out a feasibility study to ascertain the level of community support. The subsequent findings demonstrated that significant support existed for our proposed initiatives. What began as a modest capital campaign objective has now blossomed into an extraordinary \$15 million dollar capital campaign goal (\$10 million of which is to come from the private sector) to fund construction and renovation costs as well as the first five years of operating costs for providing social services.

During the past many months, our Campaign Co-Chairs, Elizabeth Wirth and François Carrier, along with our Cabinet Members, Honorary Cabinet Members, consultants, and staff have been quietly but effectively working to raise substantial support from within the private sector.

We are extremely proud to be able to share with you the result of their dedication and efforts thus far: together we have raised an impressive 90% of our goal to date. We are now officially in the public phase of our campaign, and we are reaching out to you as individuals, and as members of the community at large, to help us reach 100% of our objective by December and invite you to consider contributing today to our capital campaign according to your capacity.

With sincere gratitude,

**Carole Croteau**  
President of the Board of Directors

**Marina Boulos-Winton**  
Executive Director

## SAVE THE DATE!

Starting mid-November, we'll be launching a fundraiser in the form of a virtual auction filled with unique and fabulous items! All proceeds from the auction will go directly to supporting Chez Doris' mission to help women in precarious situations or those experiencing homelessness.

Follow us on social media to stay informed:

@ChezDorisRefuge  
 @ChezDorisRefuge  
 @ChezDorisRefuge  
 linkedin.com/company/ChezDorisRefuge

## A message from our campaign co-chairs

How did I get so involved with this outstanding organization that helps so many vulnerable women in the Montreal area?

I knew about Chez Doris for years, being a small contributor via the University Women's Club in Montreal, so when I was called in January 2020, I accepted a meeting without further thought. The story of Chez Doris was as expected, one of a most worthy cause, but so are quite a few others that contact us all frequently.

My total conversion happened in early June 2020, when I had my first lengthy visit to Chez Doris. The kind, non-judgemental work that all the staff and volunteers at Chez Doris do was a picture of kindness and competence in action that I had not anticipated. Things were being done well beyond expectation: not only physical and mental needs were being met, but accounting, tax returns, management of funds for women who could not carry money on the street, long term welfare and much more. Seeing the women that were being helped so much, particularly during the pandemic when they could not stay with friends or in overnight cafés, made me a full supporter, and I accepted to chair the capital campaign, with a view to getting a co-chair who would be very involved also. By September the highly capable and kind François Carrier came on board. The friends who joined our honorary and working cabinets are also of a very high calibre, and all joined with enthusiasm because of the work done at Chez Doris.

"There but for the luck of a fortunate birth go I" has always been part of my thinking, and Chez Doris brought this home in spades. The capital campaign with plans for overnight accommodation and studio apartments for women stepping out of their difficulties is hugely worthwhile now and for the future. To prove my commitment, I also became a major contributor to the campaign, and I ask you most humbly to contribute what you can to achieve our goal by December 2021.

**Elizabeth Wirth, Campaign Co-Chair**

I live in the heart of the city and work downtown: I love Montreal. But the beauty of the city and all that brings it to life are not enough to mask its challenges, including those related to homelessness. Homelessness is not new and existed long before the pandemic: it was enough to go for an early morning run through the city to see the extent of the problem in Montreal.

I knew this when I was invited to get involved with Chez Doris. What I didn't know anything about was female homelessness and the profound disparity of resources that are mobilized to support women in very precarious situations or who are experiencing homelessness: while 25% of homeless people are women, only between 10 and 15% of beds are dedicated to them. This statistic alone could have been enough to attract my support.

From my initial contact with Chez Doris, I was impressed by the diverse services it offers to the most vulnerable women in our city, its commitment to helping women reintegrate into society, and the impact it will have by adding new beds and services. Seeing this, I immediately agreed to support Chez Doris's major campaign and hope the entire business community will do the same.

**François Carrier, Campaign Co-Chair**

We accept online donations. We also accept third party gifts, publicly traded stocks, and estate gifts including insurance policies.

Registration number:  
101835841RR0001

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**Opening hours**  
7 days a week: 8:30 am – 10:00 pm  
Overnight services: 9:00 pm – 8:30 am  
[www.chezdoris.org](http://www.chezdoris.org)