



**Canadian Mental  
Health Association**  
Sault Ste. Marie Branch  
*Mental health for all*

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **CMHA Sault Ste. Marie alters services to protect public health and safety amid COVID-19 pandemic**

Sault Ste. Marie, March 18, 2020) – In an abundance of caution amid public concern related to the COVID-19 pandemic, Canadian Mental Health Association Sault Ste. Marie is closing its office effective Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup> and making some changes to programs and services.

The health and safety of our clients and staff remains our priority as we continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and find the best and safest way to provide services and programs.

Like all Ontarians, we are following advice from local, provincial and national health authorities to help stop the spread of this disease. CMHA Sault Ste. Marie is making the following service changes, effective immediately until further notice, to protect our clients and staff:

- Office based programs including Justice, Dual Diagnosis, Mental Health Promotion, and Counselling will close
- Club 84/Hope House will close, but will offer registered members of the program an opportunity to pick up pre-ordered meals Monday to Friday between 12:00 and 1:00 pm. Meals for registered members can be ordered by calling 705-942-9561
- Access information and referral program will continue to receive calls which will be answered Monday to Friday between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm. Please call 705-759-5989, 1-855-366-1466 or email [information@cmhassm.com](mailto:information@cmhassm.com)

We are doing everything possible at this time to keep safe options available to support individuals in need of care. We will continue to monitor all the developments of COVID-19 and will continue to inform our clients and the community of further changes to our programs and services. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Access Program at 705-759-5989 or 1-855-366-1466 or email [information@cmhassm.com](mailto:information@cmhassm.com) leave a message and we will return your call.

### **Reducing anxiety related to COVID-19**

CMHA recognizes that at this time of uncertainty, symptoms of anxiety and depression may be exacerbated. These five basic tips may help individuals experiencing heightened mental health concerns to remain calm and balanced as this public health situation unfolds.

- Considering the level of attention and seriousness being paid to the COVID-19 pandemic, it's normal to feel anxious. Try not to avoid, ignore or suppress anxious thoughts. Instead, be aware of your anxiety and accept that you're feeling anxious in this situation. Try to keep things in perspective; notice and challenge your thoughts that may be extreme or unhelpful.



- Self-care is critically important at this time, as worries can be made worse if we aren't taking care of ourselves. Lean on social supports, try to get enough sleep, eat healthy, exercise and engage in enjoyable activities. Do the things you would typically do to support your health, and be sure to use caution and follow health and safety guidelines while doing them.
- Seek information from reliable news sources only. Limit checking in on the latest news to short, defined periods, and refrain from setting related push notifications on your device. Appropriate information consumption may be calming and can lessen the sense of danger.
- Take the recommended precautions as outlined by Health Canada and other credible health agencies. Remain focused on the factors within your control, such as washing hands, covering your mouth during coughs and sneezes, avoiding non-essential travel, etc.
- If you're noticing that your symptoms of anxiety (in association with COVID-19 or otherwise) are causing you significant distress or are interfering with your ability to function normally, reach out for formal mental health supports from a recognized agency, such as CMHA.

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