

PETITION: TO CLOSE THE THUNDER BAY JAIL

To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

Whereas:

- WHEREAS deaths amongst imprisoned people in Ontario's provincial correctional system are all too frequent, including at the Thunder Bay Jail, which has long been recognized as a "death trap"
- WHEREAS the Government of Ontario announced in 2022 that the Thunder Bay Correctional Complex would replace the Thunder Bay Jail and the Thunder Bay Correctional Centre as "part of Ontario's plan to modernize corrections" because the two existing institutions are "out-of-date infrastructure that no longer meets current needs".
- WHEREAS the Government of Ontario is backtracking and now plans to renovate and keep open the "out-of-date" Thunder Bay Jail and Thunder Bay Correctional Centre for several years after the Thunder Bay Correctional Complex opens.
- WHEREAS the Thunder Bay Jail and Thunder Bay Correctional Centre do not have enough staff now, resulting in harsh conditions of confinement that violate the human rights of imprisoned people;
- WHEREAS it costs on average more than \$350 a day to operate one jail bed, with the estimated 149-bed Thunder Bay Jail and 203-bed Thunder Bay Correctional Centre costing more than \$125,000 a day to operate.
- WHEREAS alternatives like permanent and supportive housing (costing \$275,000 a unit to build and \$131.50 a day or \$48,000 a year to operate) that could help alleviate provincial jail system crowding by providing access to basic necessities and services in the community that are more cost-effective and quicker to bring online which prevent lawbreaking and reduce the flow of people entering custody.
- WHEREAS a jury for the coroner's inquest into the death of Kevin Mamakwa, who died in the Thunder Bay Jail on 2 June 2020, recommended the closure of the Thunder Bay Jail.

We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

- Close the Thunder Bay Jail and Thunder Bay Correctional Centre once the Thunder Bay Correctional Complex is open; reallocate funds currently earmarked for renovating these facilities towards building community infrastructure like permanent and supportive housing; and reallocate funds that would be spent on operating the "out-of-date" jail and correctional centre in Thunder Bay towards covering the operational costs of running new permanent and supportive housing spaces.

Name (printed)	Address (printed)	Signature

Please return to Organizer or mail to: MPP Sol Mamakwa, Room 361, Main Legislative Building, Queen's Park, Toronto, ON M7A 1A5, (Tel.: 416-326-7692). Only original signatures are accepted in the Legislature.