

Memorandum

COM-C 3-2026

Subject: Emergency Social Services Response – Welland Incident

Date: Tuesday, February 10, 2026

To: Public Health and Social Services Committee

From: Henri Koning, Commissioner, Community Services

Niagara Region's Community Services Department is responsible for planning, leading, coordinating, and managing the delivery of emergency social services (ESS). ESS is activated in situations where a community emergency or event has displaced residents from their homes, and is delivered through partnerships with first responders, local area municipalities, non-governmental organizations, other Regional departments and community partners.

As a response to the shelter in place order issued by Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS) on Friday, December 19, 2025, ESS responded, in partnership with the City of Welland, the Canadian Red Cross and Niagara Region Emergency Management team, by opening a reception centre at the Welland Community Centre to provide a safe space for residents that were unable to return to their homes. The reception centre acted as a safe location for displaced residents to receive timely information and support as needed, as well as snacks and water provided in-kind through Rapid Relief Team (non-profit organization).

Due to the prolonged duration of the incident, Community Services initiated overnight lodging for a small number of individuals requiring support through the Emergency Response Activation Agreement that Niagara Region holds with the Canadian Red Cross. This agreement enables Canadian Red Cross to provide emergency response assistance to residents of Niagara Region quickly, in the case of an emergency.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

Henri Koning, MHSc
Commissioner, Community Services