

## **POSITION STATEMENT: Health and Safety**

### **ISSUE:**

Ensuring that all Bishop's University students have access to comprehensive, student-centered health and safety supports both on and off campus. This includes timely and culturally inclusive mental health services, proactive campus safety measures, clear reporting protections, and strong off-campus living supports. Students deserve to live and learn in environments that prioritize their physical safety, mental well-being, and dignity.

### **RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY:**

- The Bishop's University Students' Representative Council
- Bishop's University
- City of Sherbrooke
- Borough of Lennoxville
- Quebec Student Union
- Government of Quebec
- Government of Canada

### **DETAILS:**

Students face rising mental health pressures, housing insecurity, safety concerns, and barriers to accessing timely and culturally inclusive supports. As a result, post-secondary institutions across Canada are experiencing increased demand for mental health services, stronger campus safety standards, and clearer accountability regarding off-campus living conditions. Creating a safe and healthy campus requires proactive institutional commitment and meaningful student consultation.

### **IMPACT/ANALYSIS:**

Student health and safety form the foundation of academic success and campus connection. When students face additional barriers in access to support services, they are less able to fully participate in academic and community life.

Maintaining equitable investment in health and safety services for students that are based on students' needs and an equitable foundation will improve retention and support overall student well-being.

### **POSITION:**

The Bishop's University Students' Representative Council (BUSRC) advocates for a proactive and comprehensive approach to student health and safety. We support strengthened mental health services, accessible healthcare resources, preventative safety measures, and transparent crisis response protocols. Health and safety policies must prioritize prevention, accessibility, and

accountability to ensure that all students feel protected and supported throughout their university experience.

The Students' Representative Council supports the following:

Long-Term Goals:

- Expansion and sustained support and funding of student mental health services
- Mandatory inclusion of campus supports and resources within course syllabi
- Creation of campus support and resources outside of working hours
- Creation of safe rest spaces on campus, including nap pods or designated quiet recovery spaces
- Comprehensive campus-wide lighting audit with student consultation
- Creation of conflict resolution, anti-discrimination, and inclusive classroom training to promote respectful learning environments and inclusivity within the greater community

Short-Term Goals:

- Strengthened non-retaliation protections to ensure students are protected when filing reports or complaints
- Creation of a clear definition and strengthened student understanding of the university's role in off-campus safety
- Development of programming to educate students about tenant rights, legal protections, and off-campus safety resources
- Ensure short-term emergency housing options for students in unsafe campus living situations
- Student-centered harm reduction approaches that address root causes rather than restricting or enforcing non-student-centered policies
- Expansion of culturally inclusive and representative mental health supports
- Sustained mental health support for first-year students beyond orientation week

The Students' Representative Council opposes the following:

- Lack of transparency in institutional safety planning and implementation of safety policies
- Insufficient mental health service funding or prolonged wait times
- Harm reduction approaches that reduce student programming under the guise of safety
- Policies that fail to protect students from growing safety concerns