



## **Request for Proposals**

### **for an Expert Report/Affidavit of Health Risks of Indoor Mould Exposure**

This RFP seeks a leading medical expert in the field of mould and human health to prepare a concise review of current scientific understanding about the adverse health impacts of indoor mould exposure. The report will form part of the suite of RentSafe resources on mould.

#### ***Background on RentSafe***

RentSafe is a cross-sectoral collaborative initiative that addresses unhealthy housing conditions affecting tenants living on low income in both urban and rural communities in Ontario. It was initiated in 2014 and arose from a multi-year effort within Canadian Partnership for Children's Health and Environment (CPCHE) to understand environmental threats to child health and therein, a recognition that toxic exposures often occur indoors and are disproportionately more serious for those living in low-income circumstances. With active involvement of public health, legal aid clinics, municipal property standards/by-law enforcement, and social service sectors as well as housing providers and tenants, RentSafe aims to build awareness and capacity across sectors so that tenants, when faced with mould, pests/pesticides, lead, radon and other unhealthy housing conditions, are better able to get the support they need. See more details on-line at [rentsafe.ca](https://rentsafe.ca).

#### ***RentSafe Existing Resources for Physicians and Tenants on Mould***

This RFP will round out an existing suite of RentSafe mould resources (<https://rentsafe.ca/2019/06/26/new-resources-on-mould-and-health-for-physicians-and-their-patients/>) developed collaboratively with RentSafe partners including physicians, staff in public health units, legal aid clinics, and tenant advocates. Through a collaboration supported by the College of Family Physicians of Canada, RentSafe partners co-created a podcast training resource for physicians that emphasizes their role as professionals in supporting their patients' efforts to get mould in their home remediated, including connecting with legal aid and other community supports. A RentSafe tenant advocate then worked with the legal aid clinic director in her community to create a companion resource for tenants that encourages them to seek advocacy support from their health care professional in securing mould remediation.

#### ***This RFP***

Through funding secured by the Canadian Environmental Law Foundation (CELA) from the *MakeWay Foundation*, RentSafe partners are now creating an expert report about mould. This

report will bring together relevant expertise in health and building science, supported by best available science, and informed by the on-the-ground needs elucidated by tenants and frontline workers. The overall objective is to create a report that tenants and their legal advocates can present in Ontario Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) hearings (although we expect the report will be applicable before tribunals outside Ontario as well). The idea, and need, for such a document arises directly from the experiences of lawyers in community legal clinics who have faced repeated challenges in successfully assisting tenants bringing LTB applications about mould and echoed by the experiences of tenants.

The objective for such a document, if sufficiently backed and vetted by authoritative sources, is to eliminate the costly and often prohibitive barrier that tenants face in seeking legal redress. Tenants rarely have resources to hire/recruit a public health professional or other authoritative sources to present information on mould and its health risks, or remediation, at a Landlord and Tenant Board hearing. Such a resource would save resources not only for individual tenants but will be an efficiency measure to save significant judicial resources overall. Moreover, the dual focus on health concerns and remediation of mould is intended to achieve judicial decisions that will require the correction and prevention of mould in housing for current and future tenants.

### ***Scope of work***

This RFP seeks a leading medical expert in the field of mould and human health to prepare a concise review of current scientific understanding about the adverse health impacts of indoor mould exposure. (Note that RentSafe will separately secure consultant services for the building sciences portion of the report.)

The paper, approximately 8-12 pages in length (including any graphics), should:

- briefly describe the importance of indoor environments, and in particular housing, to health and well-being
- provide a fully referenced summary of the scientific and medical literature about the health risks of mould in the indoor environment
- include information relevant to risk reduction and health protection measures, such as how the severity of contamination and/or duration of exposure correspond with the development/exacerbation of adverse health outcomes.
- include references from primary research/peer reviewed literature as well as sources of general/lay information, such as Health Canada and other authoritative sources
- highlight the particular risks and vulnerabilities of the developing fetus and child, where relevant, or other vulnerable groups (e.g., those with asthma)
- highlight key intersections between mould exposures/adverse health effects and the social determinants of health (e.g., poverty, access to medical care), in order to emphasize the intersecting risks/vulnerabilities of low-income and marginalized populations (level of detail in this section can be tailored to writer's relevant expertise)
- utilize ample headings and subheadings, and graphics as appropriate, to enable a reader to quickly access key information
- include an executive summary (1-2 pages in length)

- be written in accessible (lay) English, geared to no greater than a grade 10 (high school) literacy level to ensure that it can be understood by multiple non-expert stakeholders and interested members of the public
- avoid jargon, excessive use of acronyms and, where possible, passive voice, and
- be prepared using MS Word and submitted electronically.

The order of the above thematic elements is flexible. The consultant will propose the order and relative weight of the various themes and topics in an annotated outline (see work plan below).

***Process for submitting a proposal***

If you are interested in being considered for this contract, please:

1. prepare a brief statement or letter (no more than one page) explaining why you are suited to this work, highlighting your relevant skills, expertise and/or experience.
2. Attach your CV or resume.

Proposals should be sent electronically (in MS Word or PDF) by **5:00 pm EST on Dec 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020** to: Erica Phipps, Executive Director, CPCHE, [erica@healthyenvironmentforkids.ca](mailto:erica@healthyenvironmentforkids.ca)

***Selection process***

RentSafe and the CELA Foundation will identify a shortlist of the top three (3) candidates from all proposals received by the deadline, taking into consideration candidates’ medical/professional credentials as well as their relevant skills, expertise and/or experience. The short list of candidates will be reviewed and discussed with the existing RentSafe working group comprised of legal aid, public health and other partners engaged in the ongoing RentSafe mould work. In addition, we may ask short-listed candidates to provide names and contact information for one or two references. A writing sample may be requested, as well.

The final decision will be made by Erica Phipps, CPCHE and RentSafe director, and Kathleen Cooper, with the Canadian Environmental Law Association. The successful candidate will be advised via email by mid-December 2020. Contracting will be arranged through the Canadian Environmental Law Association.

The schedule of work is as follows:

| <b><i>Task</i></b>  | <b><i>Date</i></b> | <b><i>Comments</i></b>   |
|---|--------------------|--|
| Joint teleconference/zoom meeting with the two authors (health and building science report sections, respectively) and members of the RentSafe team | mid- December 2020 | Overall orientation and discussion of cohesiveness of two-part report  |
| Annotated outline submitted   | 15 January 2021    | RentSafe/CELA will provide comments within 15 business days of receipt |

| <i>Task</i>   | <i>Date</i>    | <i>Comments</i>   |
|---|----------------|---|
| Payment of half contract value, pending receipt of invoice to Canadian Environmental Law Foundation   | 1 January 2021 |   |
| First draft of report submitted   | 9 March 2021   | RentSafe/CELA will provide consolidated comments within 15 business days of receipt |
| Second draft prepared, conference calls among authors and RentSafe mould working group, and peer review. 1-2 additional iterations of the draft, as needed. | April-May 2021 |   |
| Peer review; final revisions  | May/June 2021  |   |
| Final report submitted, including all graphics/illustrations and references   | 30 June 2021   |   |
| Final payment issued, pending RentSafe/CELA approval of final report and receipt of invoice   | 15 July 2021   |   |

### ***Compensation***

RentSafe/CELA has a budget of \$7,000 for this work, plus HST. There are no benefits or travel expenses associated with this contract. It is expected that the consultant will work from her/his own workspace.

### ***For more information:***

If you have questions about the RFP or the proposed work, please contact Erica Phipps at [erica@healthyenvironmentforkids.ca](mailto:erica@healthyenvironmentforkids.ca) or 613-791-4248.



RentSafe is an initiative of the **Canadian Partnership for Children's Health and Environment**

with the **Canadian Environmental Law Association** serving as the lead CPCHE partner for this project

Funding for this RentSafe project is provided by the **MakeWay Foundation**

