This page was exported from - Shelburne Free Press
Export date: Fri Oct 30 10:09:45 2026 / +0000 GMT

Coats for Dufferin returns for the 2025 winter season

Written By Joshua Drakes

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Recognizing the growing need for warm, dependable outdoor apparel in the community, Coats for Dufferin is preparing for another year of giving back.

Originally a program for kids in schools, founder Jacqueline Clement realized the scope of the deficit was far larger than she first expected.

?I originally started this initiative during COVID just as we were starting to go back to normal,? she said. ?I originally saw a huge need in schools, and that's where it began. But then I saw refugees and immigrants coming here from Ukraine or South Africa, for example, and they're obviously not prepared; they came here with basically what they could carry. Yes, there's other thrift shops, but saving those extra few bucks makes a difference for them.?

Over time, seeing that adults were just as much in need as kids, the initiative morphed into Coats for Dufferin. With demand increasing every year, Clement said there has not been a season when they have had a single item left over. Everything was gone. As a result, the program has continued to expand each year.

Clement made sure to shout out the amazing work her team has put in to make sure that Coats for Dufferin is a success each year.

?I need to mention my colleagues,? she said. ?Jessica Menard and Sarah DeBoer. They run the Orangeville operation for me while I handle Shelburne. This is also the first year we've taken on volunteers, so we now also have student volunteers and adult volunteers throughout the community.?

The program is very straightforward. They accept donations of new or slightly used winter wear, including hats, jackets, and gloves ? anything that can help protect from the elements. They're then cleaned, if needed, and put on display at locations in Orangeville and Shelburne for anyone to take if needed.

An important factor, Clement said, was preserving clients' dignity. Everyone who comes can take whatever they need. No judgment, no questions asked.

?There's an important dignity factor to it,? she said. ?People have asked us over the years, ?how do you make sure you're monitoring people not coming in and taking more than one item, or resell them elsewhere?'?

?I tell them I don't care. I don't care if they come by to give something to a friend; if they need the money so badly, they're selling it, then go for it. There's no cost to take any of our items; they're all donated to help the community.?

For those who might need a little bit of extra help, Coats for Dufferin has special assistance available. If you're looking for a particular item or perhaps a rare size, you can fill out a private form, and the volunteers at Coats for Dufferin will try to find items that are close to your requirements and prepare them for you.

?For example, we've had people going for job interviews, and they might need something a little more fancy,? Clement said. ?That's not a problem, we will try to sift through the donations and find what they need. That includes odd sizes that are hard to get. We will absolutely take requests.?

Coats for Dufferin remains open for everyone, and no matter the struggle or need, Clement encourages anyone who needs clothing

to come out. The initiative has already begun collecting items and will be open for drop-offs for the rest of November.

Locations where the coats can be accessed include the Edelbrock Centre in Orangeville, open Nov. 6 to 30, Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Shelburne's location is 134 James Street, open from Nov. 6 to 30, Monday 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Thursday 7 a.m. to 9 a.m., and Sunday 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Orangeville Legion will have a pop-up close on Dec. 7, from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m., and Dec. 8 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

For more information on Coats for Shelburne, and a complete list of all drop-off and pick-up locations, head to https://linktr.ee/coatsfordufferin.