



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES NEW PROGRAM AIMED AT HOUSING
100 HOMELESS FAMILIES**

*New initiative to reduce homelessness tackles housing for 100 families located in at-risk communities;
funded by City's surcharge on house sharing dedicated to reducing homelessness*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today launched the Housing Homeless Families program, an unprecedented joint initiative with the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless (the Coalition) and its HomeWorks Campaign to address homelessness impacting families in the most at-risk communities. Using funds derived by the City of Chicago's surcharge on the house sharing industry, the City will work with the Coalition to connect 100 homeless families in high crime communities with permanent housing. To secure housing for those families identified, the City will create 100 new permanent supportive housing units.

"Around the city, children should be able to focus on their studies, and not where they are going to sleep at night," said Mayor Emanuel. "Working with our partners at the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless on this new initiative, we will work to ensure that more families experiencing or on the verge of homelessness can find and maintain the housing and stability they need to thrive and provide for their children."

Beginning this summer, the Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) and the Coalition, along with lead project partner, CSH, will launch the first phase of this effort to identify families currently experiencing homelessness or who have touched the homeless shelter system in recent months, focusing on those with school-aged children. The second phase will include placement of the eligible families into 100 new permanent supportive housing units to be added by the Chicago Low Income Housing Trust Fund.

"We are thrilled that the city is committing a new resource for housing for homeless families," said Doug Schenkelberg, Executive Director of Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, "and in particular that they are recognizing the needs of the highly vulnerable doubled-up households that have not been able to receive housing and services previously."

Because families that are homeless are at a significantly higher risk for experiencing violence, the City and the Coalition will focus on communities experiencing some of the city's highest rates of violence, including: Austin, Humboldt Park, West Englewood, and Englewood. Together, the City and the Coalition will identify families by working closely with shelters specializing in family

services, and with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) to assess families of schools with a higher concentration of homeless students to select them for housing.

“The goal of this initiative is to help our most vulnerable families to establish stability so that their children can succeed,” said DFSS Commissioner Lisa Morrison Butler. “Thanks to collaboration with our partners at the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, the city will deliver a coordinated response to ensure the needs of our most vulnerable families are met, and to prevent families on the cusp from experiencing homelessness.”

The initiative will enlist feedback from designated shelters in the key community areas, placing priority on families with students attending schools in the area. These schools include: Ellington ES, Nicholson ES, Earle ES, Ward ES, Howe ES, and Lowell ES.

Once families are identified for the program, they will receive housing vouchers, and will be matched to a housing provider who will help them locate housing and ensure a smooth transition. Families will continue to work with these providers as they receive wraparound services to support them in maintaining permanent housing. Families will also receive support by housing navigators in getting to appointments and obtaining required documents for housing applications.

The matching and transition process will be led by CSH using best practices based on implementation of the city's emerging coordinated entry system for homeless service and housing, a vital ingredient to the success of similar initiatives focusing on housing Veterans and Chronically homeless residents.

The Housing Homeless Families initiative was borne out of a yearlong planning process led by the City and with input by the Coalition, and draws upon lessons derived through the Ending Veterans Homeless Initiative and the Chronic Homeless Pilot programs, which use the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to leverage “real-time” data to identify where the most vulnerable families are, and to allocate resources for families and individuals experiencing homelessness based on where the immediate needs are.

The initiative will be funded in part by a \$1 million investment by the Chicago Low Income Housing Trust Fund (CLIHF), with matched funds via the City's house sharing revenue stream. Last year, the Chicago City Council enacted an unprecedented four percent surcharge on the house sharing industry, making Chicago among the first municipalities to leverage a dedicated funding source for homelessness. To date, the city has allocated more than \$500,000 in funding for homelessness reduction, serving approximately 150 homeless individuals.

Since taking office, Mayor Emanuel has made addressing homelessness a key priority. In addition to a 5-year commitment to create more affordable housing, the Emanuel Administration has launched several innovative programs with a focus on reducing homelessness, including: participation in the national EVHI campaign helping to house more than 3,000 homeless Veterans to date; creation of a new day labor program to employ and offer services to more than 500 panhandlers; and a significant expansion of affordable housing which has created or preserved more than 38,000 affordable units since 2011.

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