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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT, CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND PARTNERS LAUNCH PILOT PROGRAM PROVIDING SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WHO CAUSE HARM IN INTIMATE-PARTNER RELATIONSHIPS**

**CHICAGO** - Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) have launched a pilot program that will provide services to people who cause harm in intimate-partner relationships in an effort to prevent further violence. Metropolitan Family Services (MFS) was selected as the provider via a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process and will work with a local evaluator, Heartland Alliance, to deliver this innovative program as part of the Mayor's *Our City, Our Safety: A Comprehensive Plan to Reduce Violence in Chicago*, making it the City's first-ever citywide [strategic plan](#) to address gender-based violence and human trafficking. CDPH has invested \$500,000 in the FY21 and FY22 budgets to build out this pilot program for services for people who cause harm within intimate-partner relationships. Historically, individuals who cause harm can only access specialized services through the Perpetrator Accountability Intervention Program (PAIP) if mandated by a judge, leading to a significant portion of those causing harm left without options for trauma-informed, specialized services.

"Our efforts to reduce gender-based violence throughout our city must not only respond to victims of violence and their needs, but the individuals and trauma of those who cause harm," said Mayor Lightfoot. "This program will reach out with necessary resources and supports to reduce the risk of continued violent behavior. We hope to provide alternative solutions to address and prevent partner violence, and will continue addressing this problem through our citywide strategic plan."

With these services, the City acknowledges that harm does not happen in a vacuum and that trauma is pervasive in so many of our communities. The City of Chicago seeks to ensure that individuals who cause harm are offered adequate services and support that are responsive to the individual as well as the family unit and/or communities impacted by the harm. This pilot will focus on the West Englewood, Englewood, Chicago Lawn, and South Chicago communities and use a data-informed approach that will center survivor safety. In 2020, there were over 5,300 reported



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victims of domestic violence to the Chicago Police Department and 62 domestic violence related homicides, an 82% increase from 2019. The Request for Proposals for this pilot project required that applicants provide services in community areas with the highest rates of domestic violence.

“We at Metropolitan Family Services appreciate this special opportunity to partner with the City of Chicago on this important initiative – one that is providing alternative solutions to address intimate partner violence,” said Ric Estrada, Metropolitan Family Services’ President & CEO. “This approach will be driven by survivors’ needs, voices, choice and safety; by the need to hold accountable the person who caused harm while recognizing their own history of trauma; and by the need to recognize and affirm the supportive role of the larger community.

These funds will help to implement innovative, trauma-informed, and culturally appropriate non-mandated services for adults who cause harm within intimate-partner relationships. A challenge in developing “non-mandated” community-based services for people who cause harm is that there is limited evidence and research in the field. As such, this demonstration project will be evaluated by Heartland Alliance’s Social IMPACT Research team to both ensure that the design of programming is reflective of and responsive to people who cause harm to optimize voluntary engagement in the program and to measure impact of the interventions carried out by MFS.

“We are excited to work in partnership with the City of Chicago, Metropolitan Family Services, and philanthropy to not only identify *what* strategies are effective in preventing intimate partner violence, but also to understand *why* effective strategies work,” says Callie Kaplan, Director of Research at Heartland Alliance. “The findings from this evaluation will inform future violence prevention strategies in Chicago and provide critical evidence on the importance of investing in the safety of our families and communities.”

The Chicago Department of Public Health’s mission is to promote and improve health by engaging residents, communities, and partners in establishing and implementing policies and services that prioritize residents and communities with the greatest need. The department works to promote culturally responsive and intersectional approaches to building safe and equitable communities that help to heal from trauma and restore relationships. CDPH’s community health improvement plan, *Healthy Chicago 2025*, which is focused on racial and health equity, supports innovative practices such as this pilot. This new effort aligns with *Healthy Chicago 2025*’s guiding principle on trauma-informed practices and its priority area of public safety.



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“This investment and pilot program aligns with CDPH’s mission to address community trauma and improve the health of Chicagoans,” said CDPH Commissioner Allison Arwady, M.D. “By providing services to those that cause harm, we hope to interrupt currently unsafe and harmful behaviors while also preventing any future harm from occurring.”

If someone needs support and is experiencing domestic violence, they can call or text the IL Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-877-863-6338 (877-TO END DV).

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