



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT JOINS BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD FOR GROUNDBREAKING
ON NEW SOUTH SIDE FACILITY**

*BCBSIL Morgan Park Center to bring health and wellness support and create 550 jobs
on the South Side*

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today joined Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) and Alderman Carrie M. Austin for a groundbreaking ceremony for its new Morgan Park Center. Scheduled for a mid-2020 opening, this multi-purpose facility in Marshfield Plaza at 119th Street and I-57, will focus on improving the physical and economic health of the surrounding communities bringing up to 550 jobs, and serving residents with free health and wellness classes, connections to community resources, and education on how to better use health insurance.

“Our mission to expand equity across Chicago isn’t limited to economic investment, but includes access to health and wellness support, jobs, and other vital resources needed for our families and communities to thrive,” said Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot. “This commitment by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois marks the latest step in that important journey, reflecting the vitality of our Morgan Park community, and drive continued investment across our entire South Side.”

All told, the launch of the Morgan Park Center is expected to bring up to 550 jobs that BCBSIL is committed to filling by hiring local residents. BCBSIL is repurposing the shuttered Marshfield Plaza Target store that closed earlier this year.

“This future site is aimed at impacting both the economic and physical health of Morgan Park and the surrounding communities,” said Maurice Smith, president of Health Care Service Corporation. BCBSIL is a division of Health Care Service Corporation. “When we need to expand our operations, we look to areas where we can make an exponential impact – it makes sense for our members, our employees, and the entire community.”

The BCBSIL Morgan Park Center will combine community health outreach, including nutrition classes, yoga and other programs, and employee workspace. These functions are both part of its commitment to improving communities by tackling



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health issues and societal factors, including joblessness that keep people from being their best selves. This location is not BCBSIL's first community outreach center. In April, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois opened a Blue Door Neighborhood Center in the Pullman neighborhood, focused on positively impacting the health of people away from hospitals and physician offices.

"This new multi-purpose center is bringing critical services to the neighborhood, while also breathing new life into this retail area," said Alderman Carrie Austin (34). "I am extremely excited that Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois chose Morgan Park for its latest health and wellness center bringing hundreds of needed jobs and spurring economic growth to the community."

Mayor Lightfoot is committed to supporting development in areas that have experienced decades of disinvestment and economic decline. Last month, Mayor Lightfoot joined officials from Farmer's Fridge to open a new commercial kitchen near Midway Airport that will bring 300 new jobs to the area. Mayor Lightfoot recently launched a new and unprecedented strategy to support the revitalization of key commercial corridors on the South and West sides of Chicago. INVEST South/West leverages \$750 million in already allocated public funding to support efforts by the City in collaboration with community, corporate and philanthropic partners in revitalizing the core of 10 underinvested communities over the next three years.

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