



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:**

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

[press@cityofchicago.org](mailto:press@cityofchicago.org)

**CITY OF CHICAGO UPDATE ON LIMITED STAY SHELTER POLICY**

**CHICAGO** – On Sunday, March 17th, shelter residents originally scheduled to exit shelter in January will be exiting with case-specific exemptions. These exemptions include extensions for families with children. No shelter residents will exit on March 16th. On March 17th, 34 residents will exit shelter.

Our city is committed to compassion,” said **Mayor Brandon Johnson**. “By encouraging resettlement while also providing case-specific extensions with a focus on health and safety, we are advancing a pathway to stability and self-sufficiency.”

“While we know Chicago’s limited resources cannot meet the full scale of need across the New Arrivals Mission,” **Mayor Johnson** said. “We are constantly evaluating options that will lead to better care for all Chicagoans.”

To date, 14,700 people have exited shelter due to resettlement across the Chicago area and 5,200 people have reunited with family and friends through out-migration for a total of 19,900 people supported. Currently, 4,155 of 11,210 shelter residents are being provided support in resettlement efforts and are making progress towards securing housing. No shelter residents are expected to exit shelter on Saturday. Moving forward, those exiting have the option to return to the Landing Zone and be reprocessed and placed in shelter once again if appropriate beds are available.

Extensions to the policy will be determined on an individual basis. Factors from the Department of Family and Support Services’ (DFSS) Limited Stay Extension Policy still apply and have always included public benefit enrollment, pregnancy or infant care, medical care, disability, mental health, gender-based violence concerns, bereavement and medical isolation or quarantine

Two additional considerations were added and were announced today. First, due to current bed availability, families with children who are in shelter, as of today, will receive 30-day



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extensions, which may be renewed up to three times through June 10, 2024. Families who qualify for Asylum Seeker Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ASERAP) already qualified for available extension options based on existing criteria under DFSS's Limited Stay Extension Policy. Today's announcement means about 4,500 additional individuals with shelter exit dates originally planned for March, April, and May will have options for extensions. This prioritizes bed availability for families with children who are currently in shelter and aims to minimize disruption for the duration of the school year while continuing to support new arrivals on their paths to stability and self-sufficiency. Families with children who are in shelter as of today will not have to exit until the end of their available extensions, nor will they be required to go to the Landing Zone to request shelter placement.

Second, additional precautions were added to address the emerging measles cases. The Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) confirmed 12 measles cases (2 community cases and 10 in shelters) and continues to coordinate a comprehensive, city-wide response to the first measles cases in Chicago in five years during a period when the United States is experiencing a resurgence of measles with 17 states reporting confirmed cases. A team from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) arrived in Chicago Tuesday to support the efforts to mitigate transmission of the highly infectious virus. To ensure the safety of shelter residents and all Chicagoans, two additional policies were added, and one existing policy was clarified in the existing Limited Stay Extension Policy.

- **Vaccination Requirement:** Measles is a highly transmissible infectious disease effectively controlled by vaccination. To prevent the avoidable spread of infectious disease, the City will require that all residents who enter or stay in a City-leased, owned and operated shelter system be vaccinated for Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) or Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Varicella (MMRV) depending on their age as directed by public health officials (unless medically contraindicated). Additional vaccines may be added as deemed necessary by the Commissioner of CDPH. As of March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, new arrivals at the Landing Zone who fail to report their vaccination status or refuse voluntary vaccination will not be placed in a shelter.
- **Medical Assessment Pause:** DFSS may pause the Limited Stay Policy at shelter sites with known or suspected exposure so that CDPH can conduct individual assessments. The pause for selected sites will last until CDPH assesses immunity status and reaches 95% vaccination rate at all sites. If a confirmed case is found at any shelter, the medical quarantine extension will be triggered for all non-immune shelter residents. This medical assessment pause currently applies to six shelters



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due to possible secondary exposure to conduct vaccination and vaccination verification.

- **Medical Quarantine:** Although medical quarantine is already incorporated in the original Limited Stay Extension Policy, the language has been refined in response to emerging measles cases. Operationally, this means all exposed, non-immune residents remain in shelter through their quarantine period, plus an additional 7 days, as long as they get vaccinated and comply with quarantine requirements. Residents without immunity at a quarantined site, including those in isolation rooms off-site, qualify for this medical quarantine extension for the duration of their 21-day quarantine period plus 7 transition days for case management.

The 60-day shelter stay limit was originally announced in the wake of the State's announcement of increased investment in resettlement services and case management. Due to inclement weather and the delay in fully staffing case managers at every shelter, shelter stay limits had previously been extended by 60 days for the 5,673 individuals who were originally scheduled to exit shelter beginning on January 16th. The new exit dates for this group may be adjusted depending on if they meet eligibility for new extensions and will be added on to their current exit date. As has been the process since November 2023, any new shelter residents will receive a 60-day notice upon entering the shelter system.

The updates today reflect the City of Chicago's commitment to prioritizing the health of all Chicagoans.

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