



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

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

**CITY OF CHICAGO LAUNCHES CITY-WIDE HEALTHY VENDING CHALLENGE**

*Initiative Calls on Businesses and Organizations Across Chicago to Provide Healthy Choices  
in Vending Machines*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) Commissioner Bechara Choucair, M.D., today launched a city-wide Healthy Vending Challenge, calling on Chicago's businesses and organizations to follow the City's lead in providing healthy options in food and beverage vending machines. Last month, new healthy vending machines started rolling out in all City-owned buildings across Chicago, as part of an initiative unveiled by Mayor Emanuel to ensure City employees and the visiting public are provided with predominantly healthy snack and beverage options at these locations.

"Once in place, the City's new vending machines will make it easier than ever before for City employees and the public to make healthier choices," said Mayor Emanuel. "We are challenging all of Chicago's businesses and organizations to do the same for their employees and visitors, so that people across the city have greater ability to make healthy choices."

The Healthy Vending Challenge asks organizations to change their current vending offerings to those lower in sugar, salt, and fat in alignment with guidelines based on the American Heart Association's healthy food procurement standards.

"Whether we need a quick snack or a cool drink, we should have healthy options no matter where we are," said Dr. Choucair. "The Healthy Vending Challenge is a way for companies and organizations to provide Chicagoans with healthy options in our busy, everyday lives."

Five large Chicago-based organizations have already indicated their support and their intent to sign on to the Healthy Vending Challenge, representing dozens of vending machines in neighborhoods across the city, providing hundreds of Chicagoans with access to healthier food and beverage options. These organizations are: Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, the Greater

121 NORTH LASALLE STREET, ROOM 507, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602

Chicago Food Depository, the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago, Vanguard Health System and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois.

“Providing healthier options for members and families is a priority for YMCAs across Chicago,” said Richard Malone, President and CEO of the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago. “This is why we’re happy to take the Healthy Vending Challenge and are working to provide people with more options in all our locations.”

Bringing healthier vending to organizations supports a comprehensive strategy to promote healthy lifestyles in Chicago. “It is important to create healthy environments all across the city, and healthy vending is a part of that,” said Dr. Adam Becker, Executive Director of CLOCC. “Vending machines can be found in a variety of places – workplaces, schools, hospitals, and more – and all of these places have the opportunity to be healthy places.”

The Challenge builds on the City’s new healthy vending policy, unveiled by Mayor Rahm Emanuel in November 2012 and approved by the Chicago City Council in December, whereby at least 75 percent of all food and beverages in every machine in City-owned buildings will include healthier, affordable options for city employees and visitors. Forty percent of these new healthy vending machines have been installed, with 100 percent to be installed over the next couple of months. Additionally, the City has 100 percent healthy vending in parks and schools and numerous programs to combat obesity in our neighborhoods.

This initiative adds to the steps Mayor Emanuel has taken to improve wellness in Chicago. This past fall, the Mayor announced the Park Families Wellness Initiative, which will feature affordable nutrition education and active lifestyle programs for Chicago communities who are most in need of wellness services. CPS recently announced a new Healthy Snack and Wellness Policy for students in all of its schools across the city. Chicago Lives Healthy, the nation’s largest municipal wellness program, launched this year and has more than 38,000 registrants. And Mayor Emanuel has also led an effort to combat food deserts and has worked with national retailers to ensure access to fresh fruits and vegetables is available in every part of Chicago.

The Healthy Vending Challenge was created as part of Healthy Places, a partnership between the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC). Healthy Places promotes health where Chicagoans live, work, learn, and play and is an initiative of Healthy Chicago, the city’s ambitious public health agenda dedicated to making Chicago the healthiest city in the nation.

Interested organizations can visit the Healthy Chicago or Healthy Places website to download *A Blueprint for Healthier Vending* [here](#). This toolkit contains all of the information needed to participate. Once they commit to adopting a healthy vending policy, organizations can email [healthychicago@cityofchicago.org](mailto:healthychicago@cityofchicago.org) to indicate their commitment. Once organizations have met the

requirements of the Challenge, they will receive an official certificate to document their success, a decal to share their success on their organization's website, and recognition on the City of Chicago website.

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