



**For Immediate Release**

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**CITY JOINS ALDERMEN CAPPLEMAN, OSTERMAN AND 10 SERVICE PROVIDERS IN HOSTING  
RESIDENT SERVICE FAIR TO HELP CHICAGO'S HOMELESS COMMUNITY**

*New study shows four percent decrease in homelessness during 2016-2017*

The Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) today joined Alderman James Cappleman and Alderman Harry Osterman in hosting a resident service fair to help connect homeless residents living at Lawrence and Lake Shore Drive to services in the area. Nearly 10 service providers from emergency shelters, mental health and substance abuse treatment centers and medical care assistance were on-site to engage with individuals looking to access resources.

"Under the leadership of Mayor Emanuel, the City of Chicago has made important progress in improving outreach and service to homeless residents, and today's service fair is an example of that," said DFSS Commissioner Lisa Morrison Butler. "But there is more work that needs to be done and we are constantly improving our methodology for determining how many homeless residents we have in Chicago to ensure we are delivering the services they need."

Participating organizations include: Salvation Army, Sarah's Circle, Northside Housing, McDermott Haymarket, Inspiration Corporation, Thresholds, Cornerstone and Catholic Charities. They provided information on drop-in and shelter options, as well as treatment centers and workforce opportunities and vans will be on-site to transport individuals who wish to seek assistance or shelter while at the service fair. Salvation Army, who has been a long-standing partner, will donate meals to those participating in the fair.

"Every day The Salvation Army provides help and hope to thousands of Chicagoans struggling to find a home, a job, food or fight addiction," said Colonel Charles Smith. "Thanks to our strong partnership with the City of Chicago, we are able to serve the most vulnerable in their time of need."

"Whether you are a senior, a school age child or someone experiencing homelessness, everyone in Chicago deserves access to services and that is what the City is here today to provide," said Alderman James Cappleman. "I want to commend the Department of Family and Support Service

and all of our partners who have gathered to ensure this vulnerable community has the supportive services they need to live happier, healthier lives.”

The resident service fair builds on what the City has already been doing in the Uptown area through the Chronic Homeless Pilot, which has housed 55 individuals. DFSS has met with and worked with numerous partners and delegate agencies for the past 18 months to engage individuals who live at the viaducts to provide continuous outreach and engagement services to homeless residents.

"I appreciate the coordinated efforts by the City that have resulted in 55 formerly homeless individuals from our community that have successfully transitioned into housing. Given the ongoing homelessness crisis around our city, it is critical that we do more to create affordable housing units," said Alderman Harry Osterman.

The City also announced today that Chicago has experienced a nearly four percent decrease in homelessness over last year. The data comes out of the City's annual [Homeless Point-in-Time \(PIT\) Count and Survey Report](#). Mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), the PIT count requires municipalities and homeless service providers to demonstrate their needs every two years.

The PIT revealed a decrease in the total number of homeless during 2016-2017. The survey accounted for 5,657 homeless residents in January, down from 5,889 last year. Overall the total 4% decrease from the previous year marks the lowest observed count of homeless individuals citywide in over a decade.

With overall homeless down over the last year, the 2017 PIT demonstrates progress toward the city's broader goal of reducing homelessness through success with the following subgroups:

- Veteran homelessness has decreased for the second consecutive year and by 10 percent since last year;
- Unaccompanied youth has dropped by 10 percent;
- Families and families with children living in shelters has decreased 13 percent (from 661 in 2016 to 575 in 2017), while reaching the city's lowest number of families in shelters since 2007.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires municipalities and homeless service providers to demonstrate their needs on a biennial basis by reporting how many individuals experience homelessness on a given night. DFSS conducts the PIT each year to monitor the number of residents experiencing both unsheltered and sheltered homelessness to inform allocation of services and outreach, even though not required by HUD.

DFSS leads the City's PIT count in coordination with local governmental entities, local policy and advocacy groups, service providers, other essential partners, and over 500 volunteers and staff.

A recent study by the Center for Urban Research and Learning at Loyola University Chicago found that approaches like the Chronic Homeless Pilot are also assisting in the decrease in

homelessness. In the last year, the unsheltered homeless population in Uptown has decreased by 42%, from 73 in 2016 to 31 in 2017. These decreases were also seen city-wide.

The City also remains committed to the Plan to End Homeless 2.0 and will continue to make strides to end homelessness by working with the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless 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. Also, Mayor Emanuel recently broke ground on the Chicago's first emergency intake center. The Salvation Army 'Shield of Hope' Center will incorporate best practices in homeless services to provide homeless families awaiting long-term shelter with the resources and support they need to transition to permanent housing.

Since Mayor Emanuel took office in 2011, the City of Chicago has increased funding for homeless initiatives by more than 10 percent and invested in new programs targeting veterans, youth, families, and victims of domestic violence. To ensure that the City has enough affordable housing to support families and residents around the city, Mayor Emanuel has overseen the following improvements:

- Passed the Affordable Requirements Ordinance (ARO) to create approximately 1,200 units of housing and generate \$90 million in funding by 2020;
- Worked with housing advocates to pass the Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Preservation ordinance to retain 700 SRO units in gentrifying areas by the end of 2018;
- Leveraged new revenue through a \$2 million annual surcharge from the house sharing industry to serve as many as 300 homeless individuals with housing and wraparound services each year
- Provided housing for 100 families and we will focus our efforts on homeless families at Chicago Public Schools with the highest number of homeless students

For more information or to access services, call 311.

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**About DFSS:**

DFSS' Homeless Outreach Prevention (HOP) teams work daily with residents experiencing street homelessness and chronic homelessness to assist them in securing support services and housing. Through partnerships with delegate agencies, DFSS houses more than 3,000 people per night through a citywide network of overnight shelters and interim housing.