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MAYOR EMANUEL DOUBLES "DAY FOR CHANGE" HOMELESS PILOT PROGRAM

Based on success of pilot, City of Chicago to double down on program to provide more than 550 homeless with day labor opportunities

Mayor Emanuel announced today that the City of Chicago will make the Day for Change pilot a permanent fixture this year in its ongoing efforts to address homelessness. By doubling the program's capacity, the city is seeking to reach more homeless individuals through a unique program that provides an opportunity to engage in day labor and wraparound services. The Day for Change pilot served twice as many people as it was intended to, and will now seek to serve at least 550 unique individuals by expanding the program's reach to cover more areas of the city.

Funded by the house sharing surcharge enacted last year by Mayor Emanuel, the pilot program was created to serve 100 individuals through a unique opportunity to earn a modest wage.

"To ensure every Chicagoan has an opportunity for steady housing and employment, we are investing in programs that work," said Mayor Emanuel. "Expanding the footprint of the Day for Change program helps homeless residents get not only a paycheck and services, but the chance to get their lives back on track."

Over the course of less than three months, the pilot has helped 225 individuals either homeless or panhandling to earn roughly \$12,000-15,000 combined in wages. This, in turn, has helped the City of Chicago to better understand the unique issues and needs of the hard to reach population, and will apply this to its citywide strategy to reduce homelessness.

Based on this success, the city will expand the geographic footprint of the program to serve the Central Business District. While the pilot focused on daily recruitment of homeless and panhandler populations primarily at the viaducts on the north side along Lake Shore Drive, the program will expand its focus to the Michigan and State Street corridors. This will deliver landscaping, cleaning, and other improvements to these high-trafficked corridors through the assignment of participants to temporary work opportunities.

“We are working to create a system where cases of homelessness are rare, brief, and non-recurring,” said Lisa Morrison Butler, Commissioner of the Department of Family and Support Services. “The Day for Change program provides us a unique opportunity to better gauge the needs of our most hard to reach residents, and we will apply these lessons to improve our broader citywide homeless strategy.”

The program is operated through a city partnership with A Safe Haven Foundation, which operates two work vans to do daily work recruitment at the viaducts and underpasses, where a concentrated population of homeless and panhandlers reside. Program participants will be eligible to earn up to \$600 annually, and will receive meals, transportation, behavioral health services, job preparedness training, healthcare screenings, hygiene care, and interim housing.

“Thanks to the support of Mayor Emanuel and the City of Chicago, the Day of Change provides an unmatched opportunity stepping stone for homeless to get off the streets and into housing, social services, work and stability,” said Neli Rowland, President of A Safe Haven. “We have seen incredible success through the pilot, with stories of lives restored emerging as a result of our collective efforts.”

A Day for Change, which began in September 2016, is modeled after a similar program in Albuquerque. Since the program launched in Chicago, the city has helped a handful of individuals to gain housing, and several more with taking the first steps to being a workforce development program. Furthermore, the engagement provided by the pilot enabled the city to add more individuals to its One List—which supports planning for service delivery, and ultimately helps us better understand the needs of this vulnerable population so that we can get them into permanent housing and back on their feet.

This expansion of Day for Change is in line with other innovative city investments to reduce homelessness, including: an unprecedented surcharge on the house sharing industry, making Chicago among the first municipalities to leverage a dedicated funding source for homelessness; participation in the national EVHI campaign allowing us to house more than 3,000 homeless Veterans to date; and the creation of the Citywide Task Force to Reduce Homelessness, which has, among many other issues, been charged with both addressing chronic homelessness citywide.

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