



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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**CITY OF CHICAGO LAUNCHES 'YOUR HOME IS SOMEONE'S WORKPLACE' – A
CAMPAIGN TO SUPPORT ALL CARE WORKERS**

CHICAGO — As a key pillar of her anti-poverty agenda, Mayor Lightfoot today launched the *Your Home is Someone's Workplace* campaign to elevate care workers (e.g. house cleaners, nannies, and home healthcare aides) as working professionals deserving of better working conditions, dignity and respect. The mayor's anti-poverty agenda – which includes growing quality jobs, improving people's income, building wealth and closing racial health disparities – the campaign serves as a call to action to employers of care workers to commit to four actions: 1) pay a fair, living wage; 2) provide paid time off; 3) have written expectations that are clear and mutually agreed upon; and 4) maintain safe workplaces.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us the undeniable value of those who care for our homes and our families,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “We can no longer accept the devaluation of care workers who are mostly women of color in our City. Since day one, I have committed to addressing economic hardship and poverty experienced by Chicagoans. I grew up watching my mother as a home healthcare aide and saw her tireless work met with minimal pay and no benefits. We must create safe workplaces for everyone, regardless of where that work takes place. Today, in the face of a crushing need for care and care work, we begin an effort that will improve the lives of care workers, and thereby improve all of our lives.”

There are over 56,000 care workers in the Chicagoland area who are predominantly women of color and immigrants. Though they are covered by the City's Minimum Wage Ordinance and must be paid at least \$13.50 per hour as of July 1, 2020, many care workers historically are paid below minimum wage. And, although the City's Paid Sick Leave Ordinance covers many care workers, most are not provided health insurance or paid time off, which hinders their ability to provide for themselves and their own families. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, home healthcare aides is the fastest growing industry nationally – expected to grow by 208% by 2028.



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"Millions of domestic workers go to work every day taking care of our homes and our loved ones. Yet most domestic workers are facing the devastating loss of income or worse, working in unsafe environments. Now more than ever, we can see that care is a collective responsibility that needs a collective solution. Change starts at home with employers playing an important role in ensuring the dignity and respect for domestic workers," said Ai-jen Poo, Director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance.

Through the *Your Home is Someone's Workplace* campaign, employers and care workers can find information, resources, and guidelines on creating safe workplaces at chi.gov/care. As part of the campaign, the City also released a PSA recognizing the invaluable contributions care workers provide for homes and families. Also, the City will be canvassing Chicago Park District sites and Chicago Public Library branches with a poster to highlight awareness around the rights of care workers. The campaign was created in partnership with workers and community-based partners including the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA), Latino Union of Chicago, Arise Chicago, Shriver Center, the Alliance of Filipinos for Immigrants and Empowerment (AFIRE), and SEIU Healthcare.

"At a time when the families of domestic workers are emotionally and financially devastated by a lack of work, there is now new hope. The City of Chicago and Mayor Lightfoot are standing with a united voice to support domestic workers," said Martinez Sanchez, care worker and member of Arise Chicago.

According to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, domestic work remains the top industry where labor trafficking happens. Thus, in addition to the *Your Home is Someone's Workplace* campaign and the PSA, and in order to dig deeper and develop solutions to address root causes of the exploitation and, in some cases, human trafficking experienced by care workers, Mayor Lightfoot today also announced a 'Protecting Workers Working Group' that brings agencies at the all levels of government together with community-based organizations to advise the City on how to address industries, such as domestic work, that are ripe for exploitation and human trafficking. The working group will be co-chaired by the Mayor's Office and the City's Office of Labor Standards (OLS), which operates within the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP).

"All Chicago's workers deserve workforce practices that enhance equity, address wage gaps and protect against mistreatment," said Andrew Fox, Director of the Office of Labor Standards. "Care workers in particular are vulnerable to exploitation, and we will continue to fight to uphold and protect their rights."



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Mayor Lightfoot urges every household that employs a care worker to visit the campaign's [website](#), share the PSA with friends and family, and begin to see themselves as employers. The City is also seeking input via a short [survey](#) from households that employ care workers to better understand the industry locally and inform future policy decisions.

“I am proud to be a domestic worker. Domestic workers are a vital part of our society and economy. We are a lifeline to families so they can work. We feel encouraged and eager to be working towards more dignified working conditions with the City of Chicago,” said Sally Richmond, care worker and member of AFIRE.

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