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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT JOINS LABOR, MEDICAL AND FEDERAL PARTNERS TO
MARK PROGRESS ON MCCORMICK PLACE ALTERNATE CARE FACILITY**

Completion of phase two of the project brings an additional 1,750 patient rooms in one week, result of expeditious work by hundreds of workers from across the city

CHICAGO—Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today joined Robert Reiter, Jr., President of the Chicago Federation of Labor, Dr. Nick Turkal, Executive Director of McCormick Place Alternate Care Facility, Larita Clark, CEO of the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority (MEPA) to announce the completion of the second phase of work to convert the McCormick Place Campus into a new Alternate Care Facility (ACF). Construction of the McCormick Place ACF has been led by Chicago's trade unions, with over 600 workers spanning eight trades working in unison to deliver 2,250 patient rooms within just under two weeks.

Once operational, the ACF will serve low to moderate acuity patients with COVID-19 and builds on the City's continued efforts to bring relief to local hospitals by creating a system of care to handle the expected rise in cases.

"I want to stress how remarkable it was to put together a robust, unique medical care facility in such a short amount of time and with limited resources," said Mayor Lightfoot. "This facility is poised to be one of the largest in the nation and, the only site with individual negative pressure tents for patients, and this is just another step in our comprehensive strategy to address the COVID-19 healthcare crisis. But this project would not be possible without the exemplary work and coordination between multiple government departments, agencies, our trade unions together, and I want to commend them for their tremendous work here because they have made it possible for us to save many lives."

Phase Two of the project delivered 1,750 additional 10' X 10' patient rooms 43 nursing stations and fully built out support rooms for medical supply storage, pharmacy and housekeeping services – tripling the footprint of the facility. Work on the project began only two weeks ago and has produced a one-of-its-kind care setting ready to aid in the crisis thanks to the fast work and resolve of local labor. In



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a mere two weeks, Chicago's local unions and laborers have worked to complete the following: more than 100 new water lines installed, 1,000 electrical outlets and lines laid, and installment of more than 100 data lines which will make it possible to implement electric records systems to help intake patients safely and quickly.

"I want to applaud the tremendous work that our multiple trade unions have come together to complete in such a short amount of time on this truly unique and important project," said Bob Reiter President of the Chicago Federation of Labor. "Safety is always our top priority on any project, every day, these workers have risked their own health and safety by leaving their families to come here to McCormick Place, and this sacrifice will not be overlooked. Though the tragedy of the COVID-19 pandemic is what made this project necessary, what we have seen happen here is nothing short of a Chicago miracle, and my sincere thanks goes out to all those who made it possible."

Thus far more than 64,000 manhours have gone into the project to make the ACF a reality. The buildout of the McCormick Place facility has included eight trade unions in coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the IL National Guard who have worked in tandem to complete a robust buildout that ensures the facility is fully functional and equipped to accept patients, if hospital capacity becomes scarce. The trade unions included teamsters, electricians, plumbers, carpenters, laborers, operating engineers, and decorators.

In addition to the workers behind the construction of the facility, the city has made considerable progress in training up staff to operate it. Working with its state partners, the City has begun onsite training of 150 medical professionals ready to provide care to patients within the facility. This workforce includes experienced medical personnel drawn from national staffing pools, military and travel healthcare as well as area hospitals with capacity due to procedure cancellations. Announced last week, the administrative team overseen by veteran hospital administrator, Dr. Nick Turkal, will support critical onboarding for personnel working in this unique care setting.

"The astonishing transformation of McCormick Place into a fulsome healthcare facility is a testament to the passionate commitment of the hundreds of talented and dedicated individuals who have been working around the clock to bring this new space to life and make it available for patients in need," said Dr. Turkal. "Now that it's built, our team has been hard at work to monitor the trends of this unpredictable virus, listen to our partners, and ensure our staff are prepared to receive patients whenever they need us."



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The ACF incorporates unique features to provide rapid care for moderate level patients. The Illinois National Guard this week retrieved negative pressure tents to complete the final and third phase buildout of the McCormick Place ACF. These tents will be installed in a separate hall where units of ventilation to ensure the appropriate pressure in the rooms. The McCormick Place ACF will be the only place in the nation to provide patients with individual negative pressure pod-like tents to recover without risk of impacting others.

“The National Guard is a part of the Department of Defense. We are also a reserve force. We fight America’s war,” said Brig. Gen. Richard Neely, Adjutant General, Illinois National Guard. “But as the National Guard, we’re also here for our communities. And right now, across the state and here at McCormick place, we are helping our medical community increase their capability to combat COVID-19. This is one of the most rewarding missions we could possibly have, helping our neighbors in need.”

General construction is being managed by the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority (MPEA) with support from USACE, FEMA, and the Illinois National Guard. While construction is underway, the City will coordinate contracting and procurement to provide wraparound services crucial to the operation, including but not limited to, medical supplies, equipment, engineering, janitorial staff, food service, and waste management. The City anticipates hundreds of jobs will be created if the ACF becomes fully operational and is working with construction contractors to conduct direct outreach to local communities, and to incentivize local hiring across new and existing contracts supporting the startup of the ACF.

“The work that has been accomplished here is nothing short of remarkable,” said Larita Clark, CEO of MPEA. “From our house trades that work here all year, to the hundreds of tradesmen, members of the National Guard and Army Corps of Engineers, the collaboration and relentless focus on completing the job is admirable. We are grateful to be able to help fill this need for our community.”

The completion of phase two marks the latest step in bringing an additional 3,000 patient rooms online by the end of the month, providing capacity to address an anticipated surge in hospitalizations around the state related to COVID-19. The new ACF will be one of the largest in the nation and is designed to alleviate the burden on Chicago’s existing health care system. The additional 1,750 patient rooms were constructed over the past week and will be the largest patient space among the halls being converted for the McCormick Place ACF.

For more information and Chicago specific updates on COVID-19, text COVID19 to 78015, email coronavirus@chicago.gov or visit Chicago.gov/coronavirus.