

**STATEMENT FROM THE CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY & SUPPORT SERVICES TO THE  
CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON BUDGET AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

November 9, 2020

Good morning Chairwoman Dowell and the honorable members of the City Council. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the Department of Family and Support Services' budget for year 2021.

I want to thank Mayor Lori Lightfoot for her leadership and commitment to our City's most vulnerable residents. Mayor Lightfoot's investments and prioritization of social services help to ensure that the needs of vulnerable Chicagoans are accounted for and that solutions to those needs are readily available and easy to access.

The Mayor's dedication to youth development positioned One Summer Chicago to be one of the nation's largest youth summer employment programs this year and increased wages for One Summer Chicago participants from \$8 an hour to \$14 an hour. We built on the One Summer Chicago mission of youth empowerment and launched the first-ever Chicago Youth Service Corps of nearly 2,000 young people that dedicated their summer to adding creativity and innovation to our response to COVID-19.

At DFSS, we put residents first and help abridge social disparities in communities across Chicago. We are proud to be the gateway for City social services and take a compassionate approach to navigating the footprint and infrastructure for initiatives like rental assistance, expedited housing, home-delivered meals and senior services, shelter for residents experiencing homelessness, the Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline, early learning and head start, youth services and workforce development for underserved communities and returning citizens.

In partnership with more than 360 community-based delegate agencies, we annually serve approximately 435,000 residents. Many who are faced with economic, social, cultural and behavioral inequalities. The overall health, safety and wellbeing of these individuals and their families is our primary focus – and we do this work diligently and as rapidly as possible.

We will continue to invest in areas that lessen burdens and ignite hope in vulnerable Chicagoans. We will continue to strengthen our networks, train our providers, adhere to best practices and support outcomes-based and fair RFP processes.

As we look to 2021, our goal is to help bring a sense of normalcy to the residents we serve and build a foundation of trust and stability by providing services, uninterrupted and without delay.

Thank you all for your continued support and advocacy for human services.