



Department of Human Services
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**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): Short-term Family Housing
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Services

- **What programs are happening on-site?**

Response: The wrap-around services provided and/or coordinated onsite include emergency housing; linkages to permanent housing programs (e.g. rapid rehousing, targeted affordable housing, and permanent supportive housing); permanent housing search assistance; early childhood screening and liaisons to schools; education, training and employment services; health care and behavioral health care; financial and budget management counseling; and 24 hour social work and security staffing. The program will also partner with community service organizations to provide and/or coordinate services onsite, including health and wellness programs; mentoring and tutoring; and programming and enrichment activities for children and parents. The program will have age-appropriate outdoor and indoor recreational space, study rooms and computer labs, a health and wellness room for health care providers to examine and treat residents (much in the same way that the Hoya Clinic operates at DC General), space for enrichment programming, case management services and social service provision, and a dining room where meals will be provided three times daily. The program will also provide families with private living quarters with refrigerators and access to other food storage and preparation spaces as well as laundry facilities onsite.

- **What programs will be offsite?**

Response: Offsite programs include connections to employment, training and education services (including linkages to the TANF Employment Program), childcare, and primary health care. Some services are provided both onsite and offsite, such as behavioral health care, housing assistance, and case management services.

- **Why will childcare be offsite?**

Response: Offsite childcare facilitates easier transitions for families back into permanent housing, and connects families with experienced high-quality early learning centers. Short-term family housing offers a balance of on-site programs, as well as off-site, community-based programs. Connecting families to off-site programs is important as family involvement in off-site programs can continue after exiting emergency shelter, thus easing the family's transition to permanent housing in the community. The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports families with access to subsidized childcare in partnership with the Office of the State Superintendent for Education (OSSE). Families are assisted with access to existing high-quality early childhood programs such as Head Start, Early Head Start, and the Early Learning Quality Improvement Network (QIN).

- **Do we know who will provide services at the sites?**

Response: No, not at this time. The service provider will be selected through a competitive contract process. The Department of Human Services will issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the provision of services for Short-term Family Housing programs. A Technical Panel will score proposals based on a number of factors including past experience and responsiveness to the needs of the programs. The most competitive proposal will be awarded the contract. This competitive contracting process will occur closer to the time when the construction of the facility is complete.

- **Will there be any city staff working at the site?**
Response: Competitively selected homeless service providers provide services at most of District-funded homeless service programs. District government plays an oversight role.
- **How will families move to permanent housing?**
Response: In fiscal year 2016, nearly 1,250 families in the District exited emergency shelter. Families work with their case managers on individual housing plans to overcome barriers to housing (such as active rental debt, eviction history and poor credit) and to obtain permanent housing that is suitable to their family's needs. Eligible families also have access to permanent housing resources such as rapid rehousing, targeted affordable housing, and permanent supportive housing.
- **How is the city dealing with the lack of options for affordable housing?**
Mayor Bowser has invested \$200 million in affordable housing over the last two fiscal years (FY17 and FY16), and she has committed to invest \$100 million in affordable housing for every year of her Administration. In addition, over the last two years the Mayor and Council have made unprecedented investments in resources that are proven to end homelessness (rapid rehousing, targeted affordable housing, and permanent supportive housing) amounting to more than \$60 million in new resources.

New Neighbors

- **What is the typical family background and composition?**
Response: Of the families residing at DC General, approximately 80 percent previously lived with family or friends, approximately 75 percent are single parent households, and approximately 43 percent are headed by transition-aged youth (aged 18 to 24 years old). *From slide 2 of the following presentation:*
<http://mayor.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/mayoromb/publication/attachments/Ward-1-ANC1B-Economic-Development-Committee.pdf>
- **How many families and persons will live in each site?**
Response: The Homeless Shelter Replacement Act of 2016 legislated the number of units at each Short-term Family Housing site. The largest site will have 50 units. The average family size for families experiencing homelessness is approximately 2.5 persons per family. That means roughly 125 people will be living at a 50-unit site.
- **What is the age range of the children who will reside at the site?**
Response: Of the children residing at DC General, approximately 41 percent are infant/toddler aged, 48 percent are Elementary School aged, and approximately 11 percent are Middle or High School aged. The number and ages of children may change over time, depending on the composition of families.
- **What will the impact be on school enrollment and funding?**
Response: Of the school-aged children residing at DC General near the end of the 2016 school year, less than 10 percent attended the in-boundary elementary school. Students at DC General attend more than 50 schools across every Ward of the District. Although data shows

that the vast majority of students at DC General do not choose to attend the in-boundary schools, the District intends to accommodate any increase in school enrollment as it would for any school experiencing an increase in enrollment. Additionally, as the short-term family housing programs are not scheduled to open until late 2018 and 2019, there is additional time to assess any potential impact on enrollment and plan accordingly. Typically, 9-10 months prior to any given school year, DC Public Schools (DCPS) begins to work on school enrollment projections. This involves working with each school leader and community on determining what the expected student population will be the upcoming school year. During this time, community factors like new housing and school openings/closings will be considered as it relates to the impact on enrollment. DCPS works closely with the Department of General Services (DGS) and other relevant agencies to ensure the space and programs are ready for students, including making any necessary facility accommodations for an increase in enrollment. In addition, DCPS continuously monitors enrollment increases with respect to staffing needs to ensure they provide additional staff allocations on an ongoing basis should a school experience an unexpected influx of students at any point during the year.

Building and Neighborhood

- **Who are the architects?**

The site architects for the new sites are: Ward 3 - Ayers Saint Gross; Ward 5 - R. McGhee & Associates; and Ward 6 – Studio 27.

- **What will be the process for input on the design?**

Response: There is a two part process for community input on exterior design. Ward-based Advisory Teams have already hosted a listening session with the project architect. Advisory Team members were encouraged to seek input from the community groups that they represent and present these ideas and feedback directly to the architects. The District will host community-wide meetings in mid-December to seek feedback and input from the community.

- **What is the impact on traffic during operations once it's open?**

Response: The impact on traffic will be assessed as part of the Board of Zoning Adjustments review process, and presented to both the Advisory Team and the ANC. Both the architectural firm and the District Department of Transportation will conduct separate transportation analyses and submit them as part of the formal case record that will be available on the Office of Zoning website.

- **What will be the impact on parking?**

Response: Parking will be assessed as part of the traffic assessment (see above). Furthermore, the vast majority of families receiving short-term housing services does not have cars and utilize public transportation as do many District residents. For on-street parking, the current zoned parking regulations apply.

- **What is the plan for facility maintenance long-term?**

Response: District-owned facilities are maintained and secured by the Department of General Services (DGS). DGS will either use a Consolidated Maintenance Contract (CMC) or will use employees in the Facilities Maintenance Division (FMD) of DGS to manage the facility

maintenance requirements, which will include interior, exterior and landscaping elements. Additional maintenance and security will also be provided through the service provider contracts (the homeless service provider that will manage the short-term housing program). The service provider will be chosen through a competitive process that will be conducted before the facility is opened. Furthermore, Good Neighbor Agreements which will be developed between the Advisory Team and the service provider will ensure that the community has input on maintenance commitments and expectations.

- **What about safety?**

Response: Short-term Family Housing will have security personnel on site, as well as social service staff, around the clock. In addition, coinciding with the contracting for Short-term Family Housing service provision at each site, the Advisory Team and the service provider will develop a “good neighbor agreement,” which will be an agreement between the Short-term Family Housing service provider and the Advisory Team on behalf of the community to set forth expectations and commitments regarding exterior facility and landscape maintenance, safety and security, mutual codes of conduct and respect, and clear and expedient process for communication and problem solving. The agreement will also set forth clear expectations for ongoing Advisory Team engagement and coordination.

Getting Involved

- **Are there opportunities for the community to volunteer?**

Response: Yes, there will be opportunities to volunteer. Volunteer opportunities will be available through the contracted service provider as well as with the community-based partners that will provide programs and services to families, such as tutoring, mentoring, health and wellness and enrichment programs for children and families. We also encourage community members to continue to take advantage of volunteer opportunities that exist now to support families and individuals experiencing homelessness. The Homeless Children’s Playtime Project and DC Central Kitchen both provide services in our continuum of care.

- **How can we get more information?**

Response: Each site’s Advisory Team ensures that there is a representative voice from the surrounding community during the development phase of Short-term Family Housing facilities. The Advisory Team members will both coordinate community feedback and input from their representative groups as well as share information with those same groups. In addition, minutes and presentations from the Advisory Team meetings are posted on the following website: www.mayor.dc.gov/homewarddc.