



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 14, 2015
CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-295

CITY ANNOUNCES COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF HOMELESS SERVICE AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS

Human Resources Commissioner Banks, First Deputy Mayor Anthony Shorris to oversee review, in coordination with Mayor's Office of Operations

Current organizational structure more than two decades old

Plan will streamline and modernize homeless agencies' organizational structure to better prevent, reduce and manage homelessness

NEW YORK—With major new City initiatives underway across all agencies to combat homelessness – and an organizational structure for homeless services that is more than 20 years old – Mayor Bill de Blasio today announced a comprehensive operational review of New York City's homeless programs to ensure services are delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible in order to prevent, reduce and manage homelessness.

The review, which will begin immediately, will be led by Human Resources Administration Commissioner Steve Banks, acting in his capacity as the administrator of the social services district for New York City, and First Deputy Mayor Anthony Shorris, with the Mayor's Office of Operations supporting the effort. In light of his announcement that he will pursue other opportunities, Commissioner Taylor will move to City Hall in an advisory role to support the re-organization effort, effective January 1, 2016. Commissioner Banks will oversee the Department of Homeless Services as well as the Human Resources Administration during the review period.

“Tackling homelessness is an urgent priority – and that’s why we have invested additional resources and launched innovative new initiatives to place homeless individuals and families into permanent housing, and to prevent homelessness in the first place,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “We must also guarantee that the organizational structure is best positioned to deliver these services and operate these programs. Commissioner Banks and First Deputy Mayor Shorris will lead a comprehensive review of our existing systems, which are more than 20 years old, so we can maximize our ability to serve homeless New Yorkers and the entire city. Their years of experience and dedication, as well as their knowledge of these issues, make them well-suited to lead this endeavor.”

Mayor de Blasio continued, “I also wish to share a personal note of deep gratitude and appreciation to Commissioner Taylor for his tireless work and great effort over the past two years. In great part because of his commitment and hard work, we were able to help over 22,000 people move out of shelter and into permanent housing, lay the groundwork for the production of 15,000 new units of supportive housing, and serve over 91,000 people with preventative services such as legal help and rent assistance. There is no question that our current homeless problem would be far more pronounced without these reforms, and Gilbert has been essential

to their implementation. I wish him nothing but the best as he pursues new challenges, and I remain grateful for his service to our City and appreciative that we will benefit from his expertise for the next few weeks.”

Changes in structure will begin almost immediately. Services for homeless individuals have historically been delivered through a number of agencies, especially the Department of Homeless Services and the Human Resources Administration. Areas that will likely receive specific examination for improvement and modernization include how contracting with non-profits is performed in the agencies; the sharing of functions across agencies; the coordination of client service delivery, and program development efforts. Final results and recommendations of the review will be completed in early 2016.

The City’s work to combat homelessness over the past two years includes:

- Creating and implementing new rental assistance programs and exit pathways helping over 22,000 individuals exit shelter.
- Creating the City’s first-ever multi-agency program to systematically inspect and repair shelters – the Shelter Repair Squad – making over 12,000 repairs at shelters.
- Expanding homelessness prevention services, such as legal services and emergency rental assistance to keep families and individuals housed, serving over 91,000 individuals.
- Expanding outreach to homeless individuals on our streets and subways, making over 2,500 placements to shelter from streets and subways.
- Cleaning up 26 encampments and putting a system in place to monitor and clean up new encampments as they pop up.
- Creating *Open Doors*, a program opening 500 new Safe Haven beds in houses of worship for individuals rejecting traditional shelter, in addition to 674 existing beds.
- Launching the City’s largest supportive housing program, creating over 15,000 supportive housing units over the next 15 years.

###