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**NEW YORK CITY ANNOUNCES EXTENSION OF FREE INTERNET-ENABLED
TABLETS FOR 10,000 OLDER ADULTS IN NYCHA**

Following last spring's delivery of 10,000 internet-enabled tablets to older NYCHA residents, the City is extending free internet service on those devices for an additional year

NEW YORK—Following last spring's delivery of 10,000 internet-enabled tablets to older adults living alone in 288 NYCHA housing developments across all five boroughs, Mayor Bill de Blasio, Chief Technology Officer John Paul Farmer, DFTA Commissioner Lorraine Cortez-Vasquez and NYCHA Chair and CEO Greg Russ today announced the City is extending free internet service on those devices for an additional year. During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic in New York City last spring, New York City provided 10,000 tablets to older New Yorkers who live alone in New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments.

"COVID-19 has only reinforced how essential Internet access is, whether it is used to connect to loved ones, school or a doctor," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "Providing 10,000 NYCHA seniors with free access to the Internet for another year will be transformative for their lives and help them stay connected in the digital age."

NYCHA residents who are aged 62 and older and living alone were prioritized for tablets as well as wrap around support services from the Department for the Aging and Older Adults Technology Services (also known as Senior Planet) to help older NYCHA residents in setting up and learning to operate their tablet, access free classes and resources, and engage with friends and family. With this extension, NYCHA older adults who received the tablets will be able to enjoy free internet connectivity and support services for an additional year. To learn more visit nyc.gov/cto.

"Internet is a necessity, not a luxury," said **Deputy Mayor of Operations Laura Anglin**.

"Connecting older adults to technology resources is critical for their mental health and well-being, especially as they spend more time at home. This partnership between the Chief Technology Officer, Department for the Aging, NYCHA, and Older Adults Technology Services is critical and I'm thrilled to see it continue for another year."

"The past year demonstrated just how critical Internet connectivity is to staying informed, accessing services and learning opportunities, and maintaining social relationships," said **Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development Vicki Been**. "By extending Internet service on these tablets, we're keeping older NYCHA residents engaged and connected to their communities, the city, and beyond."

"The COVID-19 pandemic proved that broadband connectivity is no longer a luxury, but a necessity," said **John Paul Farmer, Chief Technology Officer of the City of New York**. "The internet provides more than access to important digital services such as food delivery and healthcare – it provides connection to family, friends, and community. The extension of this critical program ensures that older New Yorkers will continue to benefit from their newfound digital connectivity."

"An additional year of free internet service and support to NYCHA seniors will be extremely beneficial in this changing landscape by providing continued connectivity with loved ones and access to other resources through the internet," said **NYCHA Chair and CEO Greg Russ**. "In this day and age, it is critical to have access to high-speed internet and we are grateful to the Mayor's office and DFTA for extending this access to some of NYCHA's most vulnerable residents."

"Keeping older adults connected to their loved ones, senior centers, and virtual programs have helped combat social isolation, a serious health and mental health issue for older New Yorkers, particularly during the pandemic. Virtual programming keeps them active and engaged," said **Department for the Aging Commissioner Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez**. "We applaud the Mayor's decision to extend free internet service to older NYCHA residents who received tablets. It will continue to help them stay connected to friends and loved ones, and find support and services online."

"The last year has shown us just how essential internet connections are for older adults. We are thrilled to continue this important partnership with the Mayor's Office of the Chief Technology Officer and the Department for the Aging to support Connected NYCHA for another year," said **Executive Director of Older Adults Technology Services (OATS) from AARP Tom Kamber**. "We look forward to helping additional low-income older NYCHA residents learn the skills required to use their internet-connected devices, and access information and essential services online."

"T-Mobile is proud to partner with the City of New York to keep 10,000 seniors connected with unlimited digital access," said **Mike Katz, EVP, T-Mobile for Business**. "From staying connected to loved ones, to making in-home grocery orders or obtaining medical care through telehealth, this critical connectivity is possible thanks to the commitment of NYCHA."

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