

From: Nicole Cueto (DHS)

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To: Nicole Cueto (DHS)

Subject: PRESS RELEASE - DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES REINFORCES DAYTIME SHELTER ACCESS & PROGRAMING POLICY FOR CLIENTS IN ALL SHELTERS



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#12-15

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES REINFORCES DAYTIME SHELTER ACCESS & PROGRAMING POLICY FOR CLIENTS IN ALL SHELTERS

DHS announces \$16.9 million a year initiative to provide new and enhanced programming for those living in single adult shelters throughout the city

DECEMBER 28, 2015 – In a memo to homeless shelter providers, the Department of Homeless Services is reinforcing existing policy on shelter programming and daytime access for residents in homeless shelters, emphasizing residents should be offered employment, training and other services and cannot be required to leave shelters during the day, administration officials announced today.

The release of the memo, sent to 92 shelter providers by DHS First Deputy Commissioner Lorraine Stephens, is part of the review of the City's homeless services programs that Human Resources Administration Commissioner Steven Banks has initiated at the direction of Mayor de Blasio.

The memo states:

- DHS clients should be offered, and encouraged to participate in, employment, job training, social services and recreational programming during the day and should not be asked to leave shelter during daytime hours.
- All clients must be afforded unrestricted access to recreation rooms, waiting rooms and other common areas within the shelter during the day.
- To maximize opportunities for client engagement, these services, combined with the programming enhancements that many shelters are currently implementing, should be targeted to clients who are onsite during the day.
- Single adult clients should be granted accommodation to stay in their dorms during the day for medical/mental health reasons and other special circumstances.

“In general, our shelter providers are handling programming and daytime access appropriately, but we want to be completely clear in case some providers do not understand our policy,” Banks said.

In addition DHS announced a new investment of \$16.9 million a year to provide new and enhanced programming for those living in single adult shelters throughout the city. The new initiative will allow for increased critical services, including job training, at 39 single adult and adult family DHS facilities.

“The goal is to provide clients in the shelter system the opportunity to acquire the skills that will allow them to leave shelter permanently,” Stephens said.

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"Reducing Homelessness, Improving Lives"

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