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Mayor Marty Walsh announces subsidized housing for 1,000 homeless, at-risk Boston families



Updated: 11:41 PM EDT Mar 30, 2020

BOSTON — Boston Mayor Marty Walsh announced further measures Monday to help protect homeless and at-risk families during the city's coronavirus public health emergency.

Walsh said the Boston Housing Authority and Boston Public Schools are creating a new partnership that will help house 1,000 families with BPS students who are either at risk of displacement or are experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 crisis.

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The Boston Housing Authority will house up to 500 families living in shelters through the state's Leading the Way Home program, a partnership between the BHA and the state network of family shelters in which the BHA issues vouchers to displaced Boston families living in shelters.

The other 500 rental vouchers will be provided to families who are in precarious situations that lack necessary stability or could easily lead to displacement. These families will be served through a direct partnership between the BHA and BPS, in an effort to reach out to the unsheltered homeless population with children enrolled in Boston's schools.

The rental vouchers can be used in the private market to ensure the homeless and at-risk families have a place to live. The first housing placements are expected to begin in May.

"We know anxiety about housing goes beyond monthly payments. Many families have been struggling to find or hold onto housing, before this public health crisis even began," Walsh said in a statement. "Homelessness creates barriers for our students to grow, learn and succeed, and schools being closed presents even more challenges for families experiencing housing insecurity. These vouchers ... will support our students in critical ways and help us get closer to our goal of ending homelessness in Boston."



Boston sports heroes join Mayor Walsh's #RootingForBoston social media campaign

As of Monday, 825 Boston residents have tested positive for COVID-19, which indicates 90 additional positive tests from Tuesday's total.

Walsh said 55 COVID-19 patients in Boston have made full recoveries, while the coronavirus death toll in the city remains at two.

The mayor once again stressed the importance of social distancing during the public health emergency. He said there are no plans in place yet to fine Boston residents who violate social distancing guidelines.

On Sunday, Walsh announced that the city has secured more than 240 additional beds to increase social distancing in existing homeless shelters and to help provide people in need of a home a place to safely quarantine and isolate themselves, which will help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Boston.

"We are fully committed to protecting all of our residents, including those experiencing homelessness, because every life is worth protecting," Walsh said in a statement. "Together with our partners, we have spent the last several years strengthening our ability to protect the health of our homeless population, no matter what challenges come our way. We will continue to ramp up resources as necessary to serve everyone in our city with the care and equity they deserve. I sincerely thank everyone who is doing their part in helping us increase our ability to help those in need."

The City of Boston, with support from Suffolk Construction, built an isolation and quarantine facility with a capacity of 38 beds next to the 112 Southampton Shelter. This site augments the 17 existing beds at the Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program's Barbara McInnis House.



Boston putting zip ties on basketball hoops, taking measures to discourage team sports

[Suffolk University will repurpose a dormitory](#) to provide at least 172 beds, helping reduce congestion and increase social distancing in existing shelters in Boston. This facility will be managed by the Pine Street Inn and the Boston Public Health Commission.

Another 70 beds will be available after The Davis Companies reached out to Walsh's office to temporarily redeploy the site of a former long-term acute care hospital in Brighton that will be ready to open within days. This facility, which will be open within days, will be operated by the Boston Public Health Commission in partnership with Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program.

SHOW TRANSCRIPT

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This golden retriever is delivering groceries to his neighbor who is self-quarantining

Someone get this pup a treat, stat!

HouseBeautiful

Updated: 4:28 PM EDT Mar 30, 2020

Kelly Allen

Colorado Springs, Colo. —



Megan Hiler
@MeganHilerTV

If you watch anything today, make it this. A [#ManitouSprings](#) dog is making deliveries to a self-quarantined neighbor so she doesn't have to risk getting sick ❤️ bit.ly/3bslley



241 8:23 PM - Mar 28, 2020

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On a regular, pre-coronavirus day, we have more than enough reasons to love dogs: their unconditional love, companionship, loyalty, and the ways they make us laugh, to name a few. Unsurprisingly, that's still proven to be true during these times. There's a [dog](#) delivering groceries to his self-quarantined [neighbor](#) who is at high risk of getting sick, and it's just another situation that'll make you want to sprint to a shelter and adopt every animal in there.

Watch the video above from KKTV via CNN.

In Manitou Springs, Colorado, 7-year-old golden retriever Sunny has been helping out his neighbor Renee Hellman, according to KKTV 11 News. Sunny and his owner Karen Eveleth

have lived next to Hellman for more than a decade. Hellman's health issues and reliance on oxygen to breathe put her at high risk for getting sick from coronavirus, so Eveleth and her pup teamed up to get groceries for her. It's simple: Sunny is in charge of retrieving Hellman's grocery list, Eveleth buys the groceries, then Sunny delivers them all.

"Little things like Sunny coming over to visit is nice, and it makes you feel good," Hellman told KKTV 11 News. "It's a way of communicating."

The dynamic neighbor-pet duo has been helping Hellman with her groceries for weeks now. Eveleth hopes their act of kindness will make people smile. "Anybody can do something small, that can be so helpful," Eveleth told KKTV 11 News.

