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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**\*\*\* Press Release \*\*\***

**State of Emergency**

***Jersey City Protecting Most Needy: Expanding Free Showers and Food Services amid Covid-19 State of Emergency***

**Jersey City – Mayor Steven M. Fulop and health officials** announced today, the city is increasing humanitarian efforts during the Coronavirus pandemic by expanding life-saving services for the homeless - including the reopening of free public showers, supplying meals and personal hygiene kits to support them, while also assisting the county to secure temporary housing for the homeless to self-quarantine.

“We have witnessed how COVID-19 has had a devastating impact around the world on all of us, but when you think of those who have the least in society, they are even more vulnerable during this crisis,” **Mayor Fulop** said. “We all are pulling together to normalize our lives in this unprecedented challenge of our times, but the only way we will succeed is if we look out for those who need help the most, and leave no one behind.”

The city’s Health and Human Services (HHS) Department is working in conjunction with Hudson County officials to secure three local hotels as temporary housing for chronic homeless in Jersey City to assist them in self-quarantine, and also as an isolation setting for those who have tested positive for the deadly Covid-19 virus.

The sheltering completes the life-saving package engineered by the city, as it also unveils the expansion of its popular shower services for the homeless in Journal Square that successfully launched in November of last year. As personal hygiene is a large factor in reducing the risk of spreading COVID-19, the showers are now reopened from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m., Monday through Friday and each user receives a personal hygiene kit to further these efforts.

“We’ve been working with Hudson County officials to come up with a comprehensive plan, providing meals ready to eat (MRE’s), hygiene kits and establishing isolation shelters where the homeless can recover if they get sick,” said **HHS Director Stacey Flanagan**, acknowledging that one homeless person has tested positive for Coronavirus in Jersey City. “We are also setting up for nurses to do wellness checks on them as well. Additionally, and it’s very important, that the distribution of the

personal hygiene kits continues because it will help reduce the risk for these individuals, and those they come in contact with in our shelters.”

The showering program began six months ago as a single trailer that allowed for privacy three days a week for the homeless to take showers where a majority of them congregate, in Journal Square. Now, a second trailers has been added, and showers are being provided five days a week with a second site to be determined.

HHS staff working and assisting the homeless at the bath trailers are following strict CDC guidelines, using gloves and all necessary garmenting and equipment to safeguard them from any potential viral exposure. The staff additionally is trained to OSHA standards and each shower is fully and safely cleaned and disinfected after each use.

Anyone who believes they have been infected with the virus or have come into contact with someone infected is urged to contact their health care provider, and can receive further guidance through Jersey City’s hotline: 201 547-5208. All city offices remain open, and are working on an appointment-only system.

**All media inquiries should be directed to Kimberly Scalcione, Press Secretary, at [KScalcione@icnj.org](mailto:KScalcione@icnj.org). ///**