

# Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE July 10, 2020

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT **Transition of Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center Shelter**

## **Summary:**

The purpose of this memo is to update you on the operations at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center at Dallas (KBHCCD) shelter location and outline plans for transition from the site. Each Monday, starting July 13, 2020, guests will be transitioned from the KBHCCD Shelter to the Wyndham Hotel in groups of no more than 50 to have a full closure of the KBHCCD Shelter by August 31, 2020.

Once transitioned to the hotel, guests will receive support services to include testing and medical care, mental health, security and case management. Twenty-four-hour services will be provided by way of OHS Street Outreach. Guests would stay at the Wyndham for no more than 14 days (if negative for COVID-19) or no more than 21 days (if COVID-19 positive) prior to being transitioned to an existing overnight shelter or our Rapid Rehousing Program. The 14-day maximum stay for COVID-19 negative guests will allow for planning for successful transition to final disposition.

Approximately 60 guests from the KBHCCD have been placed on the Housing Priority List with more being added daily. These guests will be prioritized for rapid rehousing services in our Rapid Rehousing Program briefed to City Council on June 17, 2020 and approved on June 24, 2020.

## **Background:**

Since March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the KBHCCD has served as an overflow overnight shelter to provide additional capacity to our Homelessness Response System. The need for additional capacity was created when, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the CDC recommended shelters institute immediate social distancing and approximately 45% of the beds in our shelter network were lost virtually overnight.

Since that time, the staff of OHS and our contracted partners have provided the following services (current as of 6/25):

- 33,000 total overnight stays (3,583 unduplicated)
- 6,000-day service stays since we launched in May (service includes lunches)
- 1,105 new HMIS entries and qualification for housing programs
- 245 registrations for Stimulus checks
- 54 Veterans transferred to housing

DATE July 10, 2020

SUBJECT **Transition of Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center Shelter**

**Current Status:**

The current escalation of community spread of COVID-19, coupled with additional capacity opening up at our overnight shelters, offers the City both the need and ability to rapidly provide testing, isolation, services, and repopulation.

The KBHCCD Shelter remains the only shelter location in the network that is accepting new guests nightly and thus has the highest potential for risk of spread. Staff have taken every precaution available to us to this point and have not experienced wide spread symptoms consistent with COVID-19 spread. However, we have concerns that as cases and spread continue to grow, our set-up of congregate sheltering and services offers a higher risk of negative impacts from COVID-19 than ever before.

Additionally, this transition of guests from the KBHCCD shelter would provide the first large scale testing of a congregate shelter in our City since the outbreak began. This model could easily be replicated at other congregate shelters, as necessary, to contain any future spread and conduct contact tracing.

Finally, OHS Street Outreach Team members have been offering services at the KBHCCD Shelter from its inception. This has led to a decrease in our service delivery to encampment locations which continue to grow. One component of this plan includes a reconstitution of efforts to provide outreach, services, and resolution to our growing encampment issues that are occurring citywide.

**Transition Plan:**

The proposed plan for the transition of the KBHCCD Shelter will include the following components:

**Utilizing Existing Contracts and Relationships for Housing:**

In April, OHS successfully housed 175 guests from the Dallas Life Shelter at the Wyndham Garden North Hotel for a total of 28 days to successfully contain the spread of COVID-19 at that shelter. The staff at the Wyndham Garden North are prepared to support this new operation based on past experience, capacity, and an existing contractual arrangement with the City.

**Utilizing Current Providers for Management at the Site:**

OHS has had a contractual arrangement with Endeavors for shelter management since April. Endeavors staff have developed relationships with our guests and have served admirably during their deployment. We feel utilizing this experienced staff at our Hotel location is critical to the success of this transition. We have already requested a proposal from Endeavors for costs and services to accomplish this effort.

**Transportation and Length of Stay at Hotel:**

Beginning Monday, July 13th, OHS will transition no more than 50 guests (approximately one-quarter of our average population) to the Wyndham Garden Hotel for temporary isolation. Guests would stay at the Wyndham for no more than 14 days (if negative for COVID-19) or no more than 21 days (if COVID-19 positive) prior to being transitioned to

DATE July 10, 2020

SUBJECT **Transition of Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center Shelter**

an existing overnight shelter or our Rapid Rehousing Program. The 14-day maximum stay for COVID-19 negative guests will allow for planning for successful transition to final disposition.

**At no point during the operation will more than 150 guests be served on site at the Wyndham Garden Hotel.** If this requires additional spacing of transportation or additional weeks of operation at the Convention Center, OHS will sustain operations.

**Operations at Hotel:**

Once guests are transitioned to the hotel, the following services will be provided on-site for the length of the duration of this operation:

**Security and EMS:**

Congruent to our past operation at the hotel, the City will coordinate with the City Marshal to have 24-hour on-site security and with Dallas-Fire Rescue for on-site Fire Prevention Officers and an EMS Unit.

**Mental Health:**

The North Texas Behavioral Health Authority will continue to provide mental health services and connections to services by licensed social workers on-site for the duration of the operation. NTBHA has provided these services at the KBHCCD site since opening and at the Wyndham Garden North hotel during the Dallas Life operation.

**Testing and Medical Care:**

OHS will continue our relationship with Parkland Hospital to provide three critical services at the Wyndham Garden North in accordance with the Dallas Life Shelter Operation:

1. Parkland HOMES Staff will conduct testing of all guests within 24 hours of arrival at the site for determination of COVID-19 presence.
2. Parkland HOMES Staff will provide virtual medical visits for any chronic treatments that do not require hospitalization. HOMES Staff have also previously provided medications and prescriptions to guests at the Wyndham Garden North during the Dallas Life Operation.
3. Tests will be processed by the Dallas County Health and Human Services Laboratory with results returned to the OHS Director once completed.

**OHS On-Site Services:**

OHS will maintain a 24-hour presence at the hotel site throughout the duration of the operation.

**Repopulation of Overnight Shelters:**

OHS staff have already begun conversations with our traditional shelter partners on the process for repopulation. All four of our congregate shelters are prepared to support the plan presented by taking back guests that are COVID-19 negative OR are COVID-19 Negative after a 14 day stay in isolation.

DATE July 10, 2020  
SUBJECT **Transition of Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center Shelter**

Immediately, we are aware of up to 150 shelter spaces ready to accept guests back into shelter. As this operation continues, we expect additional spaces to open as shelters are currently increasing overnight and day service capacity.

OHS will provide transportation using existing staff and resources for guests transitioning back into overnight shelter.

Finally, we have already identified 60 guests from the KBHCCD who are on the Housing Priority List with more being added daily. These guests will be prioritized for service in our Rapid Rehousing Program to provide additional long-term housing options outside of the shelter network.

**Next Steps:**

Coordination efforts are currently underway with City of Farmers Branch to intelligently implement this transition and not overwhelm our resources on site. We will continue our work with our overnight shelter partners to repopulate as appropriate. We greatly appreciate your support of this plan and the urgency to conduct this operation given the latest COVID-19 numbers in our City and County.

Please contact me or Kevin Oden, Interim OHS Director, should you have any questions or concerns surrounding this plan and we will make sure they are addressed immediately.



Nadia Chandler Hardy  
Assistant City Manager

c: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager  
Chris Caso, City Attorney (Interim)  
Mark Swann, City Auditor  
Billierae Johnson, City Secretary  
Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge  
Kimberly Bizzor Tolbert, Chief of Staff to the City Manager  
Majed A. Al-Ghafry, Assistant City Manager

Jon Fortune, Assistant City Manager  
Joey Zapata, Assistant City Manager  
Dr. Eric A. Johnson, Chief of Economic Development and Neighborhood Services  
M. Elizabeth Reich, Chief Financial Officer  
Laila Alequresh, Chief Innovation Officer  
M. Elizabeth (Liz) Cedillo-Pereira, Chief of Equity and Inclusion  
Directors and Assistant Directors