"True charity requires courage: let us overcome the fear of getting our hands dirty so as to help those in need."

– Pope Francis

Help us end street homelessness in NYC by Opening Doors to those in need.

New York City takes care of our neighbors. The NYC Department of Homeless Services (DHS) seeks faith institution partners to meet the urgent challenge of sheltering street homeless New Yorkers. Through Opening Doors, faith institutions provide a safe and warm overnight space for unsheltered individuals referred by outreach providers. You can help bring community members off the streets and onto the path to services.

DHS seeks for the Opening Doors program to be mutually beneficial for all parties involved.

Through Opening Doors, faith partners will:

- Be financially compensated.
- Have the opportunity to offer staff jobs to those in their community.
- Support the homeless by providing them beds overnight as well as needed social services.

Financial Compensation:

- Program fee – based on the number of beds and length of time the program is open during the year (Max 19 beds per site.)
- Staff - Security guards, a maintenance worker, and a social service staffer.
- Capital improvements/bonuses – sites may submit space improvement proposals that will enhance the space where the program is being run. For example, a church may ask for assistance in covering fees to purchase a new boiler or refrigerator.
- Insurance – increase in fees affiliated with running the program at the site.
- Utilities – based on utilization of the space for the program.
- Misc. Supplies – cleaning, paper goods, etc.
- Food – to cover costs of breakfast and dinner.
- Beds, linens, towels, pillows – Cleaning costs are covered as well.

What are Opening Doors sites?

- A supportive environment that will invite homeless individuals in for a warm bed and meal.
- Programs can be brought up in places of worship or any other available community space.
- The number of beds offered is at the discretion of the site, up to a mximum 19 beds.
- Potential for serving both men and women.
- Ideally beds to be provided year-round but there may be flexibility for bringing on seasonal sites. The colder months of November-April are the preferred time to bring up seasonal beds.
- Sites will be open minimally overnight. Programs may also choose to remain open 24/7 and provide day time services.
- Showers on site are preferred.
- Homeless individuals will be sent directly from outreach teams who will screen them.
- Outreach teams will support the program by offering trainings to staff who are working on site and conducting visits to meet with homeless individuals.
- Outreach staff will work with homeless individuals on obtaining permanent placement by assisting in the collection of documents, completing housing packages and setting up housing interviews.

"Share your bread with the hungry, and take the poor into your home; when you see the naked, clothe him and do not ignore your own kin"

– Isaiah 58:7
(Haftorah for Yom Kippur)

"If they have some place to rest their heads, it's a first step in beginning to reclaim other aspects of their lives."

-Rev. Debra P. Northern
Minister of Parish Care | Riverside Church.

Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church Respite Bed Site

When Christ said, "Come all who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest," he wasn't only speaking to tithing, affluent, housed individuals. I believe he said Come ALL. Providing a space 365 days a year for 12 men experiencing homelessness in NYC to sleep is our way of saying ALL. Come ALL. And find rest.

-Amanda Hambrick Ashcraft, MDiv
Director of Outreach Ministries,
Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church

"One who sleeps while their neighbor is hungry is not one of us. He who has mercy will be treated with mercy by Allah. Be merciful to those on the earth so that those in the heavens will be merciful to you."

-Prophet Muhammad

"When giving a gift, one should give whatever is needed to whomever needs it; and knowing that someone is in need of something, one should give it even unasked, much more so when asked. Invariably one should give with care, with a serene mind, full of compassion, with words of endearment, congenial speech, and a smile on one's face."

Achariya Dhammapala
(A Treatise on the Spiritual Perfections)

Help us spread knowledge on ways New Yorkers can help end street homelessness:

- Call 311 or use the 311 app to report street home less individuals you see to our street outreach staff. Our outreach teams will arrive within two hours to offer services to those in need, encouraging them to come indoors.
- Host discussions and preach messages on homelessness, on the need for us to show compassion and support for those experiencing homelessness.
- Get to know this population of the sheltered homeless in your community: Invite them to participate in programs at your house of worship. Also ask them what they need.
- Advocate for more state funding for supportive housing.

To learn more contact

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OPENING DOORS

The NYC Department of Homeless Services

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