



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF COOK COUNTY

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TONI PRECKWINKLE
PRESIDENT

April 20, 2020

To whom it may concern,

I'm pleased to inform you that the Cook County Department of Public Health and Cook County Emergency Management and Regional Security have worked to secure hotel space to provide respite housing for first responders in suburban Cook County. For the purposes of this initiative, "first responders" are defined as essential police, fire, and emergency medical service (EMS) personnel employed or contracted by a governmental entity. Eligible first responders are those who experience repeated exposures, live with other high risk individuals (i.e., elderly and/or immune-compromised), and do not have the ability to safely quarantine themselves from other household members; this means not having access to a separate bedroom and bathroom.

Given the limited supply of hotel space, we ask you to help us prioritize workers who may not be able to afford leasing or renting a hotel room. Individuals will be offered housing for 7 day increments at which time the first responder can renew for an additional 7 days. These opportunities will be available to County first responders based upon the availability of housing and only for the duration of the Cook County Department of Public Health order. Durations of an individual stay will be based upon health guidance and will be limited to what is needed to address the immediate threat to public health and safety. Individuals who develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19 will be offered housing in a separate location.

We hope that you will partner with us to ensure your workers may access this resource, and ask that you:

1. Identify first responders at your institution who are high risk, not able to quarantine at home, and do not have the financial resources to obtain lodging elsewhere;
2. Communicate eligibility to those workers through your internal communication processes;
3. Complete the verification form attached to this letter;
4. Submit or have your staff submit the form to covid.intake@cookcountyhhs.org.

Once received, the form will be reviewed and the first responder will be contacted and directed to a hotel in suburban Cook County with available space. Upon arrival, the first responder must present a valid form of employee identification, government identification, and the verification form in order to secure accommodation.

I'd like to convey my sincere gratitude to you and your staff for the incredible work you are doing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sincerely,

Toni Preckwinkle
President, Cook County Board of Commissioners