

CITY OF BALTIMORE GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR



MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary

From: Christopher Shorter, City Administrator

Date: May 25, 2021

Re: **City Council Resolution 21-0028R Informational Hearing – Baltimore’s Plan for our Neighbors Experiencing Homelessness and Residing in Hotels During the Pandemic**

The Office of the City Administrator has reviewed City Council Resolution 21-0028R, for the purpose of inviting the Acting Director of the Mayor’s Office of Homeless Services (MOHS), the Director of the Mayor’s Office of Children and Family Success (MOCFS), the City Administrator, the Acting Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), and the advocacy groups Housing Our Neighbors and Homeless Persons Representation Project to brief and advise the City Council as to: the overall outcomes for our neighbors experiencing homelessness who were able to be temporarily housed in the hotels; what is next for them; crisis response for those experiencing homelessness in encampments during the pandemic; and the availability of programs to access permanent supportive housing.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Baltimore worked expeditiously to provide safe, non-congregate shelter and transitional housing options for families and individuals experiencing homelessness. The Mayor’s Office of Homeless services manages 5 hotels: Knights Inn-Security Blvd, Holiday Inn Express-Russell St, Holiday Inn Express-Gay Street, Days Inn-Security Blvd, Fairfield Inn-S. President St. with capacity of over 500 beds. The Baltimore City Health Department also manages additional capacity at the Lord Baltimore hotel. In order to cover the costs associated with sheltering and quarantining the homeless, the city is expected to request \$35 million dollars in reimbursements from FEMA. To date the city has already received \$29 million dollars of funding commitments and will seek approximately \$70 million dollars of total reimbursements from FEMA.

Our administration is committed to implementing an anti-homelessness strategy that ensures homelessness is rare, brief and non-recurring in the City of Baltimore. As we move past this current crisis, we look forward to continuing collaborations with government and non-governmental stakeholders. We know that the work we have done to date has helped protect some of our city’s most vulnerable individuals and families and we are confident that the new leadership will continue to build on this transformational work.

OCA is pleased to address the Council at an informational hearing to discuss the City’s plan for our neighbors experiencing homelessness. We look forward to addressing this critical topic together with the other aforementioned agencies at the upcoming hearing.