March 30, 2020

THURMAN BRISBEN CENTER RESPONDS TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The Thurman Brisben Center (TBC) is continually evaluating regulatory requirements and guidelines to plan for and protect the health of the homeless it serves, its staff, and the greater community. As it has for over 32 years, TBC endeavors to fulfill its essential role, serving all Virginia Planning District 16 as the region's largest safe, modern, congregant shelter for the homeless. To maintain its high standards of integrity to mission while insuring safe and sustained operations TBC’s COVID-19 Emergency Response Team is empowered to address rapidly changing conditions. The TBC Board of Directors approves and authorizes the following:

- **Learning** from the tragic experiences of those in congregant living facilities in Kirkland, WA, Richmond, VA and congregant shelters in Minnesota, New York, California, and other locations; and,
- **Evaluating** and **applying** guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Virginia Department of Health (VDH), Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Governor Northam's Executive Order 53 and 55 and Public Health Emergency One and Two; and,
- **Applying** guidance asserted by the Executive Director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH): *Homeless shelters and drop-in centers present the greatest risk of virus transmission and the potential to become medically compromised facilities.* (Dr. Robert J. Marbut Jr., March 26, 2020)

1. **Social Distancing:**
   a. **Retaining** in shelter persons of high-risk health profile.
   b. **Relocating** capable residents to a local hotel - those who continue working.

2. **Increasing Hygiene/Sanitation:**
   a. Shelter residents have been relocated to separated beds.
   b. Separate areas of the shelter are designated for isolating symptomatic persons.

3. **Providing Meals to Shelter and to Those Housed in Hotel:**
   a. Fredericksburg Public School food services provides all meals for shelter residents.
   b. Businesses, churches, and organizations provide all meals for TBC residents in hotel.

4. **Hard-Working Staff:**
   a. TBC is operating with less than optimal staffing in this stressful time; however, TBC continues to provide essential services, including case management by teleconference.

5. **Impact to Donations:**
   a. TBC faces challenges raising 63% of its budget ($660,000) in addition to (37%) $400,000 received from local jurisdictions and state/federal grants.

For more information, please visit the Brisben Center website: [https://www.brisbencenter.org](https://www.brisbencenter.org)

Sincerely,

N. David Cooper, CEO

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Eric Watkins, Board Chair