Revere sets up hot line to aid residents during pandemic crisis

Revere Mayor Brian M. Arrigo uses a bullhorn from the town’s mobile City Hall van to urge the public to abide by social distancing guidelines along Revere Beach.

By John Laidler | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Revere officials on March 30 announced the establishment of a new hot line for community members to seek food assistance and other services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Staffed from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, the CONNECT hot line (617-712-3487) is equipped to help people apply for federal SNAP food assistance, unemployment benefits, and other services, and to work through technology challenges.

The English and Spanish service is a joint initiative of The Neighborhood Developers, a nonprofit that builds affordable housing in Chelsea, Revere, and Everett, and CONNECT, a partnership among TND and four other
organizations that works to improve the financial mobility of low-income families.

“The need for unemployment assistance, for SNAP, and for emergency assistance in our communities has skyrocketed over the last two weeks. The hot line is trying to make sure that people continue to have access to these essential public benefits,” said Rafael Mares, executive director of TND.

As of Tuesday, March 31, the state Department of Public Health had notified the city of 140 positive cases of COVID-19 in Revere, a significant jump from the previous week, when the city had just eight cases.

“As positive case numbers continue to rise in our city, we are working to remove as many barriers to resources and information as possible. . . . Our partners at The Neighborhood Developers and CONNECT have always been here to support our community through innovative programming, and the launch of this hot line is going to have a real, immediate impact,” Mayor Brian Arrigo said in a statement.

Fourteen of the confirmed cases in Revere were among residents at Jack Satter House, according to a posting by Hebrew SeniorLife, which operates the supportive independent living facility in Revere. It said seven of those residents are hospitalized, while six have died.

“We send our deepest condolences to the families of these residents — may their memory be a blessing. Our thoughts are with those who are ill and we send our best wishes for their full recovery,” the website posting said.

On March 28, the city’s Inspectional Services Department visited restaurants along Revere Beach Boulevard, encouraging them to end take-out services until further notice. Each establishment has now either voluntarily shifted to a delivery-only model or closed, Romano said.

Arrigo also took to Revere Beach Boulevard Saturday afternoon in Revere’s mobile City Hall van, using a bullhorn to urge the public to abide by social distancing guidelines and take the increase in cases in Revere seriously.

City workers, meanwhile, have also been conducting outreach with residents of Revere’s senior housing facilities to ensure they are receiving the support they need.

In other announcements related to the pandemic, the city said it is waiving the convenience fees that residents are normally charged for all online
transactions with the city, including payment of taxes, permit fees, water bills, and parking tickets, according to Nick Romano, an aide to the mayor.

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