



## **MAYOR DAVID J. NARKEWICZ**

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**For Immediate Release - April 1, 2020**

### **CITY OF NORTHAMPTON TO OPEN TEMPORARY EMERGENCY SHELTER WITH SERVICENET AT NORTHAMPTON HIGH SCHOOL**

Northampton, MA: Mayor David J. Narkewicz announced that on Wednesday, April 1, 2020, at 3:00 PM the City of Northampton, in partnership with ServiceNet, will open an emergency 24/7 shelter at Northampton High School (NHS) to serve residents of ServiceNet's two overnight homeless shelters located on Center Street and Grove Street which are closing.

ServiceNet has been working tirelessly to keep the residents of its two overnight shelters safe since the onset of COVID-19, but current sleeping spaces within those two facilities are inadequate to allow for proper social distancing. The Northampton COVID-19 Emergency Management Team - led by the Mayor and composed of Public Health, Fire Rescue, Emergency Management, Police, Schools, and other city departments - has spent the last several weeks planning and setting up the shelter, securing resources, and working with ServiceNet officials on operational details.

The emergency shelter at NHS will be staffed 24/7 by ServiceNet staff and supported by city staff and community volunteers, including security provided by the Northampton Police Department. The city has secured meals for the site through our generous community partners Smith College and the Hampshire County House of Corrections. Upon entry of the shelter, staff and shelter residents will be screened by a predetermined set of health questions, and if any markers for illness are present they will not be allowed into the shelter and will be directed for medical evaluation and isolation at an alternative location. Once inside, residents will be screened twice a day.

The city is grateful for generous donations of supplies and other essentials from many area businesses, institutions, and individuals. The city continues to accept donations of necessary items. Please see [www.northamptonma.gov/COVID19](http://www.northamptonma.gov/COVID19) for specific needs.

The City of Northampton continues to seek community volunteers who are able to assist in this effort to safely shelter our most vulnerable neighbors and urges people to contact Assistant Chief Andrew Pelis at [apelis@northamptonma.gov](mailto:apelis@northamptonma.gov) for more information.

The City of Northampton has also established a COVID-19 Emergency Fund and is accepting donations from the community to support the shelter effort. Donate online at [www.northamptonma.gov/COVID19](http://www.northamptonma.gov/COVID19) or make checks payable to the City of Northampton with “COVID-19 Emergency Fund” in the memo line and place in the Drop Box located outside the Municipal Office Building behind City Hall or mail to City of Northampton, Attn: COVID-19 Emergency Fund, 212 Main Street, Northampton, MA 01060.

Finally, ServiceNet is urgently in need of staff to support the emergency shelter and is hiring. If you or anyone you know is interested in this critical work, please visit [www.servicenet.org/jobs](http://www.servicenet.org/jobs)