



CITY OF PORTLAND
Department of Health & Human Services
Kristen Dow, Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Health & Human Services & Public Safety Committee
FROM: Department of Health & Human Services Leadership
DATE: April 9, 2021
RE: Relocation of HHS programs to 39 Forest Avenue

We are pleased to provide this memo outlining details related to the co-location of some Health & Human Services (HHS) programs to 39 Forest Avenue. The co-location of these key programs from the Social Services and Public Health divisions of HHS to a single, centralized location in the city seeks to reduce barriers to those who access vital services as well as enhance organizational efficiency. In addition, the much larger physical space at the Forest Avenue location provides opportunities for program expansion as well as increased opportunity for physical distancing to maintain health and safety for staff and service recipients.

The purpose of the memo is to outline the following:

- List of impacted programs and staff from the Health & Human Services department
- Description of the Forest Avenue building and layout
- Layout of HHS programs within Forest Avenue building
- Description of operations
- Anticipated timeline
- Financial comparison

Outline of current HHS programs and staff by location and division

HHS Administration

Number of Staff: 6

Current location: City Hall

HHS Administration Staff includes the HHS Director, Deputy Director (to be hired), Financial Manager, Principal Administrative Officer, Administrative Assistant and the Resettlement Coordinator (to be hired).

Public Health & Social Services HR & Financial Teams *Note PAO & Financial Manager FTE are located in HHS Administration*

Number of Staff: 8

Current location: City Hall & 196 Lancaster Street (General Assistance Building)

Staff includes the Financial Manager, Principal Administrative Officer, Principal Financial Officer, and 5 Accountants

Public Health division

Portland Community Free Clinic

Number of staff: 4

Schedule: Monday - Thursday 9:00am - 9:00pm, Friday 9:00am-12:00pm

*Current Location: India Street Public Health Center**

The Portland Community Free Clinic provides primary care to uninsured, low-income adults (18-64). All services at the PCFC are provided at no charge. Care at the PCFC is provided by volunteer physicians, nurse practitioners, and nurses. Volunteers include primary care, internal medicine, and specialty services. PCFC staff time is funded by the Friends of the Portland Community Free Clinic which is an independent 501c3.

STD/HIV Clinic

Number of staff: 8 including our Medical Director

Schedule: By appointment only, Tuesday and Thursday from 10:30-5:30 (w/flexibility to meet patient need)

Current Location: India Street Public Health Center

Maine's only Public Health full service STD Clinic. The clinic provides patients with a full panel of STD/HIV testing and treatment as well as Partner Services. The STD Clinic also provides PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) and PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis) case management and at-home HIV testing. The STD Clinic also houses a fully operational laboratory.

Minority Health Program

Number of staff: 2 full time and 17 per diem Community Health Outreach Workers

Schedule: Sunday- Saturday, 7:00am-8:00pm (dictated by community need)

Current Location: Reiche Public Health Station

The City of Portland's Minority Health Program develops and implements evidence-based public health programming that enhance access to quality and affordable health care to improve the well-being of minority communities in the Greater Portland Area. This process is driven by the communities the program serves directly. This program also assists other City programs in ensuring services provided are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

Maternal and Child Health

Number of staff: 3

Schedule: Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm

Current Location: Reiche Public Health Station

The Maternal and Child Health (MCH) program offers a variety of services to Portland residents, including free home visits for residents who are pregnant or have a child up to age 5. Currently about 60% of their caseload are non-English speaking families. MCH staff will assist with any/all medical related needs and assist with referrals for social supports. Staff are also Certified Lactation Counselors able to provide Portland mothers with breastfeeding assistance.

Tobacco & Lead Poisoning Prevention

Number of staff: 6

Schedule: Monday - Friday 8am-4pm

Current location: City Hall

The Tobacco Prevention Program works across Cumberland County to create and implement tobacco-free policies in the following sectors: Municipalities, Colleges/Universities, Hospitals, Behavioral Health Facilities, Schools, Multi-unit Housing, and Youth Serving Entities. The team also works to implement evidence-based

strategies through education to youth as well as training for utilizing the Maine QuitLink.

The Lead Poisoning Prevention Program works to reduce childhood lead poisoning in the cities of Portland and Westbrook. Program objectives include increased screening for blood lead levels in children aged two and under and educating parents and landlords with young children about lead poisoning prevention.

Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL)

Number of staff: 5

Schedule: Monday - Friday 8am-4pm

Current location: India Street Public Health Center

The Healthy Eating Active Living Program implements both Let's Go! 5-2-1-0 and SNAP-Ed throughout Cumberland County. SNAP-Ed provides nutrition education services in settings that are most accessible to individuals eligible for SNAP, including: schools, food pantries, Head Start programs and other childcare settings, grocery stores, and regional DHHS offices. Let's Go! 5-2-1-0 is a nationally recognized childhood obesity prevention program with the goal of increasing physical activity and healthy eating for children from birth to 18 years of age through policy and environmental change. Let's Go! works with nearly 150 sites across Cumberland County in: childcare settings, schools, and out of school settings in order to reach children and families where they live, learn, work, and play to reinforce the importance of health eating and physical activity.

Substance Use Prevention & Harm Reduction Services

Number of staff: currently - 3, full capacity - 6

Schedule: Monday - Friday 9am-5pm

Needle Exchange schedule:

On-site: Monday-Friday 9am-4pm

Outreach: Sunday-Saturday, hours vary

Current location: India Street Public Health Center

The Substance Use Prevention & Harm Reduction Services Program offers a variety of programming serving individuals as young as 12 through age 65 and older. From implementing evidence-based primary prevention strategies aimed to delay the onset of early substance use, to utilizing paramedics to address the unmet medical needs of Portland's unsheltered residents and those with substance use disorder(s), to operating the State's largest and only municipally-run needle exchange program and naloxone distribution program, the SUPHRS program touches many individuals with life saving education not only in Portland, but throughout Cumberland and York Counties.

Research & Evaluation Program (REP)

Number of staff: 1

Schedule: Monday-Friday 8-4

Current location: Cummings Center

The REP program conducts and analyzes public health research to inform and evaluate Portland Public Health programs and activities.

Public Health Administration

Number of staff: 1, Public Health Director

Current location: City Hall

Social Services division

All current services located at 196 Lancaster Street

General Assistance

Number of staff: 8

Schedule Sunday-Saturday 7:30-4:30

The General Assistance Program (GA) provides Portland residents with assistance for basic needs such as rent, food, non-food, medication, fuel, utilities, and other essential services. All assistance is granted in voucher form and no cash assistance is granted. Financial Eligibility Specialists (FES) work actively with applicants to ensure that appropriate in-house and outside community referrals are made to other support services.

Workfare

Number of staff: 1

Schedule Monday-Friday 7:30-4

General Assistance requires that able-bodied individuals participate in a work program as a condition of receiving financial assistance. This program offers realistic work opportunities in various city departments and local nonprofits. One of many workfare opportunities is to work with our maintenance team to work on neighborhood clean-up on the blocks around our facility as part of our mission to be good neighbors. Participants also do mentoring through nonprofit organizations, such as Preble Street, Hope House, Portland Adult Education and Salvation Army. The Workfare Coordinator works closely with HIRE, the Social Services Division's employment services program to help translate experience from the program into employment and self-sufficiency. Workfare will leverage the increase in the HIRE team's capacity to provide on-site services that will greatly improve the programs' shared self-sufficiency goals for their clients.

HIRE

Number of staff: 2

Schedule Monday-Friday 8:00-4:30

Helping Individuals Regain Employment (HIRE) assists General Assistance recipients achieve self-sufficiency, or other eligible benefits. Staff help clients overcome barriers to employment find jobs through employment case work targeting their needs and referrals to outside agencies, such as English as a Second Language courses for individuals with low English proficiency. Individuals who are unable to work receive help applying for disability benefits. While operating at full capacity, the HIRE team put on successful programming that led to gainful employment. These include partnering with area employers to host on-site career fairs in our office where the employer conducted interviews and made direct hires. Increasing our space will allow multiple employers to attend career fairs increasing employment opportunities.

Representative Payee Program

Number of staff: 2

Schedule Monday-Friday 8-4:30

While most people receive their Social Security and Supplemental Security benefits directly, some are mandated by the Social Security Administration to have a Representative Payee to provide assistance in managing their funds. Payee services for consumers receiving Social Security Disability benefits are provided through this program. Benefits to these individuals are dispersed through a Representative Payee who receives the check on behalf of the beneficiary and provides for personal and financial needs.

Housing Navigation

Number of staff: 2

Schedule Monday-Friday 8-4:30

Our housing navigators provide professional case management working with homeless

individuals and families, specializing in assisting clients secure permanent housing and reach their goals of self-sufficiency. Housing navigators assist clients in their housing search and accessing the resources needed to obtain housing. These include housing vouchers, and programs like Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) which utilize funds to pay for security deposits and short-term rental assistance for individuals and families residing in homeless shelters. Our team uses a rapid re-housing approach with a particular focus on reducing recidivism through providing follow-up care services that connect clients to other mainstream resources, helping ensure successful outcomes. We believe in a housing first approach where individuals are most equipped to resolve other issues in their lives when they have a safe place to live. These issues often contribute to the episodes of homelessness people experience; consolidating housing navigation and Public Health will increase outcomes in both areas as stable housing increases one's self-efficacy to engage in treatment and treatment helps mitigate factors that contribute to homelessness.

Housing Retention

Number of staff: 2

Schedule Monday-Friday 8-4:30

The Human Services Counselors in the Housing Retention team work with Family Shelter clients placed in housing. They provide case management that connects to mainstream resources and are proactive in the landlord tenant relationship, mediating disputes and mitigating issues before eviction.

Social Services Administration

Number of staff: 2

Monday-Friday 8-4:30

Administration staff include the Director of Social Services and Executive Assistant.

Fiscal

Number of staff: 6

Schedule Monday-Friday 8-4:30

Fiscal staff currently reside in a hallway that is only partially private and secured from public access. In normal times, clients confused by our layout would sometimes wander the hallway until someone noticed and could lead them to the exit. The new location will house the Fiscal team clearly separating frontline public areas from restricted access areas. The new building will be easier for clients to navigate and it will be safer in terms of disease risk. Individuals will be able flow in one direction, entering and exiting through different doors. The building has an updated HVAC system, adding to the building's superior safety from airborne pathogens.

Security

Number of staff: 2

Monday-Friday 7:15-4:15

The office has two Security Guards. In standard daily operations, one guard would check bags as people enter our office while the other guard patrols. This allows for screening clients at entry through our metal detector and directing guests to be signed in and then to our waiting area. In addition to the central waiting area we also have additional flex space to act as overflow waiting space if needed.

Maintenance

Number of staff: 2

Schedule Monday-Friday (5 AM-2 PM) (3-11 PM)

The Maintenance Manager currently cleans Public Health's India Street Clinic and needs to move locations throughout the day. Consolidating the two divisions into one building will create efficiencies in their schedule.

Social Services Division Program Additions

Prevention and Diversion

Number of staff 8

Schedule Sunday-Saturday 12 PM-8 PM

The Additional space will allow for the Social Services Division to create a Prevention and Diversion Program modeled after the Pine Street Inn Front Door Triage Program. Staff would have the ability to connect with individuals before they enter emergency shelter and homelessness. This opportunity for a critical intervention to try and build on natural supports to eliminate the need to enter the Emergency Shelter system. Staff would have the ability to seek alternate resources, connect with landlords to mediate evictions, and enroll individuals in prevention case management services.

Maintenance at Current Locations

The co-location of the staff from the four current locations includes two currently leased spaces. The spaces at both our India Street Clinic and our General Assistance Program have become increasingly cramped and tired over the years, with numerous facility issues.

At our current space at India Street Public Health Center the condition of the building the public health division is currently leasing at 103 India Street has become increasingly dire, with multiple systems failures that have impacted clinic operations. Examples include the closure of clinic operations for 10 days in November last year due to a water main break; a 12-hour power outage that same month which jeopardized vaccine in cold storage; security issues with doors that do not adequately lock; and lack of a secondary egress from the building or dedicated staff entrance.

In addition, the current space that the Social Services Division occupies at 196 Lancaster St. has deficiencies in its facilities that negatively impact daily operations. The layout of the office is confusing for clients and community partners to navigate and often results in visitors getting lost. Poor ventilation's effect on temperature means some offices are too cold in the 50s and some are too hot in the 90s. In late 2019, a heavy rainstorm pushed headache-causing fumes up from beneath the floor that took weeks to mitigate. Both the ongoing temperature issues and the fumes displaced staff from their workspaces. Other semi-regular problems include plumbing, electrical and vermin: finding bathrooms out of order and outlets not working.

Description of Forest Avenue space

Location

Located at 39 Forest Avenue, the building spans the width of the block with entrances at 39 Forest Avenue and 100 Oak Street

Square footage/layout

At 37,000 square feet, the space is large enough to comfortably accommodate both Divisions' staff and the members of the public they serve. The large, flexible space inside the conference and training rooms will allow for expansion of existing offerings and

creative opportunity for development of new services. The Divisions will each occupy one floor with Public Health clinical services on the first floor and Social Services, Administration and the fiscal team on the second floor.

Entrances

The building allows for three separate entrances. The public entrances to the building are on Forest Avenue with a staff entrance on Oak Street. The Public Health entrance abuts the sidewalk and the entrance to Social Services is up past the public parking spots with the staff entrance on Oak Street.

Accessibility

Ramps at the Forest Avenue entrance and inside the building provide accommodation for people who use wheelchairs and other mobility devices. Additionally, once inside the space at 39 Forest Avenue there is sufficient room to accommodate those using wheelchairs and other mobility devices. The current space inside 103 India Street, particularly for those who access the Needle Exchange Program, is very narrow and limited, and requires entering multiple doors. The centralized location of the building on the peninsula will place the office between Congress Street and Cumberland Avenue, granting access to major bus lines.

Building operations

Parking

The location provides parking for up to 10 vehicles including two handicapped spaces with metered spaces along Forest Ave. Staff parking will be in the Spring Street garage.

Hours of operation

Various programs operate on differing schedules, but some programs are anticipated to operate 7 days per week between 8am and 7pm. There will be no overnight accommodations in the building.

Security

The security staff will monitor both the internal and external space associated with the new location. In addition to the outside grounds being monitored we will have a telephone line in place for neighbors to report concerns, in line with our Good Neighbor practices at other HHS locations.

Co-location of HHS programs

In addition to the fiscal and logistical benefits associated with co-location of HHS programs, the consolidation of these services in one location will result in reduced barriers for service recipients:

- Improved client access to services - Social Services and Public Health programs often “share” clients or see the same clients for different services, but don’t always realize it. Co-locating our programs would improve our ability as a department to provide low-barrier services to clients “under one roof.”
- Strategic planning and collaboration - Co-locating services will naturally allow for programs to interact with one another in a way that are presently challenging. The potential to meet the vital health & human services needs of Portlanders will be improved through greater integration.

- Opportunities for program expansion - In both the Social Services and Public Health divisions, space constraints at current locations limits the opportunity to planfully expand programs to meet community needs.
- Improved health equity - At a time of increased recognition of the need to reduce health disparities as a means to achieve health equity for all, the co-location of HHS programs will serve to improve services for vulnerable populations. By physically locating the Resettlement Coordinator alongside the Minority Health Program, Portland will be taking a step forward in meeting the ‘culturally and linguistically appropriate services’ (CLAS) standards to produce improved standards to the New Mainer population.

Anticipated Timeline

- **June 1, 2021-** Begin renovations to the upper floor so that GA can be prepared to be fully operational at that location on July 1, 2021.
 - Renovations to this floor primarily are putting security doors in place and addressing Facilities concerns around ADA compliance in the restrooms. We will additionally need internet and phone access in place.
- **July 1, 2021-** GA fully operational out of Forest Ave location
- **July 2021-** Move HHS staff from City Hall and Reiche to Forest Ave.
- **July - October 2021-** Clinic renovations.
- **By November 1, 2021-** Move clinic operations to Forest Ave

Cost Comparison

India Street (6,122 sf @ \$11.33 psf)	\$69,362
Lancaster Street (10,217 sf @ \$14.69 psf + \$24,326 common area maintenance)	\$174,414
Estimated Cost of Diversion Space (1,300 sf @ \$13 psf)	\$36,400
TOTAL CURRENT RENT	\$280,176
39 FOREST BUILDING RENT (37,000 sf @ \$7.50 PSF)	\$277,500