



FOR IMMEDIATE

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CISS Works to House Homeless to Allow Social Distancing ***Goodwill of Central Iowa to hold special donation drive this weekend***

DES MOINES, Iowa (March 20, 2020) – As Coronavirus (Covid-19) begins to make its way to Iowa, Central Iowa Shelter & Services (CISS) officials are working diligently with community partners to implement an emergency plan to rapidly house homeless individuals.

“Housing is healthcare always, but in times like this, it is imperative,” said Melissa O’Neil, CISS CEO.

“With the release of some federal dollars, the ingenuity of community partners and a lot of teamwork, we are working to house as many homeless clients in Central Iowa as possible.”

“We worked in two directions this week. First, we determined how many of our clients could sustain a monthly rent if we were able to help pay or waive the security deposits and the first month rent requirements since we know this lump sum of money is what keeps people homeless; and second, we worked to find temporary places for our most vulnerable clients (over 60 and with compromised immunity) to allow for the social distancing required to slow the spread of this virus,” explained O’Neil.

Goodwill of Central Iowa is a community partner working with CISS. This weekend, they will hold an emergency donation drive at 7 of their metro locations to help the homeless with items they need to keep safe and healthy as they are housed.

“There are so many things happening right now that we can’t control,” said Jackie Norris, Goodwill of Central Iowa CEO. “This donation drive is a way we can help support our community, doing what we do best.”

Beginning today (Friday) through Sunday at 5 pm, Goodwill (see locations below) will push for community members to drop off donations to benefit CISS. Experts believe the coronavirus can stay on

unwashed clothing for up to 3 days. All clothing will be quarantined for at least 72 hours before distributed to CISS.

“Imagine being handed the keys to an apartment and all you really have are the clothes on your back,” explained O’Neil. “The community can help by donating gently used linens (for twin or double beds), blankets, towels, dishes, pots and pans – anything a person would need to sleep, shower and cook.”

Central Iowa Shelter & Services is the largest low-barrier shelter in Iowa. Its mission is to provide shelter, meals and support services to adults experiencing homelessness and to facilitate their move toward self-sufficiency.

Goodwill of Central Iowa is a non-profit organization that uses a donated goods retail infrastructure to support programs improving the quality of life for anyone facing a barrier to employment across its 22-county region. Its mission is to change lives of Central Iowans with barriers to employment by helping them earn and keep jobs through workforce training in our businesses and your communities.

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***See attached for locations, hours and list of items needed**

Help the Homeless

Help support our homeless community as they navigate through the impact of COVID-19, including social distancing and quarantines. Many people will be temporarily relocated and do not have the items needed to keep them safe and healthy.

Donation drive

What do we need?

- Bed Linens for twin and double beds
- Blankets
- Pillows
- Towels
- Dishes
- Pots and pans
- Silverware
- Water glasses
- Men's clothing – especially jeans and undergarments
- Women's undergarments
- Small furniture items – kitchen table and chairs, love seats

What stores participating?

East

3251 East Euclid Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50317

South

3333 SE 14th St
Des Moines, Iowa 50320

Jordan Creek

6630 Mills Civic Parkway
West Des Moines, Iowa 50266

Ankeny

509 N Ankeny Blvd
Ankeny, Iowa 50023

Urbandale

4520 Northwest Urbandale Drive
Urbandale, Iowa 50322

Johnston

5355 NW 86th St
Johnston, Iowa 50131

Waukee

170 Laurel Street SE
Waukee, Iowa 50263

Hours for Donations

Friday and Saturday: 10 am to 6 pm

Sunday: Noon to 5 pm