



BERNARD C. "JACK" YOUNG
Mayor
100 Holliday Street, Suite 250
Baltimore, MD 21202

The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan
Governor of Maryland
110 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

April 20, 2020

Dear Governor Hogan:

Thank you for your leadership and partnership during the COVID-19 pandemic. I appreciate the ongoing dialogue and collaboration from your team.

I am writing to formally request the use of the emergency alternative care site built at the Baltimore City Convention Center. Specifically, Baltimore City is requesting that up to 100 beds be dedicated to provide shelter, isolation, and humanitarian assistance to vulnerable residents who have tested positive for COVID-19 and are not able to self-isolate. These residents include individuals experiencing homelessness and members of the immigrant community. The City is prepared to provide them with case management services, as well as transportation to and from the facility.

Baltimore City has taken proactive and aggressive steps to protect our homeless population from COVID-19. We relocated 160 healthy, but vulnerable homeless individuals who are 62 and older to hotel locations to limit exposure to COVID-19. We moved 155 additional homeless individuals from existing shelters to a larger, temporary shelter location to allow for more space and social distancing. In addition, we procured 102 motel rooms for the purpose of quarantine and isolation of individuals experiencing homelessness who were awaiting COVID-19 testing results and/or tested positive for COVID-19. We have been utilizing this isolation resource since March 20th.

Like many cities, Baltimore has experienced the spread of COVID-19 in congregate settings. Last week, we learned that several staff and clients had tested positive in two shelters. In an effort to protect those shelter clients and staff, we tested and isolated nearly 70 individuals in less than two days and the isolation motel is at full capacity. This presents two immediate challenges. First, we cannot accept any new hospital referrals of homeless individuals to the isolation site as it is full. Second, we plan to proactively screen, test and isolate positive individuals remaining at another shelter that has 150 remaining clients, but have nowhere to house and support those who test positive. We are in the process of procuring another isolation motel with 128 rooms. However, staffing at our current isolation site continues to be a challenge and I expect it to be even more difficult to staff another location.

In addition, hospitals and community based organizations have contacted members of my senior team expressing the need for isolation locations for COVID positive immigrants who are unstably housed or live in crowded conditions. I see this as an emerging need for this underserved population.

I would like to schedule a time to discuss this urgent request with you as soon as your schedule permits.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bernard C. 'Jack' Young". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping flourish at the end.

Bernard C. "Jack" Young
Mayor of Baltimore