

DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT

DECEMBER, 2023

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Reported: New York City Mayor Eric Adams and New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasani recently announced "TeenSpace" — the city's tele-mental health service available to all New York City teenagers between the ages of 13 and 17 years old at no cost. Launching this month, the service — created in partnership with online therapy platform Talkspace — will allow New York City teenagers to connect with a licensed therapist through phone, video, and text.

As levels of anxiety and depression among youth and teenagers have risen during and since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, this new program will help connect teens with appropriate support and referrals to more care if needed. The launch delivers on a key commitment from Mayor Adams' "[Working People's Agenda](#)" and "[Care, Community, Action](#)," his mental health plan for New York City released in March.

Talkspace will operate the innovative service connection to a therapist, helping to introduce young people to care. Teens will be able to engage with a professional through video, phone, and unlimited chat on the platform. If a client is in need of extended services, they can be referred to additional external resources.

The city and Talkspace designed the service with input from New York City teenagers, convening focus groups to best understand their mental health needs and to build a platform that is as useful and responsive as possible to those who will use the platform. By leveraging telehealth tools, this approach also reduces physical and financial burdens for young people.

The TeenSpace platform arrives as mental health challenges are becoming increasingly prevalent among young people in New York City and across the country. [New data published](#) by DOHMH revealed that, between 2011 and 2021, there was an increase in the percentage of city students who reported feeling sad and hopeless, non-suicidal self-injury, and suicidal ideation. In 2019, 36 percent of New York City high schoolers reported feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for at least two weeks during the past 12 months that they stopped doing their usual activities — that figure rose to 38 percent in 2021. Latino and Black students were significantly more likely than white students to report feeling sad or hopeless. Over the last 10 years, rates of suicide ideation increased among adolescents, with 9.2 percent of New York City public high school students in 2021 reporting attempting suicide over the past 12 months.

Department for Homeless Services (DHS) Reported: On the night of **Tuesday, January 23rd, 2024**, DSS-HRA-DHS will conduct its annual Homeless Outreach Population Estimate (HOPE) Survey, a point-in-time survey undertaken each winter that helps the City estimate the number of unsheltered New Yorkers living on the street on one of the coldest nights of the year. The results gathered through this survey provide the City with valuable information that helps determine how to allocate resources to best serve New Yorkers in need with care and compassion.

The night of HOPE is coming soon, and DSS-HRA-DHS needs your help to conduct this survey by canvassing streets, parks, subways, and other public spaces. Volunteers are needed from approximately 10:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m. on the night of January 23rd. Just a few hours of your time will help us in our ongoing efforts to support New Yorkers experiencing unsheltered homelessness and encourage them to take that first important step to come off the streets and subways and accept the vital services and supports they need and deserve. Through DSS' 24/7/365 outreach efforts, they have referred more than 8,500 New Yorkers experiencing unsheltered homelessness to transitional and/or permanent housing in FY22 alone. Your participation in HOPE will help them build on that progress. Please visit nyc.gov/hope to learn more and to register.

HRA Reported: The Fair Fares NYC Program helps New York City residents with low incomes manage their transportation costs by providing them with a 50% discount on public transportation. Eligible New York City residents receive a 50% discount on subway and eligible bus fares. Pay-per-Ride, weekly unlimited, and monthly unlimited options are all available. Fair Fares can also provide 50% off MTA Access-A-Ride paratransit trips.

Fair Fares NYC applications are open to eligible New Yorkers, ages 18-64, whose household income meets program income eligibility requirements. Subway and eligible bus discounts are open to New Yorkers who do not have, and are not eligible for, discounted transportation from the MTA or the City. If individuals meet the Fair Fares NYC eligibility criteria, they may be eligible for the Fair Fares NYC discount on Access-A-Ride fares even if they are already enrolled in the MTA reduced-fare Program for persons with disability or have an Access-A-Ride MetroCard.

Fair Fares enrollment is simple and can be completed online: **[Apply for Fair Fares on ACCESS HRA!](#)** View the "How to Enroll" videos in **[English](#)** and **[Spanish](#)**.

Many Cash Assistance and SNAP recipients can ride for half price. Each non-elderly adult should log into Access HRA or create an account if they are not the head of their case and click "Enroll Now".

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) can help eligible New Yorkers heat and cool their homes.

HEAP may be able to help you if you heat your home with:

- Electricity
- Natural Gas
- Oil
- Coal
- Propane
- Wood/Wood pellets
- Kerosene
- Corn

For more info, please visit <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/>

Governor Hochul's Office Reported: Gov Hochul signed the Clean Slate Act into law a huge win for Public Safety, Justice and fairness. New Yorkers who have criminal convictions will no longer face a lifetime stigma or a conviction record preventing them from accessing jobs, housing, and an education.

Governor Hochul also signed essential legislation to protect NY Homeowners from deed theft.

NYC Health Emergency Preparedness Reported on: Winter Preparation tips and information on Heating Assistance – The winter season brings the possibility of winter weather emergencies. Advance Warning System partners should prepare staff and clients for the upcoming winter season. To learn more about winter weather safety, visit the Health Department's interactive [online infographic](#).

People at greatest risk of being affected by extreme cold and other winter weather-related dangers may include those who:

- Are homeless and not in shelters;
- Drink heavily or use drugs;
- Live in a home with inadequate or no heat and;
- Are 65 years and older;
- Are infants;
- Have certain medical conditions, such as heart and lung disease, high blood pressure or diabetes;
- Have serious mental health conditions, developmental disabilities, or dementia;
- Have physical disabilities that limit mobility;

Prepare for the cold and winter weather before it arrives to stay safe and healthy throughout the season.

- Check the carbon monoxide detectors and smoke alarms are working.
- Make sure you have warm clothing you can layer, as well as gloves, a hat and sturdy shoes and/or boots.
- Talk to your at-risk friends and family and make a plan to support them when the weather turns cold.
- Review the signs and symptoms of hypothermia and frostbite to quickly identify and respond effectively by calling 911.

If you do not have heat or hot water:

- Tell your building superintendent, property manager, or owner right away. Call 311 if the problem is not fixed quickly.
- Go to a warm place, such as a friend or family member's house. If you stay home, wear layered, loose-fitting clothing.

Until your heat is fixed, heat your home safely:

- Never use a stove, oven or charcoal grill to heat your home. Kerosene heaters and propane space heaters are illegal in NYC.
- Place space heaters at least 3 feet away from anything that can catch fire, such as curtains or tablecloths. Do not hang clothes over a space heater to dry.

Need help paying your heating bills? Check your eligibility for the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) to help pay for heating and maintenance costs:

- **The 2023-2024 Regular HEAP benefit is open.** Eligibility and benefits are based on income, household size, the primary heating source, and must have a household member who is under six years old, 60 years or older, or permanently disabled. Apply in person through HEAP Local District Contact or visit https://www2.pardot.health.nyc.gov/e/944933/energy-assistance-program-heap-/n5wnt/393101838/h/Afuftrq12kgFRwYrz2vbiBHRw0Iwov_rE_STcWXaSIg
- **The 2023-2024 Emergency HEAP benefit is scheduled to open on January 2, 2024.** Households may also be eligible for an emergency benefit if they are in danger of running out of heating fuel or having their utility service shut off. Emergency HEAP benefits and eligibility are based on income, available resources, and the type of emergency. Households facing an energy emergency should call their local [Department of Social Services' HEAP office](#) for assistance.
- **The 2023-2024 HEAP Clean and Tune benefit is open.** Eligible households can receive energy efficiency services such as chimney cleaning, minor repairs or installation of carbon monoxide detectors or thermostats. Households should call their local Department of Social Services' HEAP for assistance and information: https://www2.pardot.health.nyc.gov/e/944933/programs-heap--tune-benefit/n5wp7/393101838/h/Afuftrq12kgFRwYrz2vbiBHRw0Iwov_rE_STcWXaSIg
- **The 2023-2024 Heat Equipment Repair and Replacement benefit is open.** Homeowners may be eligible for assistance to replace or repair a furnace, boiler, or other direct heating equipment. Benefit amounts are based on actual cost of repair or replacement. Households may call their local [Department of Social Services' HEAP office](#) to apply.

For more information on eligibility and applying for HEAP benefits, visit [Home Energy Assistance Program \(HEAP\)](#).

Con Edison Reported: Con Edison customers are on pace to break last year's record for solar installations and the company continues to set new records for electric vehicle charge point installations according to its third quarter [Clean Energy Update](#).

The report shows a continuing upward trend in customer-owned renewable energy projects and demonstrates Con Edison's deep commitment to ushering in a clean energy future equitably and efficiently so every New Yorker can share in the benefits of a more sustainable grid.

Con Edison's Clean Energy Update is a quarterly snapshot of four important clean energy technologies: solar generation, battery storage, electric vehicles and building electrification adopted by customers in the five boroughs of New York City and Westchester County. The data reflected in this update is collected as part of the company's work to build infrastructure capabilities, programs and incentives that make it easier for customers to install clean energy technologies in their homes and businesses.

NYC Emergency Management Reported: NYC Emergency Management runs a program called "Share Your Space" that allows people to offer their properties voluntarily for emergency management-related activities, such as a service center, a CERT training, a commodity distribution point, or other functions identified by the department.

To support emergency sheltering for arriving asylum seekers, New York City is currently looking for facilities to be used as Humanitarian Emergency Response and Relief Centers (HERRCs) as well as for short-term, smaller congregate sheltering. If you know of a space of at least 25,000 square feet, please consider filling out the survey. You can fill out the survey, find more information, and get answers to frequently asked questions [here](#) or email nycshareyourspace@oem.nyc.gov.

Respectfully Submitted by:

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