



## **Ministry of Legal Affairs**

### **PRESS STATEMENT**

Update – Temporary Shelter in Place Accommodations - COVID-19

**Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs,**

**Senator Hon. Kathy Lynn Simmons. JP**

Thursday, April 9, 2020

Good Evening Bermuda.

I would like to provide an update on the arrangements that the Government has put in place to help our homeless citizens shelter in place.

First, let me say that this has been an extraordinary undertaking to house over 40 adults for a 24 hour period in a facility that is not usually set-up for this capacity, and for this long period of time. Normally such arrangements are made for a hurricanes but during these unprecedented times, we have adapted and continue to adapt to the challenges faced.

Since the Shelter in Place Order, the team at the Department of Child and Family Services with professional assistance from the Department of Health, the Mid-Atlantic Wellness Institute and the St Johns Ambulance have maintained and managed the shelter at the Berkeley Institute.

As of today, we have relocated the shelter to the gymnasium at CedarBridge Academy to accommodate the required social distancing practices, additional space and facilities. The shelter will operate on a 24 hour schedule that includes regular cleaning, maintenance, meals and bathroom facilities.

I repeat, the shelter is now operating on a 24-hour schedule to meet the needs of our homeless citizens and to provide protection for them during this period.

The gym is set up with 40 beds in two separate areas for males and females. The Department of Environmental Health has today approved the facility. Let me take this opportunity to thank the Royal Bermuda Regiment for their assistance today in transporting the cots.

The Ministry will have a minimum of four staff at all times that the shelter is open.

### **Medical Resources**

In order for the facility to operate 24 hours a day, we require medical staff to be on the premises at all times.

Therefore, we are pleased to have the service of a Mental Health Nurse from Mid-Atlantic Wellness Institute available from 6am to 6pm and this is no change from services at the Berkeley site. There are no additional service providers - Turning Point is available during the day only.

St. John Ambulance will be on-site from 6pm to 8am and this is no change from the Berkeley site.

We do realise that as the health challenges mount, resources such as doctors and nurses will become scarcer. Therefore, we would like members of the community, particularly, doctors and nurses, to volunteer their services if possible. If you are able to do so, the number to contact us on is 707-2223.

In closing, I would like to thank the Department of Child and Family Services, the Mid Atlantic Wellness Institute and the St Johns Ambulance Bermuda and all of our Third Sector and Charities that we working with to meet the needs of our vulnerable citizens.

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