

March 16, 2020

### **COVID-19 update from Nicholas House Executive Director Dennis Bowman**

Thank you for supporting Nicholas House's efforts to help homeless families achieve self-sufficiency. Like you, we are closely monitoring the current situation related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and recommendations from both the CDC and the Georgia Department of Public Health.

We are committed to meeting the needs of homeless children and parents during this time by continuing to provide housing, case management and other services to meet their needs. Looking ahead, we are concerned that as the virus makes an economic impact, many vulnerable families may have job losses or cutbacks that will lead to them losing their homes.

Here is how we are responding to the COVID-19 crisis:

In addition to assisting families in apartments throughout Metro Atlanta, Nicholas House has a multi-level infection control plan at our Boulevard shelter location to limit or contain viruses based on CDC and HUD recommendations for shelters and ensure the health and safety for residents, staff and volunteers. There is no illness at the shelter and we are prepared and are using various prevention strategies, including screening for symptoms and mandatory handwashing for all who enter the shelter.

While the current overall risk is low, it is important to be aware. We will continue to monitor the situation, follow national best practices from public health officials, ensure there is no evidence of illness at the shelter and continue to follow prevention safeguards with multi-level plans in place to address any issues. We also participate in weekly calls with the health community and other homeless service providers to coordinate our efforts system-wide.

We are increasing rental support for families in our apartment-based programs who are experiencing job loss and cutbacks due to the health crisis and will expand our homelessness prevention program to meet the rising need in our community.

We have expanded our after-school program to an all-day camp for children in our emergency shelter so that their parents can continue to work while schools are closed.

To ensure the safety of our wider community, we have cancelled our March 27 New Beginnings Awards Luncheon fundraiser-- which means that we will miss out on vital funds to support homeless families.

As need rises and resources diminish, we are working to meet the needs of both the families we currently serve and the families that will need our services in the times to come. We are committed to our mission to help homeless families be self-sufficient during this challenging time, which is only possible because of your continued support.

If you would like to support the families we serve through the COVID-19 epidemic, please consider:

- [Making a donation online](#) may be the most effective way to help as we meet increased costs due to COVID-19, ensuring that homeless families are protected and their needs are met, including housing and rent assistance, nutrition, healthcare services and more
- Ordering needed items for families in our emergency shelter from [our Amazon wishlist](#)
- Organizing an item drive for families in Nicholas House programs and delivering them to our shelter (details [here](#))
- Coordinating a sack lunch delivery for families in the shelter (details [here](#))

Thank you for your kindness and generosity. We are deeply grateful for all that you do for the homeless families we serve and wish you and your loved ones safety during this challenging time.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dennis L. Bowman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dennis" being the most prominent.

Dennis Bowman  
Executive Director