



**Department of
Social Services**

Human Resources
Administration

Department of
Homeless Services

W-2-680
Rev. 09/23

Commissioner's Office

Molly Wasow Park
Commissioner

Fabienne Laraque
Chief Medical Officer

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Dear Hospital Emergency Department Director:

As we approach the winter, once again the NYC Department of Homeless Services (DHS) is concerned about the risks that unsheltered New Yorkers experiencing homelessness face during the cold weather months in NYC. Many have chronic conditions that put them at higher risk of cold weather-related injuries and death.

Similar to prior years, DHS will declare a Code Blue Alert under the circumstances described in the attached procedure. As usual, we ask that hospitals allow individuals in need to remain in the hospital ED waiting room or other warm, indoor space while the alert is in effect during the times specified in the procedure, and offer a blanket.

If an individual experiencing homelessness presents to your hospital emergency department, does not need immediate medical care, and requests or accepts DHS services, please call the DHS Joint Command Center at 212-607-6040 or email SHSCC@dhs.nyc.gov.

On behalf of all New Yorkers, thank you for your help in assisting individuals experiencing homelessness during cold weather emergencies.

For any questions, related to DHS Code Blue please contact: Jennifer Wilcox at jwilcox@dhs.nyc.gov.

We appreciate your assistance.

Sincerely,

Fabienne Laraque, MD, MPH
Chief Medical Officer