

## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE \_\_\_\_\_

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### SUFFOLK SUPPORTS CITIZENS AFFECTED BY PARTIAL GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

SUFFOLK, VA (January 22, 2019) – As the partial government shutdown initially announced on December 22, 2018 continues, the City of Suffolk would like to make our citizens aware that we are taking steps to assist affected families impacted by furloughs.

Furloughed employees may apply for assistance with the following Departments, as detailed below:

- **The Department of Social Services (Suffolk DSS)** provides invaluable services to citizens in need, no matter the circumstances, as outlined below. To speak with someone regarding your specific needs, please contact their main number at 757-514-7450, and you will be transferred appropriately. (Health & Human Services Building, 135 Hall Avenue)

#### *Energy Assistance: Crisis Assistance*

Crisis Assistance is intended for emergency situations. It helps eligible households when Fuel Assistance or other resources cannot meet the need. Some examples of emergencies include: lack of heat, imminent utility cut-off, and inoperable or unsafe heating equipment. Types of Crisis Assistance may

include: payment of utility security deposit; purchase of portable space heater; purchase of primary home heating fuel; payment of primary heat utility bill; repair of heating equipment; replacement of heating equipment; and/or provision of supplemental heating equipment maintenance.

To be eligible for Crisis Assistance, there must be a heating emergency and certain income and citizenship criteria must be met. Applications for equipment-related assistance are accepted from November 1<sup>st</sup> through March 15<sup>th</sup> at the Suffolk Department of Social Services. Assistance for the purchase of heating fuel and utility bills for primary residences are available from the first workday in January through March 15<sup>th</sup>.

*Intake Services:*

Intake Services assist families that have a financial emergency (example: a cutoff or disconnection notice) due to a sudden change in household income.

For more information, please contact the [Suffolk Department of Social Services](#).

- **The Department of Public Utilities:**

Payment extensions are being offered to primary account holders who present furlough documents to the Customer Service Office located at Suffolk City Hall (442 West Washington Street, 1<sup>st</sup> floor). For more information, call 514-7000, Option 1, Customer Service.

- **The City Treasurer's Office:**

To confirm eligibility for tax deferments, call the Compliance Office, 514-4297, and speak with Andrew Tasch, or visit the Treasurer's Office in Suffolk City Hall (442 West Washington Street, 1<sup>st</sup> floor).

- **The Department of Parks & Recreation:**

Affected citizens utilizing childcare services or any active members of the Suffolk Recreation Centers or Sports Leagues may be able to have their

payments delayed until the government reopens and their paychecks resume. Each situation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. For more information, please contact Michael Frickanisce at 757-514-7250, or visit the Parks & Recreation Administration Office, 134 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

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