

Village of Mount Prospect **Press Release**



Mount Prospect Human Services Department Responds to Crisis Following 3-Alarm Fire at Apartment Building

DATE: June 21, 2024
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The Village of Mount Prospect Human Services Department is responding to a community crisis in wake of a 3-alarm fire at Orion Parkview Apartments, 1800 block of West Palm Drive, that left around 100 residents displaced this past Monday evening. Human Services social workers are working individually with each victim of the fire to assess and meet their specific needs.

When responding to an emergency, Human Services generally addresses the situation in two phases: immediate crisis response/stabilization and long-term support. As they arrived on-site, staff members jumped in to provide emotional support to victims while firefighters battled the blaze into the early hours of Tuesday morning. With the assistance of the Village's Emergency Management team, Orion management staff, and American Red Cross of Illinois, Human Services set up an intake center at the scene. This is where the team conducted another crucial piece of immediate crisis response – securing shelter and access to basic needs, like food and water, for those affected. All victims of the fire have either been placed in a vacant unit by property management, a hotel, with family or friends, or have other housing arrangements.

“Often in times of crisis, needs arise that many people are not aware of or have not considered,” said Julie Kane, Director of Human Services. The Department’s staff use their expertise, resources, and partnerships to address urgent needs and relieve the victims of such burdens. In the immediate, staff assists with the following as needed:

- Filing insurance claims / navigating renter’s insurance
- Replacing identification cards and government documents
- Working with Red Cross to get refills on prescription medications
- Grief and trauma support
- Making and expediting appointments
- Securing and distributing funds for essentials and personal items
- Providing access to clean clothing

As Human Services shifts into the long-term support phase of crisis response, staff will focus on helping those affected rebuild their lives and regain a sense of normalcy. Social workers are currently still in daily contact with victims or in contact as needs evolve.

“Our team is committed for the long haul to help these families,” says Kane. “It won’t happen all in one week, but we have let families know that we will be here for the duration to help them navigate what lies ahead.”

Human Services is grateful for the community and the help they receive to provide the best care possible. Those who would like to donate can do the following:

- Donate non-perishables to the Mount Prospect Food Pantry at Village Hall during business hours or at the Police Department Headquarters 24/7
- Donate gift cards from local retailers, like Walmart – drop off at Human Services on the second floor of Village Hall during business hours or to the front desk at the Police Department Headquarters 24/7
- Donate to Human Services' Emergency Assistance Program via PayPal

The Village of Mount Prospect is only able to accept the donations listed above. For other items, community members are asked to do the following:

- Donate clothing, furniture, household goods/appliances to Salvation Army location at 1035 E. Rand Road, Arlington Heights
- Donate clothes, shoes, toys, books, games, linens, small appliances/housewares, and electronics (video games and consoles) to The Kid's Pantry at Christian Life Church, 400 E. Gregory Street, in Mount Prospect.

Residents displaced by the fire are being directed to these community partners for their individual needs.

More details about donations are listed on the Human Services website page:

www.mountprospect.org/humanservices

About the Department

The Village of Mount Prospect’s Human Services Department is led by Director Julie Kane and Deputy Director Esther Salutillo, both of whom are licensed clinical social workers. Their team currently consists of five additional social workers, a public health nurse, three administrative professionals, and a therapy dog.

The Village of Mount Prospect (pop. ~56,000) is one of few villages of its size in the area that has a human services department.

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