



Mayor of Providence

Angel Taveras

Executive Order 2012 - 2

Establishing the Healthy Communities Office

August 24, 2012

WHEREAS, the health, well-being and safety of Providence residents is a high priority for the Taveras Administration; and

WHEREAS, chronic diseases - such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes - are the leading causes of death and disability in the United States, and account for nearly 6 of every 10 deaths and affect the quality of life of millions of Americans; and

WHEREAS, although chronic diseases are among the most common and costly health problems, they are also among the most preventable or manageable, and adopting healthy behaviors such as eating nutritious foods, maintaining physical activity throughout life, and avoiding tobacco and drug use and alcohol abuse and obtaining appropriate disease screenings can help prevent, control or reduce the devastating effects of these diseases; and

WHEREAS, low-income individuals in Providence are disproportionately affected by asthma, exposure to secondhand smoke, and chronic disease risk factors; and

WHEREAS, research shows that drug and alcohol use by young people is preventable, especially when usage is not initiated before age 16; and

WHEREAS, nearly 90 percent of all regular smokers began smoking at or before age 18, and twelve hundred minors become new daily smokers in Rhode Island each year, with tobacco use contributing to all four of the top causes of death in the state: Heart Disease, Stroke, Cancer and Respiratory Disease; and

WHEREAS, obesity has increased at an alarming rate over the last two decades, doubling in children and adults, and tripling in adolescents, and resulting in 66% of adults and 32% of children nationally being categorized as overweight or obese; and

WHEREAS, the health effects on children of being overweight include development of cardiovascular disease risk factors, diabetes, orthopedic problems, asthma, low self-esteem, sleep apnea, and adult obesity; and

IN CITY COUNCIL  
SEP 10 2012

RECEIVED THAT  
THE CLERK RECEIVED  
*Ann M. Stetson*  
CLERK

WHEREAS, research has linked obesity to many debilitating and life-threatening chronic health conditions, causing or contributing to 112,000 excess deaths per year;

NOW THEREFORE, do I, Angel Taveras, Mayor of the City of Providence, order the following, effective immediately:

1. That there is hereby established the **Healthy Communities Office (HCO)**, whose Executive Director shall be appointed by the Mayor and serve at the Mayor's pleasure. The Mayor shall make all appointments he determines are essential to the operation of the Office, and such appointees shall serve at the pleasure of the Mayor.
2. The HCO shall assume all the duties and responsibilities formerly within the purview of the Mayor's Substance Abuse Prevention Council (MSAPC) office, established by Executive Order #2003-05, and the HCO will continue to convene the MSAPC's substance abuse task force to participate in, advise, and support the office's work on substance abuse prevention.
3. The HCO is hereby designated as the alcohol, drug and tobacco prevention as well as the nutrition, physical activity, public health policy and obesity prevention office for the City of Providence. The HCO shall receive all available State and Federal funds, and those of charitable trusts and foundations with regard to these issues. The HCO shall coordinate its activities with all relevant Federal, State and Local departments and agencies and additionally with private sector organizations which address these issues.
4. The HCO shall provide leadership and advise the Mayor on health and prevention issues, environmental policy changes, media and public education campaigns, community outreach, compliance and enforcement of city and state licensing laws, and evaluation of these efforts.
5. The Executive Director shall provide a report of the Healthy Communities Office initiatives, grant activities, and successes to the Mayor on an annual basis at the end of each fiscal year that the HCO remains in existence.
6. All officers and employees of the City shall provide the Healthy Communities Office with the fullest cooperation.



Angel Taveras  
MAYOR

Dated: August 24, 2012