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NEWS RELEASE

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CITY, COUNTY PARTNER WITH THE “Y” OVER CODE BLUE

Beginning tomorrow, January 23, the Allentown YMCA-YWCA will open its doors as a temporary shelter during certain Code Blue nights. The volunteer move by the “Y” was announced today by Allentown Mayor Ed Pawlowski, Lehigh County Executive Tom Muller and YMCA-YWCA Chief Executive Officer Jim Finchum.

Lehigh County Emergency Management will declare a “Code Blue” when the temperature is expected to dip below 32 degrees at night. Details are being worked out to get notification on the county Emergency Management web page.

Persons in need of shelter will be able to stay in the small gym at the “Y” on Monday through Thursday evenings from approximately 10:30pm to 5:00am. The bleachers will be open and plenty of floor space is available.

“We are more than happy to be of assistance,” said Finchum. “The YMCA-YWCA has always been an important contributing member of the Allentown community. We’re glad to be able to help.”

“The city has been having private conversations with potential temporary providers over the past week. I want to thank Jim Finchum and the board of directors for making the “Y” available,” said Pawlowski. “I have been deeply involved in homelessness issues since my days in college, which is why I formed the Commission to End Chronic Homelessness. I would much rather see homeless citizens get into a structured environment that is offered by a number of providers in the city with open beds, but this generous gesture by the “Y” offers another opportunity so everyone can get inside on very cold nights.”

Lehigh County Executive Tom Muller said, "It's great that the "Y" is opening its doors to those who need help the most. The county Office of Emergency Management is looking further into what assistance it may be able to provide to the "Y" and other temporary shelters during this extremely cold period."

The Allentown YMCA-YWCA is located at 425 S. 15th Street.

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