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MASSACHUSETTS COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

Committed to ensuring that everyone has a place to call home

October 22, 2014

Important Housing Notice: Waiting List Openings for the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program

Families and individuals should apply on or before November 3rd to be considered.

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Greetings!

After months of advocacy, we were excited to see that this year's final state budget does indeed include increased resources for the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP), an important housing subsidy program of the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The budget includes a direct appropriation of \$65 million, with \$5.5 million in additional funds being channeled back into the program from unspent FY'14 resources. MRVP serves very low-income families, unaccompanied adults, and unaccompanied youth, and is central to the state's ability to address homelessness and housing insecurity.

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DHCD, in consultation with advocates and providers, has developed a plan to distribute these new MRVP resources. *As one part of this plan*, DHCD is "unfreezing" 783 mobile MRVP subsidies that previously were administered by local housing authorities (592 subsidies) and regional housing agencies (191 subsidies). The full plan also calls for the distribution of additional tenant-based vouchers, project-based subsidies, subsidies for participants of the Secure Jobs Program, and funds to preserve the affordability of existing units.

For the 191 mobile vouchers that will be unfrozen to be made available through regional housing agencies, DHCD is working with the providers to develop a new waiting list. **Applications for these subsidies are being taken only until Monday, November 3rd by six of the regional housing agencies.** We encourage you and anyone with whom you are working to spread the word about the waiting list opening.

We recommend that families and individuals apply to all six lists to maximize their chances of being selected for one of these currently available subsidies and for subsidies that may become available in the future.

Applications are available in English and Spanish [on the DHCD website](#), as well as in Haitian Creole, Chinese, and Khmer (not posted yet online, but available through DHCD or by emailing [Kelly](#)). We are checking to see if applications in additional languages such as Portuguese also will be made available.

Please see below for more specific details, directly from DHCD.

The Coalition welcomes this important development and will be working in the year ahead to further increase MRVP to better meet the needs of low-income households across the Commonwealth who are experiencing homelessness and housing instability. For FY'16, we are working once again with the Housing Solutions Campaign (led by Homes for Families and Citizens' Housing and Planning Association) to craft our public policy strategy. In a recent meeting, this group has agreed to a common budget request of \$100 million for the year ahead, so please stay tuned for more details and how you can get involved in this campaign.

Thank you!

-Kelly Turley
Director of Legislative Advocacy
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781-595-7570 x17

From DHCD:

NOTICE OF WAITING LIST OPENING

The state has recently made available funding for a limited amount of new Massachusetts Rental Program (MRVP) mobile vouchers. MRVP mobile vouchers provide rental assistance to low-income families and individuals who lease privately-owned apartments. A household pays at least 30 percent, but not more than 40 percent, of its income as rent plus any tenant-paid utilities. Housing agencies must first establish a waiting list from which applicants, who apply and are randomly assigned to the waiting list, will be selected to be screened for eligibility.

Six of the regional housing agencies will be accepting MRVP applications from Monday, October 6, 2014 to Monday, November 3, 2014. All applications must be received or postmarked no later than 5 p.m. on Monday, November 3, 2014. Late applications will not be accepted and will be returned to the applicant.

APPLICATIONS ARE ACCEPTED VIA U.S. MAIL OR

BY HAND DELIVERY TO EACH OFFICE. NO APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED BY FAX OR EMAIL.

Applicants are encouraged to use the printable PDF application document below. The applicant simply types in the required information and prints, signs, and submits to the appropriate agency. Applications must be complete to be processed and entered into the lottery. Applicants who are homeless may be eligible for a priority. The emergency application provides details on the definition of homeless priority, as well as the required documentation that must be submitted at the time of application in order to be considered for an emergency priority. Failure to provide a completed emergency application, with the required documentation, will result in the applicant being placed on the standard waiting list only.

Eligibility for MRVP includes an income limit set at 50 percent of area median income as well as criminal background screening for all household members, an asset test (assets cannot exceed 1.5 gross household income or \$15,000, whichever is greater) and documentation for all household members related to identification, income and assets.

For all reasonable accommodation requests including sign language interpreters, or the need for an interpretation or translations in a language other than English, please contact the respective agency.

Apply

To apply, fill out the [Universal STANDARD Application for State-Aided Public Housing, MRVP, & AHVP](#).

Homeless Applicants, use the [Universal Emergency Application for State-Aided Housing](#).

Provide completed applications, either in person or by mail, to the appropriate regional agency. Please see each agency websites for specific income limits and additional information related to submitting applications.

Community Teamwork, Inc.
155 Merrimack Street
Lowell, MA 01852
www.commteam.org

Housing Assistance Corp.
460 West Main Street
Hyannis, MA 02601
www.haconcapecod.org

HAPHousing
322 Main Street
Springfield, MA 01105
www.haphousing.org

Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership
125 Lincoln Street
Boston, MA 02111
www.mbhp.org

RCAP Solutions, Inc.
12 East Worcester Street
Worcester, MA 01604
www.rcapsolutions.org

South Middlesex Opportunity Council
7 Bishop Street
Framingham, MA 01702
www.smoc.org

Applications are being accepted until 5 p.m. on
November 3, 2014.

All timely applications will be entered into a lottery to
determine waiting list placement. Application date will not
affect placement on the waiting list.

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