



**SUPPORT PASSAGE OF
HOUSE DOCKET 2295
TO STRENGTHEN
EMERGENCY AID TO THE
ELDERLY, DISABLED
AND CHILDREN (EAEDC)**

**Please Cosponsor An Act Relative to Assisting Elders and
People with Disabilities in the Commonwealth (House Docket 2295 + Senate Docket to be determined)
Lead Sponsors: Representative Jim O'Day and Senator Patricia Jehlen**

What is EAEDC?

EAEDC is a state-funded cash assistance and benefits program providing support to approximately 22,000 extremely low-income individuals, administered by the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA).

Who is served by EAEDC?

- Extremely low-income adults 65 years of age or older who are in the process of applying for Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Adults experiencing a mental or physical disability that inhibits their ability to work for at least 60 days
- Participants in the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission's programs
- Certain caretakers of children who are not eligible to receive Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) program benefits or caretakers of adults with severe disabilities
- Lawfully present immigrants who are residents of Massachusetts

How would House Docket 2295 improve the EAEDC Program?

This bill would:

1. Increase the EAEDC grant: The typical monthly grant of \$303.70* has not been increased since 1988. While EAEDC is a vital lifeline for program participants, the benefit levels are very low. We are proposing to match the levels provided under the TAFDC program for households of comparable size, so that, for example, one person on EAEDC could receive up to \$428/month (with rent allowance).

2. Remove the shelter reduction/penalty for individuals experiencing homelessness: EAEDC program participants who are experiencing homelessness receive a reduced grant of only \$92.80 per month. This monthly grant is significantly lower than the current grant for individuals who have housing and clearly is insufficient to allow these participants to meet their basic needs. By eliminating this grant reduction, EAEDC participants experiencing homelessness (in or out of a shelter) will not be further financially disrupted and may be able to transition into a more stable living arrangement sooner.

3. Increase the allowable personal asset limit from \$250 to \$2,500: Letting an individual have more than \$250 in total monthly assets will allow more EAEDC participants to have assets and to move toward housing stability (by being better able to afford ongoing rent, first month's rent, last month's rent, and security deposit payments). The bill language also would exclude the first \$15,000 in a vehicle's value when determining the asset limit (as in the TAFDC program), so that more EAEDC applicants with cars can be approved—which is especially vital in areas with limited or no public transportation.

4. Create an annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) for EAEDC program participants: Building in a COLA so that DTA can provide increased benefits in response to the wider economic conditions would ensure that participants do not fall behind further economically from year-to-year.

*This is the amount provided to single individuals who are responsible for paying some monthly rent, known as "Living Arrangement A"

**For more information, please contact the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless:
Kelly Turley, Associate Director, kelly@mahomeless.org, 781-595-7570 x17
www.mahomeless.org**