

LINE ITEM 7004-9316

## RESIDENTIAL ASSISTANCE FOR FAMILIES IN TRANSITION

### HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION PROGRAM



**Strengthen the RAFT Homelessness Prevention Program in Fiscal Year 2019:  
Increase funding to help more low-income households avoid or exit homelessness**

The Residential Assistance for Families in Transition Program (RAFT, Line Item 7004-9316) is designed to allow eligible households to receive a maximum of \$4,000/year in flexible funds to help avoid or exit homelessness. Typical uses for RAFT include funds for rent, mortgage, or utility arrears, first and last months' rent, startup costs, moving expenses, related household expenses, and/or employment-related transportation costs. RAFT provides short-term financial assistance to households with incomes at or below 50% of area median income (AMI). At least 50% the funds are dedicated to households with incomes below 30% AMI. RAFT is a program of the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and is administered by 11 regional agencies across the Commonwealth.

For FY 2019, the Coalition and partners are asking the Legislature to deepen the overall investment in RAFT by increasing funding to \$18.5 million, up from the FY'18 funding level of \$15 million, and to maintain FY'17/FY'18 language that expanded the definition of family. We recommend that \$14.5 million be dedicated to families with dependent children under the age of 21, and \$4 million be dedicated to applicants who are eligible under the expanded definition of family included since FY'17, including elders, people with disabilities, unaccompanied youth, and families without dependent children.

- **With \$18.5 million in FY'19, an estimated 5,685 households would be able to receive immediate resources to prevent homelessness**, based on the average FY'17 RAFT expenditure of \$3,254/household (including the \$539 administrative fee per household approved).
- In FY'17, the RAFT program served 3,980 families and 124 individual households statewide.
- RAFT provides families with children with an alternative to entering the Emergency Assistance (EA) shelter system. An added benefit of the program is that it also helps to stabilize families in need whose incomes, although very low, make them ineligible for shelter.
- RAFT continues to be a flexible tool for households with low incomes, helps households avoid or exit homelessness, and plays an important role in the Commonwealth's comprehensive approach to upstream homelessness prevention.

**Please actively support increasing RAFT funding to \$18.5 million and maintaining expanded eligibility language for FY'19 to help more families and individuals across the Commonwealth to have a safe, stable place to call home.**

For more information, please contact the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless: Tina Giarla, [tina@mahomeless.org](mailto:tina@mahomeless.org), 781-595-7570 x16 or Kelly Turley, [kelly@mahomeless.org](mailto:kelly@mahomeless.org), x17 or the Regional Housing Network of Massachusetts: Maureen Fitzgerald, [mfitzgerald@regionalhousing.net](mailto:mfitzgerald@regionalhousing.net), 617-367-9798.



## FY'19 Organizational Endorsers:

Action Inc.  
AIDS Action Committee  
Allston Brighton Health Collaborative  
Arise for Social Justice  
Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC)  
Boston Center for Independent Living  
Boston Homeless Solidarity Committee  
Boston Tenant Coalition  
Brandeis University Waltham - Hunger and Homelessness Division  
Bridge Over Troubled Waters  
Catholic Charities Worcester County  
Citizens' Housing and Planning Association  
City Mission  
Community Action Agency of Somerville, Inc.  
Community Action Inc. of Haverhill  
Ecumenical Social Action Committee  
Family Promise North Shore Boston  
Father Bill's & MainSpring  
First Church Shelter  
Friends of the Homeless North Weymouth  
Habitat for Humanity North Shore  
Haley House  
Harvard Square Homeless Shelter  
HomeStart  
Housing Families Inc.  
Justice Resource Institute - Youth Harbors  
Lowell Transitional Living Center  
Luk, Inc.  
Lynn Economic Opportunity (LEO)  
Lynn Housing and Neighborhood Development  
Lynn Shelter Association  
Massachusetts Alliance of HUD Tenants  
Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless  
Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance  
Massachusetts Senior Action Council  
MetroWest Legal Services  
Mission and Justice Ministry of Park Ave Congregational Church UCC  
My Brothers Table  
North Shore Coalition for Peace and Justice  
Peabody Housing Authority  
Pine Street Inn  
Plymouth Taskforce to End Homelessness  
Poor Peoples United Fund  
On the Rise, Inc.

Regional Housing Network of Massachusetts

- Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority  
Berkshire Housing Development Corporation
- Community Teamwork, Inc.
- Franklin County Housing & Redevelopment Authority
- Housing Assistance Corporation
- Metro Housing Boston
- RCAP Solutions, Inc.
- South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc.
- Housing Solutions for Southeastern MA
- WayFinders

Rosie's Place  
Samaritans Steps  
Somerville Homeless Coalition  
South Coast Regional Network to End Homelessness  
St. Francis House  
The Psychological Center

- Pegasus House
- Daybreak Shelter
- Women's View

Those Who Can, For Those in Need  
Women's Lunch Place  
Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness

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