

Support families and children experiencing homelessness and protect their right to shelter

PROTECT
OUR FAMILY
Shelter
SYSTEM

PROTECT
FAMILIES'
RIGHT
TO SHELTER

Pushing Families
Out of State -
WRONG in FL.
WRONG IN TX.
WRONG IN MA

Make your voice heard!



Help us fight for a Massachusetts that protects children and families experiencing homelessness: Contact the State Legislature today!

Here is a sample script:

"Hello, my name is [your name] and I live in [city/town]. I am asking you to act quickly to protect children and families experiencing homelessness by supporting the Emergency Assistance shelter system. Please:

- *Swiftly provide the \$425 million in supplemental funding needed to keep family shelters open*
- *Reject the Governor's proposals to further limit shelter stays to 6 months, cut extension opportunities, impose stricter residency requirements, and exclude many immigrant families who otherwise meet strict shelter eligibility requirements*
- *Preserve presumptive eligibility, which gives families temporary access to shelter while they gather documents to prove ongoing eligibility*
- *Strengthen support for families leaving shelter, including by increasing HomeBASE rehousing resources*

Contact information:

- Senate President Karen Spilka: 617-722-1500
- Speaker of the House Ron Mariano: 617-722-2500
- Find out who your State Senator and State Rep are:
<https://malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator>
- Call them via the State House switchboard: 617-722-2000

Find Your Legislators



You can also call Governor Maura Healey (617-725-4005) and ask her to protect children and families experiencing homelessness. We should not force children and parents to sleep on the street!

To stay informed on future actions: <https://tinyurl.com/ea-event-rsvp>

For more information, please contact:

Kelly: kelly@mahomeless.org or Andrea: apark@mlri.org

Stay Up-to-Date



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What is going on?

For over 40 years, the Emergency Assistance (EA) shelter program has provided shelter and services to eligible Massachusetts children and families experiencing homelessness. This program represents a commitment to protect children and families in the greatest need. Since November 2023, new policies from the Governor and Legislature have chipped away at access to shelter.

Recent shelter restrictions are forcing more children, parents, and pregnant people with nowhere to sleep into unsafe places; increasing unsheltered homelessness; and disproportionately harming immigrant families. Additional proposed changes will further perpetuate discrimination, inequality, and trauma to children and families. Limiting access to the EA program will not solve the Commonwealth's underlying housing crisis.

What policies have changed so far?

Nov. 2023: Cap on shelter placements & waiting list for eligible families

April 2024: 9-month time limit on Emergency Assistance shelter stays

Dec. 2024: 30-day "rapid" shelter limit for many families, with **no** possibility of remaining on the waiting list for EA shelter

What are the proposed changes?

- **Reduce the length of stay limit** from 9 months to 6 months and eliminate most extension possibilities
- Allow state officials to **remove an unlimited number of families** from EA shelter, by removing the weekly cap on terminations
- Impose a **statutory residency requirement**
- **Eliminate presumptive eligibility** and require complete documentation at the time of application
- **Exclude many immigrant families** who otherwise meet strict shelter eligibility requirements

Facts about Emergency Assistance (EA) Shelter



EA shelter is **only** available to eligible households with children, or people about to have a baby who have no place to sleep. *Every household in EA shelter includes at least one child or pregnant person.*



EA shelter has strict eligibility rules to get in and remain in shelter, including regular meetings and room inspections.



EA is not a migrant shelter system. EA was created to be a safety net for children and their families in Massachusetts, **including** immigrant families.



The current time limits on EA shelter are already forcing children and families back onto the street before they can secure housing. This puts children at risk of harm and will cost taxpayers and communities more money.