

**Please Ask Your State Senator to Cosponsor and Actively Support Amendment #603 from Senator Payano to Clarify the Start Date for Emergency Assistance Family Shelter Time Limits**  
**Help Ensure Children and Families Have the Additional Time Needed to Secure Housing before Losing Vital Shelter Benefits**

**Late April**

The House and Senate pass the FY24 supplemental budget on April 25th. It includes language to limit how long families can stay in the Emergency Assistance (EA) family shelter program, as well as funding to continue basic shelter operations and to increase supports and services for families.

Governor Healey signs the FY24 supplemental budget into law on April 30th, and it becomes Chapter 88 of the Acts of 2024.

The new law will limit EA shelter stays to 9 months, with the possibility of two 90-day extensions and hardship waivers for eligible families.

**Early May**

The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) informs families, shelter providers, and other stakeholders that they will apply the 9-month time limit retroactively.

See <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/ea-emergency-family-shelter-length-of-stay-policy#what-date-will-be-used-to-start-counting-a-family%E2%80%99s-9-months-in-shelter?>

**May 10th**

Senator Payano files Amendment #603, Clarifying Time Limit Implementation Date for Family Shelter. This amendment would add an outside section to the FY25 budget to clarify that EOHLC should not consider EA benefits received prior to June 1, 2024 in calculating participants' eligibility for ongoing EA shelter benefits.

**\*Now\***

**Please ask your State Senator to cosponsor and actively support Amendment #603 to the FY25 Senate budget to ensure that all families in EA shelter are able to remain in shelter for at least 9 additional months, if needed, and have the opportunity to access the enhanced services and supports funded by the Legislature in the FY24 supplemental budget.**

**June 1st**

The new time limit will go into effect on June 1st. Without legislative clarification, EOHLC will begin to issue notices to thousands of families reaching the 9-month time limit, notifying them that their EA benefits may be terminated in 90 days.

This will be before many families are able to access the enhanced services and supports funded by the Legislature through the FY24 supplemental budget.

**September 1st**

Without legislative clarification, the first families will be forced to leave shelter on/around September 1st if they don't qualify for extensions. For many families, this will be before securing long-term housing and right at the start of the new school year.

**For more information, please contact Kelly Turley, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, [kelly@mahomeless.org](mailto:kelly@mahomeless.org), and/or Andrea Park, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, [apark@mlri.org](mailto:apark@mlri.org).**