



MASSACHUSETTS COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

Committed to ensuring that everyone has a place to call home

Take Action to Codify and Improve the HomeBASE Family Rehousing Program

Please cosponsor and actively support [House Bill 1297](#) and [Senate Bill 890](#), An Act promoting housing stability for families by strengthening the HomeBASE program

Sponsored by Representative Christine Barber and Senator Liz Miranda

What is HomeBASE?

HomeBASE is a short-term transitional housing program that provides families that are eligible for Emergency Assistance shelter with \$20,000 over 24 months to be used for monthly help with rent, initial move-in costs, and/or resources to purchase basic furnishings, in tandem with case management and rehousing supports. Families can elect to use HomeBASE when initially applying to shelter or as a tool to exit shelter. HomeBASE allows families to transition away from and out of shelter by providing resources as a pathway to stable housing. HomeBASE is a program of the Department of Housing and Community Development, funded via line item 7004-0108.

What needs to be fixed in HomeBASE?

HomeBASE currently is not codified in state statute, leaving it vulnerable to yearly budget whims. Currently, participants can receive up to 24 months of HomeBASE benefits, without explicit opportunities for further extensions. This means that families with children that are stably housed with HomeBASE can lose that support and end up being evicted or back in shelter after exhausting the \$20,000 in HomeBASE benefits, even though evictions and shelter stays are more costly emotionally, physically, socially, and economically. The goal should be to always preserve stable housing, especially during the recovery period from the COVID-19 pandemic, which will last for years to come.

How can we fix HomeBASE?

This bill would put the HomeBASE program into state statute, direct the Department of Housing and Community Development to provide renewals of HomeBASE rental assistance to families and children who otherwise would be facing a return to homelessness after the first 24 months in the program, and increase the maximum benefit levels to \$30,000 over the first 24 months and \$15,000 in subsequent renewal periods. If such changes were implemented, more families would be able to remain stably housed, and the HomeBASE program would be strengthened.

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Who has cosponsored the HomeBASE bill?

As of May 18th, the bill has been sponsored or cosponsored by Representatives Barber (sponsor), Cahill, Garry, Higgins, Howard, LeBoeuf, Montañó, O'Day, Sabadosa, and Vitolo, and Senators Miranda (sponsor), DiDomenico, Eldridge, Jehlen, Moore, Moran, Rausch, and Tarr.

Which organizations have endorsed the HomeBASE bill?

As of June 2nd, the bill has been endorsed by organizations across the Commonwealth, including Abby's House, Alliance of Cambridge Tenants (ACT), Allston Brighton Health Collaborative, Arise for Social Justice, Berkshire Housing, Brazilian Women's Group, Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance, Central West Justice Center, Community Action Agency of Somerville, Inc., Disability Law Center, DOVE (Domestic Violence Ended), Inc., Economic Mobility Pathways (EMPath), Essex County Community Organization, Family Promise North Shore Boston, Friends of Boston's Homeless, Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS), Grow Food Northampton, Homes for Families, Housing Families Inc., Housing Greenfield, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Mass Senior Action Council, MLPB, My Life My Choice, Northeast Justice Center, One Family, Rosie's Place, Safe Passage, South Shore Resource and Advocacy Center, Temple Sinai of Sharon, Inc., The Center for Teen Empowerment, and Western MA Network to End Homelessness.

Please cosponsor and actively support [House Bill 1297](#) and [Senate Bill 890](#) to permanently establish and improve the HomeBASE Family Rehousing Program!

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

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