

Commonwealth of Massachusetts



## **Emergency Assistance Program**

Fiscal Year 2016, Fourth Quarterly Report

Department of Housing and Community Development

August 4, 2016



**Department of Housing and Community Development**  
**EA Legislative Report**  
**Quarter 4, SFY 2016**

In FY16, the EA system experienced a sustained caseload decrease with the daily number of families staying in shelter and hotels/motels dropping by 728 families from 4,528 at the end of June 2015 to 3,800 at the end of June 2016 (a 16 percent decline). This is largest annual decrease in the EA caseload since the program's creation and the largest percentage decrease in over ten years. The subset of families staying in overflow hotel/motels dropped from 1,261 at the end of June 2015 to 440 by the end of June 2016 (-65%), ending the fiscal year with the hotel/motel caseload at its lowest level since August 2008.

During Quarter 4, 2,253 families applied for EA, only two percent more than the previous quarter (2,207 families) but 21 percent fewer families compared to FY15 Quarter 4. 980 families were placed in EA shelters or hotels/motels during Quarter 4, one percent fewer than the previous quarter (992 families) and 19 percent fewer families than were placed in FY15 Quarter 4. Also in FY16 Quarter 4, 212 EA eligible families were diverted from shelter with HomeBASE Household Assistance, a flexible benefit to help them retain their current housing or support them in seeking alternative housing. This represented 18 percent of families entering the system.

The Boston regional eligibility office continued to serve as the entry point for the greatest number of families placed in shelters or hotels/motels, 315 families in Quarter 4, 32 percent of all placements, followed by the Springfield and Brockton offices, respectively, accounting for 18 percent and 9 percent of placements.

Fifty-one percent of families entering EA shelters and hotels/motels were eligible due to a health and safety risk, while domestic violence was the reason for homelessness for 16 percent of families, eviction for 13 percent, and threatened eviction for another 12 percent. Of those families experiencing a health and safety risk, 52 percent qualified for EA because they were in irregular housing situations. Twenty-eight percent reported living in situations not meant for human habitation, and seven percent were homeless due to conditions in their housing units. Another 13 percent of families entering an EA shelter or hotel/motel during Quarter 4 were experiencing health and safety problems related to their hosts' behavior (violent conduct, substance abuse, or mental illness).

During Quarter 4, 1,130 families exited the EA system. 592 (52 percent) of these families left an EA shelter or hotel/motel with HomeBASE Household Assistance.

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**EA Applications and Entries**

<b>All Applications</b>	<b>SFY 2016 Quarter 4</b>	<b>Previous Quarter</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>SFY 2016 Total</b>
Families Applying to EA	2,253	2,207	693	771	883	8,923
Families Entering Shelter and Hotel/Motels or Diverted with HomeBASE Household Assistance	1,192	1,448	463	367	362	5,609
Families Entering Shelter & Hotels	980	1,040	332	319	329	4,286
% Entering Shelter or Hotels/Motels	82%	72%	72%	87%	91%	76%
Families Diverted with HomeBASE HA	212	408	131	48	33	1,323
% Entering HomeBASE	18%	28%	28%	13%	9%	24%

**Note:** Families applying for EA are an unduplicated count. Since families may apply multiple times, the sum of monthly data do not equal the quarterly total.

**Sources:** DHCD Placement Unit Daily Entry Data and Tracker.

**EA Health & Safety Assessments**

	<b>SFY 2016 Quarter 4</b>	<b>Previous Quarter</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>SFY 2016 Total</b>
H&S Assessments Conducted by DCF	602	594	173	217	212	2,969
Families Determined at Risk	494	489	150	179	165	2,101
% Referrals at Risk	82%	82%	87%	82%	78%	71%
Shelter Diversions	108	105	23	38	47	868
% Referrals Diverted	18%	18%	13%	18%	22%	29%

**Source:** DCF Monthly Homeless H&S Assessment Reports.

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**EA Shelter Entries by Region**

Regional Office	SFY 2016 Quarter 4		Previous Quarter	SFY 2016			SFY 2016 Total	
	# Families	% of Total		Apr	May	Jun	# Families	% of Total
<b>All Offices</b>	<b>980</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>4,286</b>	<b>100%</b>
Boston	315	32%	378	115	100	100	1,567	37%
Brockton	84	9%	96	33	23	28	353	8%
Fall River	22	2%	16	11	7	4	86	2%
Fitchburg	13	1%	9	3	9	1	46	1%
Framingham	21	2%	16	6	7	8	79	2%
Greenfield	5	1%	4	1	2	2	38	1%
Holyoke	1	<1%	3	1	0	0	66	2%
Hyannis	14	1%	11	4	5	5	66	2%
Lawrence	53	5%	48	20	12	21	225	5%
Lowell	29	3%	44	9	9	11	169	4%
Malden	8	1%	1	6	0	2	37	1%
New Bedford	31	3%	26	13	11	7	109	3%
North Shore/Salem	64	7%	52	17	28	19	218	5%
Pittsfield/North Adams	7	1%	2	3	3	1	14	<1%
Plymouth	0	0%	3	0	0	0	12	<1%
Revere/Chelsea	75	8%	78	20	25	30	359	8%
Southbridge	7	1%	0	1	3	3	15	<1%
Springfield	173	18%	159	48	62	63	609	14%
Taunton	6	1%	6	4	0	2	26	1%
Worcester	52	5%	40	17	13	22	192	4%

Source: DHCD Placement Unit Daily Entry Data.

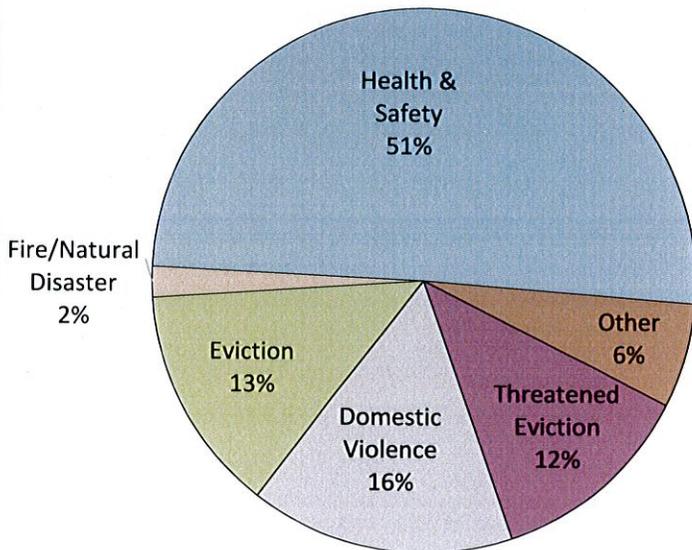
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**Reason for Homelessness,  
Families Entering Shelter and Hotels/Motels**

Reason for Homelessness	SFY 2016 Quarter 4		Previous Quarter	SFY 2016			SFY 2016 Total	
	# Families	% of Total		Apr	May	Jun	# Families	% of Total
<b>Total</b>	<b>980</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>4,286</b>	<b>100%</b>
Domestic Violence	154	16%	134	58	53	43	569	13%
Eviction	132	13%	128	43	48	41	569	13%
Fire/Natural Disaster	18	2%	16	5	5	8	75	2%
Health & Safety	495	51%	548	157	166	172	2,317	54%
Threatened Eviction	120	12%	83	42	32	46	425	10%
Other	61	6%	83	27	15	19	331	8%

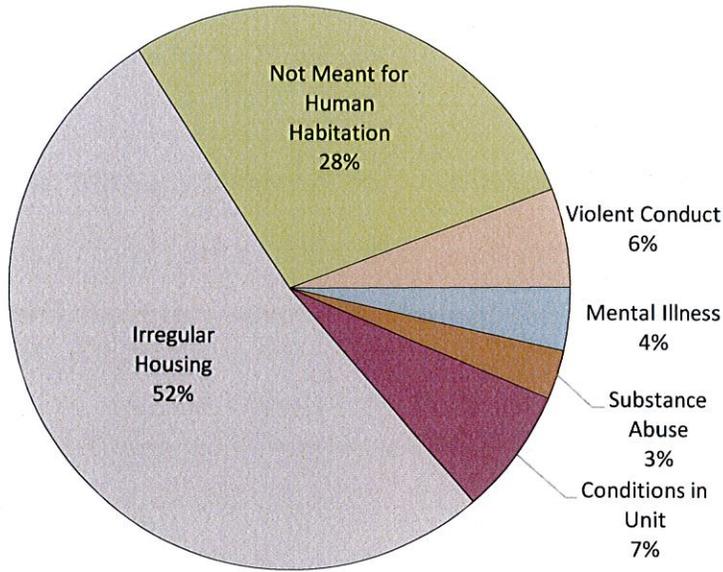
**Note:** Data includes families placed in an EA shelters or hotels/motels who declined their placements.  
**Source:** DHCD Placement Unit data.

**Reasons for Homelessness  
Quarter 4, SFY 2016**



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**Health & Safety Reasons  
Quarter 4, SFY 2016**



**Shelter and Hotel/Motel Exits**

Shelter and Hotel/Motel Exits	Quarter 4	Previous Quarter	SFY 2016			SFY 2016 Total	
			Apr	May	Jun	# Families	% Exits
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,130</b>	<b>1,228</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>4,715</b>	<b>100%</b>
Abandoned	107	128	41	32	34	505	11%
Criminal Activity	2	2	1	1	0	16	<1%
Feasible Alternative Housing with HB	592	683	193	181	218	2,412	51%
Feasible Alternative Housing without HB	210	201	81	57	72	859	18%
Ineligible	22	20	8	7	7	98	2%
No Show/Rejected Placement	7	21	2	3	2	60	1%
Non-compliance	28	13	9	7	12	85	2%
Temporary Shelter Interruption	83	76	27	26	30	336	7%
Other/Unknown	79	84	26	23	30	344	6%

**Notes:**

Families receiving a Temporary Shelter Interruption may return to the system within 30 days.

Families terminated from shelter for abandoning their placements or non-compliance may return to the system pending an appeal.

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**EA Shelter and Hotel/Motel Caseload**

Daily Utilization by Shelter Type	Quarter 4, SFY 2016	
	# of Families	% of Total Daily Caseload
Shelter	3,360	88%
Hotels/Motels	440	12%
<b>All Families</b>	<b>3,800</b>	<b>100%</b>
Caseload Difference from Previous Quarter	-133	
% Change from Previous Quarter	-3.4%	

**Note:** Data indicate the number of families in EA shelter or hotels/motels at the end of the quarter.

**Length of Stay and Cost of Families Exiting EA During Quarter 4**

	Min.	Max.	Average
Days in EA Shelter or Hotels/Motels	1	1,552	324
Cost Per Episode	\$117	\$181,584	\$37,908

**Notes:**

Cost per episode assumes an average daily rate of \$117 (the weighted average of the shelter and hotel/motel rates).  
The average daily rate includes additional costs incurred through housing stabilization and services coordination provided to families in EA.

**HomeBASE Caseload**

Type of Assistance	Number of Families
Household Assistance	4,207

**Note:** Data indicate families active in the HomeBASE program during July 2016.