

FY 2013 MRVP Announcement

The Patrick-Murray Administration is committed to strengthening the way in which the state responds to homelessness and affordable housing in Massachusetts. Accordingly, in Governor Patrick's FY 13 budget proposal, he targeted expanded resources for the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP) to increase the supply of rental vouchers for low income and homeless families. The \$6M increase to the MRVP program is an integral aspect of the Administration's Emergency Assistance and Housing First Reform agenda which was developed through the budget process with partners in the legislature.

Utilizing this expanded MRVP resource, DHCD will be allocating approximately 550 new vouchers to homeless families who were in the shelter system prior to June 30, 2012, with the goal of reducing the hotel/motel population and to provide permanent housing solutions for extremely low-income families. The vouchers will be allocated in two forms: approximately 400 mobile vouchers and 150 project-based supported housing vouchers. The total number of new vouchers is approximated because the actual number will depend on the date each individual voucher is issued and the actual cost of each voucher which will vary by regional rental market.

The 400 mobile vouchers will be allocated regionally according to the number of families in the EA system and be issued to priority families using the following eligibility criteria: 1) Family must have entered the EA shelter system between October 29th, 2011 and June 30th, 2012, 2) Family earns income below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, and 3) Priority will be given to families who have at least one disabled member in the household.

The 150 project-based vouchers will be allocated through a competitive state-wide RFP process and help to expand the supply of supported housing for homeless families that have multiple barriers to access or sustain housing. The RFP was developed with input from program stakeholders and will be posted in mid-September.

To allow for the targeting of this limited resource to homeless families who have a disabled member in the household and/or have multiple housing barriers, the agency has filed an emergency regulation change on September 10, 2012. The regulation change is limited to the net new resources.

DHCD staff has trained the staff that will administer the new targeting procedures and will be closely monitoring the implementation to ensure that the new regulations are being implemented consistently.

If you have any questions about the MRVP program or to the regulation changes, please do not hesitate to reach out to Ellen Ward at 617-573-1153. Throughout this process we will continue to engage with our legislative partners to carry out these meaningful reforms.