



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING &
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Deval L. Patrick, Governor ♦ Timothy P. Murray, Lt. Governor ♦ Gregory Bialecki, Secretary, EOHEd

**HomeBASE Program
Notice 2011-04**

To: HomeBASE Administering Agencies
From: Lizbeth Heyer, Associate Director, Division of Public Housing & Rental Assistance
Robert Pulster, Associate Director, Division of Housing Stabilization
Subject: **HomeBASE Temporary Accommodations Protocol**
Date: September 20, 2011

In response to unanticipated demand, DHCD is issuing new guidance for the administration of HomeBASE Temporary Accommodations Placement (TAP). HomeBASE Administering Agencies (HBAA) should carefully review the policy and procedures below and ensure that it is distributed immediately to staff and subcontracting agencies working at the front door in DHCD offices. This new policy will take intense coordination between DHCD and HomeBASE staff to make sure that families are correctly informed of the availability, or lack thereof, of TAP units so they make informed and accurate choices.

This policy is effective immediately.

Policy

1. All HomeBASE Administering Agencies will retain their current TAP units and fill them upon turnover. This includes only TAP units for which the HBAA currently holds a lease. HBAA's should not be using hotel placements as TAP units. DHCD will evaluate, on a case-by-case basis whether additional TAP units (beyond those stated in the contract) are necessary in certain regions and authorize additional units if necessary. HomeBASE TAP units will continue to be paid for with HomeBASE resources.
2. When a HBAA does not have any TAP units available, families needing TAP will be placed in EA shelter and become shelter clients. Such families entering EA shelters will lose their HomeBASE status and need to wait like all other shelter families for their HomeBASE placement, which will primarily be based on length of stay. Families entering shelter who would have otherwise received a HomeBASE TAP unit but for the lack of availability will be placed in EA shelter at the expense of EA.
3. When there are no available TAP units, the family will be offered the chance to remain a HomeBASE client and wait where they are for their HomeBASE benefit. If they choose to do so, and are able to do so safely, they will be advised when TAP resources are available for their use or when HomeBASE household assistance or rental assistance will be available to them. In the meanwhile, if their situation changes and they need immediate shelter, they should return to the TAO for an EA shelter placement.

Procedures

1. The HomeBASE Administering Agency will communicate with DHCD Homeless Coordinators and/or Regional Directors on a daily basis (likely in the mornings) of the availability of TAP units.
2. Families will continue to see a HomeBASE staff member for the prevention pre-screen.
3. EA applicants will be referred to the Homeless Coordinator for EA eligibility determination.
4. EA-approved families who are HomeBASE eligible and are not in need of a TAP will proceed to HomeBASE for a benefits assessment.
5. The DHCD Homeless Coordinator will notify HomeBASE-eligible clients in need of TAP of their options:
 - a. If a TAP unit is available, the family will be referred to HomeBASE for placement.
 - b. If NO TAP unit is available and the family is unable to secure a temporary short-term accommodation on their own, the family will be offered an EA shelter placement through the EA program. Once in an EA shelter, the family will be re-housed through HomeBASE in the future.
 - c. If the family is able to secure safe, short-term, temporary accommodations with friends, relatives, etc., the family will continue to work with HomeBASE at that time.
6. EA eligible families needing immediate shelter will be placed by the DHCD/DHS Placement Unit.
 - a. These families must complete and sign all EA shelter forms (HMNT, Uniform Shelter Rules, etc.) with the DHCD Homeless Coordinator.
 - b. Homeless Coordinators will send placement forms to the DHCD/DHS Placement Unit with the box checked off for “HomeBASE Eligible Family. This would indicate that the family would have been placed in HomeBASE but for the lack of availability of TAP so that DHCD can track these numbers.

As always, we appreciate your efforts, feedback and flexibility and appreciate your flexibility as we make continued improvements to HomeBASE. If you have any questions regarding this notice, please contact Brendan Goodwin at 617-573-1210 or by email at brendan.goodwin@state.ma.us.