



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

Deval L. Patrick, Governor ♦ Aaron Gornstein, Undersecretary

## Public Housing Notice 2013-22

To: All Local Housing Authority Executive Directors  
From: Lizbeth Heyer  
Re: Health and Safety Initiative for FY14  
Date: September 26, 2013

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We are happy to announce that DHCD is again making capital funds available to Local Housing Authorities (LHAs) for addressing health and safety hazards in *site and common areas*. Last year, we granted Health and Safety Initiative awards to 182 LHAs, which led to the correction of more than 400 deficiencies. This year, we will award another \$3M to LHAs for these same purposes.

This initiative is a priority due to increasing liability expenses. LHAs should take this opportunity to proactively examine properties for potential hazards and apply for funding to correct them before injury occurs. Our goal is to minimize risks to the health and safety of residents, staff, and visitors. As a self-insured agency, this is good business practice for all. Awards will be granted for capital projects that:

- If *not* completed, **could put the LHA (and indirectly DHCD) at risk** for future liability claims;
- Require **between \$1,000 and \$25,000** in capital funds; and
- Can be fully **completed by June 30, 2014**.

Like last year, awards will not carry over into FY15, so all projects must be completed by the June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline. All unspent funds will be returned to DCHD at end of the fiscal year. This initiative is specifically targeting the following types of work:

- Eliminating on-site trip and fall hazards, such as: damaged stair treads and nosing, damaged front & rear thresholds, pot holes in driveway areas or walkways, and ponding areas that lead to water & ice build-up;
- Replacing damaged, loose, or missing handrails;
- Replacing on-site public safety lighting;
- Removing trees or large tree limbs near buildings or power lines;
- Replacing windows with damaged balances; and
- Replacing broken or inoperable door closers that lead to slamming doors.

In order to be considered for an FY14 Health and Safety Initiative award, LHAs must complete the attached worksheet and submit it electronically to Amy Stitely ([amy.stitely@state.ma.us](mailto:amy.stitely@state.ma.us)). **Submissions are due by Monday, October 21, 2013 at 5pm**. Late submissions will be reviewed, as funding permits. **LHAs must be fully on track to spend formula funding per their capital improvement plan in order to receive an award.**

If you have a capital project that supports the health and safety of residents, but is not described above, you may still submit this item in your application for consideration. However, the DHCD Facilities Management Specialists will be reviewing all proposed projects to verify that they fall within the definition of a true health and safety liability. Since DCHD is funding this initiative through the Capital Bond Account, all projects must qualify as bond-funded, capital expenses. (See [Public Housing Notice 2012-12](#), dated 12/28/2012, for detailed criteria.) If you need further guidance on project eligibility, please contact one of the DHCD Facilities Management Specialists:

James Marathas, Director of Facilities Management	781-858-4008
Bruce McCarrier, Facility Management Specialist	617-791-3491

For planning purposes, **LHAs should anticipate a maximum award that is equal to \$100 per state subsidized unit.** For instance, if an LHA has 450 units of state public housing, then that LHA could expect to get up to \$45,000 (450 X 100) in funding. That said, DHCD has the discretion to award more or less than that amount depending on the situation. **LHAs should, therefore, be sure to list all potential projects on their submission sheet and rank them by priority level. A priority of '1' denotes highest importance, and the total cost of 'priority 1' projects should not exceed the \$100 per unit limit.**

Funds awarded through this initiative will be in addition to an LHA's formula funding allocation and cap share. Health and Safety Initiative funding can not to be applied toward capital projects that are already covered through current formula funding. DHCD will enter all Health and Safety projects in the Capital Planning System (CPS) and will update capital improvement plans to reflect awards and projects. As is the case for all projects, LHAs must close the project and update components in CPS once the job is complete.

As always, LHAs must implement capital improvement projects in accordance with all applicable statutes, rules, and regulations. We encourage LHAs to utilize the [DHCD Small Projects Guide](#). This guide offers step-by-step instructions on how to implement projects with construction costs that are below \$25,000.