



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

Deval L. Patrick, Governor ♦ Aaron Gornstein, Undersecretar

Public Housing Notice 2013-25

To: All Local Housing Authority Executive Directors

From: Lizbeth Heyer, Associate Director, Division of Public Housing and Rental Assistance

Subject: Vacant Unit Turnover Initiative

Date: October 3, 2013

We are happy to announce, for the third year in a row, DHCD will be awarding funds to LHAs to assist in the cost of re-occupying vacant state-aided public housing units. Last year's vacant unit turnover initiative resulted in LHAs successfully turning over and occupying 214 units that had been vacant greater than 60 days. This year, DHCD will dedicate another \$2 million to assist in re-occupying elderly, handicapped and family state-aided public housing units that:

- Have been vacant for over 60 days (first day of vacancy was July 31, 2013 or earlier).
- Require capital repairs with cost estimates between \$3,500 and \$25,000; and
- Can complete turnover by June 30th, 2014.

The scope of work for each unit must address capital repairs needed to accomplish turnover. If the work proposed is within the limits of a routine turnover (such as cleaning, painting, or refinishing surfaces or repairing appliances), then it will not be eligible for funding under this program unless those items represent less than 15% of the estimated turnover cost. For clarification of allowable uses for bond and operating funds, please refer to [Public Housing Notice 2012-22](#).

The funds dedicated to turnover costs will provide LHAs with tools and funding to more quickly house eligible elderly, handicapped and family households. Furthermore, the funds will help ensure the successful implementation of our vacancy policy, which took effect in January 2013. This new policy no longer provides full subsidy for units vacant for more than 60 days without a DHCD-approved waiver. Please make sure you are following the vacancy policy regarding all units vacant more than 60 days. We urge you to seek out this re-occupancy funding if it will help bring your units into compliance (for further details regarding the vacancy policy see [Public Housing Notice 2012-11](#)).

To be considered for this funding, LHAs must complete the provided worksheet which requires identification of the unit, an estimated scope of work, an estimated cost, and a proposed schedule. Please include architect's and/or engineer's design fees in the proposed budget. LHAs that do not use the attached spreadsheet will not be considered for funding. LHAs should submit the spreadsheet electronically to Juliana Gamble at juliana.gamble@state.ma.us by **Tuesday, October 22, 2013**. Late submissions will be reviewed, as funding permits.

In order to receive payment, all work must be completed by Monday, June 30, 2014, and all invoices received by DHCD by July 18, 2014.

Funds awarded for this purpose will be in addition to an LHA's formula funding allocation and cap share. Please note that DHCD will be reviewing operating reserve levels before making any awards. DHCD will enter all Vacant Unit Initiative 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.

In addition, to be eligible for this funding, LHAs must be up to date on their reporting submissions, including the Quarterly Report on Occupancy/Vacancy and the on-line vacancy ledger. If you need assistance with either maintaining your on-line vacancy ledger system to ensure it is current or submitting your most recent Quarterly Report on Occupancy/Vacancy, please contact your Housing Management Specialist.

LHAs that receive these funds are responsible for implementing the projects according to applicable statutes and regulations. We encourage LHAs to utilize the DHCD Small Projects Guide which contains step-by-step instructions for projects with construction costs under \$25,000. The guide will ensure that the projects are done efficiently, cost-effectively and according to the applicable statutes, rules and regulations. LHAs can find the guide on DHCD's Small Projects web page, <http://www.mass.gov/hed/housing/ph-mod/0-25000-dhcd-small-projects-guide.html>. Thank you for your attention to this important and exciting opportunity and we look forward to another successful initiative occupying vacant units.