



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

Charles D. Baker, Governor ◆ Karyn E. Polito, Lieutenant Governor ◆ Janelle Chan, Undersecretary

## Public Housing Notice 2019-12

To: Local Housing Authority Executive Director  
From: Amy Stitely, Associate Director, Division of Public Housing  
Date: April 29, 2019  
Re: **Clarifications of the Regulatory Definition of “Homeless Applicant”**

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The online Common Housing Application for Massachusetts Public-Housing (CHAMP) has launched, and DHCD has promulgated the corresponding emergency Eligibility and Selection Criteria regulation at 760 CMR 5.00. Recognizing that CHAMP and the new regulation contain terminology changes, DHCD is issuing this PHN to reiterate DHCD policy regarding the definition of “Homeless Applicant” contained in the regulation at 760 CMR 5.03. Please note that although the terminology and procedures have changed with the CHAMP rollout, DHCD policy has remained the same as follows:

- 1. Temporary or transitional rental assistance to applicants does not affect an applicant’s eligibility for Housing Situation Priority status.** For many years, the annual state budget has contained a requirement that applicants for public housing will remain eligible for priority status notwithstanding the receipt of temporary rental assistance in the form of state or federal subsidies. Applicants who are participating in such programs, including RAFT and HomeBase, will retain or be granted priority status if the LHA determines that the applicant was displaced from their primary residence because of a Housing Situation as set out in the DHCD Housing Situation Priority Policy. LHAs should continue to process the application in accordance with current procedures to determine whether the applicant is eligible and qualified for housing.
- 2. Living in a nursing home, hospital or other long term care facility does not affect an applicant’s eligibility for Housing Situation Priority status.** Applicants who are living in long term care facilities will retain or be granted priority status if the LHA determines that the applicant was displaced from their primary residence because of a Housing Situation such as a Severe Medical Emergency as set out in the DHCD Housing Situation Priority Policy. LHAs should continue to process the application in accordance with current procedures to determine whether the applicant is eligible and qualified for housing.

3. **Applicants who are living in a temporary residence, including participants in a temporary rental assistance program or patients in a long term care facility, may choose either the location of their temporary residence or the residence from which they were displaced as the residence for which they will receive local resident preference.**
  
4. **LHAs should deny or revoke priority status to an application where the applicant has obtained permanent housing of appropriate size for the applicant family.** Permanent housing includes tenancies at will or under lease that are entered into by the applicant. Permanent housing does not include housing occupied pursuant to a temporary homeless program or nursing homes, hospitals or long term care facilities.

Please contact your DHCD Housing Management Specialist if you have any questions about this PHN.