



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

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

Public Housing Notice 2019-23

To: Local Housing Authorities

From: Amy Stitely, Associate Director, Division of Public Housing

Date: October 2, 2019

Subject: Regional Capital Assistance Team (RCAT) Advisory Board Elections
(For those LHAs that are not participating in the RCAT program please disregard this notice)

DHCD is administering elections for the seating members on 3 RCAT Advisory Boards that will meet quarterly to discuss issues of program performance and coordination. DHCD encourages LHAs that are participating in the RCAT program (PLHAs) to nominate their own Board Member to this special Advisory Board, per the directions in this Notice. This is a great opportunity for PLHA Board Members to be part of an evolving program that has state-wide impacts.

Section 26C(e) of M.G.L. 121B requires that an Advisory Board be established for each RCAT. See *link to the statute* and excerpted language below:

<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXVII/Chapter121B/Section26C>

(e) Each capital assistance team shall have an advisory board consisting of 11 members. The host housing authority shall appoint 1 of its own board members to the advisory board; the department shall appoint 1 member, who shall have at least 5 years of experience as the manager of not less than 200 units of privately owned housing; and the department shall promulgate regulations establishing election procedures for the selection of the remaining 9 members. The department shall limit eligibility for election to members of participating housing authorities in the region. The advisory board shall meet on a quarterly basis with the capital assistance team director, host housing authority director and the director of the department or a designee of the director of the department and shall discuss issues of program performance and coordination.”

In the statute, ‘department’ refers to DHCD.

Once the RCAT Advisory Board is finalized, the host housing authority (HHA) director shall convene quarterly meetings in accordance with the statute and RCAT Program Guidelines. The Advisory Board makes recommendations and provides important information to the program administrators. However, the

Advisory Board does not have formal authority to govern the program. Final decisions regarding matters of operation, coordination, policy, and performance will reside with the RCAT, HHA, and DHCD.

The Advisory Board nomination and election process is as follows:

1. The PLHA Executive Directors should discuss at their next Board meeting who they would like to nominate for the RCAT Advisory Board. Each LHA Board may nominate a maximum of 2 candidates. Each candidate must be a member of the LHA Board. If the LHA Board nominates 2 candidates, one of the candidates must be a Tenant. PLHAs may abstain from nomination.
2. PLHA Executive Directors will then act as the authorized Nominator on behalf of the Board and so file their nomination electronically via email to DHCD Director of Project Management, Fatima Razzaq at Fatima.Razzaq@mass.gov .
3. Upon close of the Nomination period on November 30, 2019, DHCD will tabulate the nominations and determine the candidates for election. The HHA and the PLHA Executive Directors will be notified of all of the candidates in their region.
4. In the event that the number of nominees equals the number of vacancies, voting will not be required for nominees to assume their Advisory Board position.
5. DHCD will then transmit a Public Housing Notice to all PLHAs announcing the RCAT Advisory Board Elections and process. PLHAs will have a 45 calendar day period of time to cast votes, in accordance with the process defined in the notice. Each PLHA Board will vote for a maximum of nine (9) candidates for the RCAT Advisory Board members representing its RCAT Region. PLHAs may abstain from voting. The PLHA Executive Director will be the authorized Voter on behalf of the Board.
6. Upon close of the voting period, DHCD will tabulate the votes and announce the results via Public Housing Notice. It will be the responsibility of the PLHA Executive director to notify their Board members of the results.

The Nominations and Elections will be facilitated and managed by DHCD.

Determination of Advisory Board Members

Each RCAT Advisory Board must have at least one Tenant Board member. The Tenant candidate receiving the most votes of any Tenant candidate shall be the first elected member on each respective RCAT Advisory Board. The next elected member shall be the candidate receiving the most votes other than the initial Tenant elected member, and the remaining seats shall be filled in a similar manner, by the candidates receiving the next highest number of votes, until nine (9) members have been elected. In the event of a tie for the ninth seat, DHCD shall select between the tied candidates based upon the qualifications of the tied candidates and the overall diversity of the board. In the event that no Tenant candidate(s) receive any votes, DHCD shall appoint a tenant board member(s) from the respective PLHAs with PLHA consent.

Each RCAT Advisory Board member shall serve a term of 5 years. There is no limit on the number of terms for which a member may be re-elected. Advisory Board Nominations and Elections shall be held every 5 years or as necessary to accommodate the evolution of the RCAT program. In the event that an elected RCAT Advisory Board member resigns or cannot fulfill the duties during his or her term, DHCD shall fill the vacancy by appointing the candidate who received the next highest number of votes after the last candidate to be elected under the procedures described above. DHCD will

repeat this process, continuing with the candidate with the next highest number of votes, until all seats are filled. Provided, that if the resigning or otherwise incapacitated RCAT Advisory Board member was elected as a Tenant member, then DHCD shall appoint a Tenant member from the respective PLHAs with PLHA consent to fill the vacancy. If DHCD is unable to fill any vacancy through the process described above, DHCD may appoint any person meeting the preferred qualifications set forth in its guidelines to serve as the replacement RCAT Advisory Board member. The person appointed to fill any vacancy shall serve for the balance of the original term of the resigned or otherwise incapacitated member.

Advisory Board Member Qualifications

Required Qualifications for Advisory Board Nominees:

1. Must hold a current seat on the Board at an LHA that is participating in the RCAT program.
2. Ability to travel to quarterly in-person meetings that may occur in the evening or on weekends, depending on availability. May require traveling up to 125 miles for Central-West Region, 60 miles for Northeast Region, and 100 miles for Southeast Region. NOTE: missing two consecutive meetings may result in dismissal from the Board.
3. Access to telephone, email, and computer.
4. Must have completed their on-line Board Member training.

Preferred Qualifications for Advisory Board Nominees:

1. Ability to act as a liaison and representative for LHA tenants, staff, and boards in the region.
2. Experience or interest in being part of a new and innovative program.
3. Familiarity with the DHCD Capital Program.
4. Familiarity with best practices in Maintenance Planning and Operations.
5. Term is not predicted to expire until after Jan 1, 2025.
6. Existing Advisory Board members are eligible for nomination and re-election.

RCAT Advisory Board Meetings shall be held in a fully accessible location and conducted in accordance with DHCD regulations. Participating LHAs and their Local Tenant Organizations (LTOs) will be given at least 3-weeks' notice of all meeting times and locations. The first meeting for each RCAT Advisory Board shall take place not later than 60 calendar days following the announcement of the results of the election.

If you have any questions please contact Fatima Razzaq at Fatima.Razzaq@mass.gov .