



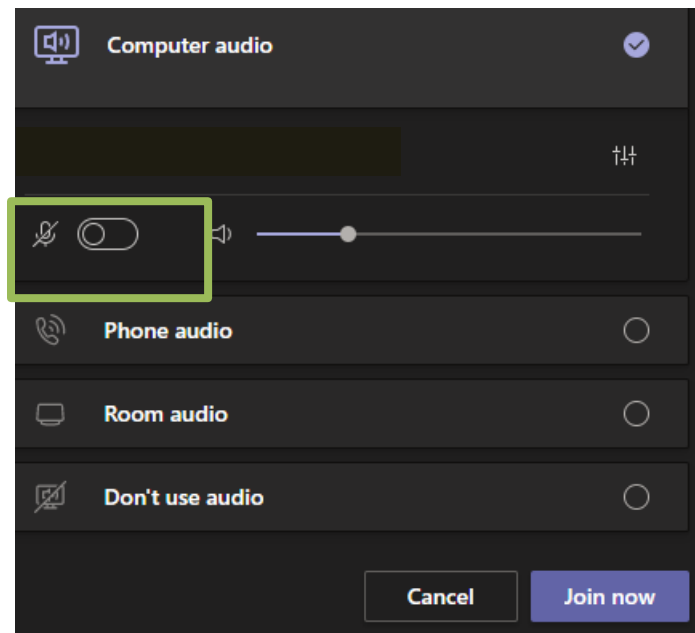
DHCD Office Hours Community Mediation Referrals

1/26/2020

Last Updated: 1/26/2020

Please Mute

Please join the meeting muted during the session to keep interruptions to a minimum

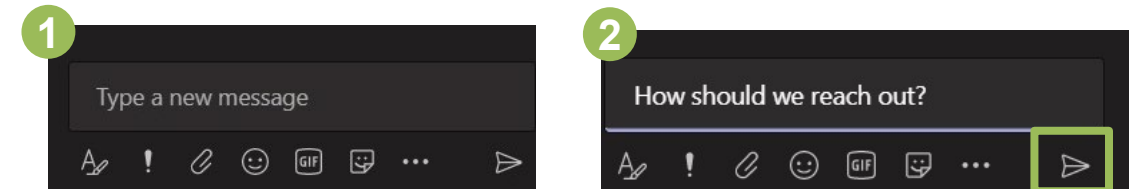


Engage During Meeting

1. Teams Chat

Send a message in the **Teams Chat** panel

1. Type in your **question**
2. Hit Enter



2. Questions / Checkpoints

- We will be monitoring the Teams Chat for questions throughout the session
- During the designated checkpoints for questions, **please come off mute** to ask your questions once the moderator calls on you

This Call Is Being Recorded





WELCOME

Our Journey Today

1 HOUR



Welcome & Overview

5 mins



Community Mediation Services Overview



Referral Process

15 mins



Community Mediation Scenarios



Resources



Q&A

40 mins



Reminders & Next Steps

Purpose



Clarify for appropriate RAA staff on **referrals to community mediation services** applicants.

Goal



Create a standardized understanding of when applicants should be **referred to a Community Mediation Center** with the aim of resolving conflict and preserving tenancies.

Community Mediation Centers are **local non-profits** that work with landlords and tenants to **resolve eviction disputes**.



Mediation services utilize a neutral, trained third-person to encourage pre-court and pre-trial settlements.



These services **complement** and often occur in parallel to **RAFT application reviews**.

- ✓ When a resolution is reached through **collaboration**, the resolution is more lasting
- ✓ Mediation can help drive to a **faster resolution**
- ✓ Mediation gives each party a **sense of control** over the process and outcome and helps to retain relationships

Outlined below are three scenarios that should automatically be referred to Community Mediation Services



APPLICANT HAS OUTSTANDING BALANCE

If an applicant has an outstanding balance of more than \$10,000 owed to the landlord, the applicant should automatically be referred to Community Mediation Services.



APPLICANT DENIED RAFT FUNDS

If an applicant has been denied RAFT funds, they should be automatically referred to Community Mediation Services.



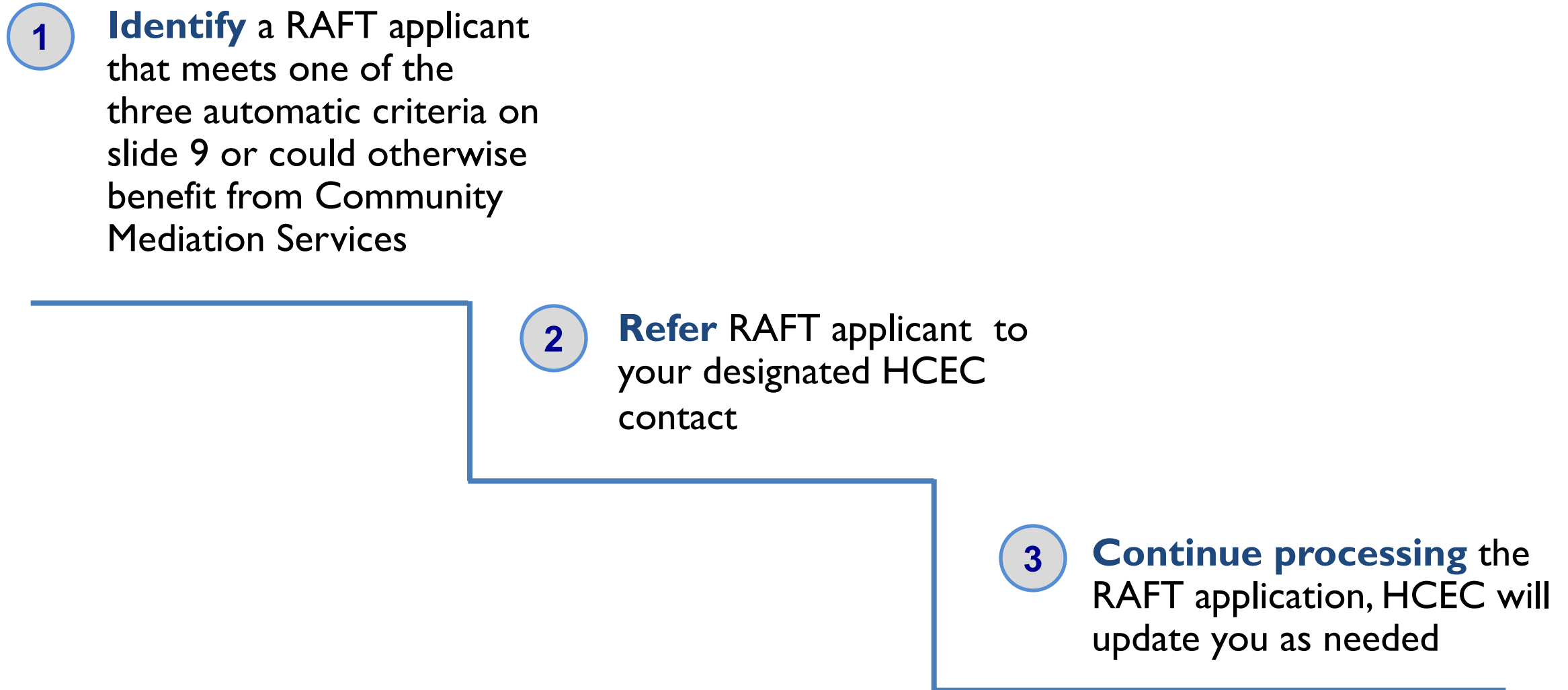
LANDLORD IS UNRESPONSIVE

If an applicant has not been denied RAFT funds, but the landlord is not responsive to ongoing communication from the RAA, the applicant should be referred to Community Mediation Services.

Mediation can be useful in other situations as well. Additional examples are provided on slide 10 to better understand situations where referrals to mediation services may be helpful.

Additional examples of scenarios that could benefit from Community Mediation Services:

- A complex range of other issues exists beyond non-payment, such as property conditions or landlord and/or tenant behavior that needs resolving
- Miscommunication or lack of communication is the primary barrier to agreement
- The landlord and tenant are willing to work together toward a solution
- The tenant does not qualify for a subsidy program, but the landlord and tenant are willing to explore other options, such as a repayment plan
- The tenancy is coming to an end, but extra time may be possible by mediating a move out plan



1

Local Community Mediation Center

<https://www.resolutionma.org/housing>

2

Community Mediation Programs

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/eviction-diversion-initiative-legal-services-and-mediation#faq:-learn-how-community-mediation-can-help-tenants-stay-in-their-homes->

3

HCEC Contacts

Please reach out to your RAA's HCEC Resource listed to the right if you need additional guidance on Community Mediation Services.

RAA	HCEC Resource	Contact Info
Berkshire Housing Development Corporation	Noah Barnes	noahb@bcrha.com
Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance	Antoinette Cabral	acabral@cmhaonline.org 508-791-7265 ext. 131
Community Teamwork, Inc.	Maria Mendez	MMendes@commteam.org
Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority	Sarah Fitzgibbons	sfitzgibbons@fcrhra.org 413-223-5211
Housing Assistance Corporation	Emily Harris	EHarris@haconcapecod.org
Lynn Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development	Tiffani Mateo	tmateo@lhand.org
Metro Housing Boston	Joana Abs	Joana.abs@metrohousingboston.org 617-925-0111
NeighborWorks Housing Solutions	Victoria Worth	vworth@nhsmass.org 781-422-4259
RCAP Solutions	Yvette Sanchez	ysanchez@rcapsolutions.org 978-630-6631
South Middlesex Opportunity Council	Heather Silva	hsilva@smoc.org 508-232-1346
Way Finders	Jennifer Santos	jsantos@wayfinders.org 413-233-1913



QUESTIONS



REMINDERS

All RAAs are operating with the goal of a **three-week application** processing time

Review and use **RAFT policy guidelines** from the FY21 Administrative Plan (released on January 11, 2021)

Any household receiving DTA/MassHealth benefits are automatically income eligible for RAFT once verified



NEXT STEPS

Next office hours will be held **Friday February 5** from 1:00PM – 2:00PM



RAFT QUESTIONS

Direct questions to your supervisor

Escalate questions to Amy Mullen
(amy.mullen2@state.ma.us)

We want to hear from YOU! Menti Live Polls



I. What topic would you most like to cover in a future Office Hour Training?

How to Participate

1. Go to [Menti.com](https://www.menti.com) on your smartphone or computer browser.
2. Enter the code **44 93 36 7** into the field shown to the right



Please enter the code

12 34 56

Submit

The code is found on the screen in front of you



THANK YOU!