

The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities' (HLC) Division of Housing Stabilization (DHS) has implemented an Inclement Weather Policy for families applying for the Emergency Assistance (EA) Family Shelter program who have not yet been determined fully eligible for the EA Family Shelter Program. These temporary placements may be given when HLC determines that the weather conditions outside are unsafe for families. To access an Inclement Weather Policy placement, families must meet minimum standards to obtain a Temporary Verification Waiver, described in more detail below. While in the temporary placement for the duration of the inclement weather, families will be expected to work with shelter staff to complete their full EA Family Shelter program application and follow the [Uniform Shelter Rules](#).

1. Inclement Weather Triggers, Activation, and Deactivation

HLC retains full discretion to activate and deactivate the Inclement Weather Policy. The triggers for the EA Family Shelter Inclement Weather Policy (IWP) are defined as any of the following:

- Extreme cold threshold measured by forecasted ambient temperature or windchill below 20 degrees Fahrenheit;
- Snowfall creating hazardous conditions in excess of 2–4 inches, forecasted or accumulated, especially during nighttime or where there are blizzard or white-out warnings issued by local authorities;
- Ice storms or freezing rain that create dangerous travel or exposure conditions; or
- Other hazardous weather conditions as determined by DHS.

HLC will utilize weather briefings received from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS) as the primary standard to inform the decision to trigger the Inclement Weather Policy. In the absence of definitive weather information from MEMA or NWS, local weather updates from news media or weather-specific apps will be used by HLC. Depending on the nature of the weather event, the Inclement Weather Policy may be enacted for a specific region(s) or for the entire Commonwealth.

The Inclement Weather Policy will be activated by the DHS Chief Operating Officer (COO). In the absence of the COO, the inclement weather policy will be activated by the Director of Intake, Eligibility, and Placement.

As part of the activation process, the COO will consult with:

- the Director of Family Shelter Services or their designee to ensure provider readiness; and
- the Director of Intake, Eligibility, and Placement to activate at HLC front door and to ensure shelter capacity.

When HLC activates the Inclement Weather Policy, notifications will be provided in the following ways:

- A banner will be posted across all [HLC websites](#);
- Information will be provided to families when they call the EA Family Shelter Contact Line: (866) 584-0653;
- Information will be provided to families at the [Mattapan Family Welcome Center](#); and
- Information will be provided to families at the [HLC field offices](#).

The deactivation of the Inclement Weather Policy will take place the next business day following the end of the inclement weather event. If a weather event is adjacent to a holiday, HLC has the discretion to extend the end of the inclement weather event until the following business day after the holiday.

2. Eligibility and Accessing Inclement Weather Policy Placement

To access Inclement Weather Policy placement, families must meet minimum standards to obtain a Temporary Verification Waiver but will not be restricted by the priority categories outlined in the [Emergency Assistance Family Shelter Program Guidance on Contact List and Prioritization Procedures](#).

When the Inclement Weather Policy is in effect for the entire Commonwealth, families who present at or call into HLC offices or the Family Welcome Center (FWC) during these conditions may access the Clinical Safety and Risk (CSR) site or other designated EA shelter site, as determined by HLC, provided they meet the same eligibility criteria as families granted a [Temporary Verification Waiver](#).

When the Inclement Weather Policy is in effect for only a specific region in the Commonwealth, families who present at or call into HLC offices located in that region during these conditions may access these sites provided they meet the same eligibility criteria as families granted a Temporary Verification Waiver.

Temporary Verification Waiver criteria includes:¹

- Verification of identity for all family members;
- Verification of familial relationship;
- For family members 18 years old and above, consent to a criminal background check through a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) screening, and return of the criminal background check results with no convictions or pending charges for serious crimes leading to ineligibility pursuant to 760 CMR 67.02(12)-(16) and the “Criminal Offender Record Information Policy for the Emergency Assistance Family Shelter Program;”
- For family members 10 years old and above, return and analysis of Sex Offender Registry Information check from Sex Offender Registry Board; and
- Signed attestation that the family meets all other eligibility requirements as part of the application.

Families who are temporarily placed in a site under the HLC Family Inclement Weather Policy for the duration of the inclement weather event are not considered EA Family Shelter program participants. Receipt of a placement under this policy does not guarantee the family is eligible or will be found eligible for the EA Family Shelter program.

If a family reaches EA Family Shelter eligibility during an inclement weather event, they will be placed in a Bridge Shelter Track site as soon as feasible and safe or by the end of the inclement weather event.

When the inclement weather event ends, families not yet fully eligible for EA Family Shelter must depart the site the following business day and may go to the nearest open HLC office to continue their full eligibility process. Failure to timely exit without approval from HLC may impact eligibility for the EA Family Shelter program.

Transportation will be provided to the inclement weather placement sites for families placed during the inclement weather event and from the inclement weather placement sites back to HLC offices, if needed.

3. Terminations from Inclement Weather Placements and Requests for Reconsideration

If a family member engages in activity threatening the health, safety, or security of families or staff, the family’s stay in the inclement weather site may be terminated. HLC will issue a

¹ Guidance for Temporary Verification Waivers is included in the [Emergency Assistance Family Shelter Program Guidance on Contact List and Prioritization Procedures](#). HLC retains discretion to revise as needed, which may result in changes to this guidance.

HLC – Division of Housing Stabilization
Family Inclement Weather Policy



letter in the event of termination notifying the family they must exit the next business day, or as soon as feasible in light of the inclement weather.

If a family is terminated from a placement, they may submit a request for reconsideration, with additional information and supporting documents to EOHLCreview@mass.gov within 48 hours of receiving the termination letter. The family will not be permitted to remain at the site during the period of reconsideration. Requests for reconsideration will be granted only if the request provides additional information on a good cause reason why the activity that led to the termination was committed. Reconsideration will occur within two (2) business days by HLC via a desk review. The family will receive notification of the decision on the reconsideration from HLC.