



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Emergency Assistance (EA) Commission

Meeting 4
October 15, 2024





Agenda

- **[5 min] Introduction, Review & Approval of Last Meeting Notes, Preview of Upcoming Sessions**
- **[5 min] Recap of Previous Sessions**
- **[10 min] Preview Report Outline & Listening Sessions Plan**
- **[60 min] Deep Dive on System Levers + Previous Data Requests**
- **[10 min] Next steps**



Recap of Previous Sessions



Overview of Discussion To Date

Key Question: How do we further ensure the EA system meets family needs while reinforcing EA system principles and acting within our fiscal and operational constraints?

Guiding principles for EA system:

- Family homelessness should be **rare, brief, and non-recurring**
- System should be **flexible to serve needs of families**, building from lessons learned to date on need to move from one-size-fits-all approach
- System should be **fiscally and operationally sustainable**

Next steps to address these principles and considerations:

- Shifting to a **needs-based model with:**
 - Changes to **service delivery model**
 - Right-sizing of **length of stay policies**
 - Reforms to **diversion and exit tools**
- Hearing from other key stakeholders, like providers, landlords, advocates, and families



Update on Current State of EA System

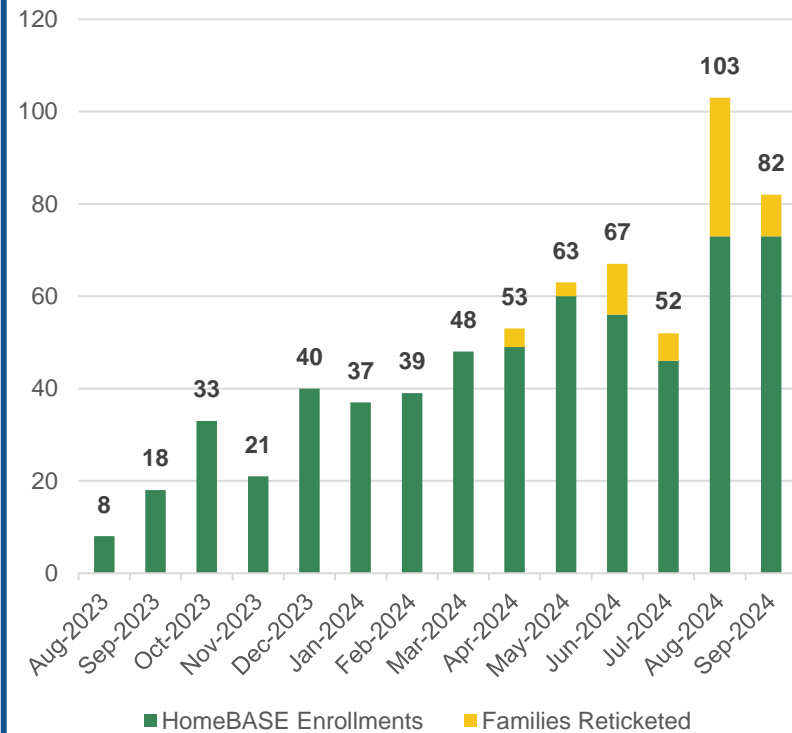
Measures we have taken in last year have decreased demand on the system, while exits and diversions have increased

Demand

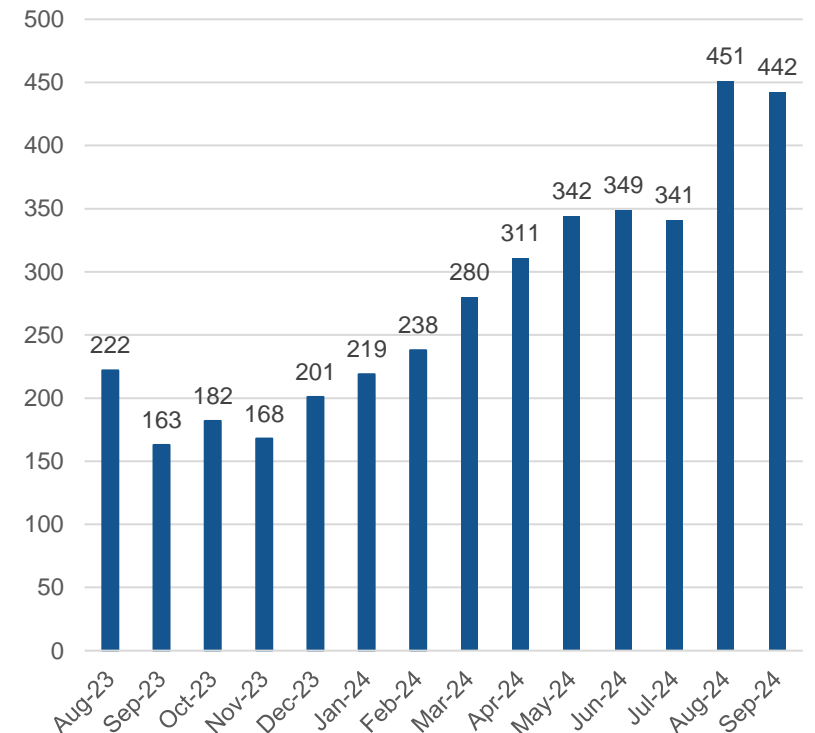
July Avg Daily Demand
20 families

Sept Avg Daily Demand
16 families

EA Diversions



EA Exits

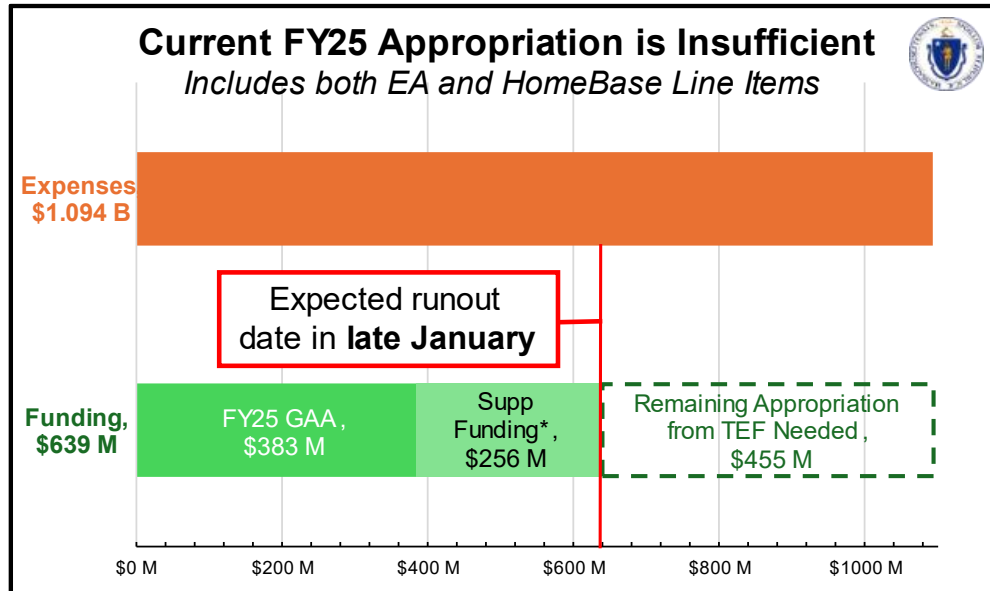




Update on Current State of EA System

At the same time, continued spending is not sustainable

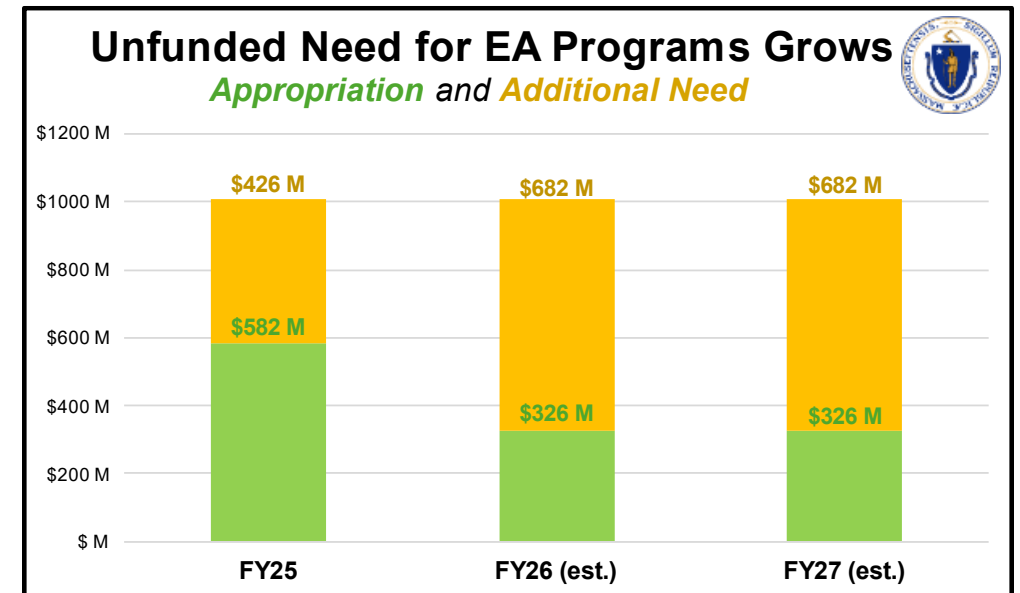
FY25:



- \$639 M has been appropriated so far (EA + HomeBase), while the whole program is projected to cost \$1.094 billion in FY25, leading to a deficiency of \$455 M
- When appropriated funds run out around late January 2025, **the Commonwealth may not be able to pay providers** unless further appropriation is authorized by the legislature

*From supp signed April 30th including \$175 M from TEF and \$81 M from FY24 rollover

Out-Years:



- Legislature has appropriated \$1.4 billion for the EA program since Nov. 2022, but one-time funding sources (Transitional Escrow Fund, “TEF”) are running out
- Continued spending at current caseload, level of services, and continued GAA appropriation without TEF leads to **large out-year General Fund needs**



Report Outline & Listening Sessions Plan



Draft Report Outline

Our discussions to date will form the basis of the report due December 1

Report Section	Discussed To Date?	For Future Discussion?
Introduction & History of EA Program	Yes, July Meeting	N/A
Families in the EA System	Yes, September Meeting	N/A
Stakeholder Feedback	No	Yes, November meeting
EA Program Principles: - Homelessness is rare, brief, non-recurring - Shifting from one-size-fits-all to needs-based model	Yes, August and September meeting	Yes, discuss needs-based and regional model today
Conclusion & Next Steps	No	Yes, November meeting

Timeline

- **Today:** Review report outline and discuss needs-based model
- **End Oct – Early Nov:** Begin drafting report
- **Early Nov:** Share draft report with Commission members for feedback
- **Mid Nov – Dec 1:** Integrate feedback and finalize report



Listening Sessions Schedule

We are in the process of scheduling listening sessions and encourage your attendance

Listening Session	Commission Lead	Date	Time
EA Providers	Sec. Augustus	10/9/2024	2:00pm
EA Families	Sec. Augustus	10/22/2024	2:00pm
Advocates and CBOs	Sec. Walsh	10/25/2024	12:00pm
TRC Families	Cristina Aguilera Sandoval, Executive Director of ORI	10/29/2024	1:00pm
Municipalities	Lt. Governor Driscoll	10/28/2024	1:30pm
Landlords and Property Developers	Chris Thompson, Undersecretary of Housing Stabilization, EOHLC	10/30/2024	2:00pm

- Up to 7 commission members can attend each listening session, RSVP required
- Due to the Open Meeting Law, members are allowed and encouraged to attend and listen but should not participate in the discussion.



Needs-Based Model



Families in our system need to be supported in different ways

Examples of families with different needs in the EA family shelter system include:

Family 1:

New arrival family where both parents have work authorization

Needs shorter term emergency housing and assistance to find a job, longer-term housing, language support post-exit

Family 2:

Family that has been evicted from Massachusetts housing due to sudden loss of employment

Needs assisting in remediating eviction history, increasing income, and stabilization assistance

Family 3:

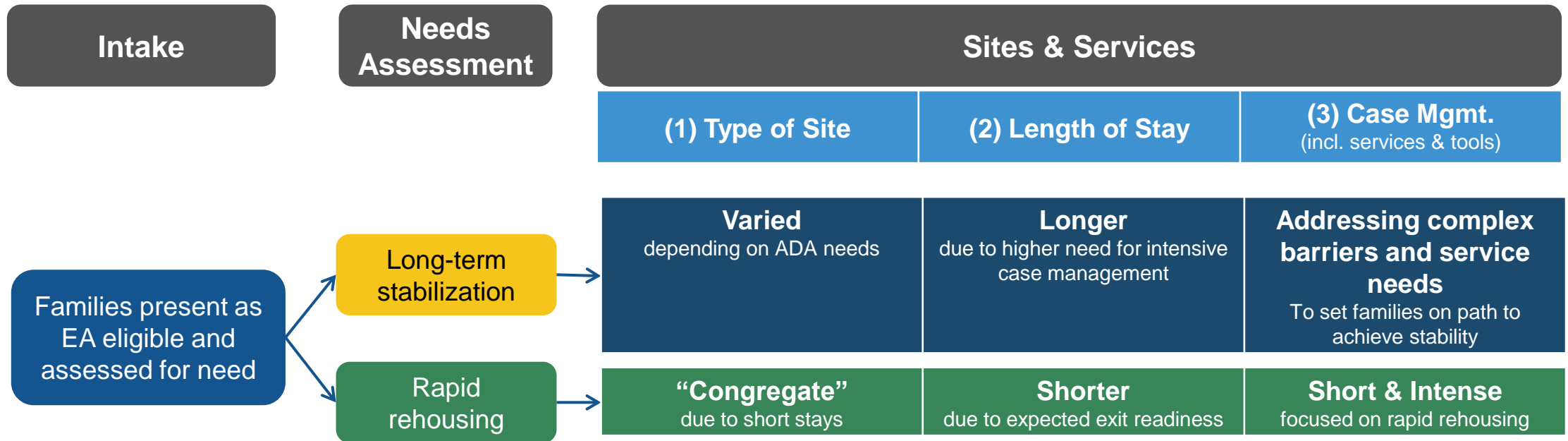
A family (new arrival or MA resident) that has a child with multiple chronic conditions and disability requiring high levels of medical and educational care

Needs longer-term housing stability and access to intensive health services

Shifting to a needs-based model would align sites and services to the needs of different families



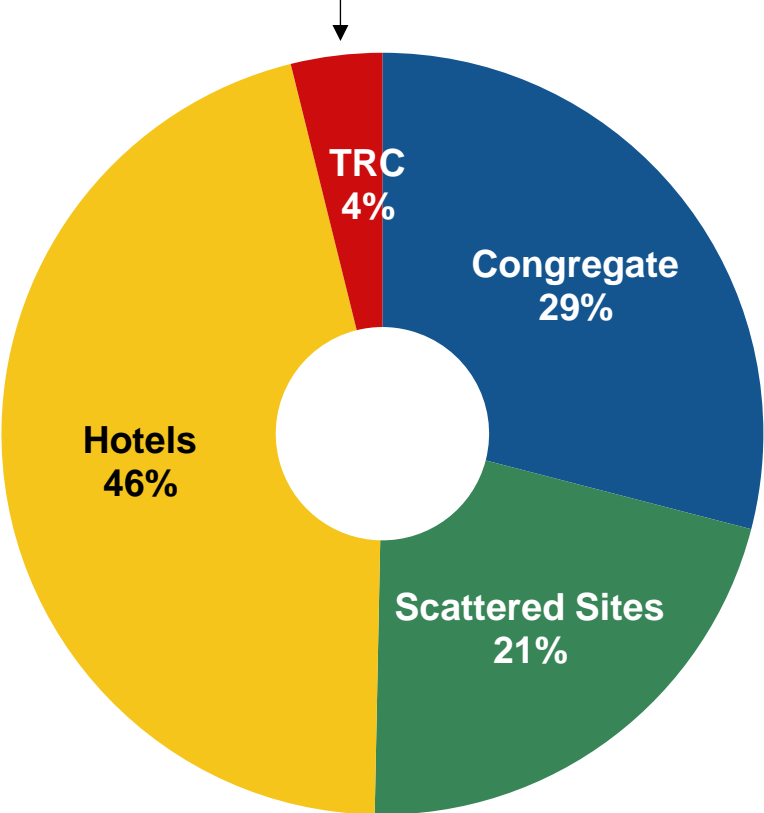
Key components of needs-based model for discussion today: (1) types of sites, (2) length of stay, and (3) case management models and tools





Type of site is a key component of a needs-based model

New model running as part of recent challenges to the system



Type of Site	Notes	Cost	Case Management Frequency
Hotels	Largest % of portfolio due to 2023 expansion	\$\$\$	Low / Medium
Congregate	Private bedrooms with shared living spaces	\$	Medium
Scattered Sites	Independent apartments, important for ADA needs, takes apartments off market	\$\$	Low
Temporary Respite Center (TRC)	Open congregare sites, often in state owned buildings	\$\$\$, but higher movement through sites	High

How do we use the portfolio of sites to move families to permanent housing?

TRC length of stay combined with rapid rehousing supports has showed early success in moving families through system

(2) Length of Stay



TRC Length of Stay Follow Ups



Examples of Family Pathways from TRCs

- Family found a lease and used HomeBASE to move
- Family moved to new city with family members
- Family moved to new city through partnership program
- Family moved in with family members
- Family signed a lease with another family they met in a TRC and both used HomeBASE to move into new home



Ongoing Support for Families Exiting TRCs

- Families who use HomeBASE have access to 2 years of stabilization services
- TRC case managers connecting families with local resources near to their new homes

Lessons Learned

- We can serve more families in need when families move through the system more quickly – **important cost driver**
- Important to couple length of stay policies with rapid rehousing, intensive case management, and resources and support for families to maintain stable housing (e.g., bridge to stabilization services through HomeBASE)

With length of stay limits in EA and Temporary Respite Centers, how can we support families to plan for their next step?

HLC implemented a provider regional model this summer to be more responsive to providers, families, and municipalities

(3) Case Management: Service Model



The HLC Family Shelter Services Team has been divided into four regions with core teams to support each region. In this new model, teams support the operations of providers in their region, including case management, training opportunities, managing local stakeholder relations, etc.

Boston – 15 providers

Regional Director
Contract Manager
Provider Support Coordinator
Housing Search Specialist

Northeast – 12 providers

Regional Director
Contract Manager
Provider Support Coordinator
Housing Search Specialist

Central & West – 12 providers

Regional Director
Contract Manager
Provider Support Coordinator
Housing Search Specialist

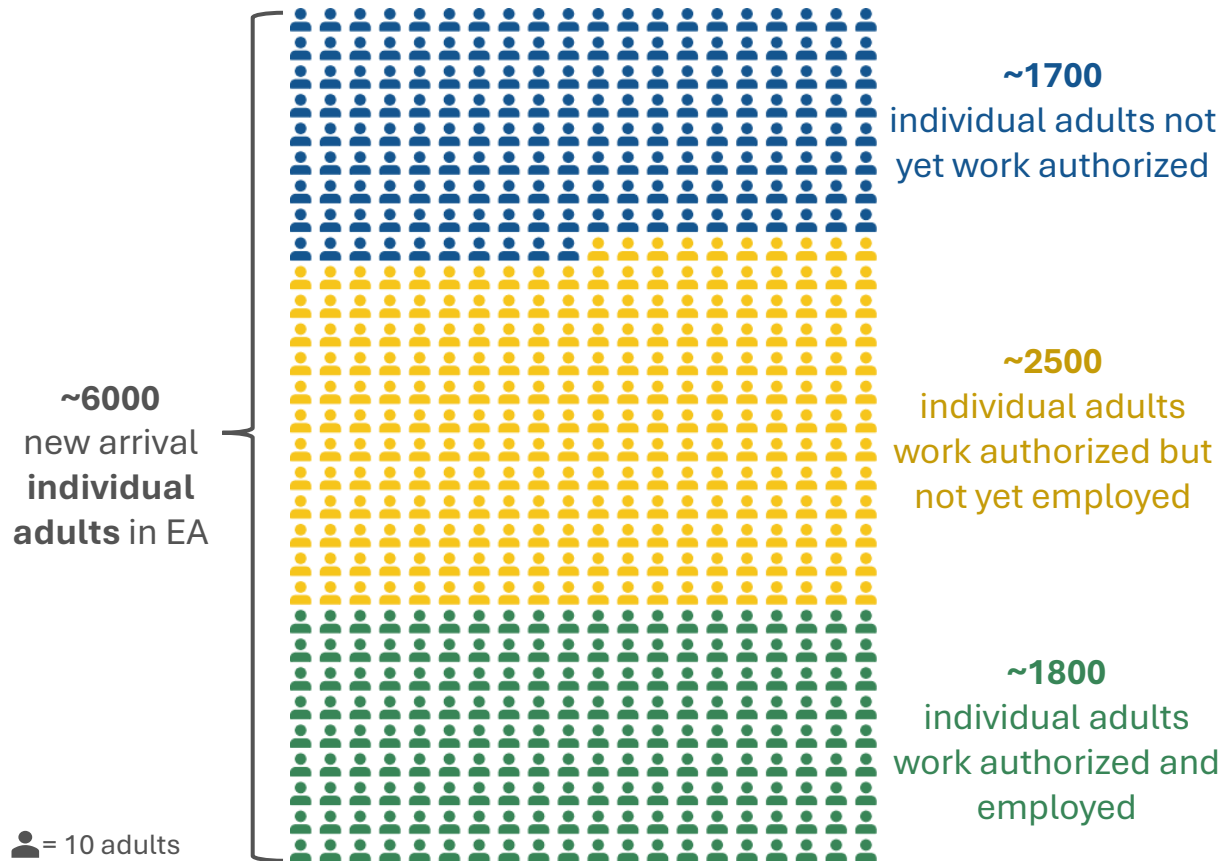
Southeast – 13 providers

Regional Director
Contract Manager
Provider Support Coordinator
Housing Search Specialist

How can we further adjust the EA system to provide more hands-on support to our families, providers, and other stakeholders?

Services and tools, including work authorization & employment, should be targeted to families' needs

(3) Case Management: Service Model



EOHLC and shelter providers provide employment tools and connections to work authorized individuals:

- ESOL services
- Resume workshops and other job skills supports
- Executive Office of Labor & Workforce Development (LWD) programs, e.g., MassHire and CommCorp
- Investment in training programs
- Direct support from LWD staff who support EA families

How should we tailor services to needs of different families (e.g., families who have jobs vs. do not have jobs) and facilitate exits to stable housing?



Conclusion and Next Steps

- Reminder to join upcoming listening sessions
- November meeting will focus on final alignment and preparation for the report due on Dec 1
- We will share a draft report in early November for initial feedback

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