

Emergency Shelter Resources

For families on the EA waitlist

The Massachusetts Emergency Assistance (EA) family shelter system does not have enough space to shelter every family right away. While we cannot provide shelter for you, we want to help you find other options for housing.

You have a few options:



1

We can help you return to a safe place to stay.

This could be with family or friends, either here in Massachusetts or other locations somewhere else. If you need help paying for a bus, train or plane, please let us know.

2

If you need help paying for rent or a room in a house here in Massachusetts, we can help you through a program called HomeBASE.

This program is for families with children under 21 years old or pregnant people. HomeBASE can help pay part of your rent and some other costs, up to \$45,000 over three years. Other costs could include furniture, moving expenses, or utilities. Please know, you will need to find housing to rent or share with another family. The state will not find an apartment for you. The attached HomeBASE flyer provides more details on this program.

3

You can apply for other benefits.

- **Food and cash assistance:** For help with food (SNAP¹) or cash assistance (TAFDC²), you can call the DTA (Department of Transitional Assistance) Assistance Line at **(877) 382-2363**. The DTA Assistance Line is open from 8:15 A.M. to 4:45 P.M Monday – Friday (closed on state holidays). For more information, you can visit <https://dtacconnect.eohhs.mass.gov>
- **Immigration help:** There are resources for immigrants across Massachusetts. For a list of resources, you can visit <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/office-for-refugees-and-immigrants>

1. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
2. Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children

More information and resources are available on the next pages →



More Resources

Are there more state resources to help with housing?

Yes, please see below for more resources that are available.

Resources to help pay for housing:

Please speak with our staff for more details

- **HomeBASE:** Families who are eligible for EA shelter may be eligible for the HomeBASE program. HomeBASE can help pay part of your rent and some other costs, up to \$45,000 over three years. If you qualify, you can search for housing and then use HomeBASE to move in without having to go to shelter first.
- **RAFT:** Low-income households with or without children can apply for the RAFT program. RAFT can pay up to \$7,000 to help with rent and other housing costs either to keep people in their housing or help them move.

Resources to search for housing:

- **(Boston Area only) Metro Housing Boston:** Offers a listing of apartment units available: <https://www.metrohousingboston.org/apartment-listings/>
- **Housing Navigator:** Offers a listing of affordable housing. Please note, some waitlists may be months or years. <https://housingnavigatorma.org/>
- **CHAMP:** Offers a single place to apply for some public housing. Please note, most waitlists are months or years long. <https://publichousingapplication.ocd.state.ma.us/>

Where can I go for more help?

You can use the website www.findhelp.org.

Visit <https://www.findhelp.org> to find resources near you.

You can use **Mass2-1-1**.

This is a statewide, free hotline for information and referrals. It is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Help is available in many languages. Mass2-1-1 helps people in Massachusetts find programs to support basic needs like childcare, food, transportation, housing, and utility assistance, support if you are facing domestic violence, and connect you to resources for less urgent needs. There are three ways to access Mass2-1-1:

- **Phone call:** Dial 2-1-1 from your telephone
- **Live web chat:** Visit mass211.org and click “211 CHAT” (top right corner)
- **Web resources:** Visit mass211.org and click “RESOURCES – SEARCH NOW”

You can visit our **Family Welcome Centers**.

These centers are operating at two locations in the Boston area. Family Welcome Centers are open **Monday – Friday 8am-5pm and Saturday – Sunday 9am-3pm** (Centers are closed on state holidays). Family Welcome Centers can meet with families to find out what they need. They can help families apply for food and cash benefits through the Department of Transitional Assistance. Families can get basic supplies like diapers, hygiene products, and formula. Family Welcome Centers can also help families find other resources in the community. The two Family Welcome Center locations are:

- Family Welcome Center Allston: 14 Harvard Ave, Allston, MA
- Family Welcome Center Quincy: Cove Fine Arts Building, 56 Wendell Ave, Quincy, MA

You can also visit our **Family Resource Centers**.

These centers (different from the Family Welcome Centers shared above) are open across Massachusetts to support families in accessing basic needs and resources. You can use the website <https://www.fcma.org/> to find locations near you.



Shelter Waitlist Process

Will the state shelter system have more shelter units in the future?

Yes, but a very limited amount. Right now, if we do not have enough space, we are putting eligible families on a waitlist. When you are next on the waitlist, we will try to contact you by phone, email, and text. Please give us as many ways to contact you as you can and be sure to check your email and answer your phone.

What happens when a shelter spot becomes available for my family?

If you are on the waitlist for shelter and a spot becomes available for you, these are the next steps:

1 The state will call, email and text you that shelter is available for you. (Please make sure we have your cell phone number and email)

2 To accept your space in shelter, you have until 12pm the NEXT business day to respond.

For example: You get a call, email, and text at 11am on Monday. To get placed, you must call OR email OR text back by Tuesday at 12pm.

- If you do not respond by 12pm the next business day, the state will go to the next person on the waitlist.
- You will NOT be removed from the waitlist or lose your spot in line for not responding in time the first time. HOWEVER, you WILL be denied from the program if you are offered a shelter spot three times and do not respond by 12pm the next day each time.

3 Getting to the shelter

- Most families will need to arrive at the shelter with their things by 5pm. You can only bring two bags per person. Each bag can only be about the size of a 30 gallon trash bag.
- If you need help getting to shelter, our staff will help you get a ride. You must be ready to be picked up as soon as possible after the ride has been confirmed.

How can I make sure that I am on the waitlist?

- You can call **(866) 584-0653** between 8 am and 5 pm, Monday through Friday, to find out if you are still on the waitlist or if a shelter space is ready for you.
- If there is no room yet, the state will NOT be able to tell you how long it will take.
- You may also call (866) 584-0653 to tell us if there has been a change in your health condition and you think you should be rescreened.
- ***Please remember***: If you do not give us all documents needed to show you are eligible for EA Emergency Family Shelter, you will be denied from the program after 30 days. You can apply again later if you have all documents. Please continue to work with our staff handling your intake process to make sure you have given us all documents.

What if I have more questions about the emergency family shelter program?

You can find more information at www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-ea-emergency-family-shelter. In-person locations are listed in the table below (offices are closed on state holidays):

Area	Location	Hours of Operation
Boston	2201 Washington St, Roxbury, MA 02119	Monday – Friday 8 am – 5 pm
Brockton	60 Main Street, Brockton MA 02301	Monday – Friday 8 am – 5 pm
Chelsea	80 Everett Avenue, Chelsea, MA 02150	Monday – Friday 8 am – 5 pm
Hyannis	181 North Street, Hyannis MA 02601	Tuesday 8 am – 5 pm
Lawrence	280 Merrimack Street, Lawrence MA 01843	Monday – Friday 8 am – 5 pm
Lowell	131 Davidson Street, Lowell MA 01852	Thursday 8 am – 5 pm
New Bedford	160 West Rodney French Boulevard, New Bedford MA 02744	Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8 am – 5 pm
Salem	45 Congress Street, Suite 4120, Salem MA 01970	Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8 am – 5 pm
Springfield	243 Cottage Street, Springfield, MA 01104	Monday – Friday 8 am – 5 pm
Worcester	50 Southwest Cutoff, Worcester, MA 01604	Monday – Friday 8 am – 5 pm

