



Closure of Federal Rental Assistance Programs to New Applications & Shift to State Programs

RAA Office Hours

March 18, 2022

Last Updated: 3/17/2021

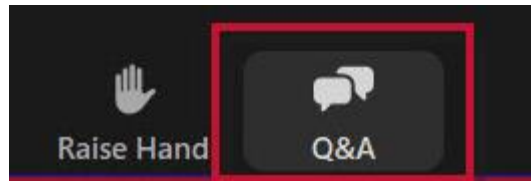


WELCOME

Asking Questions

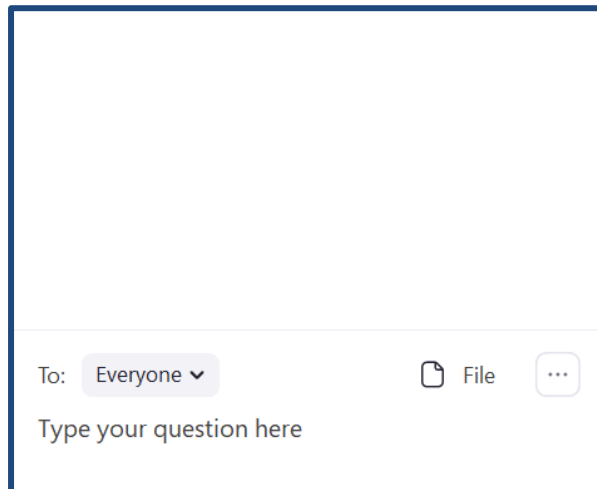
We will be monitoring the Q&A for questions

1



Click “Q&A” to submit a question (or “**Raise Hand**” to share a verbal question at designated breaks)

2



Enter your question into the “Q&A” box

We will follow up with answers to any questions that we don’t get to during the session

THIS CALL IS BEING RECORDED



Purpose



Review policy around **pivot from ERAP to RAFT** and next steps for policy guidance

Goal



Provide RAA staff with guidance and **continued support** during the closure of the ERAP program

Our Journey Today 1 HOUR



Welcome & Objective

5 mins



Training Goals



ERAP Application Closure Overview

25 mins



RAFT Overview



RAA Support, Readiness, & Next Steps

30 mins



Questions



ERAP APPLICATION CLOSURE OVERVIEW

ERAP PROGRAM CLOSURE GUIDANCE



State leadership announced this week that the Massachusetts housing payment assistance programs funded by the federal Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) will **stop accepting new applications after April 15, 2022**

The following programs will be impacted by this policy change:

- 1 **ERAP**
- 2 **SHERA**
- 3 **ERAP-Enhanced HomeBASE**

The Central Application will remain open so that households can continue to apply for RAFT

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED ON OR BEFORE APRIL 15, 2022

- ✓ There will be no changes to the Central App until after April 15, 2022
- ✓ RAAs should continue using ERAP whenever possible for all applications received on or before April 15, 2022

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BEGINNING APRIL 16, 2022

- ✓ Starting at 12:01 AM on April 16, 2022, the Central App will notify applicants of the \$7,000 limit
- ✓ Applications will be stamped with “RAFT” on the application PDF that is generated from the Central App
- ✓ RAFT policy guidance should be referenced when reviewing new applications



RAFT OVERVIEW

The RAFT rules from January 1, 2022 remain in place



Income limit of 50% Area Median Income



\$7,000 benefit limit in a rolling 12-month period for RAFT funds only (not ERAP)



Households who maxed out ERAP (18 months) may not access RAFT until at least July 1, 2022

DHCD will be providing clearer RAFT stipend guidance for households who need assistance with future rent

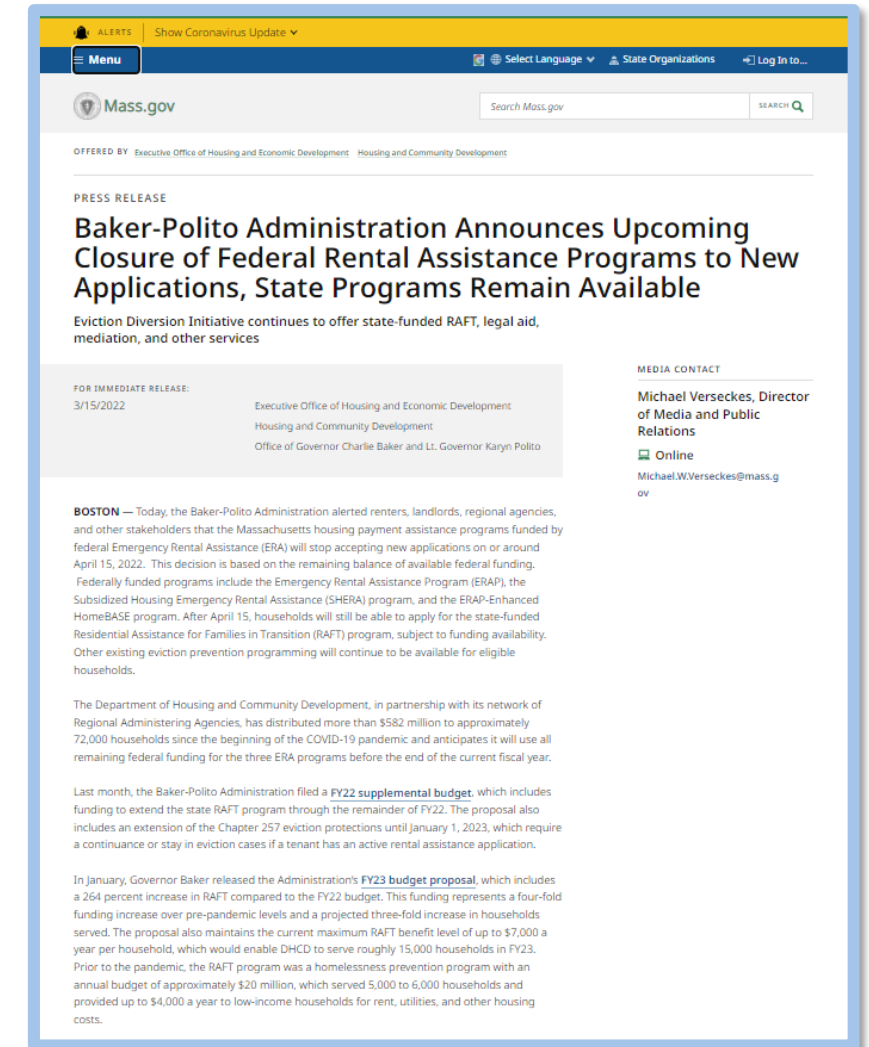


RAA SUPPORT, READINESS, & NEXT STEPS

The memo outlining information that was provided during this Office Hours was distributed on Tuesday, March 15 to RAA Leadership.

The Administration also made a press release about the ERAP application closure to ensure that the public is informed.

[Baker-Polito Administration Announces Upcoming Closure of Federal Rental Assistance Programs to New Applications, State Programs Remain Available | Mass.gov](#)



RAFT REFRESHER TRAININGS



In advance of this policy shift, DHCD will host RAFT trainings to provide policy guidance and refreshers for RAA staff. These sessions will be recorded.



RAFT Refresher | Friday, April 1, 2022 | 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM



RAFT Refresher | Friday, April 8, 2022 | 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM



RAFT Q&A | Friday, April 15, 2022 | 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM



RAFT Q&A | Friday, April 22, 2022 | 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Please adhere to the following actions by the specified dates.



Announcement of ERAP closure on RAA websites | **April 1**



Removal of ERAP eligibility information from RAA websites | **April 15**



Ensure reception, HCEC, and any other staff answering calls at RAAs have the ERAP Closure FAQs and understand basic RAFT eligibility | **April 15**



Further Questions

Direct questions to your supervisor and then contact the RAA support inbox (dhcdraaraft@mass.gov) as a point of escalations for questions. A member of the RAA Support Team will respond.

- ***Time-sensitive Questions:*** Critical questions that require responses within 24hrs should be submitted with a subject line that includes “**URGENT.**”



Best Practice

Please **specify the program** that you are reaching out about to ensure that the DHCD RAA Support team is best positioned to provide policy guidance.



QUESTIONS

THANK YOU!

