



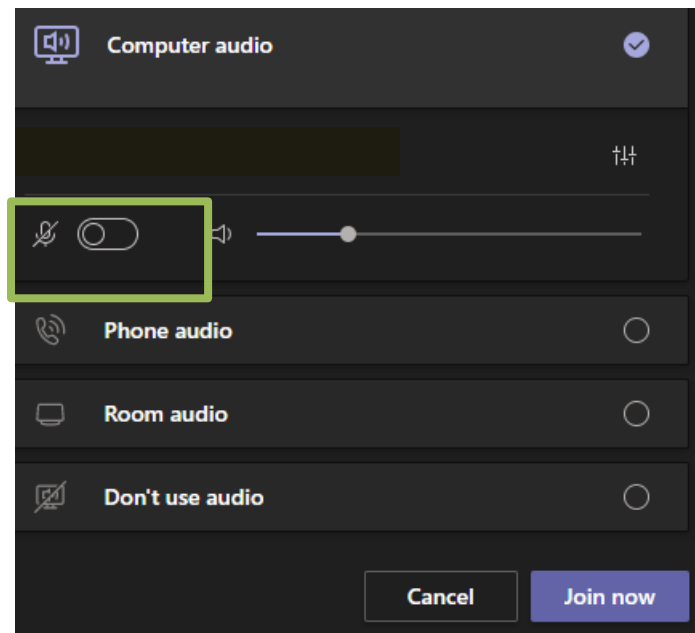
Federal Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

September 24, 2021

Please Mute

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

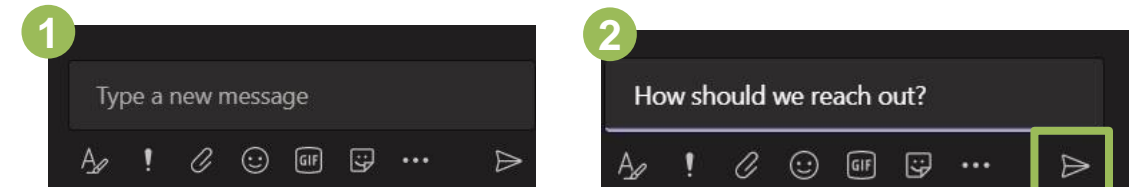


Engage During Meeting

1. Teams Chat

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

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



2. Questions

- We will be monitoring the Teams Chat for questions throughout the session
- We will triage questions during designated checkpoints

THIS CALL IS BEING RECORDED





Our Journey Today

1 HOUR



Objective & Introduction

5 mins



Frequently Asked Questions: FAQs



Central App Update

30 mins



Processing Goal Update



Policy Update



Questions

20 mins



Wrap Up

5 mins

Purpose



Review frequently asked questions and provide tips and best practices to ensure policy changes are being implemented efficiently and effectively

Goal



Provide RAA staff with **guidance and continued support** related to ERAP and other EDI programs



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Question # 1



Is an applicant eligible for rental or moving assistance if the applicant is currently renting a room in the same unit from a family member who owns the property?



There are no rules against renting from a family member, *but* RAAs should do their due diligence to confirm that the rental agreement is legitimate and documented.

Question # 2



Can ERAP be used by tenants to cover units with income-based rental subsidy?
Is there a dollar limit on subsidized housing arrears and stipends for ERAP?



- Yes, ERAP can cover up to 18 months of arrears for the tenant-paid portion of rent in units with an income-based rental subsidy (e.g. Section 8 or MRVP)
- Remember that tenants with income-based rental subsidies are *not* eligible for any months of stipends, including first month's rent
- There is no dollar limit on assistance specific to those with income-based subsidies
 - The same restrictions outlined in the Admin Plan apply

Question # 3



If an applicant has received ERAP assistance in the past and has submitted a new application requesting additional assistance, should RAAs direct the applicant to recertify or reapply?



If an applicant who has previously received ERAP benefits is reapplying for additional assistance and meets the criteria for recertification, RAAs should accept their application and process it using the rules for recertification. However, if the applicant has not started another application, they should be directed to the Recertification Form.

Question # 4



Do first and last month's rent count as prospective rent or moving expenses?

First and last month's rent count as prospective rent. Therefore, they do count toward both the 3-month limit on stipends as well as the 18-month limit on total assistance.



Question # 5



Do you need a shutoff notice to provide utility assistance?

For **RAFT**, a shutoff notice **is required** since utility payments through RAFT can only be used to prevent a shutoff/resume service.

For **ERAP**, a shutoff notice **is not required**. You can cover any utility arrears the applicant has up to \$2,500.



Question # 6



How can cases be approved that exceed \$35,000? How about \$50,000?

For cases above \$35,000, contact Molly Butman; she will do a quick review and raise the limit in HAPPY, if appropriate

For cases above \$50,000, submit the file to Compliance (Kathleen McNamara and Chhenlee Ly) via the Interchange for a full file review



Question # 7



Can applicants still use a paper application once their RAA goes live with the Central App?

Yes, a paper version of the Central App is available for those who need it. However, any paper apps that are submitted will have to be manually keyed in by RAA staff (through the Central App Portal).

While the paper app is available for those with no access to necessary technology, RAAs should strongly encourage applicants to apply online.



Question # 8



If an applicant indicates on their application that they have zero income, what additional documentation is required to verify this?

If an adult in the household has zero income, it may be self-attested in the application, as there is no way to substantiate a lack of income.





QUESTIONS



CENTRAL APP UPDATE

Central Application Release Plan (as of September 23)



The pilot and Waves IA – C are live and application processing is in progress. Remaining RAAs will go live in five waves through early October.


	Wave 0 - Pilot	Wave IA	Wave IB	Wave IC	Wave ID	Wave 2A	Wave 2B
RAA(s)	NWHS (SP)	SMOC (SP) Berkshire (DP)	Metro (SP)	CTI (SP)	HAC (SP)	Way Finders (DP) CMHA (SP) RCAP (SP)	LHAND (DP) Franklin (SP)**
Application Launch*	July 20	August 19	September 2	September 16	September 21	September 23	September 30**
RAA Go Live**	July 22	August 30 September 7	September 9	September 23	September 21	September 30	October 7

*Application available to public and routed to RAP Center; current application links will be changed to the Central Application links for RAA wave participants

** RAA begins receiving and processing

Central App Portal: New Feature Demo






Emergency Housing Payment Assistance

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HomeProgram InformationRAA Login


Available Services



Submit Application

Submit your emergency rental assistance application


More »



Upload Documents

Forgot to include any documents with your application? Upload them here!


More »



Application Information


See which RAA is processing your application

More »



Need Help?


More »



Staff Service Request:

RAA Submit a question or issue with the application

More »



RAA Application Lookup

Search for assigned RAA by Application ID

More »

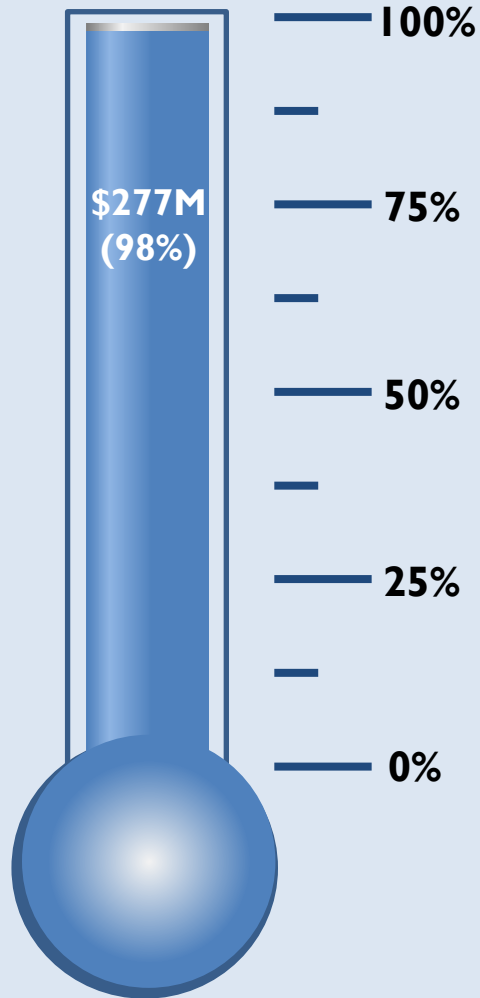


PROCESSING GOAL UPDATE

Federal Emergency Rental Assistance Program Spending Goal by Sept. 30th



GOAL: \$283.7M*



- 63.5% of ERAI funds have been spent or committed as of 9/17 (\$277M)*
 - Includes \$40M admin
 - \$6.4M stabilization
 - \$6.8M SHERA
 - \$40M COVID RAFT allocated to ERAI in June
 - **The majority—\$183M—is from ERAP**
- Gap of \$6.3M to be made up by 9/30 to hit 65% goal
- In addition, 7% of ERA2 funds have been spent or committed (\$25M, with **\$19M** from ERAP)

**65% of ERAI funds must be spent or committed by September 30, 2021*



QUESTIONS



RESOURCES

1

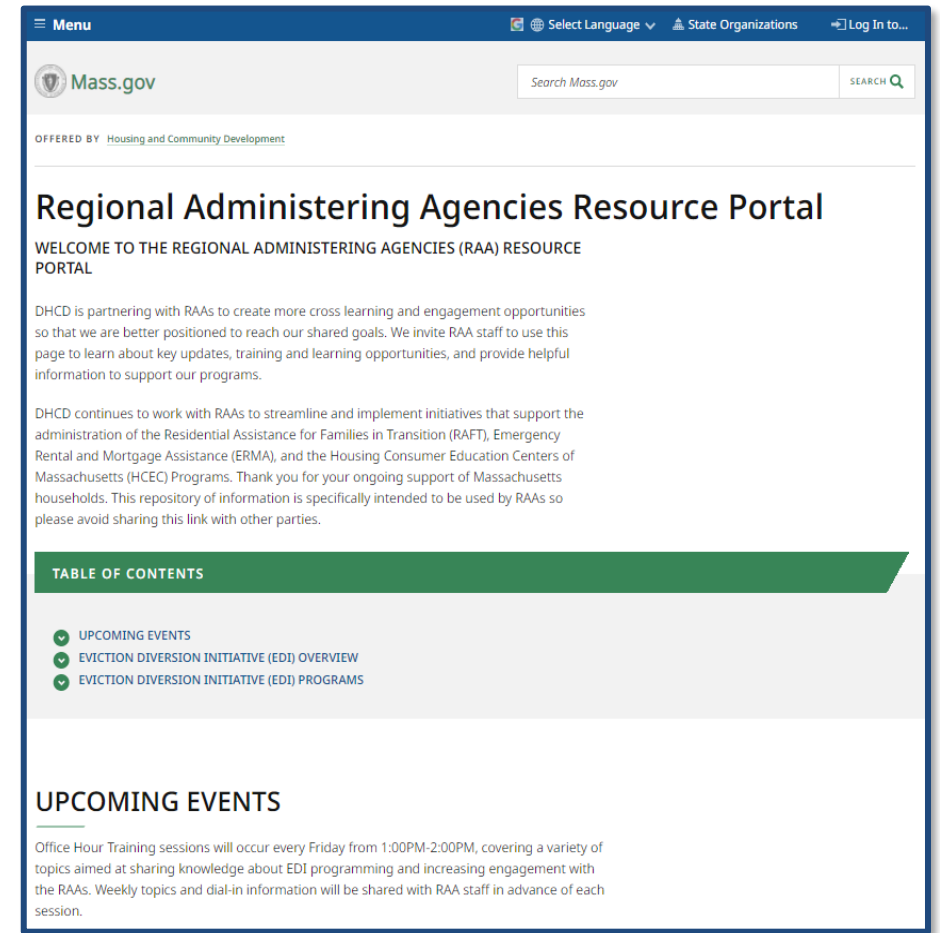
[RAA Resource Portal](#)

Central resource to provide RAA staff with key updates, training and learning opportunities, and helpful information to support programs

2

[FAQs](#)

Comprehensive list of FAQs spanning a variety of topics



The screenshot displays the 'Regional Administering Agencies Resource Portal' on the Mass.gov website. The page header includes a 'Menu' button, 'Select Language' dropdown, 'State Organizations' link, and a 'Log In to...' button. The main content area features a 'WELCOME TO THE REGIONAL ADMINISTERING AGENCIES (RAA) RESOURCE PORTAL' message, followed by a paragraph about DHCD's partnership with RAAs. Below this is a 'TABLE OF CONTENTS' section with three items: 'UPCOMING EVENTS', 'EVICTION DIVERSION INITIATIVE (EDI) OVERVIEW', and 'EVICTION DIVERSION INITIATIVE (EDI) PROGRAMS'. The 'UPCOMING EVENTS' section is expanded, showing details about Office Hour Training sessions.

Menu Select Language State Organizations Log In to...

Mass.gov Search Mass.gov SEARCH

OFFERED BY Housing and Community Development

Regional Administering Agencies Resource Portal

WELCOME TO THE REGIONAL ADMINISTERING AGENCIES (RAA) RESOURCE PORTAL

DHCD is partnering with RAAs to create more cross learning and engagement opportunities so that we are better positioned to reach our shared goals. We invite RAA staff to use this page to learn about key updates, training and learning opportunities, and provide helpful information to support our programs.

DHCD continues to work with RAAs to streamline and implement initiatives that support the administration of the Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT), Emergency Rental and Mortgage Assistance (ERMA), and the Housing Consumer Education Centers of Massachusetts (HCEC) Programs. Thank you for your ongoing support of Massachusetts households. This repository of information is specifically intended to be used by RAAs so please avoid sharing this link with other parties.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- UPCOMING EVENTS
- EVICTION DIVERSION INITIATIVE (EDI) OVERVIEW
- EVICTION DIVERSION INITIATIVE (EDI) PROGRAMS

UPCOMING EVENTS

Office Hour Training sessions will occur every Friday from 1:00PM-2:00PM, covering a variety of topics aimed at sharing knowledge about EDI programming and increasing engagement with the RAAs. Weekly topics and dial-in information will be shared with RAA staff in advance of each session.



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.**”
- *Example:* Tenant is facing imminent loss of housing (24 hours) and applicant does not necessarily fit guidelines.



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.

THANK YOU!

