

Massachusetts Housing Mediation Program

EOHLC Office Hours

Friday February 14, 2025

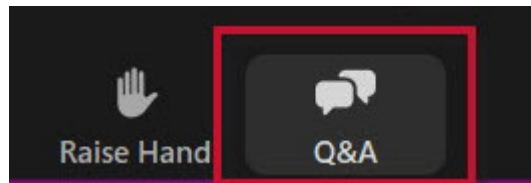
WELCOME

ENGAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

Asking Questions

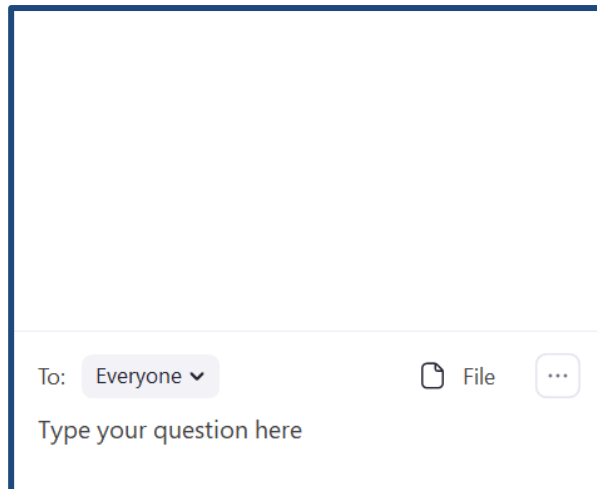
We will be monitoring the Q&A for questions

1



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

2

A screenshot of a Q&A submission form. It features a large white text area for entering the question. Below the text area, there is a 'To:' dropdown menu currently set to 'Everyone'. To the right of the dropdown is a 'File' upload button with a document icon. At the bottom of the form, there is a label that says 'Type your question here'.

Enter your question into the “Q&A” box

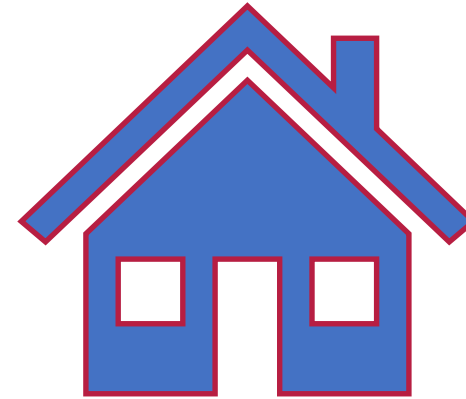
We will follow up with answers to any questions that we don't get to during the session

THIS CALL IS BEING RECORDED



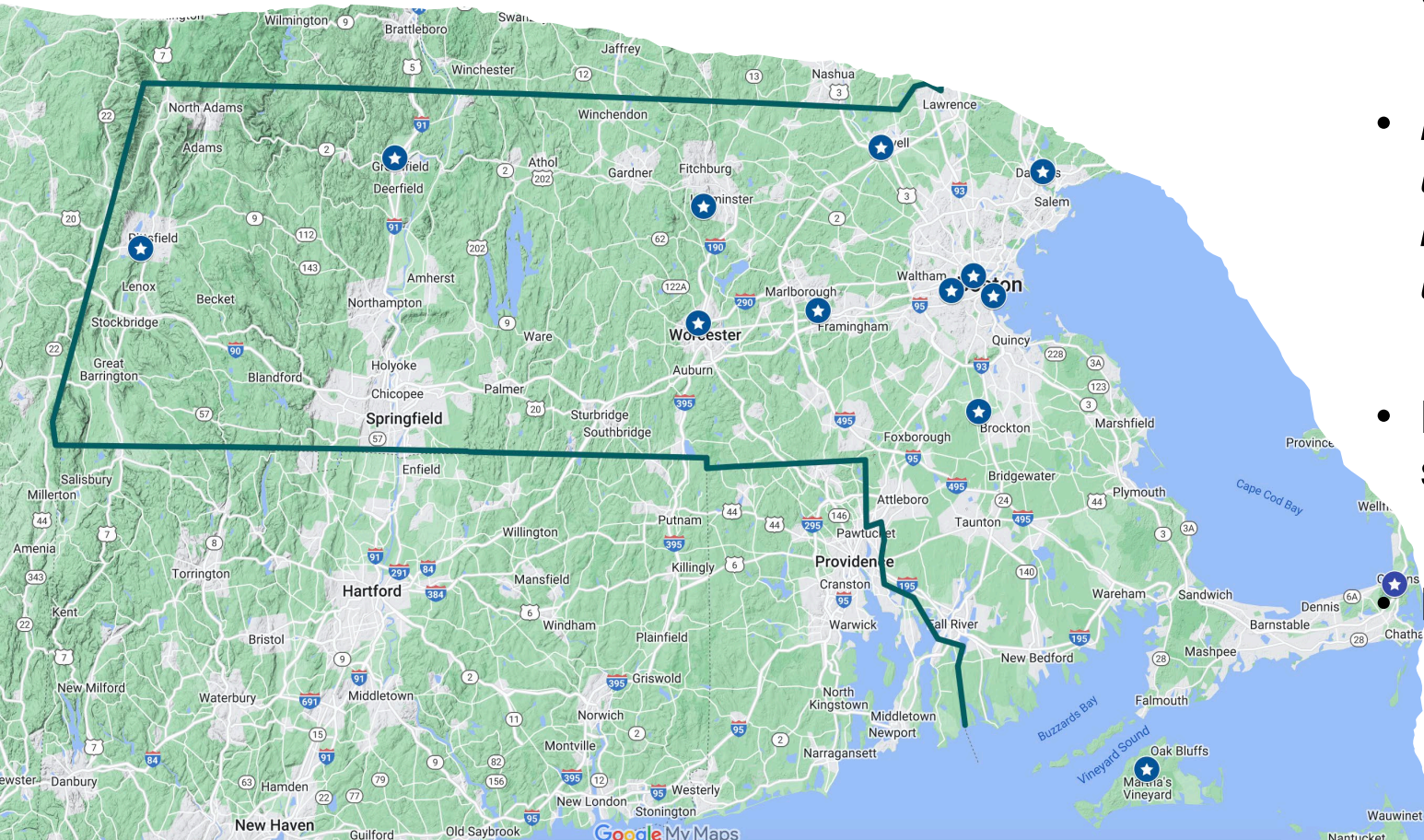
Massachusetts Housing Mediation Program

Trained mediators can help landlords and
tenants find a workable solution for
everyone



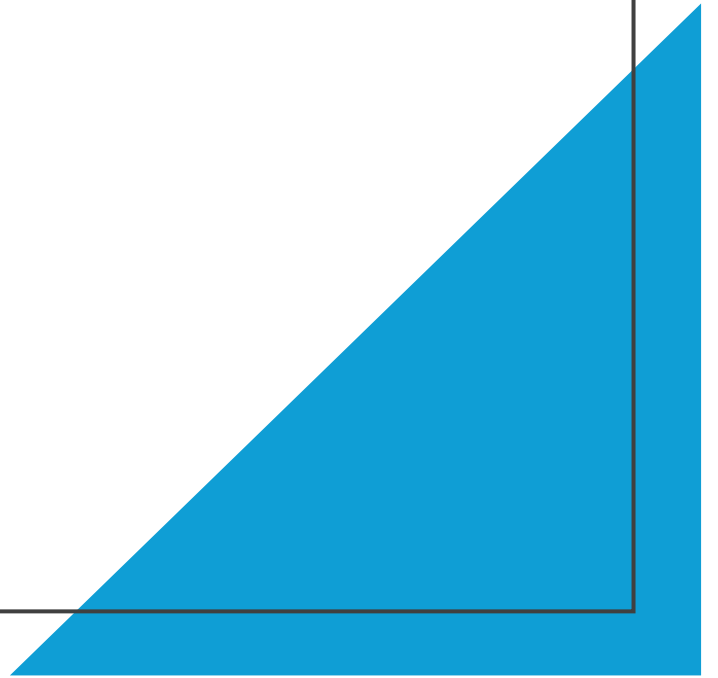
Community Mediation

- Provides services to all 14 counties in the Commonwealth
- Local organizations that serve local communities
- *Free housing mediation services for landlords and tenants for any housing related disputes that could lead to loss of housing or eviction*
- No income limitation to access services
- Legal representation not required



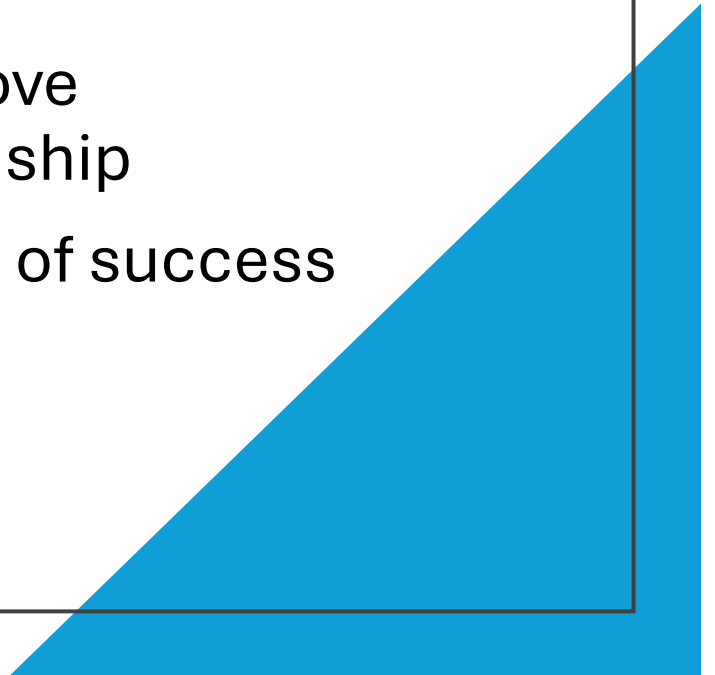
What is Mediation?

- Process where neutral third party helps parties find mutually agreeable solutions that work for all
- Confidential
- Voluntary
- Prioritizes self-determination and informed consent



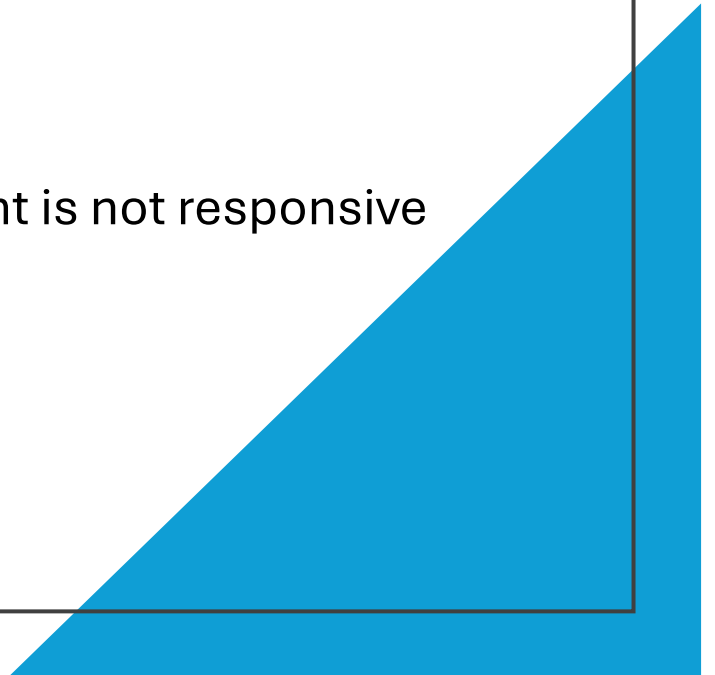
Benefits of community mediation

- Mediation services complement and can occur in parallel to RAFT application reviews
- Adherence – parties are more likely to abide by agreement when reached collaboratively
- Gives parties a chance to speak and be heard, improve communication, and often helps to stabilize relationship
- Allows for creative, flexible solutions with a high rate of success

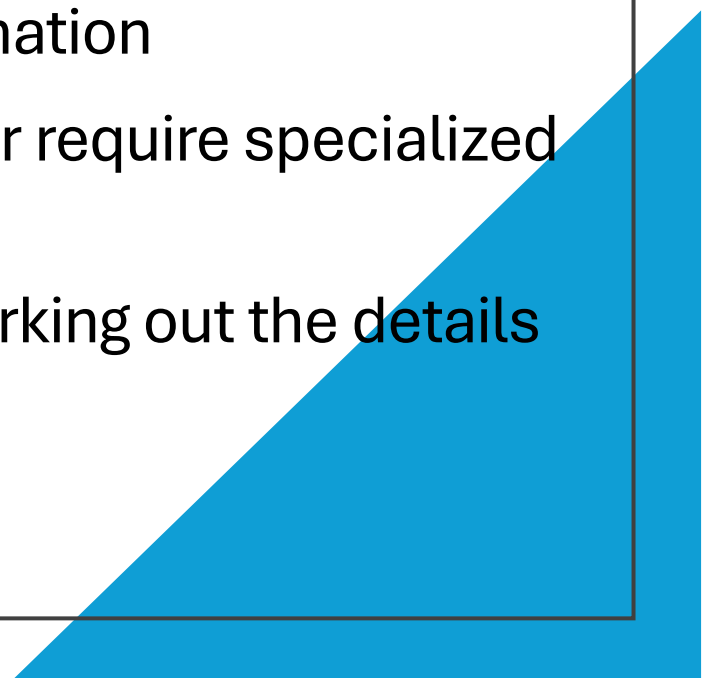


When Can I Refer Individuals to Mediation?

- Landlord and tenant disagree on the amount of rent owed
- There is a disconnect between landlord and tenant on housing-related items (i.e. condition of premises, utility bills, etc)
- RAFT-related issues
 - Tenant owes more than RAFT can cover
 - Applicant has been denied RAFT
 - Applicant has not been denied RAFT, but the landlord or tenant is not responsive to ongoing communication from the RAA



What Other Situations Can Benefit from Mediation?

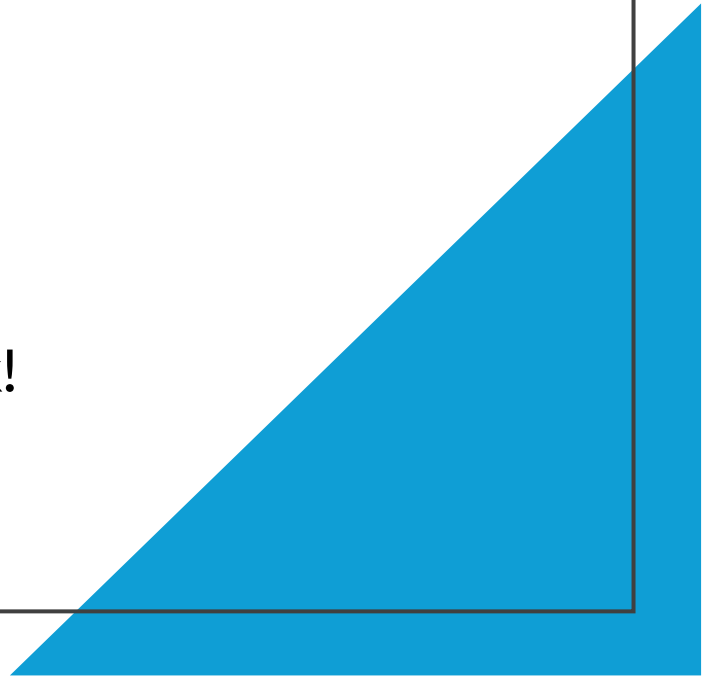
- ☐ High level of conflict between the parties – relationships are frayed
 - ☐ Communication problems exist between the parties
 - ☐ Different levels of knowledge and access to information
 - ☐ Issues are complex, involve multiple parties and/or require specialized expertise
 - ☐ People are broadly in agreement but need help working out the details
- 

Think of mediation as...

- A complement to other resources such as RAFT, housing search assistance
- A process that helps landlords and tenants figure out a way to move forward
 - Payment plans for rental arrearages or other bills (i.e. water, electricity)
 - Working out details for soft landings
 - How to handle future issues such as noise

When in doubt – refer it out!

Still not sure? Just reach out and ask!

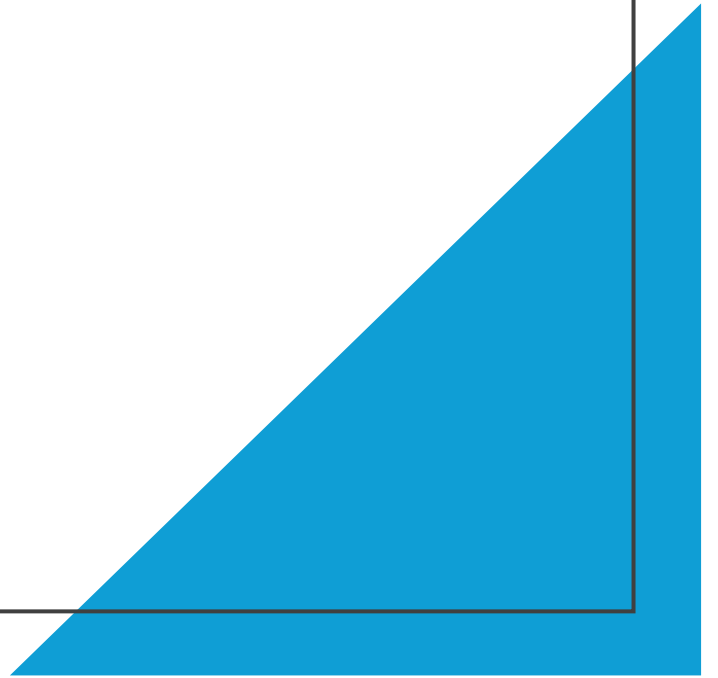


Why Refer Someone to Mediation?

- To reduce landlord-tenant conflict
- To improve landlord-tenant communication
- To increase speed of resolution
- To address other landlord-tenant interpersonal issues
- Amount of funding available for tenant won't cure the arrears

What about if there are legal issues?

- Refer to both legal services and community mediation



How Do I Make A Referral?

1. RAFT/HCEC staff refers client to a Community Mediation Center

*NOTE: No need to get landlord consent, **only need verbal consent from tenant/referring party***

- Ask client if you can refer them to mediation (verbal consent is fine)
- Determine local CMC through referencing RAA/CMC guide
 - *For more city/town specific info, you can use <https://hedfuel.azurewebsites.net>*
- Fill out [mediation referral form](#)
- Email designated contact (see slide for CMC contacts)

2. Coordinator will then reach out to both individuals to explain mediation, determine eligibility, and schedule it if everyone agrees to participate.

Contact List for RAA/Community Mediation Center

RAA	Associated Community Mediation Center	Contact Information
Hearthway	UpSide413	Lynn Wallace: lynnw@upside413.org 413-344-4810
Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance (CMHA)	Family Services of Central MA	Romina Ortiz: rortiz@sevenhills.org 508-796-1963 Wairimu Macharia: wamacharia@sevenhills.org 508-796-1971
Community Teamwork, Inc. (CTI)	The Resolution Center (<i>Essex County</i>)	Arnold Armas: Arnold@resolutionnorthshore.org 978-219-9317
	Middlesex Community College Law Center (<i>Middlesex County</i>)	Michael Healey: healeym@middlesex.mass.edu 978-656-3342
Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority	Collaborative Resolutions Group	Kenzie Helmick: khelmick@crg-collab.org 413-636-1183
Housing Assistance Corporation (HAC)	Martha's Vineyard Mediation Center	Paula Reidbord: admin@mvmediation.org (508) 693-2199
Lynn Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development (LHAND)	The Resolution Center	Arnold Armas: arnold@resolutionnorthshore.org (978)219-9317
Metro Housing Boston (Metro/MHB)	Community Dispute Settlement Center	Sooty Heng, cdscintake@communitydispute.org 617-876-5376
NeighborWorks Housing Solutions	Greater Brockton Center for Dispute Resolution	Nancy Sarcevicz: nsarcevicz.gbcd@gmail.com 508-897-2867
	Martha's Vineyard Mediation Center (<i>Bristol County</i>)	Paula Reidbord: admin@mvmediation.org (508) 693-2199
RCAP Solutions	Mediation Services of North Central MA	Teena Juby: Housing@mediationncm.org (978) 466-9595
South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC)	MetroWest Mediation Services	Li Morrison: li@metrowestmediation.org (508) 960-9336
	Metropolitan Mediation Services (<i>Norfolk County</i>)	Madeleine Duchene: Madeleine.Duchene@metromediation.org 617 241-0300 x2
Way Finders	UpSide413 (<i>Hampden County</i>)	Lynn Wallace: lynnw@upside413.org 413-344-4810
	Collaborative Resolutions Group (<i>Franklin, Hampshire County</i>)	Kenzie Helmick: khelmick@crg-collab.org 413-636-1183

HMP Community Mediation Centers

Community Mediation Center & Center Location	Names	Title	Email	Phone
UpSide413, Pittsfield (formerly Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority)	Kayla Allen Lynn Wallace	Program Director Case Coordinator	Kaylaw@bcrha.com Lynnw@bcrha.com	413 344-4812 413-344-4810
Collaborative Resolutions Group, Greenfield	Debbie Lynangale Kenzie Helmick	Interim Co-Director Case Coordinator	dlynangale@crg-collab.org khelmick@crg-collab.org	413-774-7469 413-636-1183
Community Dispute Settlement Center, Cambridge	Pedro Spivakovsky-Gonzalez Sooty Heng	Executive Director Case Manager	pedro@communitydispute.org cdscintake@communitydispute.org	617-876-5376 351-220-8087
Family Services of Central MA, Worcester	Sabrina Allfrey Romina Ortiz Wairimu Macharia	Director Case Coordinator Housing Coordinator	Sallfrey@sevenhills.org Rortiz@sevenhills.org wamacharia@sevenhills.org	508-796-1949 508-796-1963 508-796-1971
Greater Brockton Center for Dispute Resolution, Brockton	Ron Fredey Nancy Sarcevicz	Coordinator HMP Coordinator	Rfredey@gmail.com nsarcevicz.gbcd@gmail.com	508-897-2868 508-897-2867
MetroWest Mediation Services, Framingham	Seth Izen Li Morrison	Executive Director Coordinator	Seth@metrowestmediation.org li@metrowestmediation.org	508-872-9495 508-960-9336
Middlesex Community College Law Center, Lowell	Michael Healey	Executive Director	healeym@middlesex.mass.edu	978-656-3342
Mediation Services of N Central MA, Leominster	Lisa Wood Teena Juby	Executive Director Case Coordinator	lwood@mediationncm.org Housing@mediationncm.org	978-466-9595 978-728-9686
Metropolitan Mediation Services, Brookline	Antonio P. Castro Aranda Madeleine Duchene	Executive Director Case Coordinator	Antonio.Castro@metromediation.org Madeleine.Duchene@metromediation.org	617-241-0300 x6 617-241-0300 x2
Martha's Vineyard Mediation Program, Vineyard Haven	Paula Reidbord	HMP Case Manager	Admin@mvmediation.org	508-693-2199
The Resolution Center, Beverly (formerly, North Shore Community Mediation Center)	Hannah Bowen Arnold Armas	Executive Director Case Manager	Hannah@resolutionnorthshore.org Arnold@resolutionnorthshore.org	978-232-1212 978-219-9317

QUESTIONS

RAA Support

Questions

- Direct questions to your supervisor and then contact **Zendesk** as a point of escalations for questions.
- Time-sensitive Questions: Critical questions that **require responses within 24hrs** should be submitted with the priority drop down option labeled **“URGENT.”**
- Please specify the issue and add any helpful screenshots that you are reaching out about to ensure that the Readiness Coordinators are in the best positioned to provide policy guidance.

Resources

RAA Resource Portal

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

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

that provide additional, concise program guidance.

Zendesk training materials offer helpful info on processing within E2E/Salesforce

THANK YOU!

