

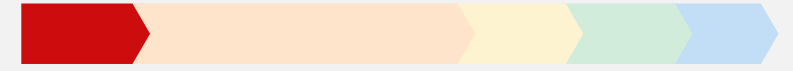


01

6 MONTH LENGTH OF STAY

COMMUNICATION &
EXPECTATION SETTING

Supporting Families on a 6-Month Timeline Notification & Expectation Setting



Provider responsibilities around notice delivery and tracking look different for families entering shelter before and after April 11, 2025

Families entering EA shelter before April 11

- Families will be selected into “batches”.
- In general, we will select families in order from longest to shortest stayers. This is not an ironclad rule, as there may be operational reasons to select out of order.
- Providers **will be responsible** for tracking delivery of selection notices for these families.
- The **selection and notification process for these families will be the same** as it has been to date. The only difference is that families will receive their notices earlier than 9 months.

Families entering EA shelter on or after April 11

- Families will receive their individualized LOS exit date on their placement letter.
- Providers will be cc'd on the placement letter and any subsequent communication that changes a family's exit date. Families' exit dates will also be available in ETO.
- Providers **will not be responsible** for tracking delivery of any notices for these families.
- Providers **will be responsible** for talking to families about their length of stay and ensuring they understand the expectation to exit in 180 days.

A Note About Email Addresses

As we move to reduce admin burden on providers by sending communications directly to families by email, it is essential that providers work with families to ensure they:

- A. Have an accurate email address recorded in ETO
- B. Regularly check that email account for updates from EOHLC regarding their EA Shelter Benefit

Supporting Families on a 6-Month Timeline



Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7+
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<p>Placement Letter with LOS Date</p>	<p>End of Month 2 Reminder</p>	<p>End of Month 3 Reminder</p>	<p>Hardship Window Open Reminder</p>	<p>Hardship Window Closed Reminder</p>	<p>Termination Notice</p>	
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Notices	<p>Months 1 to 6: Expectation Setting and Reminders</p> <p>Families get their shelter end date on their placement letter and will receive reminders by email. Providers should have regular conversations with families about their timeline and rehousing plans.</p>	<p>Month 7+: Termination</p> <p>Families will receive a shelter benefit expired notice, not an NFL-9T.</p>
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Plan A: Housing Search	<p>Months 1 and 2 Identify Viable Options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess and begin to address housing barriers, e.g. credit repair. Encourage the family to look at a variety of units, exploring all their options. Flag emerging engagement issues for your Housing Search Specialist early so they can support you. 	<p>Months 3 and 4 Apply for Units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue working through housing barriers. Assist the family to apply for promising units. Gather HomeBASE paperwork. Consult with your Housing Search Specialist to work through barriers that arise. 	<p>Months 5 and 6 Submit HomeBASE Packet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain a signed lease. Submit the HomeBASE packet in plenty of time to avoid a last-minute rush. Apply for a lease bridge early, if required. Support the family to plan for furniture and moving. 	<p>Variable Move-In</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the family with their move. Dismiss the family from the program as soon as they leave shelter.
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Plan B: Other Options	<p>Months 1 to 4: Plan and Assess</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk to the family about alternatives if they cannot secure a unit, such as staying with friends and family. Identify families who are struggling with housing search and may need a hardship waiver or to reapply for EA. 	<p>Month 5: Hardship Deadline</p> <p>Hardship Waiver applications must be submitted during Month 5 of the family's shelter stay.</p>	<p>Month 6: Reapply</p> <p>Families who cannot secure housing may reapply for shelter if they exit on time.</p>
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Communicating the Change to Families

How will families learn about the new policy?

General Communication Sent via Email

On 3/27 and 3/28, families received an email from EOHLC about the new 6-month shelter time limit. The email was sent in English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, and Cape Verdean Creole.

You can find copies of this communication on the Provider Portal. Please ensure all families receive this communication, particularly if they do not have an email address in ETO.

Family-Facing Flyer

We have also produced a 2-sided flyer (see right) with key information, which we encourage providers to post on notice boards and distribute to families. You can find this on the Provider Portal. This includes LOS and Other Changes to EA.

Mass.Gov Website

We will regularly update the [mass.gov/EAShelterLOS](https://www.mass.gov/EAShelterLOS) site with the latest information about the new policy. We will post information, FAQs, and rehousing resources there for families to access.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
Executive Office of Housing & Livable Communities
Division of Housing Stabilization

CHANGE TO SHELTER TIME LIMIT

Emergency Assistance Family Shelter now has a **6-month** time limit

How does this impact my family?

If you entered shelter on or before April 10, 2025

Did you get a notice that told you when to leave shelter?

- **If you did**, you should continue to work on leaving shelter by then.
- **If you didn't**, you will receive one soon. You will have 180 days, approximately 6 months, to leave shelter after you get the notice.

If you entered shelter after April 10, 2025

Your placement letter will tell you when you need to

You might be able to stay in shelter for an extended period if you prove you have a hardship. Please visit [www.mass.gov/EAShelterLOS](#) below to learn more about the criteria and process.

To learn about how HomeBASE could help you leave shelter, visit the link below. You can also ask your provider support staff about HomeBASE.

Visit www.mass.gov/EAShelterLOS or scan the QR code to learn more about the 6-month time limit. Here you will find information available to help your family leave shelter. You will also find information about job training programs, food assistance, housing programs, immigration legal support, and other resources.

Other Changes to EA

Uniform Shelter Rule Updates

Scan the QR code to learn more about the Uniform Shelter Rules.

- Having weapons in shelter has never been and is still not allowed. Guns are never allowed even if lawfully registered.
- If you have a weapon in shelter, your stay will be terminated and your family must immediately leave shelter. This will no longer be a non-compliance.

Warrants Process Update

Scan the QR code to learn more about the warrants process.

- HLC checks for people who have warrants out for their arrest on a regular basis.
- If HLC finds that there is a warrant(s) out for your arrest, you will have 5 weekdays, instead of 30 days, to clear the warrant with the courts.

Shelter Transfers

- Families can continue to request to transfer near their home community, and HLC will continue to review these requests.
- However, due to limited shelter capacity, we may not be able to approve all of these requests.
- You will not be able to appeal this decision.

HomeBASE Program

- If you enter shelter after April 11, you must be fully eligible to receive HomeBASE.

Last Updated April 2, 2025 | English

Communicating the Change to Families

Where can I find more information?

Providers



Attend post-launch office hours with Heather and the LOS Team over the coming weeks – we will provide more information about this soon.



Review training materials and other Length of Stay resources on the Provider Portal at mass.gov/info-details/emergency-assistance-provider-portal



Check Catching Up With the Commonwealth for important news and updates from EOHLIC



Have additional Length of Stay questions? Send us your questions at EOHLICLOS@mass.gov. Please note: This inbox is only for Provider questions.

Families



Visit www.mass.gov/EAShelterLOS to find family-facing resources about Length of Stay and Rehousing Resources

Communicating the Change to Families

FAQs: Hardship Waivers and Lease Bridge

Q: Is there any way to get more time?

A: Families who meet certain criteria written in the law may be eligible for an additional 30 days in shelter, called a hardship waiver.

You can find more information about the criteria and application process at mass.gov/EAShelterLOS.

Q: What if I have found a unit and need a few more weeks to move in?

A: If you have found housing and have a signed lease (or equivalent document), you may be able to stay in shelter for 30 days while you prepare to move in. This type of extension is called a lease bridge. You can only get one lease bridge.

Q: What can I do if I am denied a hardship waiver or lease bridge?

A: If you are denied a hardship waiver or lease bridge and you disagree with the decision, you can file a request for reconsideration. EOHLC must receive your reconsideration request within 7 days of the denial, so make you submit in plenty of time.

Communicating the Change to Families

FAQs: Rehousing

Q: What if I can't find housing by the time I have to leave shelter?

A: If you leave shelter on time, you may reapply for EA Family Shelter. You must leave your current unit before you reapply. You will need to go through eligibility checks again.

Q: What should I do to find housing?

A: We understand that moving from shelter to housing takes a lot of work. We are here to support you. You should talk to your case manager about how they can help you with housing search. You can also visit mass.gov/info-details/resources-for-ea-eligible-families to learn more about the resources available to help you pay for housing.

Q: Where should families go if they have questions?

A: Families can find the latest information about the Length of Stay Policy at mass.gov/EAShelterLOS.

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