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MOVA Awards \$2.7M to Fund Emergency Housing Services for Crime Victims during COVID-19 Pandemic

The Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA) has announced **\$2,755,011.10** in emergency grant funding to provide housing stabilization services for victims of crime in response to challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) and 29 victim service agencies will receive funding to provide critical services to victims facing eviction and/or housing instability through the remainder of the state fiscal year (June 30, 2021). As the moratorium on evictions and foreclosures in Massachusetts expired on October 17, 2020, this dedicated funding is essential to protect against displacement, loss of housing, and homelessness for victims of crime.

Of the total award, approximately \$1.2M is allocated for emergency shelter for victims; \$675,000 for rental and utility assistance costs; \$258,000 for emergency relocation costs; \$184,000 for client transportation; and \$315,000 for victim emergency basic need items.

“Ensuring survivors of crime have a roof over their heads is critical to the health and safety of them and their families”, said Liam Lowney, Executive Director for the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance. “This pandemic has increased isolation and economic distress, forcing many victims impacted by violence to lose their homes. During these unprecedented times it is essential that we support the victim serving organizations with the funding they need to meet the evolving needs of their clients.”

The challenges faced by victims of crime seeking housing services has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Social distancing measures, lack of available congregate and/or shelter space, financial constraints due to high unemployment, and the expiration of the moratorium on evictions and foreclosures on October 17, 2020 have added significant burdens in accessing housing opportunities. Agencies receiving funding are uniquely positioned to support survivor populations navigate safe and available housing through their strong relationships within state government and the communities they serve.

This temporary funding is in addition to [\\$3.5M awarded in May 2020](#) to victim service programs throughout the Commonwealth for general emergency services as a result of the pandemic. MOVA since identified a specific additional need for housing stabilization funding to support survivors and victims of crime in Massachusetts.

MOVA operates under the guidance of the Victim and Witness Assistance Board (VWAB). The VWAB administers federal funds for victim services available through the Federal Victims of

Crime Act of 1984 (VOCA), VOCA statute 34 USC 20103, which authorizes states to subaward annual VOCA grants for the financial support of eligible crime victim assistance programs.

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| Agency Name | Award Amount |
|---|------------------------|
| Benevolent Fraternity of Unitarian Churches, Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry | \$ 92,700.00 |
| Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center | \$ 180,215.10 |
| Boston Area Rape Crisis Center, Inc. | \$ 25,000.00 |
| Brigham and Women's Hospital | \$ 19,350.00 |
| Casa Myrna | \$ 208,866.00 |
| Centerboard | \$ 110,750.00 |
| De Novo | \$ 180,000.00 |
| DOVE, Inc. | \$ 56,250.00 |
| Elizabeth Freeman Center, Inc. | \$ 82,000.00 |
| HarborCOV Inc. | \$ 321,732.00 |
| HAWC | \$ 100,000.00 |
| Health Imperatives | \$ 20,000.00 |
| Hilltown Community Health Centers | \$ 20,000.00 |
| Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center | \$ 23,400.00 |
| Jewish Family and Children Services | \$ 121,445.00 |
| MA Department of Public Health | \$ 450,000.00 |
| Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers (MAPS) | \$ 45,000.00 |
| Mothers for Justice and Equality | \$ 30,000.00 |
| On The Rise, Inc. | \$ 10,000.00 |
| REACH Beyond Domestic Violence, Inc. | \$ 100,000.00 |
| RESPOND, Inc. | \$ 130,912.00 |
| RIA House | \$ 20,000.00 |
| Safe Passage | \$ 40,000.00 |
| South Middlesex Opportunity Council – Voices Against Violence | \$ 50,000.00 |
| Southeast Family Services/South Shore Resource and Advocacy Center | \$ 24,148.00 |
| The Key Program, Children's Charter | \$ 10,000.00 |
| The Network/LA Red | \$ 71,575.00 |
| Transition House | \$ 80,000.00 |
| Womanshelter Companeras | \$ 85,668.00 |
| YWCA Northeastern Massachusetts | \$ 46,000.00 |
| Total Awards | \$ 2,755,011.10 |