



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING &
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Charles D. Baker, Governor ♦ Karyn E. Polito, Lt. Governor ♦ Jennifer D. Maddox, Undersecretary

PHN 2021-24

To: All Local Housing Authorities
From: Ben Stone, Director, Division of Public Housing
Date: December 29, 2021
Re: **Regulatory Waivers Related to Removal of Congregate Program from CHAMP**

KEY POINTS:

- 1.) The Congregate Program will be removed from CHAMP and the program's application and selection processes, including managing waitlists, will be returned to individual LHAs.
- 2.) LHAs will be required to follow the DHCD Housing Situation Priority Policy for c. 667 Congregate Units for tenant selection in the Congregate Program. The DHCD Housing Situation Priority Policy for c. 667 Congregate Units will be applied by LHAs outside of CHAMP.

Congregate housing within c. 667 elderly/handicapped housing (the "Congregate Program") was included in Common Housing Application for Massachusetts Programs (CHAMP) when the system launched in 2019. As a result, there are two issues for applicants to the Congregate Program and LHAs with Congregate Housing:

- 1.) Applications to the Congregate Program increased significantly with many of the applicants disinterested in living in a congregate setting, resulting in long waitlists and delaying occupancy by applicants with a genuine interest in congregate settings; and
- 2.) because of CHAMP and the application of all priorities & preferences for tenant selection in 760 CMR 5.00, LHAs were unable to give preference to applicants with successful Executive Office of Elder Affairs ("EOEA") Multidisciplinary Assessment Team ("MAT") reviews (i.e., those applicants most likely to be interested in and suited for congregate housing).

These issues have resulted in LHAs having difficulty filling vacancies in the Congregate Program and those applicants genuinely interested in living in a congregate setting experiencing long wait times to be housed.

DHCD, in consultation with EOEA, has decided to remove the Congregate Program from CHAMP and return the Congregate Program application and selection processes back to LHAs. To accomplish this, DHCD is waiving regulations related to CHAMP contained in [760 CMR 5.00](#) as they pertain to the Congregate Program. A copy of that regulatory waiver is attached to this PHN as Attachment A.

Please see Attachment B: DHCD Housing Situation Priority Policy for c. 667 Congregate Housing and Attachment C: Tenant Selection Guidance for c. 667 Congregate Housing for details on how tenant selection for c.667 Congregate Housing will work following this regulatory waiver.

Please also see Attachments D,E,and F for the new Congregate State-Aided Housing Applications.

DHCD is optimistic that by providing these waivers the Congregate Program will experience fewer vacancies, applicants to the Congregate program will be more likely to be individuals interested in living in congregate settings and will experience shorter wait times to be housed in those settings, and LHAs will experience less administrative burden in housing applicants into the Congregate Program.

If you have any questions related to this PHN or the associated waiver, please contact Christine DeVore, Director, Bureau of Housing Management, at christine.devore@mass.gov.

Attachment A: *Regulatory Waiver of CHAMP-related Provisions of 760 CMR 5.00 for the Congregate Program*

Attachment B: DHCD Housing Situation Priority Policy for c. 667 Congregate Units

Attachment C: Tenant Selection for c. 667 Congregate Housing

Attachment D: Application for Congregate State-Aided Public Housing

Attachment E: Supplemental Application for Congregate State-Aided Public Housing

Attachment F: Application for Housing Situation Priority for Congregate Housing