



Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HOUSING &  
LIVABLE COMMUNITIES**

Maura T. Healey, Governor ◆ Kimberley Driscoll, Lieutenant Governor ◆ Edward M. Augustus Jr., Secretary

To: Local Housing Authority Executive Directors **PHN 2026-03**  
From: Jason Wright, Director, Bureau of Policy, Operations, and Performance  
Subject: RSC/MPSC Job Descriptions, Ethical Standards and Hiring Practices  
Date: February 10, 2026

The purpose of this Public Housing Notice (PHN) is to clarify the roles and responsibilities of Resident Service Coordinators (RSC) and Mixed Population Service Coordinators (MPSC), the process for changing job descriptions and expectations for RSC budgeting, hiring practices, supervision and discipline. For simplicity, this PHN will use the term RSC generally to refer to both types of Service Coordinators.

**Need To Know:**

- The role of an RSC is to enhance the ability of residents to maintain their tenancy and improve their quality of life while living in state-aided public housing.
- Any activity related to rent collection, lease enforcement and/or unit inspection is **not** appropriate for an RSC.
- EOHLC retains the right to reject RSC job descriptions that do not meet program standards and/or do not effectively meet the needs of residents in public housing.
- **LHAs must send all changes in RSC job description to EOHLC for approval.** Send to [ann-elizabeth.young@mass.gov](mailto:ann-elizabeth.young@mass.gov)
- **Failure of an LHA to adopt and adhere to an RSC job description that is in accordance with the RSC Handbook and EOHLC guidelines may result in the reduction or termination of an LHA's RSC award.**
- The unique nature of the service coordinator role requires the maintenance of clear professional boundaries, both RSCs and program grantees must ensure adherence to ethical standards in the execution of these duties.
- Regional grants will require all participating LHAs to work together to develop and adhere to RSC job descriptions, as well as to participate meaningfully in hiring, performance review, discipline and termination decisions.

**The Service Coordinator's Role**

The role of the service coordinator is to enhance the ability of residents to maintain their tenancy and improve their quality of life while living in state-aided public housing. A critical way they achieve this is by educating residents about and connecting residents with a variety of public benefits and services (e.g., food bank, MassHealth, public transportation, job training). The specific responsibilities of an RSC will be outlined in their position description by their employing

Local Housing Authority (LHA). The exact activities performed by an RSC may differ between LHAs as appropriate for each specific location and resident population. The [RSC Handbook](#) provides numerous examples of responsibilities and activities that are well suited for RSCs. Below, you'll find a sample of activities that can be included as components of an RSC's job description.

### Sample RSC Activities:

- Welcome new residents to the LHA by introducing the services provided by the LHA, the RSC program as well as a list of community resources for residents.
- Identify, evaluate, and manage relationships with relevant local partners and services providers.
- Provide referrals for services including but not limited to:
  - Local food pantries
  - Free or low-cost transportation
  - Career coaching services
  - Educational opportunities
  - Financial management training
  - Childcare services
  - After school or summer camps
  - Medical services
  - Mental health counseling
  - Substance use groups/counseling
  - Local affinity groups
  - Homemaking services
  - Legal services
- Identify residents who are eligible for benefits and help them apply. Services may include but are not limited to:
  - MassHealth
  - Medicaid
  - Social Security/Social Security Disability
  - SNAP
  - WIC
  - PFML
  - Unemployment benefits
  - Childcare vouchers
- Host educational events relevant to the needs/interests of residents, including but not limited to:
  - Homeownership seminars
  - Financial management workshops
  - Nutritional education
  - Review of available public benefits and how to apply
  - Review of available local resources (public schools, health care options, transportation, etc.)
- Host social events aimed at promoting a sense of community and inclusion. Such events may include:

- Back to school events for children
  - Coffee hours
  - Ice cream socials
  - Winter clothing disbursement
  - Job fairs
  - Opportunities to watch sporting events
  - Self-care workshops
- Identify residents at risk of eviction and provide resources, referrals, and support to help preserve tenancy.
  - At the request of management, assist in mediating conflicts between residents or educating residents about available community mediation resources. LHAs are strongly encouraged to utilize the support of third-party mediation services for such events.
  - Maintain clear and effective communication with residents regarding what activities are taking place at the LHA and in the community through a variety of methods including but not limited to social media, newsletters and flyers.
  - Assist in resident safety tasks such as distributing and helping residents fill out emergency forms with vital statistics and sharing seasonal resident safety information or providing resident support after a fire or other event displacing residents from their units.

Some activities **do not** fall within the purview of an RSC/MPSC. **No activity related to tenant selection, rent collection, lease enforcement/eviction proceedings, unit maintenance, or scheduling and performing unit inspections should be the responsibility of an RSC. An RSC may be asked by a resident to be present during maintenance or inspection and that would be permissible at the resident's request. RSC resources should be used to support tenants, not augment LHA staffing needs in other departments.** Specifically, an individual who serves as an RSC, even in a part-time capacity, may not engage in any work related to other LHA administrative or maintenance functions. If you have specific questions about which activities an RSC can or cannot engage in, please contact EOHLC's program managers: Ann-Elizabeth Young at [ann-elizabeth.young@mass.gov](mailto:ann-elizabeth.young@mass.gov)

**Grantees' repeated use of RSC staff time for unauthorized RSC tasks may lead to reduction or loss of the RSC award.**

### **Ethical Standards**

Leadership of the grantee Housing Authority is also responsible for ensuring that their RSC staff or contractors adhere to ethical standards. An RSC's primary responsibility is to support the wellbeing of residents of state-aided public housing. They must be faithful to the requirements of their position and comply with all legal and ethical standards of their employing LHA, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and any professional licenses that they may hold. They must understand and complete annual training in the Commonwealth's conflict of interest law and avoid any conflicts of interest or even the appearance of a conflict of interest. This can be a challenge because the RSC must represent and be loyal to their employer LHA while also maintaining appropriate professional boundaries and advocating for LHA residents seeking their

assistance. They should never give the impression that they represent the tenant because they are at all times an employee of the LHA. If an RSC does not adhere to ethical standards or crosses ethical boundaries with residents, this failure can lead to termination by the LHA and may cause reduction or termination of grant funding. The LHA grantees are also responsible for ensuring their staff or contractors funded by this grant adhere to these ethical standards.

**RSC grantees that fail to ensure adherence to these ethical standards by staff or contractors funded by this line item may have their funding reduced or terminated.**

### *Confidentiality and Informed Consent*

RSCs must adhere to the confidentiality policies in place at their employing LHA as well as the Fair Information Practices Act (M.G.L. c. 66A) and the LHA Privacy and Confidentiality Regulation at 760 CMR 8.00. Service coordinators may not enter into confidentiality agreements directly between a resident and themselves as a private individual. All data and files regarding residents and services provided to residents is the property of the LHA, and LHA grantees must maintain this data in accordance with M.G.L. c. 66A and 760 CMR 8.00. When discussing sensitive information, residents should be advised of the LHA's confidentiality policy. Residents should be informed that the RSC has a responsibility to act in accordance with LHA policy and protocols if a participant has threatened to harm themselves or others. **RSCs should not solicit private information from residents beyond what is required for data reporting and service provision.**

### *Professional Relationships*

RSCs should only provide services to residents in the context of a professional relationship. Service coordinators should only contact residents through LHA administered methods (LHA phone, email, mailing, etc) and should not contact residents from personal devices or accounts.

RSCs must never offer to provide paid services to residents outside of their role at the LHA. If an RSC would like to provide volunteer services to public housing residents, they should do so under a program or service that is sanctioned by the LHA grantee. RSCs may not use their role as a service coordinator or the knowledge gained while performing this role to solicit paid services of any kind to residents, or the friends, family or acquaintances of public housing residents.

### *Competence*

RSCs should only provide services and or present themselves as competent in accordance with their training, education, certification, licensure and/or relevant professional experience. RSCs should never offer or purport to provide expertise, including but not limited to medical, psychological, financial or legal advice, to residents as part of their professional duties as an RSC. If an RSC does have a specific professional competence and wish to engage in a business transaction with a tenant, all disclosures required by the Commonwealth Conflict of Interest Law, EOHLCS regulations, and the LHAs policies must be filed, and board approval must be sought. This will ensure that there is full transparency and no risk that residents are misled or mistaken about the roles of the LHA and the RSC in any outside business transaction.

### *Conflicts of Interest and Interpersonal Relationships*

Service coordinators should be aware of and comply with any fraternization policies at their LHA. However, given the unique role of the service coordinator, with the exception of pre-existing relationships, RSCs are prohibited from engaging in any sexual activities, romantic contact, or intimate personal relationships with current residents of the LHA where they are employed. This prohibition extends to a resident's family members or any individuals with whom the resident maintains a close personal bond, as such interactions can compromise professional objectivity and create conflicts of interest.

Even if not prohibited by the employer LHA's human resources (HR) policy, the unique nature of the service coordinator role requires the maintenance of clear professional boundaries. Intimate relationships with other members of the LHA staff may also create barriers to establishing a trusted relationship with the residents RSCs are there to assist and advocate for.

**RSCs must avoid developing close personal relationships with residents that extend beyond the professional realm, as such interactions compromise boundaries and suggest conflicts of interest.** Specifically, the following activities are prohibited:

- **Exchanging Gifts or Services:** Abstaining from mutual exchanges of gifts or services with residents.
- **Monetary Transactions:** Avoiding the payment or receipt of consideration for services provided to or by a resident.
- **Sharing Assets:** Refraining from sharing living quarters, vehicles, or personal property with residents.

Any interpersonal relationships which may pre-exist the RSCs hiring, a resident moving in, or the hiring of a new LHA employee should be disclosed to LHA management as soon as the conflict is recognized. The LHA will then determine how the situation will be handled.

## **Job Descriptions**

Every RSC must have an official job description which outlines their duties, hours per week and desired qualifications. It is the responsibility of the LHA to develop a job description for the RSC in accordance with the [RSC Handbook](#) and EOHLC guidance.

Please keep in mind, that RSCs/MPSCs are not seasonal or ad hoc workers. Each RSC/MPSC must have a clearly defined schedule. As residents will count on these scheduled times, it is critical that an RSC maintain the hours and schedule locations that have been announced. Likewise, each RSC must have a clearly defined supervisor who oversees their performance, ensures that services are provided in an equitable and confidential manner, and ensures that activities are reported accurately.

Regional awardees are expected to collaborate and agree on a job description(s) for an RSC(s) which meets the needs of residents eligible for services at each LHA. Job descriptions should not be finalized without the consent of all grantees covered under a regional award.

When applying for an RSC grant, every grantee must submit a sample RSC job description as part of their initial application for RSC funding. EOHLC approved funds for these positions based on the job description that was provided and expects that the RSC will deliver these services. **If a grantee needs to change or update the job description of an RSC, the grantee must submit the**

proposed change to Ann-Elizabeth Young, Livable Public Housing Communities Specialist, at [ann-elizabeth.young@mass.gov](mailto:ann-elizabeth.young@mass.gov) for approval. EOHLC retains the right to reject RSC job descriptions that do not meet program standards and/or do not effectively meet the needs of residents in public housing. **Failure of an LHA to adopt and adhere to an RSC job description that is in accordance with the [RSC Handbook](#) and EOHLC guidelines may result in the reduction or termination of an LHA's RSC award.**

## Employee Hiring, Supervision, and Discipline

While EOHLC provides funding to grantees, the grantee has sole responsibility for all aspects of the employment relationship with the RSC that it selects to do the job. The grantee initially will determine, and **document in writing**, the hours, location and nature of the arrangement under which an RSC will be engaged. These practices must comply with the [RSC Handbook](#)/guidance and the hiring LHA's personnel policy, as well as all applicable state and federal employment laws, and EOHLCs regulations regarding LHA hiring practices.

Regional grantees must collaborate on the hiring process. While the LHA administering the regional grant hires the RSC(s), it must offer its non-administrative LHA partners the opportunity to review applications and interview candidates. The LHA administering the grant will be the LHA which hires the RSC and is responsible for final hiring determinations, in consultation with regional partners as further explained above.

## Supervision and Performance Assessment

The RSC should have regular supervision interactions with their manager. Discussion of performance should occur regularly during supervision between the RSC and their manager. In addition, to fulfill their reporting duties to EOHLC, LHAs should have a clearly defined process for evaluation of RSC performance. Performance criteria should be based on the EOHLC approved job description. Regional grants should incorporate a regular evaluation protocol that involves all participating LHAs.

The exercise of supervision should be consistent with the nature of the position. **The RSC is a representative of the LHA but also has the responsibility to advocate on behalf of individual residents consistent with their duty of loyalty to their employer.** If an LHA supervisor has concerns about an RSCs performance, they should reach out to EOHLC or an attorney prior to any performance assessment or discipline of the RSC to ensure compliance with all legal requirements.

## Employee Discipline

After seeking legal guidance, an employing LHA may find that discipline, including possible suspension and termination, of an RSC may be necessary. Such situations could include poor performance, unexcused absences, or if an RSC has engaged in conflict of interest interactions.

Each grantee should clearly define, in writing, the standard termination process for an RSC. These practices shall comply with the LHA Personnel Policy, [RSC Handbook](#), and other EOHLC guidelines and directives.

In all circumstances of hourly employee termination, the LHA must provide the employee with all wages due including all earned time, and vacation time owed to them. For this reason, it is

usually the best practice to put an employee on paid administrative leave so accounts can be reconciled and a check issued. If the RSC is employed by contract or some other means, legal requirements may differ, and prior legal consultation is necessary to ensure legal compliance and avoid potential legal claims against the LHA.

When an RSC is placed on administrative leave or terminated, the LHA should remove all permissions and access to private and confidential information for the former employee, and recover any keys, and electronics, ID cards, etc.

Regional grants should incorporate steps to confer with other participating LHAs and, where reasonably possible, to inform other participating LHAs in writing before an RSC is terminated. The administering/employer grantee should comply with all aspects of its own HR policy in discipline, suspension and termination decisions.