

SDTEA Program

Seven-Day Temporary Emergency Accommodation Program: Supplemental Funding Urgently Needed



\$1 million in additional funding for SDTEA is needed in FY 14 to prevent families and children from sleeping on the streets or in other unsafe places.

The Seven-Day Temporary Emergency Accommodation (SDTEA) Program is a new back-up shelter system for families experiencing homelessness who are not yet eligible for Emergency Assistance (EA) shelter but have no safe place to sleep with their children.

The program was created in FY 14 to prevent children and their families from having to sleep on the street or in other unfit places. Families in the program are provided temporary accommodations for up to 7 days, during which time they explore other housing options, and if none are identified, families may re-apply for EA shelter.

- In the FY14 budget, the Legislature allocated \$500,000 in the RAFT line item for the SDTEA program (see over). The program began operating on September 3, 2013. In the first two months, this important program protected about 300 families from sleeping in unsafe places. 53% of these families then qualified for EA shelter, while another 11% qualified for RAFT.
- To date \$250,000, one half of the initial appropriation, has been spent and the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) expects all current funding to be depleted by mid-December.
- An additional \$1 million is needed to sustain this life-saving program through the end of the fiscal year. (The program will have utilized \$500,000 in a 3 month period - September through mid-December. So \$1 million is needed to cover the remaining 6 months of the fiscal year).
- A \$250,000 increase in the earmark is needed to keep the program operating into January when the Legislature will be back in session and more long-term funding for RAFT and SDTEA can be considered.
- The SDTEA program has been vital for families at imminent risk of being on the streets but who are not yet eligible for EA shelter. For many families, it has meant the difference between having shelter or sleeping in a car or bus station. It has also prevented many families from staying in emergency rooms at a high cost to the health care system.

For more information, contact the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute 617-357-0700 (Ruth Bourquin x 333, rbourquin@mlri.org) or Liza Hirsch x 321, lhirsch@mlri.org or Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless 781-595-7570 (Kelly Turley x 17, kelly@mahomeless.org).

7004-9316 – RAFT line item – STEAP language in bold

For a program to provide assistance in addressing obstacles to maintaining or securing housing for families with: (a) a household income not greater than 30 per cent of area median income that are homeless and moving into subsidized or private housing or are at risk of becoming homeless; or (b) a household income greater than 30 per cent but not more than 50 per cent of area median income that are homeless and moving into subsidized or private housing, or are at risk of becoming homeless due to a significant reduction of income or increased expenses; **provided, that up to \$500,000 may be used for temporary emergency accommodations for not longer than 7 days for families at imminent risk of homelessness in order to facilitate the maintenance or securing of housing or referral to other services; provided further, that, effective July 1, 2013, the department of housing and community development shall promptly refer to providers of such temporary accommodations funded by this item, those families who provide credible statements or other credible evidence that they are within 24 hours of staying in a place unfit for human habitation, who appear to have income that does not exceed 150 per cent of the federal poverty level and who are not eligible for emergency shelter services from the department; provided further, that those providers shall be available to receive and act on such referrals until at least 5 p.m. each day, Monday through Friday, but not including state and federal holidays; provided further, that nothing in this item shall relieve the department of its obligations under item 7004-0101, including the duty immediately to place families in emergency shelter if they appear to be eligible but need more time to collect verifications; provided further, that the department shall report monthly to the house and senate committees on ways and means and the house and senate clerks and the joint committee on housing detailing: (i) the number of families receiving temporary accommodations under this item; (ii) the average length of stay in temporary accommodations; and (iii) the total amount expended on temporary accommodations to date;**

\$10,000,000