



## Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness FY21 Budget Requests

**Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) (70094-9316): At least \$27 million**, including not less than \$7 million for Upstream RAFT homelessness prevention resources, at least \$3 million to serve households without dependent children, and an increase in the \$4,000 cap on RAFT benefits. The Governor's FY20 budget proposes a total of \$21 million and removes quarterly tracking and reporting, a critical tool for program evaluation and further prevention efforts.

**Homeless Individuals Assistance (7004-0102) \$58 million in line item 7004-0102**, a \$4.45 million increase from FY20 and the Governor's FY21 budget. Last year's budget amounted to an inflation-adjusted increase of 1.5% since 2001, only covering 61% of the true cost of DHCD-contracted shelter beds.

**Also: Rapid Rehousing for Individuals (7004-0202): \$5 million**, consistent with the Governor's FY21 budget and FY20 funding to continue the rapid transition of homeless individuals into permanent housing. Individuals are one third of the state's homeless population.

**Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP) (7004-9024): \$135 million** to increase the number of subsidies to low-income households and developers and increase the value of MRVP subsidies to better match current fair market rents. The Governor's FY21 budget proposes to allocate a total of \$120 million (including "off budget" sources) as compared to FY20 combined total funds of \$116 million. Far greater investment is needed to address the region and Commonwealth's affordable housing crisis.

**Housing Consumer Education Centers (HCECs) (7004-3036): \$4 million**, an increase of \$250,000 from the Governor's FY21 budget and FY20 appropriation. HCECs are the front line for housing crisis response in the Commonwealth, funding core staff and access to other resources such as homelessness prevention, housing search assistance, foreclosure prevention counseling and housing stability supports, including financial assistance programs. HCECs serve well over 1,700 households each month that lack housing stability, are at risk of homelessness or are seeking shelter.

**Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (4000-0007): \$8 million**, a \$3 million increase over the Governor's FY21 budget and FY20 to provide increased housing and wraparound services to youth and young adults experiencing homelessness and housing instability

**Alternative Housing Voucher Program (7004-9030): \$12 million**, an increase in the Governor's FY21 budget of \$7.4 million and \$8 million in FY20 to provide access to affordable housing for non-elderly disabled individuals, a population that is most at risk for becoming chronically homeless.

**Home and Healthy for Good (7004-0104): \$3.39 million**, an increase of \$500,000 in the Governor's FY21 budget and the FY20 budget to grow the MA Alliance for Supportive Housing initiative that serves chronically homeless individuals.

**Tenancy Preservation Program (TPP) (7004-3045): \$1.5 million**, an increase from \$1.3 million relative to the Governor's FY21 proposal and FY20 funding. This program preserves tenancies for individuals and families who are facing eviction as a result of behavior in the household related to a disability. TPP prevents homelessness for over 94% of households statewide.

**Secure Jobs Initiative (SJI) (4400-1020): \$2 million**, consistent with the Governor's proposed FY21 funding and FY20 funding level. SJI in Western Massachusetts alone has employed 720 individuals since 2013 with 77% employment retention and 90% housing retention.

**Regional Transit Authorities (RTA) (1593-6370): \$94 million, per the Governor's proposal (3.9% increase over FY20), but all in base funding (limiting discretionary funding to ensure Western MA obtains its fair share in a timely manner).** RTAs provide critical access to jobs, child care and other basic necessities that ultimately prevent homelessness and make stable housing possible.

**One-Stop Career Centers (7003-0803) \$10 million** in order to meet MassHire Career Centers' core facility and staffing needs. The Governor's FY21 proposal level funds Career Centers at \$3.9 million, which is comparable to FY01 funding levels, a 35% cut from peak year funding in 2007 at \$6 million.

**Adult Basic Education/ESOL (7035-0002): \$46.05 million**, up from FY20 funding of \$41.05 million and the Governor's FY21 proposal of \$40.6 million. Additional funding is necessary to help move hundreds of people off of wait lists into programs that lead to employment and greater housing stability.

#### **Western Region-Specific Requests:**

**Berkshire County Winter Overflow Shelter Collaboration (7004-0102): \$150,000** to continue the collaboration with ServiceNet, Family Life, Inc.(Louison House), Construct, Inc., SoldierOn and Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority to provide winter shelter beds and supportive services. This program serves over 150 homeless Berkshire County individuals annually.

**Craig's Doors Shelter (7004-0102): \$250,000**, an increase from \$175,000 in FY20 to expand hours of operation (to open at 5:30 pm instead of 9:30 pm) and continue to provide emergency winter shelter, case management and re-housing services to homeless individuals across the region. Craig's Doors is the only explicitly behavior-based shelter in the Upper Pioneer Valley.

**Western MA Network to End Homelessness (7004-0107): \$100,000** to continue the implementation of Housing First across the region, facilitating the coordination and collaboration necessary to make homelessness in Western Massachusetts rare, brief and non-recurring.