



Housing First
for Hampden, Hampshire,
Franklin and Berkshire Counties

Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Priorities

The Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness seeks to prevent and end homelessness through a Housing First approach that centers racial equity. Towards that end, its Fiscal Year 2025 state budget priorities include the following:

Access to Counsel Program (NEW): GOOD NEWS on the Governor's initial investment of \$3.5 million for Access to Counsel for low-income tenants and owner-occupant landlords. In addition, we urge passage of the bill's language to establish the framework for the Access to Counsel program.

Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) (7004-9316): \$300 million to address the continuing housing instability crisis as evictions and homelessness rise in western Massachusetts. (*FY25 Gov. budget: \$197m; FY24 budget: \$190m*)

Housing Consumer Education Centers (HCECs) (7004-3036): \$12 million for HCECs to continue to provide the vital gateway to housing stability and opportunity across the region. (*FY25 Gov. budget: \$8.7m; FY24 budget: \$10.4m*)

Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP) (7004-9024): \$300 million to address the severe lack of affordable housing. (*FY25 Gov. budget: \$219m; FY24 budget: \$179m*)

Workforce Development (7004-0109): \$10 million to support the critical need for individual shelter providers to recruit and retain staff. (*FY25 Gov. budget: \$0; FY24 budget: \$10m*); **and Homeless Individual Assistance (7004-0102): \$126 million** to address the increasing demand for emergency shelter. (*FY25 Gov. budget: \$110.7m; FY24 budget: \$110.7m*)

Older Adult Homelessness (NEW): \$60 million to create bridge subsidies for up to 6,000 older adults facing housing instability — a challenge that is notably on the rise in the western four counties.

Home and Healthy for Good (Permanent Supportive Housing) (7004-0104): \$8.89 million to fund a vital resource for Permanent Supportive Housing in western Massachusetts and maintain the language supporting systems change to end homelessness. (*FY25 Gov. budget: \$8.39m; FY24 budget: \$8.89m*).

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Services (40000-0007): \$15 million to create greater housing stability for youth and young adults ages 18–24 years who are without homes. (*FY25 Gov. budget: \$10.5m; FY24 budget: \$11m*)

Western MA Earmarks: Western MA Network to End Homelessness and Community Action Pioneer Valley (see next page for details)

Additional priorities include:

Tenancy Preservation Program (7004-3045): \$2 million to preserve tenancies for households with disabilities who are facing eviction. (FY25 Gov. budget: \$2.042m; FY24 budget: \$2.042m)

Public Housing

- **Public Housing Operating Subsidies (7004-9005): \$189 million** to ensure housing stability for the current and future public housing residents at the nearly 43,000 deeply affordable homes provided by local housing authorities. (FY25 Gov. budget: \$112m; FY24 budget: \$107m)
- **Public Housing Reform (7004-9007): \$7.7 million** to fund administrative reforms and support the well-being of residents. (FY25 Gov. budget: \$1.25m; FY24 budget: \$1.3m)

Alternative Housing Voucher Program (AHVP) (7004-9030): \$30 million to create more deeply affordable and accessible homes for people with disabilities. (FY25 Gov. budget: \$16.3m; FY24 budget: \$16.8m)

HomeBASE Program (7004-0108): \$80 million to continue payments to households currently enrolled in HomeBASE that need an extension and to enroll new households in the program. (FY25 Gov budget: \$57.3m; FY24 budget: \$37m)

Fair Housing Trust Fund (NEW): \$2.5 million to address housing discrimination in our communities.

Regional Earmarks

The Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness Earmark (7004-0107)

- **\$150,000** to continue the coordination and collaboration necessary to accomplish the Network's mission to prevent and end homelessness across the four western counties with a Housing First approach that centers racial equity.

Community Action Pioneer Valley (for the Three County Continuum of Care)

- **\$830,000** to provide critical gap funding to maintain its permanent supportive housing and rapid rehousing programs for 200 formerly homeless individuals.