


Commonwealth of Massachusetts

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING &
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Deval L. Patrick, Governor ♦ Timothy P. Murray, Lt. Governor ♦ Tina Brooks, Undersecretary

**HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND RAPID RE-HOUSING PROGRAM
NOTICE 2010-04
MASSACHUSETTS RENTAL VOUCHER PROGRAM
NOTICE FEBRUARY 2011**

To: Massachusetts HPRP Managers & Regional Housing Agencies

From: Jessica Berman Boatright, Special Assistant, Division of Public Housing & Rental Assistance
Mary-Anne Morrison, Director, Bureau of Rental Assistance, Division of Public Housing & Rental Assistance 

RE: MRVP Short Term Assistance for HPRP Diversion & Rapid Re-housing Families

Date: February 11, 2011

This notice serves to announce the availability of Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP) Short Term Assistance for families with expiring diversion or rehousing subsidies through the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP). MRVP Short Term Assistance (STA) provides a one-time, non-renewable six-month rental assistance subsidy to families who are income eligible and continue to need assistance beyond the expiration of their HPRP subsidy. STA will be administered by the regional housing agencies currently under contract with DHCD for MRVP administration.

The following eligibility criteria must be met for a family to receive in MRVP Short Term Assistance:

- 1) The household is a recipient of a *family* Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP) diversion or rapid rehousing who:
 - a. Has a short-term subsidy that expires between 10/31/10 and 12/31/11
 - b. Is in "good standing" with HPRP, meaning that the family has been compliant with all of the requirements of their HPRP granting agency, including participation in case management, adherence to a stabilization plan, on-time rent payments and continued good tenancy at their HPRP-assisted housing.
 - c. The family was certified as eligible for Emergency Assistance ("EA Eligible") by DHCD personnel prior to receiving their initial HPRP award.
- 2) Household income does not exceed 200% of federal poverty level.¹

¹ Per the request of the Springfield Housing Authority, the asset limit specified for traditional MRVP does not apply in income calculations for HPRP STA.

Note that MRVP STA payments can be made retroactively to January 1, 2011, but not for any date prior. MRVP STA can be used to make six-months of payments beginning 1/1/2011 for families whose leases expired during the months of October, November or December of 2010 provided that they have remained housed in their HPRP unit since the time of their lease expiration. *MRVP STA payments cannot be used for any arrearages or to re-house an HPRP recipient who has left their original HPRP unit into a new unit.*

To initiate participation in the STA program, HPRP participants should be referred to the appropriate regional housing agency by their HPRP provider. HPRP providers and regional housing agencies should make agreements at a local level about the procedures for client transfer. DHCD is available to assist with such arrangements, but DHCD's participation is not required. Regional housing agencies can use client information collected during HPRP to certify the client's eligibility for MRVP STA provided that the client information used has been collected within 14 weeks of the client's enrollment in MRVP STA.

Client's rent shares shall remain at the HPRP rate, provided that it falls within the MRVP mandate of between 30 and 40% of household income. If it does not fall within this range, the regional housing agency will calculate the rent share at 40% of the client's household income.

Regional housing agencies have received a template for reporting family enrollment to DHCD in order to request reimbursement for subsidy payments made on their behalf. Regional housing agencies should coordinate with HPRP providers to ensure that these spreadsheets are completed correctly each month of the program.

Once a client is enrolled in MRVP STA, any and all documents put in place with landlords as a component of HPRP will then transfer to MRVP STA. Regional housing agencies may use their discretion in requiring clients and/or the landlords to complete additional documentation to certify participation in MRVP STA. It will be the client's responsibility to negotiate a lease extension to remain housed in place for the duration of their MRVP STA.

In administering the program, in any instances where there is a conflict between HPRP and MRVP, HPRP procedures should be used provided that the terms of HPRP do not violate any terms laid out in the MRVP budget language.

DHCD anticipates a need for MRVP STA for the regions served by Community Teamwork, Inc. (CTI), HAP, Inc., the Housing Assistance Corporation (HAC), the Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership (MBHP), RCAP Solutions, and the South Shore Housing Development Corporation (SSHDC). Questions related to clients served in the regions of CTI, HAC, and MBHP should be directed at Matt Karr, (617) 573-1207 or matthew.karr@state.ma.us. Questions related to clients served in the regions of HAP, RCAP, or SSHDC should be directed to Brendan Goodwin, (617) 573-1210 or brendan.goodwin@state.ma.us. Please feel free to contact Jessica or Mary-Anne with any general questions.