

Program Name: Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT)

Agency: Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Division of Housing Stabilization (DHS)

Description: RAFT is a state-funded homelessness prevention program that helps eligible families keep housing, get new housing or otherwise avoid homelessness.

Website: www.mass.gov/hed/housing/stabilization/residential-assistance-for-families-in-transition

Eligibility:

Must be a family with children under 21 and/or a pregnant woman who is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless to be eligible. Household income must be at or below 50% Area Median Income (AMI). For a family of 2, 50% AMI is \$39,400; for a family of 4, 50% AMI is \$49,450.

In determining eligibility, DHCD will consider the reasons a family is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, including loss of income and increased expenses. In addition, a family must show that RAFT assistance will stabilize the current housing situation and help avoid homelessness.

Availability/Limitations:

When funds are available, RAFT provides money for security deposits, first and last month's rent, moving expenses, utility and mortgage arrears and other housing-related expenses for homeless families and families at risk of homelessness.

Immigrants: RAFT is available to immigrants with legal status. Social security numbers are needed for all household members, but if the household does not have social security cards available, the agency may accept another form of written documentation that includes the social security number (i.e. pay stubs, bank account statements).

Amount: Eligible families may receive up to \$4,000 from RAFT in a 12-month period to pay for expenses to avoid homelessness or rapidly exit homelessness. Families who are receiving funding from the HomeBASE program can access a maximum of \$8,000 from the two programs combined.

How to Apply:

To find a regional agency, call 1-800-224-5124; Family can only be approved in the region where they plan to use RAFT assistance.

Boston Housing Consumer Education Center (HCEC): Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership, 125 Lincoln Street, 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02111

Phone: 1-617-859-0400; Website: www.mbhp.org

Completing a HCEC Intake Assessment is the first step to accessing RAFT. Any family can walk into or call the HCEC Resource Center to complete the form, see above for Boston address.

Note: If a family is seeking assistance with start-up or relocation costs, they should apply for RAFT after they have identified their new unit, but before they move in.

Linked Services: May receive RAFT and HomeBASE simultaneously. Families who received only HomeBASE are not eligible for RAFT funds until 12 months after they first received assistance.

Right to Appeal: Yes, a family may reapply for RAFT after 30 days if they were determined ineligible. If there are new circumstances or new information, they should contact their local HCEC.

Retroactive? No.