

Program Name: Emergency Assistance (EA)

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

Description: A state funded program which provides emergency shelter and helps find permanent housing for homeless families with dependent children (under 21 years old). Sometimes it also helps cover housing costs.

Website: [www.masslegalhelp.org/income-benefits](http://www.masslegalhelp.org/income-benefits) and click on "Emergency Shelter"

Eligibility:

Must be homeless family with children under 21 and/or a pregnant woman (husband of pregnant woman can get shelter too). To be eligible, family's income must be <115% of FPL (family of 2= \$1,556/month; 4=\$2,358/month); the asset limit is \$2,500 (but ok to have car under \$15,000). Wages and cash benefits (TAFDC, EAEDC, SSI) count as income. Food Stamps do not count as income.

What counts as homeless and eligible for EA? Victims of domestic violence or natural disaster (fire, flood, etc.), no-fault eviction, or do not have a safe place to stay. According to DHCD, being "doubled-up" (living with friends/relatives) or facing eviction does not make one automatically eligible for EA. DHCD will assess whether the situation warrants EA services immediately or not.

**Limitations:**

To receive EA, family must agree to and sign a Re-Housing Plan, which includes searching for permanent housing, working or attending training, saving 30% of household net income and keeping children in school. If family does not stick to plan, they could lose EA benefits.

Note: If recipient is a parent under 21, he/she will be first placed in an EA Congregate Shelter or Teen Living Program.

Immigrants: EA is available to immigrants with legal status, including refugees, lawful permanent residents and persons residing in the U.S. under color of law. Note: If any member of the household has one of these statuses or is a citizen, the entire household meets this rule. Must also show proof of Massachusetts residency.

Amount:

This is not a cash benefit but rather provides a roof over a family's head.

How to Apply:

To apply via phone, call DHCD Recipient Services: 1-866-584-0653

Or visit DTA Boston office located at 2201 Washington St., Roxbury, MA; phone: 1-617-989-6100

Can apply in person at some DTA offices, including: Boston (Dudley Square), Brockton, Chelsea, Fall River, Framingham, Hyannis, Lawrence, Lowell, New Bedford, Salem, Springfield, and Worcester.

Linked Services? May also be eligible for HomeBASE.

Right to Appeal: Yes, if within 21 calendar days of denial of EA shelter. Can remain in shelter if appeal within 10 days of notice.

Retroactive? No.