



SURVIVORS, INC.

Winter/Spring 2012

SURVIVAL NEWS

Volume 24, Number 1

...the voices of low-income women



Photo by Debbie Ferretti

Room for the Poor

By Morrigan Philips

Poverty is, as the most basic definition states, the lack of resources sufficient for someone to live comfortably in society. For many, credit cards and loans have kept them in reasonable enough comfort that they have been able to put off acknowledging the grim realities of our economic system. Much of this myth of comfort and stability has fallen apart in recent years as the economic crisis has pushed more people into the uncomfortable position of realizing how close they are to a financial crisis of their own. Meanwhile, according to new poverty measures and census data, rates of poverty, particularly in rural communities and urban communities of color have risen to a 52 year high.

Complicated financial games and

*Solidarity means that even if you win,
You stand with everyone until everyone wins.*

double speak mask much of what has been fueling the financial crisis. But as more and more people have found themselves with no work, no money and mounting debt problems, the financial tricks and gimmicks that have been keeping this wreck going seem more like smoke and mirrors.

Fueled by outrage over economic gluttony and seaming impunity on Wall Street, the Occupy moment took hold of a piece of anger lying deep in the hearts of masses of people. The proverbial pinch was being felt by too many. Pop! A would-be movement sprang forth representing those whom the promise of prosperity in exchange for hard work had been made and broken.

It should be made clear that Occupy Wall Street and the multitude of Occupies that have come alive around the US are not orchestrated nor primarily constituted by financially comfortable, gainfully employed, resource rich individuals. Plenty of unemployed, underemployed and broke ass people are taking on roles of organizers within Occupies. There are also those who rely on various forms of public assistance, both safety net programs like public housing and social security programs like unemployment. Further, the camps drew many from those forgotten and neglected corners of our communities: the houseless,

...continued on page 8

Boston is a Human Rights City

On April 19, 2011 Councilor Charles Yancey and the Boston City Council approved a resolution proclaiming Boston a Human Rights City, bringing ours into a network of over twenty such cities worldwide (including Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.) committed to incorporating human rights norms and learning into local planning, social services and city culture. The groundwork for this resolution was laid by Survivors, Inc., a Mattapan-based welfare rights advocacy organization, in cooperation with Shulamith Koenig, 2003 recipient of the UN Prize in the Field of Human Rights and founder of the People's Movement for Human Rights Learning, the international sponsor agency of the Human Rights City network based out of New York City.

This resolution was a crucial beginning for the Human Rights City movement in Boston, which aims to move Eleanor Roosevelt's vision forward through grassroots examination of human rights and their application in our city. Since April, Survivors, Inc. and PDHRE have been building a network of social justice and community organizations and agencies throughout Boston to identify human rights priorities for our city, as well as to examine the work and contributions of these organizations from the interconnected perspective of human rights.



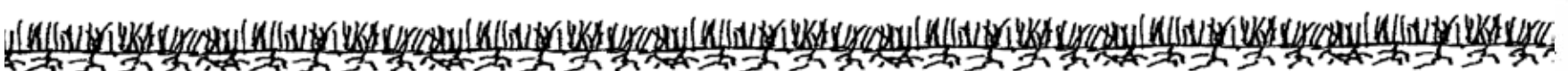
Accepting the proclamation of Boston as a Human Rights City with Councilor Yancey. Photo by Julie Joy

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SURVIVAL TIPS

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SURVIVAL NEWS originated as a project of ARMS (Advocacy for Resources for Modern Survival), a welfare rights organization at the University of Massachusetts. It is published by Survivors, Inc., a non-profit Massachusetts corporation of low-income women and our allies building a movement for welfare rights and economic justice.

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\$10 for individuals, \$25 for organizations. Free to low/no income people. Single issues are \$1. Visit our website: survivorsinc.org

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Survival News needs typists, reporters, artists, poets, to work on the paper, as well as, work study outreach workers, and archivists to archive our 23 years of historical documents. Have fun doing rewarding work for a good cause! Email Julie at wonderfulworker@aol.com for more information.

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OUR MISSION

We are a group of low-income women and their allies who organize and educate around poverty, welfare and low-income survival issues. We offer training in writing, speaking, advocacy, computer skills, desktop publishing, organizing, membership and leadership. With these skills we are able to provide a forum for the voices of low-income women to be heard. We connect welfare office outreach and campus organizing with local and broader grassroots efforts to eliminate social and economic injustice.

Welfare Speakers' Bureau

Survivors, Inc. has a busy Speakers' Bureau on Welfare. We are eager to share our knowledge with your group. We generally speak in teams of at least two people, usually including a current or former welfare recipient who is a welfare activist. The other speakers come from a variety of backgrounds, including board members of Survivors, Inc., community activists, and committed academics.

Fees are sliding scale and free to low income groups. To get a speaker, call 617-298-7311.

SURVIVAL NEWS pays \$25 to low-income people for each article, poem, or graphic that we use. The editorial board reserves the right to select material, and will give people help with writing upon request.

Our Supporters

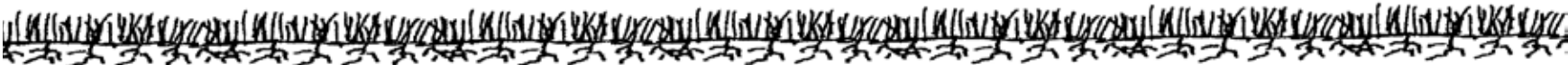
Survivors, Inc. would like to thank the following foundations for their generous support of our work for humane welfare policy and economic justice for all: **Barbara Lee Foundation, Poor People's United Fund, Common Stream, Farnsworth House, Community Works, Haymarket People's Fund, National Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts, Resist, Dominican Sisters, Dudley St. Neighborhood Initiative, Twelfth Baptist Church and Haley House Cafe.** We also thank all of the individuals who contribute to our efforts through gifts of money and time.

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*Since you asked: The grassroots running on the bottom of our pages were created by our editor, Claire Cummings. If you look closely you can see that the roots represent people on the move!



Incarcerated Women Giving Birth in Shackles Revisited: What a Way to be Born

By Chaun Renaud

It was one of the most disturbing images I have ever laid eyes on. It was the kind of image that freezes a person in time, horrifies and nauseates them all at once. I remember that day, bile rising and numb limbs. The image: a woman shackled to her hospital bed, pushing and straining to deliver her baby into the world. This did not take place at Guantanamo Bay. This did not take place in a third or second world country. This took place here in the United States of America.

Yes, in at least 45 states and immigration detention centers women are shackled while they deliver their babies. The state of Massachusetts has revised their policies however regarding this inhumane practice. For instance, MCI Framingham inmates remain handcuffed, hands in front of her person, until a physician determines that she is actually in labor and ready to deliver. Why restrain the inmate at all is my question. In fact, this practice should be banned in all states. The Rebecca Project for Human Rights, located in Washington, DC is currently working to abolish the practice altogether nationwide. I was informed by Malika Saada Saar, the Executive Director of The Rebecca Project for Human Rights that New Mexico was in the process of reforming this practice. The Rebecca Project holds monthly conference calls in support of these efforts.

Federal prisons have outlawed the shackling of inmates during the delivery and yet most states allow it. There are only five states that have officially abolished the practice: Vermont, California, New York,

Arkansas, and Illinois. I am amazed that the state of Massachusetts has only revised the policy and not banned it altogether. Massachusetts is the Nation’s leader in healthcare and education, more colleges per square mile than any other state in the Union and yet, this barbaric practice is still on the books.

I am an outraged citizen. I am outraged when I read stories about women restrained in tight belly chains while at the same time drenched in amniotic fluid. I became outraged when I read a narrative about a woman who was restrained during her Cesarean section. Not only am I outraged, but I want others to be outraged as well. Not only in Massachusetts but everywhere because a human rights violation is simply just that. This issue affects us all no matter how we view criminal behavior. These “criminals” are not giving birth to “criminals”. They are giving birth to innocent and beautiful babies who need to be welcomed into this world with as much warmth and nurturing anyone can give them. Animals are not even treated this way.

I am asking legislators to take another look at the books and I am asking citizens to begin a discussion especially as Mother’s Day is approaching. In fact, discuss this issue amongst yourselves with your mothers, spouses, family members, and age appropriate youngsters. I am asking as one human being to another to do this in remembrance of children being born as “beasts of burden”. I will ask one more thing: How would you like to have been born?

Dear Tavis Smiley,

By Pat Gowens, Director Welfare Warriors Editor, Mother Warriors Voice, a 25-year-old international mothers-in-poverty publication

Dear Tavis Smiley,

Instead of inviting wealthy guests to explain poverty, please include the experts on your show: people living in poverty and the people organizing to end the war on the poor.

You asked, “Why do the poor stay poor?” For the same reasons the rich stay rich. Intergenerational class mobility is US folklore. You asked “Are poor people superfluous?”

Poor people keep this country (and all others) functioning, generation after generation. Without poor people we would have no food and few children. Poor farmworkers provide all of our food. Poor mothers reproduce and produce the majority of children and poor women care for the children of all classes whether in daycares or as nannies. Without poor people we would have no restaurants, malls, fast-food industry, service industry, temporary worker agencies, hotels, tanneries, and foundries.

Poor people work the sub-poverty wage jobs, the jobs with the most growth in the US, the least benefits and the most danger.

Without poor people we would have no prison industrial complex, no massive job creation for professional poverty pimps, few social service careers, and far fewer wars.

But poverty is not just about bad wages. Poverty is also a result of the majority of work generating no wages: unwaged motherworkers; unwaged caregivers of the sick, the injured, the elders, the dying; and unwaged caretakers of animals, crops, and communities. Doing the unwaged work leaves few hours

in a day to generate income. Unlike Europe, the US provides no economic support to motherworkers and children. Nor does the US provide paid sick leave or paid maternity leave to most workers.

Just as there are more sub-poverty jobs each decade, there are also more people with disabilities who can not generate income. Disability also causes poverty.

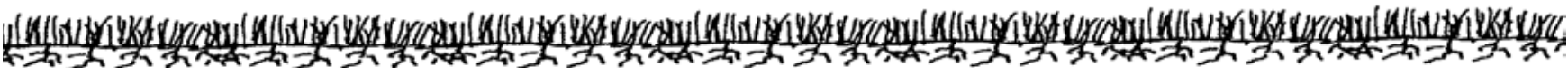
Your wealthy panel of “experts” did not include even one token sub-poverty worker, one unwaged worker, one disabled person, one anti-poverty activist. And there was no mention of the violent war on the poor. Poverty after all is violence.

Ignoring the “elephant in the studio”-- the motherworkers, farmworkers, injured workers, children, disabled people, elders, and the sub-poverty wage workers--smacks of prejudice against the poor. Excluding the activists working to stop the war on the poor is incomprehensible.

Please consider becoming the vanguard, a leader in giving a voice to victims of poverty and those who are fighting the war on the poor. Whether harvesting food in the US or mining coltan in the Congo or doing the unwaged caregiving for dependent people, victims of poverty are at the mercy of a violent worldwide economic system that elevates its status and wealth by standing on the backs of the poor. This must be changed.

Sincerely,
Pat Gowens

A FEW POVERTY EXPERTS: Congresswoman Gwen Moore, Diana Spatz (LIFETIME), Pat Albright, Margaret Prescott (Every Mother Is A Working Mother), Dotty Stevens (Survival News), Marian Kramer (Michigan Welfare Rights), Charles King (Housing Now), Arturo Rodriguez (United Farm Workers), Pat Gowens



RIP Kip Tiernan

By Karen Rock

I met Dottie Stevens in the early 80's during a Coalition for Basic Human Needs welfare rights campaign, working for the children's clothing allotment. We were both raising our children then, two of many families living in poverty. This was the beginning of our journey together. Today Dottie edits this paper, organizes grant writing for it and works on the Human Rights Cities campaign, among many other antipoverty activities. We are both grandmothers now. When I called her about the Grandma column she sounded sad.

"Kip Tiernan died," she said.

"How old was she?" I asked, mindlessly.

"85," Dottie said. "We lost a warrior."

I knew nothing about this person. All these years I had been swallowed by my own crises, still doing this work, but not knowing much about the other people doing it. I asked Dottie to tell me about her. This is the interview:

Karen: "So. She was an antipoverty activist."

Dottie: "No. She was a WARRIOR," she emphasizes. "Rain, snow, sleet, hail we were out there. Holding signs, protesting cuts to poor people. Kip fasted, more than once, to draw attention to hunger. I sat in with her for one of those fasts. She didn't just talk the issues. She showed up for them. And she could get people to listen to her who wouldn't listen to anyone else."

K. "Why?"

D. "Well, for one thing, her life was an example. She had worked in Madison Avenue advertising, a lucrative job. She left that when she was in her 50's. In 1974 she founded Rosie's Place, the first shelter for women in the U.S. I met her in the campaign against federal cuts, in the 80's, and then it seemed she was everywhere.

K. "So she founded Rosie's Place."

D. "Oh. More than that: Community Works, which helps support low income organizations; Boston Women's Fund which funds organizations working for economic justice for women; Victory House (now victory programs) for homeless female ex-offenders. In 1980 she and Fran Froehlich co-founded the Poor People's United Fund.

Oh. She founded the Greater Boston Food Bank. Also she co-authored a book with Fran, Urban Meditations. Our paper is mentioned in that book.

K's note: When Dottie was in college at UMass/Boston, trying to jump the earnings gap, Kip was teaching there.

D. "She challenged authority. She would say, 'Who sets the terms of THAT debate?' or 'Who benefits from THAT policy?'"

K. "It's amazing to me that she did all this and I only recognized her name, nothing else. Did she work from an agency, or what?"

D. "Nope. She did it all out of an office in Old South Church. Remember the Freedom Bus tour to end poverty, the national tour? I organized for that and when it came here, I asked her to speak and she did."

K. "When was that? I only vaguely remember it."

D. "1992. You know."

K. "Ohhh. That's why. I was busy being evicted and having a nervous breakdown at the time."

D. "And that's another thing about Kip. She wasn't immune to trouble of her own. One time she showed up, and it was clear when



*"We seek justice, not charity,
and the journey to justice can only be
made in the company of others."*

**Kip Tiernan
1926 – 2011**

we went to do a photo shoot like they do sometimes, that she was sad. They tried to make us all smile by having us say, "Revolution." As you can imagine, that didn't work very well anyway and Kip was down. So I said, say "CHEESEY REVOLUTION", because our movement is always hurting for money. And Kip laughed."

K. "Is there anything else you'd like to say here?"

D. "Yes. She was quick to give credit to others, to recognize other people who were doing the work and threw in where she could be of help like Greater Boston Legal Services. National Welfare Rights Union, which I work with. In 2008 Kip was instrumental in bringing Shula Koenig here. Shula had founded Human Rights Cities in Argentina, to educate and have people be intimately familiar with their human rights, so now we're working for Human Rights Cities in this country. Kip did all this without monetary compensation."

K. "Speaking of. What do you think motivated her? Or you, or me, for that matter?"

D. "Or any of the many unsung heroes out there. It's a calling, I think. Yes. A calling.

And you keep going, even when you're tired, because once you know, there's no going back."

K. "When did you last see Kip?"

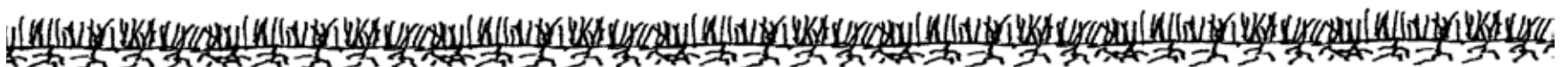
D. "Not that long before she died. Maybe a couple of months before. She was on Neighborhood Network News T.V. talking about poverty. Every sentence you could hear her catch her breath in the mike."

K. "Amazing. Inspiring for ALL of us, right?"

D. "Yep. Somebody like that, you know they're resting in peace."

K. "Thanks for your time, Dottie."

D. "No problem."



One Class One Cause Campaign, Ending Poverty

Poverty Working Group, USSF

December 2011

The USSF process made it possible for hundreds of representatives of organizations working to end poverty to come together, analyze and explore our many varied approaches, and unite in common cause. During the multi-session Poverty Summit, using the PMA process, we consolidated our relationships and passed a resolution creating the Assembly to End Poverty, which is now a formal organization with its own co-chairs (Monica Beemer and Marian Kramer) and steering committee.

In a related development, those participants in the Poverty Summit who work on housing issues created, with other housing rights activists, another formal organization, the USA-Canada Alliance during another PMA session. Together, these collaborating national organizations (bi-national, in the case of USACAI) unite approximately 40 organizations, nearly all led by and/or directly accountable to people living in poverty. This report will focus primarily on the work of The Assembly as the direct and formal outgrowth of the PWG's Poverty Summit; however, we wish to note the collaborative relationship and overlapping membership of the two organizations. (USACAI will apply for NPC status when applications next open.)

Representatives of over 20 groups attended a founders' meeting in Chicago in December 2010, and then a program planning meeting in Detroit in June 2011. During the March meetings, we inaugurated our "One Class-One Cause" campaign; with a June 2012 March to Washington a key element of the campaign. Another key element of the campaign is the PMA (People's Movement Assembly) process. We expect to organize "Poverty PMAs" around the country in the upcoming year.

Given the results of the structural changes in the economic base that have peaked in the last decade, we believe that it is necessary to intensify efforts but also to organize beyond the traditional boundaries of "welfare rights" to include the new class of dispossessed. Even the mainstream media widely report the exponential rise in poverty, evictions, and homelessness; the final shredding of the safety net; and the "need" for the imposition of "emergency financial managers" that overrule democratically elected representatives and the democratic process itself. The prevailing explanation, however, is that our "sacrifices" and "economic recovery" will bring change for the better in these conditions. But our understanding of the structural transformation—and the message of our campaign—is that the jobs being lost are gone for good, that the "emergency" managers are agents of the evolving fascist state, and that by uniting and pressing our agenda politically, we can claim the abundance produced in the electronic age and democratically distribute it.

Thus, we intend not only to end poverty, but to end the threat of poverty. That is the mission of The Assembly. The USSF process made it possible for us to articulate this mission and to unite our (sometimes disparate and competing) groups to accomplish it.

Given the energy and nature of the Occupy (OWS) movement, virtually all of our Steering Committee and Campaign members are involved at some level in that work. At our upcoming January face-to-face meeting, and following extensive discussions during our weekly calls, we will re-assess our campaign's plan for the march to Washington. We are considering regionally-based alternatives as

well as the many possible ways of relating to and advancing our work within the OWS movement.

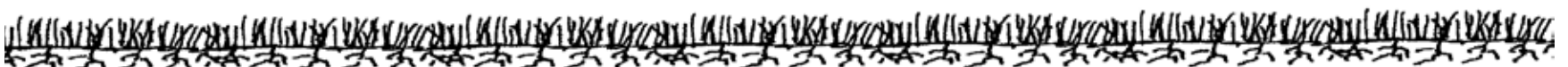
We proceed from the assumption that fundamental changes have taken place in the economic base—moving from the industrial age to the age of electronics, with its attendant permanent elimination of jobs, increase in poverty and the threat of poverty, and also its potential for expanded democracy and meeting basic human needs—and this necessitates a new politics and social order.

There is a possibility, a danger, that the old ways of thinking will be carried forward in this period—that is, seeing poverty as individual rather than structural failure—and that means that poor people will be seen as irrelevant and possibly even an hindrance to a new order. We affirm, on the contrary, that the answers to the problems of survival of the people and our planet lie in the lived experience of organized and conscious people who know firsthand about poverty.

We include here those millions of dispossessed US workers who daily face the threat of poverty but have been carefully taught that poverty is a result of personal failure and depravity. If the USSF process is to achieve its potential and aspirations, this sector must be brought into the process in a major way. For their survival and the fulfillment of the potential of this period, all must come to understand the character of this period and the real causes of poverty. We (the Poverty Working Group and the organization we generated, The Assembly to End Poverty) are actively reaching out to this sector through our One Class-One Cause Campaign, and we seek the support of the NPC to ensure the inclusion of all who live in and face the threat of poverty in the USSF process.



photos by Dottie Stevens



Donate to Survivors Inc. by visiting www.survivorsinc.org

From Reagan to Right Now: How the Rich Feed on the Section 8 Program

By Mary Ann Martorana

During the reign of Ronald Reagan, one of his main projects was to get the government out of the business of providing housing. He greatly reduced public housing and sent it on its way to oblivion and made many attempts to dismantle the Section 8 Program. He did not fully succeed with dismantling the Section 8 Program; partially due to the efforts of advocates, but mainly because the program provided such a huge hand out to private property owners.

In the beginning of the program, a limited equity partnership could come together, get a low interest bridge loan from the government to develop a property with little or no capital of

their own, then convert to a subsidized mortgage with additional tenant subsidies piggy backed on to the property. This provided a guaranteed stream of income from the subsidized property, which could then be used to leverage loans on development of market value properties. Owners could prepay their low cost mortgages after only 20 years and go market rate. If the market was low, they could keep their subsidized status at least to year 40. What could be better? Many developers used this method to build up huge property holdings and are very wealthy today because of their ability to manipulate the program for their own benefit. And it was all legal.

From the very beginning of the program there was tenant abuse. Grateful to have a place to live that they could afford, tenants almost never complained about conditions or constant inspections or regular violations of their privacy or right to quiet enjoyment of their homes. Tenants were at the mercy of managers and maintenance people who could abuse them at will without consequence. If they complained, they could move but not take their subsidy with them. To be fair, some managers were good and decent to tenants but many more took full advantage of their tenants' vulnerability. As the years passed, many low income people began to regard subsidized housing as something to try and stay away from due to the expectation of abuse.

As the Right gained more and more political traction the "project based" section 8 program was all but abandoned and the idea of tenant vouchers replaced it. The program changed to the euphemistically named "Housing Choice" mobile voucher program, administered through local housing authorities which had done a dubious job of managing public housing in the past. The idea was for people to apply for vouchers they could use in paying for privately owned rentals. The housing authorities were tasked with tenant selection from waiting lists they solicited and maintained, inspecting the properties to make sure they were suitable, administering the payments, and recertifying tenants, as well as acting as liason for landlord tenant problems. With thousands of vouchers to oversee and less and less funding, the housing authorities became overwhelmed. Some housing authority workers now have over 700 cases to maintain.

Over time, more and more prejudice against social programs for poor and working class people arose. It became more and more acceptable to abuse low income people and to view them as not worthy of decent food, shelter or medical care. Now fewer and fewer housing vouchers are funded and more and more families need help and have become desperate. If a family gets a voucher, they have to accept whatever a landlord will agree to rent to them. Often it is a unit no market tenant would want to live in. Standards have become more lax and housing authorities have less and less resources to oversee the program. The housing authorities, due to lack of staff and funding, operate in what is essentially a "buyer

"I believe that banking institutions are more dangerous to our liberties than standing armies. If the American people ever allow private banks to control the issue of their currency, first by inflation, then by deflation, the banks and corporations that will grow up around [the banks] will deprive the people of all property until their children wake-up homeless on the continent their fathers conquered. The issuing power should be taken from the banks and restored to the people, to whom it properly belongs."

—Thomas Jefferson, (Attributed) 3rd president of US (1743 – 1826)

beware" situation for the tenant, who is stuck with whatever happens for the one year term of the lease. Take it or leave it. Rules and regulations imposed upon tenants are draconian, with loss of the voucher being the penalty, but there is little oversight of landlords. Funding poor HUD has virtually no one in their regional offices to complain to when serious problems arise.

In the past few years real estate corporations have seized upon a profit making opportunity in taking mobile vouchers in their complexes. They are able to segregate the units for voucher holders and despite HUD regulations, provide fewer amenities. Often a complex will renovate most of their old units and add such amenities as washers and dryers and double pane windows to rent to market tenants. Voucher holders are relegated to non- renovated units without washers and dryers and without energy efficient windows and appliances. Even though HUD sets voucher payment standards high, based on local market rents, voucher holders do not get the same quality as other tenants and sometimes pay more via the voucher. We have seen this again and again. Landlords profit and families with vouchers suffer. Getting decent housing with a voucher is becoming harder and harder as more people face homelessness and funding shrinks. Politicians blame the victims as usual and are blind to the way in which real estate companies and property owners exploit the program and feed off it as they have done since the beginning.

Although the Right Wingers in Congress want to obliterate all of the housing programs I doubt this public subsidy program for corporate landlords will disappear completely. It is the only thing many of us have between us and the street, so those who advocate for low income people will fight to keep it. The corporate landlords will lobby for it as long as they can make market level or close to

...continued on page 7



**National Day of Action
for the Right to Exist:
Monday, April 2, Court
Square, Springfield**

(rain date: April 4th)

**End the Criminalization of
Homelessness & Poverty!
Without Housing, We Will All Be Criminals!**

- Everyone deserves a home!!
- People are suffering!!
- We need to end laws criminalizing homelessness & poverty!!
- Springfield needs to prioritize replacing housing lost in tornado!!
- Springfield—and all of our surrounding communities-- need a housing plan for *all* people!!
- Renters need to build political power, so our voices can be heard!!
- The state must stop limiting access to shelter!!
- Federal cuts in HUD and housing programs must stop
- Without the people, nothing can happen!!!

Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP) and USA-Canada Alliance of Inhabitants (USACAI) are calling on our members and allies throughout the United States and Canada to join us on

April 2 for a bi-national day of action to protest the ongoing criminalization of poor and homeless people in our communities.

Just since 1995, the U. S. has lost over 290,588 existing units of public housing and 360,000 Section 8 units, with another 7,107 approved for demolition/disposition since March of 2011. At the same time, 2.5 million foreclosures have taken place since 2007, an additional 6.9 million foreclosures have been initiated, and 5.7 million borrowers are at risk.



In those same 15 years, over 830,000 new jail and prison cells have been built, draconian immigration laws and eligibility screening criteria have been implemented in housing, healthcare, education and jobs programs, and America's three largest residential mental health facilities are now all county jails (Los Angeles, Chicago, & New York).

Contact Arise for Social Justice, 734-4948

Arnie King Commutation Update

By Dianne Zimbabwe

Warm Greetings:

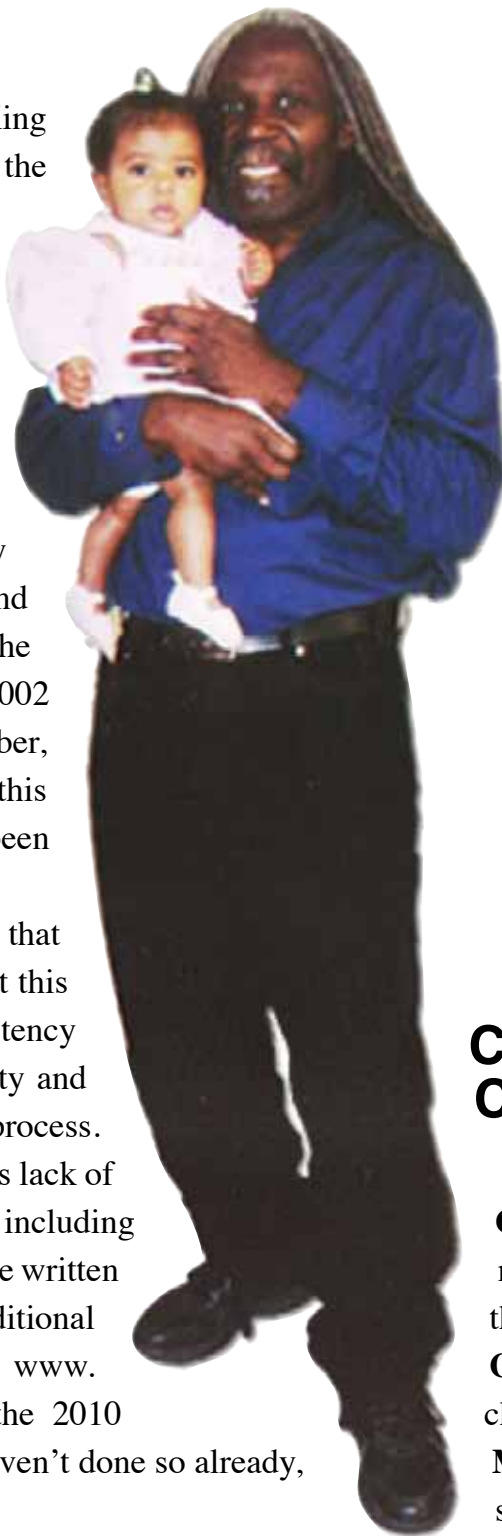
On Friday morning May 20, 2011, Arnie King was presented with the latest decision of the Advisory Board of Pardons. The hearing was held on October 7, 2010 in Natick; the document indicated the vote was taken on December 16, 2010, and the participants were the October 7th board members. A 5-2 vote against commutation was the recommendation to Governor Patrick.

In the past 10 years, previous advisory boards have considered Arnie's petition and conducted numerous public hearings. The results had been very encouraging, as in 2002 (3-3), 2004 (4-3), and as you well remember, the 2007 vote was 6-0 in support. In this recent decision 4 board members had also been participants in that 2007 unanimous vote.

Simply stated, it's unbelievable that individuals, who previously voted to support this petition, suddenly opposed it. This inconsistency raises serious concerns about the authenticity and validity of the Massachusetts commutation process. I hope you feel inclined to openly discuss this lack of transparency and to contact public officials including Governor Patrick for clarity. To assist you, the written document of the recent decision and additional documents can be viewed on the website www.arnoldking.org. The video transcript of the 2010 hearing will soon be available, and if you haven't done so already, please add your name to the online petition.

While personal accomplishments and community support have been extended with tremendous effort and enthusiasm, this recent board states, "we cannot conclude that there is anything exceptional about his self-development..." Please note that the 2007 guidelines were produced by the Patrick administration and were current when the 12/16/11 decision was made.

In closing I want you to know that you may contact Arnie for additional information and for further discussion, by postal mail: Arnie King, BSCC, Box 73, Norfolk MA02056, or by email: throughbarbedwire@yahoo.com. Thank you for your concern as well as your love and support.



Through Barbed Wire

Would like to host a Fourth Friday Event
In Your Community

We present

Readings of Prison Writings-
Panel Discussions-Films-
Theatre-Arts-Refreshments
Venues include churches, schools,
community centers, cafes,
& substance abuse programs

For more information contact:
throughbarbedwire@yahoo.com
& www.arnoldking.org

*"Why is the community present?
We are interested in redemption."*
- Nancy Murray (ACLU)

*"Having Arnie with us in the community
will help save young lives."*
- Seth Kirshenbaum (The City School)

Comments from the 2010 Commutation Hearing

Charles Ogletree (Professor, Harvard Law), "I have never seen anyone transform their life the way he has in the more than 40 years of service in prison."

Gloria Fox (State Representative), "I believe he is a changed man... and we support this commutation."

Mel King (Professor Emeritus/MIT), "What we need to see in this world is epitomized by Arnie and his change and behavior."

Reverend William Dickerson (Greater Love Tabernacle), "Arnie King is not the average inmate. He doesn't play games. He is sincere."

Reverend Dr. Ray Hammond (Bethel AME), "... he inspires young people to make the right choices and not simply scare them. We really need the voice and presence of Arnie King."

Robin Casarjian (Executive Director, Lion Heart Foundation), "For 15 years, he showed up with a sense of purpose and encouraged other prisoners to participate in group activities."

Abrigal Forrester (Street Safe Boston), "Hope - Lifeline - Redemption. He engaged the ignorance within me and told me I had value."

Paule Verdet (Professor Emeritus/BU), "It's a way of life for Arnie. He is a superb model." Felix Arroyo (former Boston City Councillor), "I wondered about him and found a calm person, at peace with himself. I know it will help our community."

Seth Kirshenbaum (Director, The City School), "Having Arnie with us in the community will help save young lives."

Aaron Tanaka (Boston Workers Alliance), "I hope you will see his deep commitment to change and rehabilitation."

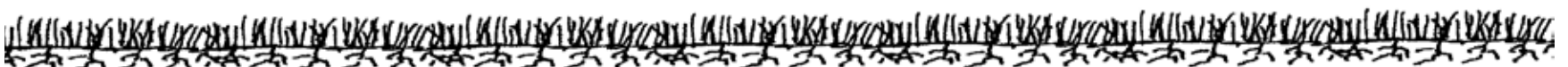
Marva King (Sister), "It matters that we heal together."

For additional information, contact: throughbarbedwire@yahoo.com

Future of Section 8 continued from page 7...

market profits off of desperate people who won't complain about second rate housing and landlord abuse.

If we, the voucher holders, were able to use the money the government pays out to these profiteers to become first time home or multi family cooperative buyers, our families would benefit and our communities would become stronger and healthier. Foreclosed homes and apartments would go to local families instead of being sold to speculators for cash at 10 cents on the dollar and home ownership would have a multiplier effect in communities.



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Room for the Poor

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those with mental health issues and substance use problems. Where camps remain these communities members also remain.

But to be clear – Occupy is not a poor people’s movement.

“How long are you broke before you are poor?” This was the question, posed by a Unitarian Universalist minister and organizer in Boston, Jason Lydon, while walking from one meeting to another. He, like many, feels being broke, struggling with cash flow and financial uncertainty as being a different identity than that of being poor.

As Occupy Wall Street and then the local Occupy Boston began to gain their legs and solidify their place in the public discourse, so too did an analysis. Corporate personhood, bank bail outs, executive bonuses and general Wall Street excess at the expense of democracy were at the top of the list of grievances. Personal stories have been told: stories of unemployment lasting two or more years, home foreclosures, bankruptcy due to medical expenses, untenable student loan debts and more.

These are the stories of people for whom the promise of security was broken. These too are those who are broke but for whom that sense of being able to live comfortably in society is somewhat attainable. But for thousands, a promise of security was never made. No part of the system has ever worked in their favor and for decades the economy has failed them in boom or bust.

Amidst seeming abundance of stuff and prosperity, the poor make a patchwork living that is a shadow of what many are able to attain. In our overly commercialized and consumption-driven society, being poor can mean being left out and left behind. Left to create and build as best one can with limited resources but never looking like everyone else. Never seeing your life reflected back to you on TV, in the news, in advertisements. Not even close. This alone makes it less likely that the poor will take up in protest with Occupy. The society that Occupiers are mounting a defense of never included the poor in the same way.

But that does not mean the poor will not organize and rise up. Poor peoples movements have and continue to play an important role social and community change work. Here is a small list of examples out of a deep and rich history:

- Coalition of Immokalee Workers
- The National Welfare Rights Movement
- Domestic Workers Bill of Rights
- Take Back the Land
- City Life/Vida Urbana anti-foreclosure organizing in Boston
- United Farm Workers
- The unemployed workers movement during the great depression
- Poor People’s Campaign organized by Martin Luther King, JR and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.
- Poor People’s Economic Human Rights Campaign
- All of Us or None: An organization of prisoners, former prisoners and felons, to combat discrimination.
- Formerly Incarcerated and Convicted People’s Movement
- Western Regional Advocacy Project

Statistically speaking, the poor hold the space at the bottom of the 99%, earning less then \$22,314 for a family of four. For an individual, the poverty threshold comes in at \$10,890 a year in earnings, or around \$900 a month. For most federal and state programs individuals are eligible for assistance within 200% to 300% of the federal poverty line. More than a reflection of earnings, the poor are a class unto themselves. The poor not only have precarious livelihoods that experience frequent economic disruption but also live in communities where there is generally less stability. Poor communities are often isolated either by location (i.e. rural isolation) or through systematic disenfranchisement. Examples include poor public transportation options, the closing of public hospitals in poor communities, and a lack of supermarkets, parks, walkable streets and sound infrastructure.

Making Room for the Poor

In his state of the Union Address President Obama mentioned poverty only once, and that was in passing. Presidential hopeful Mitt Romney recently said he is “not concerned about the very poor”. In today’s political discourse, the loss of the middle class dream that is most lamented. Every political candidate, pundit and journalist seems to be looking to champion the middle class. But no one wants to champion the poor or even acknowledge their

existence. This goes, too, for much of the discourse emerging from the Occupy movement.

Just as much of society excludes the collective experience of the poor so too has Occupy. From the very beginning of Occupy Boston, there was a striking lack of an analysis of poverty being present in the discussions and messaging of actions. Demands and grievances have focused on personal gains rather than collective objectives: a middle-class desire for debt relief; the focus on individual corporations or banks rather than on the system of capitalism; a practice of policing individuals without a larger reflection on provocateurs and a collective reflection on the societal disrespect toward the mentally ill, homeless or substance addicted. So what would an analysis of poverty within Occupy look like?

Historical reference points: Messaging and demands would be rooted in a historical analysis of years of cuts to social welfare spending and the toll those cuts have taken on communities of color in the U.S. Economic recovery, when it does come, often leaves scars in poor communities that look like cuts to social service and public welfare spending, including funding for economic development, housing, food assistance, aid to the elderly, education and job training. Additionally, since the Reagan era, poor communities have been blamed, bullied, marginalized and subjected to slander in the media.

An understanding that this is not the first nor last moment in which people will face economic hardships: things have been getting worse on the ground for decades. This too is not the first time people have risen up (see above for just a sampling poor people’s movements). Both the political and popular discourse around poverty in the United States has always boiled down to the “deserving” and “undeserving” poor. The U.S. welfare state was birthed out of a legacy of Elizabethan Poor Laws which placed the onus of one’s poverty squarely on one’s shoulders. The only ones deserving of assistance were widows with children and anyone who could not work. The influence of this philosophy is felt throughout the history of the creation of the very limited U.S. welfare state. There is no culture of poverty. But there is a culture of reluctance and outright disdain for aid to the poor in American political discourse.

The meme of the 1% and the 99% would be more actively developed and nuanced: the 99% includes people earning upwards of \$400,000 a year. It also includes people who went to Harvard and while likely buried in debt, they have social access and privilege not enjoyed by many. The idea that the 99% meme is useful and popular should not overshadow the importance of examining power and privilege within the 99%. For example, the foreclosure crisis is amounting to the largest loss of land in the black community since the African slave trade tore people from their land. Unemployment among black men is at Depression era levels. Again, economic hardship hits some communities harder due to historical disenfranchisement, oppression and economic exclusion. Economic inequality is better represented in the U.S. by looking at the 10% at the top versus the bottom 20%.

Moving beyond individual interests to a collective understanding of shared interests for economic justice: protecting and improving social safety net and entitlement programs such as unemployment insurance, food stamps, foreclosure protection and other social safety net programs, needs to be the context in which other demands such as financial industry regulation and an end to corporate personhood are placed. Messaging and tactics deployed against direct attacks to the social safety net that hit at poor communities the hardest with that distinctive Occupy analysis that ties economic hardship to big finance, could be powerful. A move in this direction would also create an opening for solutions to immediate needs of people now and in the long-term. There is a history worth noting in the U.S. of social movements winning demands that aid those in the middle more so as to relieve the pressure and slow the movement. Solidarity means that even if you win, you stand with everyone until everyone wins.

Thinking global and local: the analysis that Occupy is formulating should invoke economic justice and economic rights and be born from the messages that have been raised up by poor people’s movements in the U.S. and Global South for decades. Further, there needs to be the acknowledgement that the relative prosperity here in the U.S. relies on the exploitation and subjugation of the Global South.

A shift in praxis, or how the lessons and skills of Occupy are learned and acted upon: The way in which the economic crisis is conceived of and organized against needs to be informed by a systemic analysis of power, culture, history and economics that moves deeper into a social change model, one that re-envisions how our society meets the needs of everyone. Ending

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Making Room for the Poor

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corporate personhood, for example, will not restore funding to much needed programs and services. It will not restore dignity and comfort to those left in the cold each night by homelessness. Only a cultural and societal change that internalizes an analysis of poverty and the poor will do that.

Diversity of organizing structures to be inclusive of people of homeless and other economically stigmatized communities: much of the conflict that consumed the Dewey Square Occupy Boston camp revolved around the role homeless people played in the camp. Sometimes called junkies, other times called trouble, from the get-go there was little capacity within the camp to deal with the challenges. The typical structures of Occupy with the General Assemblies, consensus process and working group structures have limits when it comes to being inclusive of people who live in those dim and oft forgotten parts of society. The promise of meals everyday, protection in numbers and community drew the homeless to Occupy camps. For those struggling with mental health issues, living on the streets or in the shelter system and those whose struggle is compounded with substance use and addiction live frustrating lives everyday. Occupy camps also offered the promise of a space to be a part of addressing their needs. But organizing structures that were built at Occupy Boston mostly showed the divide between the priorities of the middle of the 99% and the needs of the bottom 10%. Violent and admittedly unstable personalities were present at Occupy Boston, but it was those personalities among the houseless (houseless, not homeless, Op is the preferred term of members of the community active in Occupy Boston) population that drew the most scorn. Plenty of young white, housed and comfortable men showed outright oppressive tendencies. But it was not these participants in Occupy Boston whom the Good Neighbor Agreement was directed. Solutions have been sought within the established process and almost exclusively targeted problematic personalities within the houseless community. What is more use of the the police and criminal justice system has been viewed as an acceptable option without discussion of the role these forces play in the oppression and criminalization of homelessness. There are many organizing models and many examples of empowering organizing work that don't rely on forcing marginalized and unheard communities with varying capacities to fit into our preferred process. Occupy needs to examine how its processes can and often do recreate the societal norm of excluding the voices of people living on the fringes.

An analysis of the Prison Industrial Complex (PIC) and its role in poor communities: the PIC, the criminal justice system and the police serve as methods of oppression and destruction in poor communities. The 99% analysis needs to acknowledge that for the bottom 10%-20% the police, prison guards and other agents of the criminal justice system are not allies and are certainly not "in it together" with poor communities of color. This is not about income but about the role these agents play in the criminalization of poverty. The approach to addressing inequality and societal disparities must not only look at income but also the roles people play in the systems of inequality. Occupy for Prisoners is an excellent example of solidarity between Occupy Oakland and prison abolition activists in recognition that there are many thousands locked up on the inside that can not join us in our meetings or in the streets as we fight for justice.

At the end of the day, Occupy needs to own who and what it is. It does not need to be a poor people's movement. Plenty of people active in Occupies throughout the country are hurting and letting that hurt fuel their rage and conviction. But it will not serve anyone for Occupy to continue without an analysis of poverty. This is about the top 10% versus the bottom 20%. Occupy can choose to align itself with either. But an Occupy movement that joins its interests with the interests of a poor people's movement in a shared vision of economic justice would be remarkable and bold.

In turn, anti-poverty activist, organizers and community members need to dig deep and assess how the many voices, campaigns, organizations, groups and networks can be joined in a great new national anti-poverty poor people's movement for economic justice. We all deserve better, but what is better for some should not come without, or at the expense of, the poor.

Morrigan Phillips is a community social worker and organizer in Boston, MA. She works with Survivors Inc./Mass.Welfare Rights Union and has been involved with Occupy Boston as a non-violent direct action trainer and member of the Health Justice working group. Morrigan can be found on twitter at @mbotastic.

The Color of Water in Boston

In recent weeks, the vibrant #OccupyBoston movement has been fleshing out its broad vision for society. Among its resolutions is the straightforward claim that "water is a human right." (1) In this recognition, it joins the United Nations' Generally Assembly which, under the leadership of Bolivia in July 2010, declared that access to "clean water and sanitation is a human right." (2) In turn, this builds on the adoption by most African and Latin American countries of constitutional or legal provisions affirming the right. For residents of the United States, however, access to safe water that is constitutionally protected is a challenge. Indeed, a United Nations "Independent Expert" visited the US early last year and "welcome[d] the fact that there is near universal access to water and sanitation in the United States" but she went on to note that, "it is often the poorest and the most marginalized groups that lack access" to water and sanitation" (3).

Many local organizations helped call the UN Independent expert's attention to the situation of people of color and low-income residents during a special hearing held in Boston (on February 25, 2011). There the head of a Mission Hill PTA testified to the situation of her neighbors who felt that they received inadequate notice of impending water shutoffs and had to track down their landlords to figure out what was going on... Similar testimony from high school students organized by El Movimiento called attention to high water bills especially for larger extended families.

Their experience is consistent with data from the Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC), a public body responsible for piping water to the homes of Boston's residents. Massachusetts Global Action began tracking this data since the beginning of 2007. We noted the following patterns:

a. Boston's water bills are significantly higher than other cities in the US. At nearly \$60/month for the average family of 4 it is at the high end of what cities pay. Testimony at the hearing suggested that this number was relatively low when one considers extended-family households typical of many immigrant households.

b. Protections against water shut offs are inadequate. Although BWSC does consider income during an appeal against a water shut off (based on our dialogue with them). This provision is not made explicit to residents. For example, on its website (this still the situation at the time of writing, February 14, 2012) the stated grounds for appeal are limited to medical conditions and age. We also noted a trend toward increasing shutoffs affecting nearly 2,000 households in the mid 2000s.

c. Threatened water shut off closely follows race and income patterns. A review of the BWSC's data by Mass. Global Action found that for every 1% increase in people of color by city ward, there was a 4% increase in threatened water shut offs! In effect, residents of Dorchester, Roxbury and Mattapan were 10 times more likely to be impacted by water insecurity than residents of Back Bay, Beacon Hill or the Prudential area. For people familiar with our city, this should come as no surprise.

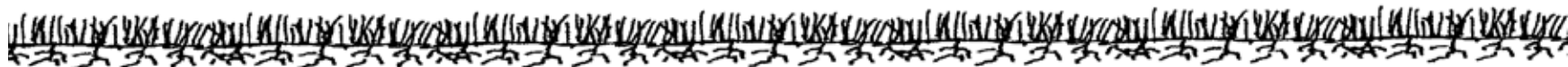
d. The price of water is going up. Each of the last two years has seen an increase in water prices above the rate of inflation. More increases are planned by the BWSC. Boston residents are paying the price for cleaning up the Boston Harbor which began in the 1980s. Instead of following the "polluter pays" principle, the cost of cleaning up has fallen onto the shoulders of Boston residents... irrespective of their ability to pay and of their actual responsibility for the pollution in the first place.

In light of these challenges, what is the way forward for Boston residents and to make #OccupyBoston's declaration a meaningful one? Mass. Global Action is working with allies in the Human Rights City Boston network to engage with the BWSC and to push for the city itself to recognize the Human Right to Water and, as a practical consequence, provide a "life line" water rate to keep the water flowing.

This demand is consistent with work elsewhere in the United States, including with the effective legislative organizing by California-based organizations which are spearheading a "duty-to-consider the human right to water" when setting priorities. For Mass. Global Action, reflecting on the "Color of Water" is essential from a racial justice perspective and more so if we are to hold the public sector accountable and also to immunize it from the risks of privatization.

To plug into the campaign and for more information, contact Mass. Global Action at 888-400-1225 or by email at info@massglobalaction.org.

Notes: (1) <http://bit.ly/wuYMUz> (2) <http://bit.ly/xBsBwT>
(3) <http://bit.ly/woiWCG>



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We Must Have CONGO ACTION NOW!

and tantalum (extracted from coltan ore). Tantalum is used in cellphones, laptop computers, and other digital equipment. It is thought that up to 80% of the world’s reserves of coltan are found in eastern Congo. This legislation will bring transparency to the use of conflict minerals and create consequences for companies that use them.

By Pat Aron, Public Health Social Worker
Coordinator, Congo Action Now

“You will not fight your battles on my body anymore!” These dying words of a woman in Lynn Nottage’s Ruined are a cry for an end to the war that has devastated the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo for the past 15 years. This war IS being waged on the bodies of women and children. It is the deadliest conflict since World War II – six million people have died and hundreds of thousands of women and girls have been raped. Most of these women have been gang-raped and left with severe genital mutilation. Sexual violence with extreme brutality has been called “the defining characteristic” of this war. Rape is being used as a strategic weapon to destroy people and communities.

I was first made aware of this horrific war three years ago by sister activists in Boston WILPF (Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom). When WILPF organized the showing of the film The Greatest Silence: Rape in the Congo, it was such a powerful experience that some of us felt we had to do something. Congo Action Now (CAN) emerged, a dynamic, inter-organizational group of women that is supporting the Congolese people in their work to end the war and sexual violence. We work in coalition with Congolese organizations both in the U.S. and in the DRC.

Congo Action Now works to influence policymakers and to raise awareness of what is happening in Congo. We organize informational house parties and presentations, hold vigils, and distribute information at marches and festivals. In September, CAN participated in the Clark University conference Informed Activism: Armed Conflict, Scarce Resources, and Congo. When the Huntington Theatre presented the play Ruined, we led post-performance discussions. We wrote and got passed a Cambridge City Council resolution on Congo and we have lobbied Congress and the President. We also pressure electronics companies to stop using conflict minerals from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

CAN is now focusing on getting a Congo Conflict Minerals bill passed by the Massachusetts legislature. The conflict in the DRC is international and complex – at one point the armies of eight countries as well as over twenty militia groups were fighting in the country. All of the warring groups are fighting over the region’s vast mineral wealth, and the conflict is in large part financed by the illegal trade in these minerals. This mineral trade is a major driver of the war and sexual violence.

During the summer, Congo Action Now members learned that the California legislature was considering a Congo Conflict Minerals bill. We decided to approach Representative Marty Walsh of Dorchester to ask him to consider filing a bill in the Massachusetts legislature. We showed him the film The Greatest Silence and invited him to the Clark University conference. Rep. Walsh was very enthusiastic about the bill and he filed it at the end of September. After an intense week of visiting legislators, twenty-three senators and representatives signed on as co-sponsors of the legislation. The bill is now before the Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight.

The Massachusetts Congo Conflict Minerals bill will prohibit the Commonwealth from contracting with companies that are not in compliance with federal regulations on Congo conflict minerals. As part of the Dodd-Frank financial services reform, any company registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission must take steps to trace the origin and supply chain of conflict minerals from the DRC and surrounding countries. The specified minerals are tin, tungsten, gold,

The conflict in the DRC is complicated and much is needed to bring an end to the war and sexual violence. One way that we in Massachusetts can have an impact on the continuation of the war is to enact conflict minerals legislation. Congo Action Now looks forward to working collaboratively with other groups to support the Massachusetts Congo Conflict Minerals bill. At this point,thirty-five organizations have signed on as supporters. Please let us know if your organization would like to join us in supporting the bill. We will be calling and meeting with legislators, testifying at a public hearing, and contacting media to gain support for the bill. We would welcome your involvement.

I have long admired the work of Survivors, Inc. Congo Action Now would love to have the opportunity to collaborate with you on this and other projects. For more information about the Democratic Republic of Congo, you may go to the CAN website at www.congoactionnow.weebly.com. You may reach us at congoactionnow@yahoo.com.

Dear Sister,

SAVE OUR SOULS (SOS)

I am hasten to inform you of the flood occasion by the persistence rainfall that has engulf the Niger Delta Region in the Southern Nigeria which our Women Shelter situate. This flood has brought about untold hardship to us and the children of this shelter.

In the immediate adjacent community, so many people including women and children had died and we were so fortunate that our children in this shelter had survived the flood.

Moreover, the flood had cause crop failure in that, so many farmland including our vegetable garden, which we cultivated to feed the women and children of our shelter were carried away by the flood. Moreso, the flood led to mosquitos which had used the stagnant water in the drainage around us to lay eggs, so that our environment is engulfed with mosquito bite, leading to malaria attacks to our women and children.

In the meantime five children of our shelter are suffering from malaria fever and we do not have a wherewithal to give them medical care, we are only using self medication to counter this malaria fever, and the self medication has a very great risk. Since it is not recommended by a doctor.

Because of the flood, it is not easy to come by nutrientional food, such as tomatoes, onions, okro water melon and pineapple to mention a few. Elsewhere in this region, which is not affected by the flood, those dwellers bring this crops and fruits to sell to us at exorbitant prices and we are not able to purchase them for our children’s needs.

I therefore beseech you to come to our immediate help by way of donation which will enable me to buy food and provide medical help for our children.

In Sisterhood,
Hannah Edemikpong
Box 185 Eket Akwa Ibom State Nigeria.
9th September, 2011.

Donate to Survivors Inc. by visiting www.survivorsinc.org

Leather and Steel

By Christine O'Connor

Leather and steel
Left leg, right hand
Leather and steel
Right leg, left hand
Leather and steel
Do you understand?

Leather and steel
Shackled by an angry man
Leather and steel
Just because he can
Leather and steel
Weren't in my plan

Leather and steel
Helpless and alone
Leather and steel
Nazi took my phone
Leather and steel
Crying for my sister Joan
Leather and steel
Thrash, cry, and moan

Leather and steel
932-9136
Leather and steel
Nazi gets his kicks
Leather and steel
It's a crime to be sick

Leather and steel
Drugged and helpless
Leather and steel
Raped? Can only guess
Leather and steel
He'll never confess

Leather and steel
Denied my mobility
Leather and steel
Stole my nobility
Leather and steel
Hastens my morbidity

Leather and steel
Raped of dignity
Leather and steel
Robbed of humanity
Leather and steel
Broke my sanity

Leather and steel
Part of me died
Leather and steel
Obliterated my pride
Leather and steel
Everyone lied

Leather and steel
I wish I'd died

Monday October 10, 2011: Intake interview w/ Scott B. of the Lindner Center for Hope. He later called telling me to go immediately to UC Hospital after conferring with my PCP Dr. D F. A decision was made to send me to UC Hospital, rather than Christ Hospital, which we had discussed during the in-take interview. I was told that UC would be able to better meet my needs for treatment for malnutrition and re-feeding. I weighed 77 pounds at the intake interview. I needed a day to arrange care for my pets and my home, and was directed on Tuesday to go to the emergency room. I was told the hospital would have my information and admit me. I experience so much abdominal pain; I am unable to sit most of the time. I pace about all day or lie down to sleep.

However there were no beds available at UC and I remained in the ER waiting room from 12:45 PM until early evening a very long time to have sit or pace. I was put in a bed in the Circle A-1 position which is nothing more than a bed in the hallway. No privacy curtain, no phone, no TV, no food, or drink like the other patients. I was continuously walked by, ignored, bumped into with carts and people. They took a urine sample and drew some blood. Other than that I was ignored. I had not had anything to eat or drink the entire time. I had horrific abdominal pain from not eating and having missed 2 doses of medication for such pain. When I complained, a doctor threw a chicken sandwich at me. I started to cry and told him I couldn't eat solid food. He gave me two 2 oz. containers of apple juice. Having just lost 5 lbs. from 2 bouts of flu, I was being exposed to all kinds of bacteria and viruses in both the waiting room and the ER. I have no immunities in my present condition. As I'm writing this at 6:00 Saturday AM, October 15, 2011, I have a very sore throat and a fever of 100. 8.

During this time, I attempted to reach Scott. B. I left messages and spoke to the answering service which informed me that the doctor on call refused to take my call. I told them I needed to be admitted as I could not sustain the ER. I was told only my PCP could admit me I called Dr. F's office and was told that he would not admit me.

I requested to be moved into a quieter, private bay as some opened up, and I was refused. At 10:30PM I advised the nurse that I was leaving AMA @ 11PM, as I was too sick to stay and needed to go home and eat and get my pain meds if I was not going to be treated. Shortly afterwards an IV drip was started, and I was moved to the Temporary ER Space 10. After an hour, I finally received the pain medication I needed hours ago. This medication takes 1 and 1/2 to 2 hours to kick in. As I was still in pain, I walked in the hallway with my IV pole to try to walk off the pain and maybe some gas. The blond male nurse told me that I was disturbing other patients and needed to get to my room and my bed. I tried to explain to him why I needed to walk, and pointed out that I was not walking past any other doors, except closets and a bathroom. He told me that if I didn't get in bed he would strap me down. I repeated my right to leave AMA, and he told me I had been put on a 72 hour hold for mental reasons. I went to the room and the bed, but he came in and proceeded to strap me down with 5" leather and steel shackles, suitable for a mass murderer, not a 60 year old, 5'4" woman, with malnutrition, severe osteoporosis, and dehydration. At least a prisoner would have a guard. I had no one to protect me. Why was Velcro restraints not used if anything had to be used?

First he strapped me down by my left leg and right arm. The strap was so tight it made my hand swell the next 3 days. I was humiliated and outraged, and having been a victim of life-threatening domestic abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, and multiple sexual assaults, I was hysterical and thrashed. Then he said for that he would tie my other arm and leg, and he did. I asked his name as his nametag read only Joe. I asked for his employee ID #. He refused to give me any information. I asked to speak to a supervisor, and he told me that was the boss of this ward. I asked to speak to Patient Relations and was refused.

I was trying to call my sister to help me on my cell phone. Nazi nurse came in and took my phone away. He said I couldn't have it because it has a cord {it was charging}. I asked him to take the cord off and give it to me and he refused. He set my phone on a high table next to the door. I asked him to put it with my belongings so it wouldn't be stolen, and he just ignored me. The hospital phone was not within reach as both my hands were strapped down.

I was so outraged I decided to show him I could make a whole lot of noise and disturb many patients the way I was. I yelled and pleaded with anyone to call my sister and repeated her phone number and my request over and over. I then sang a five-verse song with refrains over and over again in my worst pitch, screech, possible. Nazi Nurse Joe threatened to sedate me, and I begged him to put me out of mercy, so of course, he did not. I said, "What are you going to do, rape me now?" At some time I fell asleep.

Was I raped? Did Nazi nurse Joe sedate me through my IV after I fell asleep and then rape me? Was he the only one? I had blood with urine starting Weds. AM and

continuing through Friday. My urine was so red, that the PCA upstairs put the collection "hat" under the sink to show the nurse. Tests were run on my urine, and no problem was found.

I was left hog-tied and vulnerable the entire night. AT 5 AM I asked to go the bathroom. Joe took off one arm and one leg and threw me bedpan. I asked how I was going to manage a bedpan with one hand and leg tied down hard. He told me to figure it out, that other people did it. He never came back to retrieve the bedpan. It was still on the floor when I was finally moved upstairs on Wednesday evening at 9:00 PM.

At 7:20 a "patient monitor" was brought in to watch me, and the shackles were removed. This person accompanied me to the bathroom, leaving the door open a crack while I was inside. The first monitor was freaking out about bedbugs her daughter brought home from school. She constantly dripped alcohol sanitizer on the chair she sat in, and covered it with a white towel. She proceeded to scratch and itch as she told me about her bedbug problem at home. When I was moved upstairs, she did accompany me again, and repeated the ritual on another chair. But she was an angel who comforted me by stroking my head when I was still bound. The shackles were left in the room to intimidate me.

As I was being moved upstairs at 9PM, they put my file on my lap and I read that a Dr. Virginia H. had completed the 72 hour hold saying I was a risk to myself as I did not realize the seriousness of my condition!! If anyone did not realize the seriousness of my condition, it was Nazi Nurse Joe and the ER staff. I sought out the Lindner Ctr., and I came voluntarily to the hospital.

I continued to have stream of monitors making me feel even more humiliated upstairs as well. So I had to sleep in a room with lights and TV on while someone watched me sleep. The last monitor from 7PM Thursday Oct. 14 through 7AM Friday Oct.15, had a steady stream of other PCA staff that talked, bitched about their jobs and disturbed my already difficult sleep constantly throughout the night. The PCA hid in the room to avoid working. I even gave them some hints about you have a hard job, but don't take it to the patients, to no avail. So I slept quite poorly that night as well.

On Friday I repeated the request I made on Thursday to speak to Patient Relations, as I was informed that I was being released soon. Jessica came up and spoke to me. Every time I repeat the story of my trauma Tuesday night, I get more panicked and nervous and angry. I had told it to Dr. S, the psychologist, and he told me that he could tell after speaking with me for 30 seconds that I was very stable and that I had every right to leave AMA under the circumstances. I had told the story to my sister, the monitors, and several nurses, all who were as shocked as I was.

I was so shaken after telling my story again, that I am now adamant that I will not participate in any in-patient lock-down therapy at the Lindner Center. I will not participate in any out patient program in which I am under lock down. I will never, ever go to UC Hospital or any physician associated with UC Hospital. I may never, ever agree to be hospitalized for any reason. My PTSD from past events has kicked in, and I could not bear ever being locked down or restrained in any way right now. I almost had a panic attack when a store door was locked as I tried to exit, as the store had just closed. My boundaries are now walls.

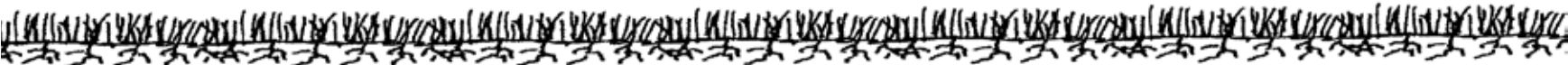
I have been irreparably damaged by the unprofessional behavior and actions of the very people with whom I am supposed to now trust my life?

Being strapped down for over five hours was the most traumatic night of my life. At least the other assaults were short in duration. Part of me died. I was robbed of my self-respect, my pride, and my humanity. I wanted to bite my hand off to get free, like a fox in a trap. I would rather have died than been strapped down. I'll never be the same.

I trust no one. Everyone let me down.

When I returned home, I discovered that my cats had not been fed in over two days. One cat ate the other's vomit as she was that hungry. Four days of mail were in the mailbox.

I thought the Lindner Center was going to save my life. Now due to the blunders of UC Hospital and staff in the ER, including Dr. Virginia H, and the extreme trauma and cruel and unusual punishment I received, my very health and life may now be at greater risk. I hold the Lindner Center responsible for not having me directly admitted, for insisting upon sending me to UC without verifying that there would be a bed available, for the inept answering service that did not take my desperate and frantic calls for help seriously, and for the on-call doctor who refused to take my call. I hold Dr. F. responsible for refusing to admit me as well.



How Much It Costs To Run Homeless Shelters,Grandma Had a Lung Hemorrhage and Testing the Massachusetts Medical Coverage Model... by Karen Rock

Don't get me wrong. Occupy Wall Street was one of the best things to happen since Woodstock until it turned into something more like Kent State, only using mace instead of bullets. You don't remember Woodstock? We'll talk about that another time. In any case, I couldn't attend Occupy Wall Street, not that one, not Occupy Amherst, where I live, and not Occupy Northampton. I was busy participating in what will someday be called the Great Steroid Experiment of 2011. I exited the hospital and landed with a thud in my development, bloated but alive. I was, you might say, occupying my living room chair, terrified by every knock at the door.

Occasionally, when energy surged through, I would vacuum two square feet of carpeting or write two sentences or draw a smiling face in hopes that my family would think I was o.k. and not put me away. I was helping my granddaughter play violin five notes at a time. "Grandma, why are you crying?" she asked. "I don't know...I forgot... But I suspect I'm in agony," I replied. "Good," she said. "Now I don't have to practice."



Everyone was taking advantage of me. I was a wounded animal in the jungle. I went back to vacuuming and there was a knock at the door. "I've always said I didn't want to die with a vacuum cleaner in my hand," I said to a virtual stranger. Steroids make you do things like this if you weren't doing them before. It was the Tea Party lady I had chased down town on a high steroid, low impulse control day. Her hair was frazzled and she looked a horrified 60. She had a coffee stain down the front of her yellow sweater. She looked like me. "I see we shop at the same free store," I said inappropriately. "Come in." I had received four colors of nail polish at the free store gift raffle (everyone's a winner) so I handed them to my ten-year old granddaughter and kicked back to entertain company. "I'm sick of all the handouts in this country," the T.P. lady said angrily. "America is my country, too." Remembering our street conversation I quipped, "I entirely agree with you. American corporations should have their hands slapped." Sensing a patriotic theme, my granddaughter was painting an American flag on my right big toenail.

"And what do you do all day to afford this place?" I felt bad for her. "Before Bush poured all the money into war I got a section 8 housing slot, but mostly I raised children and did laboring work like fruit picking. Seasonal. Like being a wife. I can't heat my apartment but at least I have one. This may be the bright side of global warming. But actually, you know, it's much more expensive to provide for homelessness. People over flowed the shelters and now the state is paying for hotel rooms at a discount, and hotel owners get a tax write off while apartments sit empty. Homelessness is big business. Just think of all the employed caseworkers. And then there are the year round guests camping by the Connecticut River and behind the local supermarket. One mechanic brings his oil there to help keep the fires going, a humanitarian but not environmentally friendly effort. In fact, it may not be humanitarian since the fires keep people warm, but kill off their lungs."

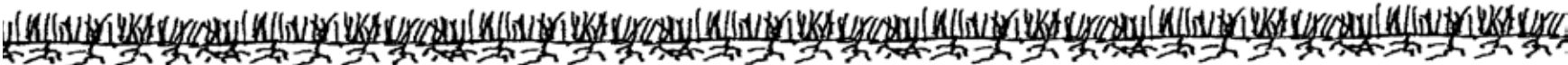
"They should be grateful," the T.P. lady said. "I'm sure they are," I said. "It's sort of like the expensive medicines you referred to when I saw you in the street. That I'm lucky and that you don't want your tax dollars paying for them. I trust you meant my steroids. Not to worry about my luck. Within four months all my fillings dropped out of my head at the same time. Mass health doesn't pay for fillings, just cleaning and extraction, so I stayed alive but lost several levels of health due to medication." "You should be grateful," the T.P. lady said. "I'm sure I am," I said. "I'm grateful your mean spirited vision of America hasn't taken over yet, or people wouldn't just be trying to stay warm. They'd be dead." My granddaughter was painting my entire left big toe black.

"Oh," I added, in an attempt to be uplifting. "And I'd like to commend you. You've provided billions of dollars for corporate bigwigs, for bankers, to name a few. You've provided yachts and vacations on them, homes and homes away from home. And I know they're grateful. They're probably going to issue a quarter with your face on it, just like Sacajawea." "They are?" she looked confused. "Sure you're guiding the media to blame the poor so the rich don't look so guilty for stealing from everybody. If you wind up on a quarter, you should be grateful," I added. "It cost money to put you there."

WHERE IS MY COFFEE SUMMIT?

By Chaun Renaud

Almost a year ago in April I was struck by an SUV while crossing the street. I do not remember the incident because I suffered a concussion but what struck me harder than the SUV was the falsified police report laying blame on myself when I could not even speak for myself. According to the police report I "rolled" on to the young woman's vehicle and that she was "driving slowly". Even though I have witnesses that contradict that statement my major issue is with the police officers who decided not to cite the White female driver. I do not understand how one can hit a human being and not be at least cited. If I, a woman of color, were to strike a White female with my vehicle I would be looking at numerous citations and a possible attempted murder charge. By the way, I was in my neighborhood, Adams Village. I say that because an insurance adjuster questioned me about being in that neighborhood. Yes, people of color live in Adams Village. Not speculating but did the police officers think I was trespassing? I did complain against the Officers involved in the case but I have heard nothing back. President Obama held a beer summit for the police officers involved in the Henry Louis Gates fiasco, maybe he can hold a coffee summit for me and the two Officers involved in this incident. Here's hoping. I am not looking to sue the Boston Police Department I am mainly seeking to call them on their own deep-rooted micro-aggression. Ahem, racism.



Dispatches from the Front: DTA Logs By Diana Moon



I have 2 stories to share about my DTA and DHCD (Department of Housing and Community Development) outreach work. Each family's situation is unique although the issues and problems they face are shared in common with many low income families. One story involves a young mother of two small children who will need much support to nurture her growth to independence and self-reliance. The second account involves another young mother of two who although very hard working earns a low income; she becomes ill, loses her job, then gets evicted and faces homelessness. I see she has a lot of courage and though she's down, she is not defeated! All too often the high cost of living causes a divide that the very best of efforts can not always manage. The first woman I met in the DHCD lobby. She sat, her face lined with worry, tending to her infant while keeping an eye on her toddler. Her story was relayed to me by the older woman sitting next to her. "She is a friend of my friend's daughter. I'd heard of her problems- she and her babies thrown out of her foster mother's home."

"I couldn't let them be on the street so I offered my place for a while. I live in public housing so she can't stay with me. We've been in to talk to the case worker. I'm worried. I don't think she wants to help us. She is very negative, she, (the case worker), says that I should keep her with me – she's not listening. I told her I'm in public housing. I feel so discouraged but I won't give up. We're waiting to go back in so we'll see what she says." (Well, I had to smile to myself -this woman has a very determined and fiery nature maybe true to her strawberry blonde hair!) I reviewed the Survival Tips section with her focusing on the Coalition for the Homeless and the services they offer. I advised her to definitely call the Coaliton with any concerns. "Counselors are available on the phone to problem solve. They are well informed and they are there to help you!" I listened a while longer as she voiced her disapointment at finding her case worker more of an adversary than someone actually helpful. Why does she even work here if she doesn't want to help . . . "Don't give up," I offered. As I headed to the next families I heard her say "Never." Later I saw her downstairs where I was distributing Survival News. "I'm going now to call the numbers you showed me – I'm on it." I'd given her contact information for me but I didn't hear from her. I wonder how she and her young friend made out...

The second story ends on a more satisfying note. On another morning I talk with a young woman in the elevator as it rises to the third floor and the DHCD office. I tell her about Survivors, Inc, about Survival News and point out the Survival Tips section. Then leaving the elevator I continue into the DHCD office and hand out Survival News to the families waiting for assistance. Some hours later I again meet the young woman from the elevator and I ask her how did things go with her case worker. "Good, she's really helpful. She thinks I can be placed in a shelter with my two children. I'm coming in again to see her. You know, I've always worked and took care of what we needed. My rent was \$1100. a month, I got food stamps and we got by .. but then I got sick. I was in the hospital and then at home recovering. I got behind on my rent and couldn't catch up ... ended up going to court. I was evicted and now must leave my apartment." I told her about the legal services offered by Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS) should she need them as she goes forward. I also went over information about the Coalition for the Homeless explaining some about the advocacy and informational services they offer. Later on the next week I met her again: "I'm

moving in with a relative who has a house. They are going to help me with rent. I'm happy. I didn't want my kids to live in a shelter. This is so much better for us!" "Yeah, I say, I'm happy for you too." Yes it's so much better for kids to live in a house.

Dispatches From the Front: Dateline Florida

By Claire Cummings, in St. Petersburg

Greetings from the Sunshine State!

Survival News now has an editor living in South Florida in the midst of a state that has one of the highest rates of poverty, home foreclosures, unemployment, homelessness and hunger in the country. Amid ostentatious displays of wealth of Florida million and billionaires and "Snow Birds" swooping in from the north to spend the winter in their "second" homes, there are homeless tent cities and food lines that regularly consist of thousands. With one of the most unpopular and mean spirited governors who requires welfare recipients to submit to drug tests for their benefits while the company he owns reaps the profits from the testing in a trust in his wife's name, and corrupt legislatures refuse federal funding for medical coverage for the disabled, funding for poor children and their families, the unemployed and the elderly have been cut to the bone. Millions of homes have been foreclosed and are lying

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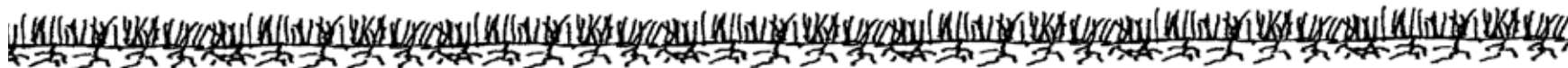
Tribute To A Fallen Soldier

When I met Ruth I was a mess, nothing but an adult child. Ruth saw something in me that I couldn't see myself. At that time she said to me "you can do better". As time passed she taught me the way only Ruth does, by real life examples. she showed me how to be a better soldier in this war on poverty and not a victim



of it. Ruth expanded my understanding of right and wrong and the true meaning of "No Justice No Peace". I see Ruth like so many others before me, she is one of my "other mothers". it is more than a just of term of respect, it is not because of her age, color, or economic status even though we have that in common, but because in the process of teaching me to be a better soldier, she actually raised a better man. Who became a better friend, a better husband, a better father, and a better person. I can still remember what she said the last time I saw her, when I told her I was graduating from college with an associates degree in business administration. She said to me "good, you can still do better he is not thru with you yet." Ruth has always in her own way inspired me to strive for better and that change is always possible. that is the gift she has given to me that I will be forever grateful for. I will miss you.

Love Always, your friend, your student, your ally, and son,
Chicago



Jobs Creation Commission Update

by Laurie Taymor-Berry

On December 31, 2008, the Massachusetts Legislature passed the Jobs Creation Commission Legislation. What began as a resolution, from the 1995 Massachusetts Democratic Issues Convention, had evolved, as a bipartisan vehicle, to bring cross sectors, including the unemployed, to the table, to generate a conversation that will hopefully address the” worst job loss in the past twenty-six years”, (Boston Globe and many other news sources)

Survivors, Inc. and the Cambridge Democratic City Committee spearheaded the Jobs Creation Commission legislation since the initial filing in 1997. The impetus for the legislation was a response to the early 90’s recession as well as the new welfare to work requirements mandated by both state and federal government. A society that intones the work ethic must provide opportunities for those who must work and want to work. Government can bring together representatives from business, labor, academia and the unemployed to focus on finding innovative, concrete solutions to creating jobs. The need is too great not to make the effort.

The “Future of Work” by Jeremy Rifkin, the Boston Globe’s lead editorial on 1/15/95 “called attention to a sea change in the working world, one that demands imaginative responses if we are to avoid the consequences of widespread enforced idleness caused by mankind’s enormous achievement in automation.” That same year, Welfare Reform became law in Massachusetts which mandated workfare for those receiving welfare. “Welfare to What?????” became a rallying cry of the Mass Welfare Rights Union and Survivors, Inc. which I had become a member of since losing my social service job to privatization and downsizing in the early 90’s.

I became focused on finding a way to make elected officials accountable to the reality that there were not enough jobs for everyone.... People need to have access to jobs that will sustain them and their families for the basic necessities of life. When the resolution for a Jobs Creation Commission was unanimously passed at the 1995 Democratic Party Convention in Amherst, I knew that it would take some work to make the words into a reality...work that would involve years of legislative advocacy, organizing campaigns for political office in order to promote the legislation that would

mandate that “our elected officials bring together representatives from government, business, labor, academia and the unemployed” to come up with recommendations and innovative solutions to the growing epidemic of joblessness.

The Jobs Creation Commission was finally enacted into law by Governor Deval Patrick in 2009. Another year passed before all the appointments were made. Members, from the designated categories, began meeting on January 25, 2011. The Jobs Creation Commission is mandated to report back to the legislature its findings by 6/27/12. **All meetings are open to the public.**

For the month of February, there will be a presentation on “Alternative Economic Development”, organized by Aaron Tanaka, the Commissioner on behalf of the Unemployed, and Tim Sullivan, the Commissioner on behalf of Labor. Aaron and Tim are the Co-Chairs for the Supply Side Subcommittee which, among other concerns, is looking into barriers to employment for individuals with CORI’s. The other two subcommittees are: Inventory and Demand. The Jobs Creation Commission has also gone “on the road”. The public, as well as local business representatives and workforce investment board staff have given testimony at over five regional meetings which have taken place in Holyoke, Worcester, Lynn, Plymouth and Lowell. Stay on the alert for the Boston Region Jobs Creation Commission Hearing in early May, 2012 and come testify! For updates contact: laurietaymorberry@yahoo.com and see: www.massjobscreation.org

Addendum: Inherent in the Jobs Creation Commission, from the very inception, was a vision to eradicate poverty and confront the challenges to conserve the planet....an unattainable vision, perhaps, but one that is vital and necessary to possess in order to ameliorate the current condition of humanity. According to Howard Zinn, we live in *“An economic system that, while lavishly rewarding some people and giving enough to others to gain their loyalty, consigns a substantial part of the population to misery, generation after generation. And along with this, a national ideology so historically soaked in racism that nonwhite people inevitably form the largest part of the permanent poor.”* (“You Cannot Stay Neutral on a Moving Train”).

Two poems

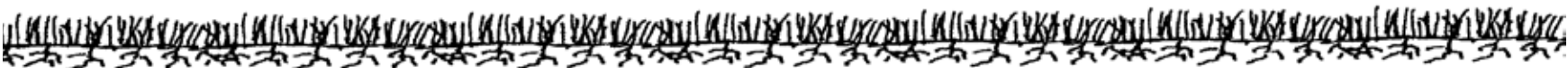
by Kork Ok



In the middle of a night
I sit and cry by a window
My tears fall down to the floor
I look at a radio, it’s twelve o’clock
I’m so depressed and so down
When I hear the sound of thunder
It reminds me of the war
When Khmer Rouge took over in 1975
Ruling by killing and murdering
Shot my sister and father without a reason.
They called us traitors
And took us away to be executed.
You must understand,
These people were vindictive

They ruled by killing
They made us miserable
They terrified us
They tore us from our mothers and fathers
I’m telling this story
Out of a rage
That never relents
How did it happen
That Khmer killed Khmer?
You must try to help me think this through
Now I live in the United States of America
My life is better than before
I live without fear every day and night forever
I live with my mother very peacefully

Soft and white snow falls down from the sky
It catches my eye while I am driving
On my way going to fishing
When I stop and wait for traffic.
It was on Saturday
It was my day off from work
The sky had clouds and was so dark
I pulled my car to park on the sidewalk.
A few minutes had gone by
I closed my eyes and started to pray
For good luck on that day
I did not know what to say in my thoughts.
I hope God will forgive me.
Because I will be fishing
Today I will commit the killing
This will bring me bad Karma.



Part of Me

By Christina Schnetzer

When and if you meet me,
There's something you won't see.
It's the part that he has taken ,
...the missing part of Me.

At first I couldn't see it
Didn't know I'd lost it anyway.
Until I called upon my confidence,
which laughed at me one day.

I felt like a wild lion,
backed behind a chair.
Like a frightened fox,
Caught up in a snare.

Ready to lash out.
Instead, I rolled into a ball
afraid, of my own shadow.
Unable to make the call.

And so I feel 'not good enough'
An onus burden to my race.
I feel as if your handprint ...
Is still clinging to my face.

My heart still hears you
Mocking ALL I do.
Feeling I am ruined ,
For anyone but you.

I lick the wounds That sting me still,
Hoping they will heal.
But seeing me from the outside
you will never quite know how I feel.

In my suit of armor , shining like the sun.
I protect myself from being hurt,
By you., or anyone.

So if I may seem guarded, off limits to everyone.
Or if I seem disjointed, unable to have fun...
It's because part of me was stolen by someone .
Someone that I trusted , someone that I love(d)...
He capitalized on my emotions come push,
Or pull,
Or shove .
....When it all came crashing down ,
And I could bear no more.
I caught a glimmer, of that part of me,
skitter 'cross the floor.
Never did I catch it, Seldom did I try.
It was that look of confidence,
That you first caught in my eyes...

Occupy Updates

By Andrew King

Peace sistas and brothas,

Hope everyone is well. I've spoken to a few of you and everyone is making big moves and staying very busy. Amidst mass media claims that the Occupy movement is over and done with, I recently attended a few Occupy organizing meetings which were very inspiring, and I can assure you that the movement is alive and well and is waiting to blossom in the spring.

A few weeks ago, Pedro and I attended a meeting in Boston's historic South End neighborhood, convened by Mel King, a well-respected black community activist, who ran to be Boston's first black mayor in the 1980's. Also in attendance were long-time community organizers from the Mass Welfare Rights Union (www.survivorsinc.org). These OG's shared their years of experience fighting for poor people and economic justice with some of the younger organizers in the room. Pedro discussed the work his union has been doing and the labor movement's role in the Occupy movement. We discussed how we could most effectively plug in to the current movement. The group of about 27 people agreed to form the "Economic Human Rights Group" (or working group). There was a debate around the name and what the nature of this "group" would be. Some of us argued that it should identify as an Occupy "working group", because although people having been fighting in Boston for decades, Occupy is what's grabbing the attention of millions of people right now, and this is a window of opportunity.



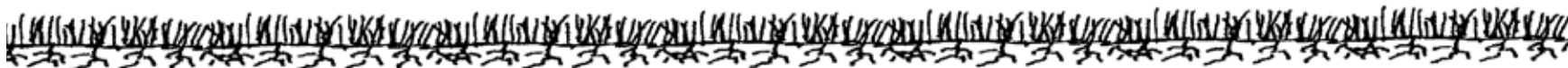
Photo by Debbie Ferretti

Dispatches from Florida

continued from page 14...

vacant in deteriorating neighborhoods, while millions of condos stand empty and unfinished, stopped cold in their construction when the euphemistically named "Great Recession" of 2008 hit like a hurricane.

Trying to find the "welfare office" here has been like trying to find a needle in a haystack. It is not listed anywhere that I could find it, yet, in my short time here. I am still searching! However, a nice young man from the Suncoast Schools Federal Credit Union, Phillip Marina, allowed me to distribute Survival News in his lobby, which is located in a poor section of St. Petersburg. Survival News is interested in making Dateline Florida a regular feature and is soliciting articles, photos poetry, artwork, and reports to feature in our next edition, as well as Outreach Volunteers to distribute the paper in Florida. If you are interested please contact: Claire Cummings at 727-623-4675 or by email at sarahclaire.cummings@gmail.com or Dottie Stevens at masswelf@aol.com



The Ruth Ellis Center states there are 5 different types of homeless teens:

1. Throwaways: discarded Youth who get thrown onto the streets because their parents couldn't handle them or didn't respect their lifestyle
2. Runaways: Teen students with a 20 percent suicide rate. Mostly male and LGBT youth widely represented
3. Couchsurfers: 15-20 year olds, may be from low income neighborhoods who go on several short term stays at friend's or relatives' houses.
4. Squatters: Teens who have been homeless for a while and know how to survive on the streets, most likely male. LGBTQ youth in areas widely represented. 40% engage in what's known as survival sex to get by and 75% percent attend school.
5. Shelter Hoppers: usually unaccompanied females from 15-24.

Short term homeless and often return home. Often neglected, or sexually and physically abused. 30% have attempted suicide and youth of color are widely represented.

When the pure taste bitter,
My Lukewarm body, kept Walking.
Our bones be tender as spilled milk
It's too cold now
To Wander with these
Sunken Bellies
So sit by the fire and
Lace the frost bite
With skin as ripe
As lines of water after it molds
You have heard of us
How we are too ripe to
find home.
And dense as we may be
we will stretch our feathers for a warm kiss,
or a long, long hug from the sun
I reek of questions unanswered
because that's what it is
because that's what they are
That's what it's like
because here is not an option
because the fault is yours
My answer is for you
Yes. We can hear you.
No. We are not done living yet.



Morning as a Squatter

by Deja Rene Carr

YOUTH PAGE

Early Years as a Couch Surfer By Deja Rene Carr

It's an hour car ride or a three hour journey on buses to get from my homeless shelter to my former town where my life still resides, resuming as if I'd never gone. Sometimes I joke, homelessness makes you the best mathematician, subtracting time and money away from life like its nothing. I've learned, as a result that you can shed everything like its your own skin, and with ease. My story isn't grieve worthy, in fact I am as lucky as they come. My mother brought me here from New York just in time for first grade. I'm now fifteen in the tenth grade. I am aware of all gained advantages from being here instead of in the city and I know I have a responsibility with them.

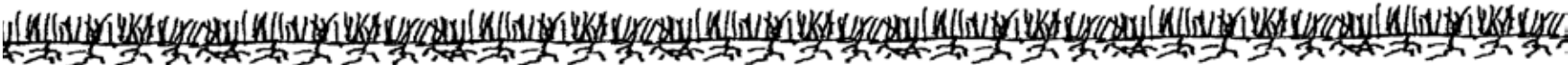
After losing our first home, we found a tiny 2 bedroom apartment. My only possessions being tall stacks of cassettes and clothing, erupting from all surfaces like an awkward looking volcano. I'd say losing that apartment was part of my plan. Some bigger picture I sure as hell did not paint. I was homeless for about an hour after we lost the apartment, I occupied Amherst and Northampton with a signs explaining my status, and optimistic feeling. I contacted a good friend of mine and her mom agreed to let me couch surf at their place until at least a parcel of this plan was revealed to me. It was an experience I will cherish and I was in simple terms what you would call "OK." The weeks flew by harmoniously but on one painfully average day, just as the school day was rolling to a slow end, I got a message from my mom regarding a homeless shelter in a nearby town. "If I turn it down, we will not be eligible for help from them for a year." The last school bell rang out and I exited the high school, greeted by my mother in a welfare funded taxi cab. And we rode off towards my current resting place. As time then slowly crawled on, I got used to the word "Homeless." I even almost accepted it.

I am lucky. Sitting in a hotel room listening to Iron and Wine. Should I feel guilty?

I didn't end up in a grungy group home. I'm alone in a well lit room. Should I be angry? Just a few weeks ago, a Homeless man stumbled up to me, reeking of four dollar beers and yelled with a cold, warm voice "Hey! You look like one of those rich College Students. Can I get a dollar?" When I responded with a genuine, "Sorry man, I'm homeless, too," his eyes widened. He seemed to soberly apologize and walk away, as if being the recipient of other's sympathy is the bad part about Homelessness. Being homeless created a huge black hole in my social and apparently more importantly, my academic life, and there are lots new holes being made. Being a musician, just getting to band practice is the hardest part of being in a band at the moment. In school, there's even a conflict that involves me not getting enough time in the actual building after school, which makes passing class impossible. There goes my time slipping away again like a math problem I will never find the answer to. My hatred for teachers gets a little stronger with every blank-faced comment regarding my lack of interest in Angle Tri-sectors or learning about Aviation. Meeting deadlines is impossible. I used to spend most of my nights traveling home, and buses became the only place I could concentrate on homework. And soon, they didn't even help. Although I've have my short-comings, being homeless has taught me lessons irretrievable from any textbook. I've learned about myself and how to use my own personality and skills as a force in life in order to advance. Art and writing is my backbone and what might be keeping my head above this sewage water, but it's not as if I'm the only one enhancing my life. My support system is my mother, who's been given the nickname Magiver for her ability to make grand things out of absolutely nothing. And she seemed to always have answers. From "How the hell do I get rid of this pimple?" to, what every independent woman needs to know

about (insert important topic here). Sometimes, she makes a kitchen table from an ironing board leftover from our old apartment. She taught me survival as a second language, and she is a reminder of the importance of role models in the lives of teens, from any background or race.

"You are not a beautiful and unique snowflake. You are the same decaying matter as everyone else and were all part of the same compost pile"- Fight Club. I am still a kid. A rambunctious, quick tempered and Fractious one. I've gone through it, wanting to be defiant, being a punk but I honestly just had to grow up a little faster. Ask any homeless kid, they might tell you the same. Homelessness made me a treasure hunter. I get my clothes and books from the local Dumps. I get fruit and bread from anywhere and bury them in my backpack for whenever I'll need them. I find the most beneficial and wonderful relationships from people I'll never meet again. And the feeling of finding new territory is a gorgeous one. But homelessness hasn't changed my ideals, my goals, or me. My ideal life in the future would be one with a communal living. A melting pot of colorful relationships and light and the constant rhythm of mental growth. Once I was stripped away from my life as I knew it, I had to find a new source of entertainment and enrichment and that's when I started to realize, writing was saving my life from focusing on turmoil, and music was right along with it, making me a more appreciative person, rather than mourning my material possessions, which in fact made me unhappy because I felt like control was not mine. I still have the same outlook, but now I think my empathy is genuine and my understanding for others has been wildly altered. If there was something I wish I had known before this happened it would be that every place with a pillow shaped rock can be a home, but if you hold on to what you know, you can carry it all on your back with ease.



SURVIVAL TIPS

Greater Boston Legal Services can help you get benefits

If you are having trouble getting the benefits to which you are entitled, contact Greater Boston Legal Services at (617) 371-1234. They can give you advice or representation to deal with the Department of Transitional Assistance (welfare), or a Housing Authority. GBLS provides either a bilingual advocate or uses interpreters to communicate with non-English-speaking clients. If you don't live in the Boston area, they can refer you to legal services in your area.

You can also get legal advice on line at MassLegalHelp, www.masslegalhelp.org.

Food Programs

Project Bread can give you information about food stamps, and can tell you what food pantries and food kitchens are near you, and tell you food stamp outreach locations. They have translators in several languages. Call their FoodSource Hotline, 1-800-645-8333; TTY: 1-800-377-1292.

Everyone has the right to apply for Food Stamps (now called SNAP, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) at their local DTA office, on the Internet, by mailing in an application, or at other food stamp outreach locations. Call the DTA at 1-800-249-2007 to find your local DTA office. You can also call Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline at 1-800-645-8333 for other food stamp locations in your area. **You have the right to sign a paper application the same day you go into a DTA local office or sign an online application electronically.**

You can also apply online by going to www.state.ma.us/dta and clicking on "Welcome to the Virtual Gateway," then click on "Apply" for the on-line application, or you can print out a paper application off the DTA website. If you do not want to apply on line or do not have access to the Internet, you can ask DTA Central to mail out a copy and you can mail it back after you fill it out.

You can get expedited (fast) food stamps if you have little or no income and assets, or if your shelter costs are higher than your income and money in the bank. This means that you should receive the benefits on an EBT card within 7 days of when DTA receives a signed application and screens you for expedited benefits. It is sometimes best to go in person if you need food stamps fast. DTA will ask for proof of who you are (your identity) and will ask you about your income, money in the bank, and expenses, to see if you qualify. You do not need a photo ID or birth certificate. If you do not have any proof of identity but you know your SSN, DTA can check your identity through your SSN and date of birth.

If you are not eligible for expedited food stamps, you can still get food stamps within 30 days of when you apply, if you meet the eligibility rules. You will need to be interviewed—either over the phone or in person— and provide proofs of your income, your address, and your immigration status (if you are not a U.S. citizen). You can self-declare your shelter costs and child care expenses. You can provide proof of your address by a letter addressed to you, an I.D., or government letter. You should receive a letter in the mail after you apply that tells you when your interview is scheduled and the proofs you will need. Unless you need expedited food stamps,

DTA does not count assets in deciding if you are eligible for benefits.

Be sure to tell DTA if you pay for childcare or before/after school fees, or if you pay for the care of a disabled adult so that you can work or go to school yourself. You can also claim the costs of travel (public transportation or a car) to and from childcare, after school programs, etc., at the federal mileage rate of 55 cents per mile. You can self-declare your child care costs. Claiming child care expenses can increase your food stamps.

If anyone in your household is severely disabled or age 60 or older, they can also claim the cost of any out-of-pocket medical expenses to increase food stamps. Medical expenses that can be claimed include transportation to doctor appointments and pharmacies to pick up medication (at 55 cents per mile). It also includes Medicaid co-payments, Medicare premiums, over-the-counter health care supplies such as aspirin, hearing aid batteries, eye glasses, skin ointments, incontinence supplies, or any other medical supplies recommended by a provider. It can also include alternative therapy costs not covered by MassHealth or Medicare (chiropractic, acupuncture, massage therapy, herbal remedies). You can also claim and prove the cost for service animals. You will need to provide proofs of your medical expenses, and a list of medical facilities you visit to claim transportation, including veterinary bills and food supplies. If an elder (60+) or disabled household member has more than \$35/month in medical related expenses, DTA will allow a standard \$90 deduction in calculating your net income. If you pay even higher out-of-pocket costs each month, the deduction can be higher. **Claiming medical expenses can increase your food stamp benefits.**

College students may also qualify for food stamps if they are low-income and meet any of the following: a) the student gets any amount of federal or state work study, b) works an average of 20 hours a week, c) has children under age 12 or gets TAFDC, d) is disabled, e) is over age 49 or under 18, f) is enrolled in school through an Employment and Training Program or the Division of Unemployment. In addition, any students enrolled in community college programs may also qualify for food stamps if they are enrolled in a career or technical education major or certificate program, or if the college thinks their course of study will lead to employment. DTA has a form for community colleges to sign to verify the course of study of these students. Students or other young adults under age 22 who live at home with parents must be part of the parent's SNAP benefits.

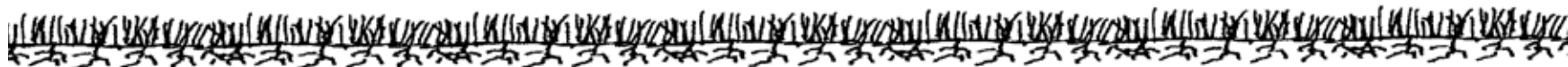
If you are denied food stamps or disagree with the amount of your benefits, you have the right to question and challenge any decisions made by DTA that you disagree with. There is information on line about how to appeal a denial of benefits: www.masslegalhelp.org. You can also contact the Legal Services office in your area for advice and legal representation.

School lunch

If your school has been approved to provide school lunches, here are some things you should know:

- **Children in TAFDC or SNAP households should be**

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automatically approved for free meals without having to file a separate application.

- **Foster children should be automatically approved.**
- **Homeless, runaway, and migrant children should be automatically approved.**
- **Once approved, a child is eligible for the entire school year and the first 30 days of the next school year.**
- **Families do not need Social Security numbers to file an application for school meals.**
- **Families are not required to provide wage stubs, tax returns, or other proof of income with the application.**
- **Families who receive TAFDC or SNAP benefits need only provide their DTA agency ID number, not gross income information, on the application.**
- **School districts should process school meal applications within 10 days of receipt.**

Fair Food

Fair Foods transports daily truckloads of grocery-quality fresh surplus food from industry to low-income communities in Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire. Bring your own bags for the food, which includes fruits and vegetables, to their Two-Dollar-A-Bag site. They do not require identification or income verification. They provide food to anyone who needs it, because there is more than enough to go around. Beyond keeping people from going hungry, Fair Foods provides the building blocks of a healthy life: fresh, affordable fruits and vegetables fifty-two weeks per year. Their headquarters in Boston are in Dorchester, telephone 617-288-6185. Their web site is www.fairfoods.org, which lists sites in the Boston area.

Community Servings provides free, home-delivered meals and nutrition programs for the acutely ill, their families, and their caregivers. They serve Eastern Massachusetts, covering 225 square miles. Call 617-522-7777. Fax: 617-522-7770. Web site: communityservings.org

Fuel Assistance for the winter months

Low-Income people can get help in paying for fuel. In Boston, Brookline and Newton, ABCD administers the federal fuel assistance program. Phone 617-357-6012, ext. 11. Assistance is for any form of heat — oil, gas, electric, wood, or kerosene. Help is given to those whose heat is included in the rent in non-subsidized housing. People with housing subsidies can get help if they pay for heat. Sign-up period is November 1 to April 30. Eligibility level is 60 percent of the medium income in Massachusetts — \$31,016 for a family of 1; \$40,824 for 2; \$50,429 for 3; \$60,035 for 4. For more details, see <http://bostonabcd.org/programs/crisis/fuel-assistance/>

[FuelEligibility.html](#)

Other benefits for people eligible for fuel assistance are weatherization (insulating your house against the cold), electrical audits, heating system repair/replacement.

If you live outside of Boston, Brookline, and Newton, call the Department of Housing and Community Development Heat Line at 1-800-632-8175 and enter your zip code to find out the agency near you.

The Good Neighbor Energy Fund has provided energy assistance to hundreds-of-thousands of residents in temporary crisis who are struggling to pay their energy bills. It is a cooperative effort between the participating energy companies in Massachusetts, The Salvation Army, which administers the Fund, and residents of the Commonwealth. The Fund is available to any Massachusetts resident who, because of temporary financial difficulty, cannot meet a month's energy expense and is not eligible to receive federal or state energy assistance. This year's Fund disbursement is \$350 per eligible household per year.

To qualify for assistance from the Fund, an applicant's gross household income must fall between 60 and 80 percent of the state's median income levels. For example, a household size of 1 would need to have a total gross yearly income of between \$32,908 and \$43,873 to qualify. A household of 2 would need to have a yearly income of between \$39,862 and \$53,149 to qualify. A household of 3 would need to have a yearly income of between \$49,862 and \$66,483 to qualify. A household of 4 would need to have a yearly income of between \$60,168

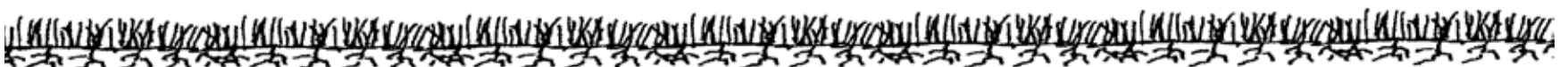
and \$80,224 to qualify. To apply, please visit one of the 36 local Salvation Army offices throughout the state. For more information, call: 1-800-334-3047 if in the Eastern part have Massachusetts (serving area codes 508, 617, 781 and 978) or 1-800-262-1320 if in the Western part of the state (serving area code 413); or visit www.magoodneighbor.org.

Mass Energy Consumers Alliance saves money on oil. You can save \$100 to \$250 on your heating oil by joining the Mass Energy Consumers Alliance for \$20, \$10 for people on a fixed income, senior citizens, or retirees, and free if you receive fuel assistance. You need to provide a letter of approval from the fuel assistance agency and send it with your application. Members save from 10 to 30 cents a gallon off of the Massachusetts state average. Reliable full-service dealers will deliver your oil and service your system. Call them at 617-524-3950 or 1-800-287-3950 for more information, in English or Spanish. Their Web site is www.massenergy.org. They are at P.O. Box 301089, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130.



Immokalee Farm workers protesting unfair trade practices at Trader Joe's and were successful. Trader Joe's has since signed on to the Free Trade Agreement. Photo by Debbie Ferretti

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Help with electric and gas bills

Discounted Gas and Electric Rates and Budget Plans

Massachusetts gas and electric utilities (except those operated by a city or town) must offer a Low Income Discount Rate. Most families receiving Fuel Assistance should be enrolled automatically. Others who qualify should obtain an application from the utility and send it back promptly or simply call the company—the utility should enroll the household right away, and not wait to verify income. For winter 2010/2011, the income limit for eligibility for 1 person is \$30,751; for 2, \$40,213; for 3, \$49,675; for 4, \$59,137; for 5, \$69,598.

Anyone can lower high winter utility bills with budget plans

Utilities offer level monthly payment plans. They estimate annual usage and divide that amount into 12 equal payments.

Any household can get a free “energy audit,” conducted by their utility company, listing ways to save on energy bills.

Shut-off rights for Any Income Household

No Shut-Off if everyone in the Household is Over 65, unless the state DPU gives permission. Companies rarely request this permission, and most elder families are not shut off.

Avoiding Shut-Offs by Setting Up a Payment Plan

Utilities cannot shut off a customer willing to catch up on overdue payments over four months (1/4 of the amount due each month), while also paying current monthly bills. Utilities can offer longer plans, and some go for over a year. Never agree to a repayment faster than you can afford—this can get you into more trouble. Instead, push the utility for a more reasonable plan, and get help from the DPU Consumer Division, 1-877-886-5066.

Utilities must offer all customers a “reasonable” repayment plan that turns service back on. Again, push for an affordable plan and contact the Consumer Division if the utility doesn’t cooperate.

ABCD provides referral services and advocacy for eligible clients interested in reducing their utility bill arrearage/debt. The major utilities serving ABCD’s geographical area of Boston, Brookline and Newton (National Grid and NStar) now offer arrearage management payment plans. Eligible clients may have their utility debt forgiven between \$1,500 - \$2,000 per year while adhering to a structured payment plan.

National Grid gas clients —call 1-800-233-5325

NStar clients—call 1-866-315-2496.

When a Landlord Doesn’t Pay the Utility

All tenants (regardless of income) have shut-off protections where their landlord is the one paying the utility company. If the landlord stops paying the utility, tenants get 30 days notice of the right to pay a “projected bill” (an estimate of that tenant’s share of the monthly bill). Even if all tenants do not pay this projected bill, the state DPU, not the utility, decides whether service should be shut off to the building. The DPU considers how much the tenants have paid, weather conditions, whether any tenants are seriously ill, and tenants’ ages. Involve the DPU with the building as soon as possible. If the building is in foreclosure, the person or institution that now owns the building must keep the utilities on.

Four Ways Income-Eligible Families Can Stop a Gas or Electric Shut Off (or Turn the Gas or Power Back On)

Elderly

No gas or electric shut-off if all adults are age 65 or over. Submit an elderly protection form, which the utility can provide.

Serious Illness

No gas or electric shut-off if anyone in the household (adult or child) has a serious illness. Any previous shut-off must also be restored. The serious illness can be:

- Physical (such as asthma, or pneumonia)
- Mental (such as depression or bipolar disorder)
- Short-term (such as the flu)
- Long-term (such as cancer).

Send the company a serious illness letter from a doctor, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or the local Board of Health, and also submit a financial hardship form. A phone call from the doctor’s office should work temporarily, but a letter must be sent later.

Child under the age of 12 months

No gas or electric shut-off if anyone in the household is under 12 months old, and any previous shut-off must also be restored. Show the child’s age with a birth or baptismal certificate, or any other reasonable proof. Also submit a financial hardship form.

Winter moratorium

Gas and electric companies cannot terminate heat-related utility service from November 15 through March 15 (often extended through April). The customer must send a financial hardship form to the company.

✳ Income eligibility

Eligibility is 60% of the state’s median income: for 1 person, \$31,218; for 2, \$40,824; for 3, \$50,429; for 4, \$60,035; for 5, \$69,641.

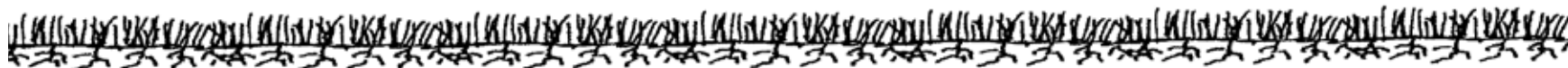
What to Do If You Are NOT Satisfied with the Utility’s Response

The Consumer Division of the State’s Department of Public Utilities (DPY) helps consumers resolve disputes with their utility companies. Call the Consumer Division at **1-877-886-5066** if the utility company makes it difficult to work out a repayment plan or threatens to shut off service where the household is protected from termination.

Help with the telephone bill

You can save on your telephone bill for local service with the telephone company’s **Lifeline and Linkup** programs. Anyone on MassHealth, SSI, food stamps, TAFDC, fuel assistance, EAEDC, or school lunch is eligible. Lifeline reduces monthly telephone bills up to \$10 a month, depending on the state, and Link-Up Link Up provides qualified subscribers with a one-time discount (up to a maximum of \$30) off of the initial installation fee for one traditional, wire line phone service at the primary residence or the activation fee for one wireless phone service. Contact your local telephone company. You may apply for Link-Up assistance when placing an

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order for telephone service. You may also get a form from the worker at your program. The DTA or the Office of Fuel Assistance needs to verify that you are on one of those programs.

Free cell phone

SafeLink Wireless is a government-supported program that provides a free cell phone and up to 250 free minutes per month of service for income-eligible customers. The process to qualify for Lifeline Service depends on the State you live in. In Massachusetts, you may qualify if...

1. You already participate in State or Federal assistance program such as SSI, Federal Public Housing Assistance, Food Stamps, MassHealth, EAEDC, TAFDC, fuel assistance, or school lunch.

2. AND No one in your household currently receives Lifeline Service through another phone carrier.

3. AND You have a valid United States Postal Address. A P.O. Box is not acceptable.

In addition to meeting the guidelines above you will also be required to provide proof of your participation in an assistance program, or proof of your income level. To apply, call 1-800-977-3768, or go online at www.safelink.com. You can also apply at your public library.

If your house is being foreclosed

A federal law provides 90-day tenant protections for tenants living in foreclosed properties nationally. **All tenants must get a 90-day notice before eviction process can be started as a result of foreclosure.** In addition, most tenants who have leases can continue to live in their homes until the end of the term of their lease.

The rights of Section 8 tenants are also protected because the new owner at foreclosure must accept both the tenant's lease and the housing assistance Payment (HAP) contract.

City Life/Vida Urbana is a 38-year-old bilingual, community organization whose mission is to fight for racial, social and economic justice and gender equality by building working class power through direct action, coalition building, education and advocacy. In organizing poor and working class people of diverse race and nationalities, they promote individual empowerment, develop community leaders, and are building a movement to effect systemic change and transform society. Their roots are in promoting tenant rights and preventing housing displacement. In response to the devastating impact of the foreclosure crisis on communities in Boston, they launched a major campaign in 2007, the Post-Foreclosure Eviction Defense campaign to help keep people facing foreclosure in their homes. Victories won by hundreds of organized families have created public and political pressure, which is driving legislative reform and has inspired the emergence of similar campaigns across the region.

In 2011, a grant from the Open Society Foundations' Neighborhood Stabilization Initiative has made it possible for them to expand this effort beyond Boston. They are now working closely with groups in four other cities and towns within Massachusetts and Rhode Island that have begun to replicate this model. Through regional and national presentations and trainings, CL/VU is extending its impact.

CL/VU maintains its core commitment to movement building and working across issues through staff and members' active participation in numerous peace and justice coalitions.

If you need their help, call them at 617-524-3541. They are located at 284 Amory St., Jamaica Plain, MA 02130. Their web site is www.clvu.org. Fax 617-524-3555.

Work requirement for TAFDC recipients

Sometimes DTA puts pressure on workers to get more parents who receive TAFDC to hold down a job or do work activities of 20 to 30 hours per week. If you are being pressured by your welfare worker to do something you are unable to do, such as hold down or search for a job or another activity for the full number of hours, ask your legal services office for help. Below is some information that can help you with the TAFDC work requirement.

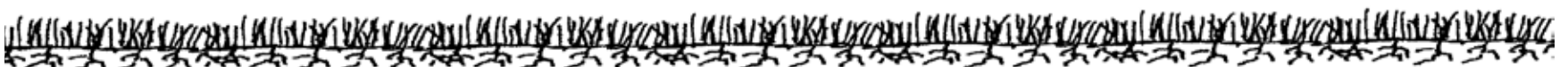
Going to an education or training program counts toward the work requirement for at least twelve months. Most kinds of adult education and job training programs count. College programs, including 4-year college, can also count. (You need to major in something that will lead to a job.) Time spent in education and training when you are exempt from the work requirement does not count against your 12 months. If you need more than 12 months, check with Legal Services. The fact that a program will last more than 12 months is not legal grounds for DTA to refuse to count it for at least 12 months.

Housing search for people in emergency shelter also counts toward the work requirement. DTA must treat families in shelter as being in full compliance with the work requirement as long as they meet the housing search requirements of DHCD's Emergency Assistance (EA) or of the shelter, if you are in a non-EA shelter, regardless of how many hours of housing search you are doing.

DTA is not supposed to lower or stop your benefits under the work requirement or your DTA Employment Development Plan if you have good cause, such as:

- you don't have suitable child care in place;
- you don't have affordable and reliable transportation;
- you need to do housing search because you can't stay where you are currently living
- even though you didn't find your own activity, DTA hasn't given you a community service site that is suitable for you and that will take you;
- you are sick, injured, or disabled (this might give you the right to be completely exempt);
- you have to care for a family member who has an illness or disability (this might give you the right to be completely exempt);
- you have a family crisis, an emergency or other compelling circumstance beyond your control;
- you don't want to stay at or accept a job that: violated minimum wage laws; discriminated on the basis of age, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, or physical or mental disability; violated health and safety standards; or was unavailable due to a strike or lockout.

DTA is not supposed to lower or stop your benefits without first
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giving you a chance to talk about whether any good cause reasons apply. If you think DTA made a mistake in lowering or stopping your benefits, quickly file an appeal and contact your local Legal Services Office for help.

Do you want to help make things better?

If you would like to join other people in making improvements in policy for TAFDC, food stamps, emergency assistance (including family shelters), or housing, there are groups working on these issues who would love to have you join them. They are:

Family Economic Initiative works on issues related to TAFDC (welfare for families with children). They meet once a month at Greater Boston Legal Services, 197 Friend St., Boston. Contact Elizabeth Toulon, 617-603-1626, for more information.

The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless works on issues related to housing and homelessness. They also do advocacy for individuals and families who are at risk for or are experiencing homelessness. The Coalition holds monthly membership meetings in Boston, generally on the final Friday of the month. Contact 781-595-7570 for more information.

The Food Stamp Coalition works on food stamp (now called SNAP) access barriers and a range of state and federal anti-hunger policy issues. They meet once a month in Boston. Contact Pat Baker at Mass Law Reform Institute, pbaker@mlri.org for more information.

Get money back from Earned Income Tax Credit

You may be eligible to receive up to \$5,036 from the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), the tax refund for working people, if you have two children. You earned this money, so don't let your refund go unclaimed.

Who can get the EIC and how much is it worth?

Single or married people who worked full-time or part-time at some point in 2011 can qualify for the EIC, depending on their income. College students who have a work-study job can get EIC.

- Workers who were raising one child in their home and had income of less than \$36,052 (or \$41,132 for married workers) in 2011 can get an EIC of up to \$3,094.
- Workers who were raising two children in their home and had income of less than \$40,964 (or \$46,844 for married workers) in 2011 can get an EIC of up to \$5,112.
- Workers who were raising three or more children in their home and had income of less than \$43,352 (or \$48,362 for married workers) in 2011 can get an EIC of up to \$5,751.
- Workers who were not raising children in their home, were between ages 25 and 64 on December 31, 2011, and had

income below \$13,460 (or \$18,470 for married workers) can get an EIC up to \$464.

If you would like to get an estimate of how much you might be entitled to get back, go to the EITC web site at <http://www.cbpp.org/eic2011>.

You can get EITC Advance Payments in your paychecks. To get EITC Advance payments, give a W-5 form to your employer. You can get the W-5 from your employer, or by calling the IRS at 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676). If you have a checking account, you can have your EITC refund deposited directly.

Some people pay money to a private tax company like H&R Block to get help in filing their tax form or to get the money right away. Rather than do that, try to get free advice. Keep the money in your pocket, or save it and use it to build a better future for you and your family. ABCD runs 13 tax preparation sites in Boston. To find the tax preparation site nearest you, go to <http://masscashback.ehs.state.ma.us>.

A family's earned income tax credit payments do not count as income in determining eligibility or benefit levels for TAFDC, Medicaid, food stamps, SSI, work experience activities (such as community service), or public housing.

To figure your EITC, use a special worksheet included as part of the EITC instructions in form 1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ.

Massachusetts workers get an extra state credit worth 15% of their federal credit if they earn under \$48,362. You can order a tax form and get more information by calling 617-887-6367 or 1-800-392-6089.



Occupy Boston Occupying UMass/Boston. Photo by Debbie Ferretti

The Child Tax Credit: An extra tax break for working families!

The Child Tax Credit (CTC) is a federal tax credit worth up to \$1,000 for each qualifying child under age 17 claimed on the worker's tax return. To be eligible for the CTC refund, a single or married worker must:

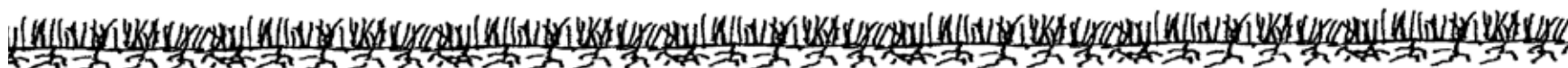
- have a qualifying child under age 17 at the end of 2010;
 - have either a Social Security number or an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number.
- Immigrant workers with either

type of number may be able to claim the CTC refund.

The credit is limited if your modified adjusted gross income is above a certain amount. The amount at which this phase-out begins varies depending on your filing status. For married taxpayers filing a joint return, the phase-out begins at \$110,000. For married taxpayers filing a separate return, it begins at \$55,000. For all other taxpayers, the phase-out begins at \$75,000. In addition, the Child Tax Credit is generally limited by the amount of the income tax you owe as well as any alternative minimum tax you owe.

To get the Child Tax Credit refund, file a federal tax return—Form 1040 or 1040A, but not 1040EZ.

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Some families can get the credit even if they owe no income tax. This is called the Additional CTC refund. To find out if you are eligible for this, file form 8812. This form must be attached to the tax return for a family to receive the CTC refund.

Working families can get both the Child Tax Credit refund and the Earned Income Credit.

WHO GIVES HELP?

Where can you go for help with rent, food, money, utilities or fuel assistance when your welfare or SSI money runs out, or when you have been kicked off of welfare because of time limits?

The United Way First Call for Help is a good place to begin looking. They can give you information and a referral. Call them at 211. They are open day and night, seven days a week. They have interpreter services for up to 140 different languages. They are open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays. The United Way also has a **Substance Abuse Help Line**, 1-800-327-5050. They can also give information on **H1N1 or seasonal flu**. They are open 24 hours a day.

Catholic Charities: With 15 sites throughout Greater Boston, Catholic Charities is able to provide a wide range of support, including food pantries, rent and mortgage assistance, utility assistance, assistance in providing furniture, baby supplies, clothing and other necessities, and seasonal and holiday assistance for families who cannot afford a warm meal at Thanksgiving or gifts for their children at Christmas. For a list of their food pantries, click on www.ccab.org/pantries.html; for a list of their basic needs sites, click on www.ccab.org/basic.html

Local Catholic Charities are as follows: **Dorchester**, 617-506-6600; **El Centro del Cardenal**, 617-542-9292; **Haitian Center**, 617-506-6600; **Laboure Center (South Boston)**, 617-268-9670; **Somerville**, 617-625-1920; **Catholic Charities North**, 781-593-2312; **Merrimack Valley (Lowell)**, 978-452-1421; **Brockton**, 508-587-0815; **Milford**, 508-478-9632.

Salvation Army: Housing and Homeless Services. Group homes, emergency shelters, and transitional living centers provide housing on a temporary basis for varying amounts of time. They:

- serve the homeless by providing food and overnight lodging.
- provide educational, counseling and vocational services to homeless and destitute individuals and families for extended periods.
- address long-term specific issues of youth for whom family care is undesirable or unavailable. Education, counseling, health care and specific training seek to meet the needs of such groups as pregnant teens, emancipated minors, and wards of the juvenile court.
- address specific health or societal driven needs of particular populations.

Family service programs help families and needy individuals with emergency food, housing, utility assistance and other temporal needs.

If you can't find a corps location near you, then call the Massachusetts Divisional Headquarters at 339-502-5900 during regular business hours. Their operators will be able to direct you to the proper place where they will try to assist you.

ABCD in Boston gives housing counseling for people going through eviction, or housing court. If Boston residents have a letter of eviction from the landlord or a summons for housing court, the counselor will assess if there are any funding opportunities. They also do mortgage and foreclosure counseling. Their number is 617-348-6347.

Travelers Aid Family Services, 617-542-7286, has a program to provide short-term emergency shelter to Boston families in crisis working in collaboration with the Mayor's Hotline. The agency also provides transportation and relocation services for individuals or families to travel to a safe place they can call home outside of Boston or the state. Transportation services include partial assistance for the fares and is primarily for those who are stranded or who are victims of domestic violence. The caseworker will have to verify that you have a place to stay when you are relocating.

There is also a homeless prevention program for Boston families to help pay back rent, if funds are available, and the agency provides shelter and stabilization services for homeless families referred from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development.

Call for eligibility requirements. Workers are available for walk-in service for transportation. Other services are by appointment and phone, Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM–4:30 PM. Staff bilingual in Spanish translation are available. **Local towns:** Some organizations operate on a town-by-town basis. Their numbers can be found in the phone book, or by dialing 411. These include local churches and civic clubs, including: Kiwanis, Elks, Lions, Knights of Columbus, Rotary, Quota, Jaycees, and The Masons.

Help for Veterans

Veterans can get some help at their local Veteran's Services. The federal Department of Veterans Affairs has published a book that lists benefits, Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents. It is available online at www1.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp

Housing and homelessness

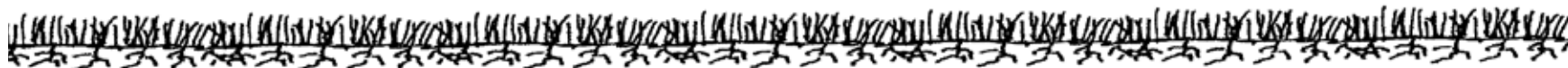
If you are in danger of becoming homeless . . .

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) in Massachusetts offers shelter, services, and money to people who are in danger of becoming homeless. DHCD Division of Housing Stabilization offices are located at DTA offices. They will assess your situation and try to help you work out a plan to avoid homelessness. If you are homeless and need shelter, a worker will help you.

HomeBASE "Household Assistance"

Household Assistance is part of the new HomeBASE program for homeless families with children and pregnant women who have no place to stay. To get Household Assistance, you need to apply for and be eligible for Emergency Assistance (EA) shelter. Household Assistance is up to \$4,000 a year. The money is to help your family move into or keep short-term housing. The \$4,000 can pay expenses for you to move somewhere else, to help you stay with someone you know, or to help you stay where you are now. DHCD will make

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these payments to a landlord, utility company, or moving company or in the form of gift cards to your host — not to you.

Household Assistance may not be the right answer for your family. You can still get EA shelter if you need it and your family meets the same rules that were in place before HomeBASE started.

If you go into a shelter, you will get help looking for housing you can afford for a longer time. You may be able to get HomeBASE rental assistance later.

Are you sure \$4,000 is enough money to keep your family in housing for one full year? If the whole \$4,000 is spent before the end of 12 months and you end up homeless again, you will not be able to get any more help from HomeBASE for the rest of the 12-month period, under current rules.

How will Household Assistance affect the family you are staying with? Your host's landlord must agree that your family can stay before Household Assistance will be approved. You may have to be added to the lease. Your host's rent may go up. If Household Assistance pays all of your host's rent or utilities, it could be counted as income for your host. Your host may get fewer benefits, such as TAFDC, EAEDC, or SSI.

You can file an appeal if you feel you were forced to take or wrongly denied Household Assistance. Contact legal services or someone else you trust for advice or for help with your appeal.

If you have questions about HomeBASE, you can call the Homeless Family Call-in Line: 617-357-0700 ext 376 or the Mass. Coalition for the Homeless: 781-595-7570. To find your local legal services program, call the Legal Advocacy & Resource Center: 1-800-342-5297 Monday – Friday 9am – 1pm or Tuesday pm to 7:30 pm or go to www.MassLegalHelp.org/find-legal-aid

The Housing and Consumer Education Center of Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership is at 617-425-6700. If you are a homeowner and would like to talk with their foreclosure counselor, contact Stephen Freeman at 617-425-6761. There are nine Housing Consumer Education Centers in Massachusetts. You can locate them at www.masshousinginfo.org.

They cannot give financial assistance at present, but they can help with other types of housing resources. More information is on their web site, www.mbhp.org.

Mass. Coalition for the Homeless, 781-595-7570, gives information and advocacy, and lobbies for better policies for people who are at-risk or experiencing homelessness. Mass. Coalition for the Homeless is located at 15 Bubier Street, Lynn, MA 01901. Their website is: www.mahomeless.org. They have published several booklets, which give advice on dealing with eviction, getting a Section 8 voucher, finding affordable housing, access to shelter, and knowing your housing rights. These are free.

Boston residents who are homeless after 5:00pm and on weekends, can call the Boston Mayor's Hotline at 617-635-4500, for information and referral. During week day hours, call the Emergency Shelter Commission at 617-635-4507 for information and referral. Families with children and pregnant women can apply for shelter benefits through the Department of Housing and

Community Development's Division of Housing Stabilization. In Boston, DHCD has staff in the same building as the DTA office at 2201 Washington Street, Dudley Square, Roxbury, phone 617-989-6100.

Free furniture/household goods

The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless runs a furniture bank for families and individuals from across the state who are moving to permanent housing. People are eligible if they have been homeless within the past 90 days. They are also able to help other low-income households, depending on their stock. The furniture bank also provides blankets and other household goods, when available. To apply, you need to be referred by an agency. Call the Donations Assistance Program at 781-595-7570, ext. 11. A staff person loads the furniture on to a truck, but the organization does not provide a truck.

Craigslist online has free furniture and other items. It lists by region. Click on "free stuff."

Health care

MassHealth

MassHealth is the Massachusetts version of Medicaid. It is a public health insurance program for eligible low and medium-income residents of Massachusetts. People who receive TAFDC, SSI, or EAEDC are automatically eligible for MassHealth, and disabled people are eligible. To find out if you are eligible, call 1-888-665-9993 (TTY: 1-888-665-9997) and request an application, or download the application on their website, MassResources.org. To find a doctor or a dentist, or other health care provider in your area, call MassHealth Customer Service at 1-800-841-2900 (TTY: 1-800-497-4648).

Commonwealth Care

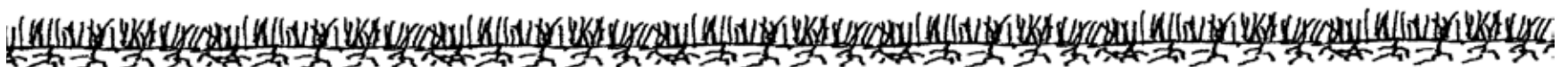
People have different Commonwealth Care plan options depending on how much money they make compared to the poverty level. The Commonwealth Care premiums depend on how much money people make compared to the poverty level.

The application form is called a Medical Benefit Request, or MBR. When you send the application to MassHealth, they will enroll you in the best program you can get, which may be Commonwealth Care. Then, MassHealth will send a notice telling you what program you get. You can get an application at your health center or hospital. Also, you can call the Health Care For All Helpline at 1-800-272-4232 to get help filling out an application over the phone. Or you can call 800-792-4355 or e-mail helpmeapply@bmchp.org for FREE help in applying.

The Health Safety Net is a program for Massachusetts residents who are not eligible for health insurance or can't afford to buy it. The Health Safety Net is sometimes called Free Care. The goal of the Safety Net is to make sure that all Massachusetts residents can get health care when they need it, regardless of income.

People of any income with large medical bills that they cannot pay are also eligible. Your citizenship or immigration status does not affect your eligibility. For low-income residents, the Health Safety Net (Free Care) pays for medically necessary services at Massachusetts community health centers (CHCs) and hospitals. To be covered, services must be on the MassHealth Standard list of covered services. The Safety Net pays all of the cost, or part of

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the cost, depending on age and income. The Safety Net also helps families with medical hardships who do not have enough income to pay their medical bills.

Most people must file a MassHealth application to get Health Safety Net (Free Care) benefits. You can file your application at a community health center (CHC) or hospital, or you can send your application directly to MassHealth. If you are applying for Medical Hardship, you must file a Special Circumstances Application (SPCA) at a CHC or hospital. You can call the Help Desk at 1-877-910-2100 for more information.

MCPHS Pharmacy Outreach is a free, confidential service available to all Massachusetts residents who are seeking information regarding their medications, and may be able to refer them to places that would help them pay for their medication. Whether you are having difficulties affording your medications or want to know what the side effects are to your prescriptions, MCPHS Pharmacy Outreach can help. By calling a toll-free help line at 1-866-633-1617, visiting our walk-in center at 25 Foster Street, Worcester, MA, or accessing our web site (<http://www.massmedline.com>), patients will receive information about their medications, prescription drug coverage, including the Medicare Drug benefit, and assistance with accessing affordable prescription drug programs.

Questions about health care?

Call Health Care For All's helpline at 1-800-272-4232. Health Care for All is a non-profit Massachusetts advocacy agency that promotes affordable and comprehensive health coverage for all groups. Their work combines policy analysis, information referral, personal and legal advocacy, community organizing and public education. They are a phone line only and do not take walk-ins. Their website is: www.hcfama.org

Health care for the homeless

Boston Health Care for the Homeless program provides health care for the homeless at clinics, Boston shelters, Boston Medical Center, and Mass General Hospital. They have a Respite Program for homeless individuals who are not sick enough to be in the hospital, but too sick to be on the street or in a shelter. Call 857-654-1000. Be sure to say you are calling about the respite program if you want to be admitted.

Medical equipment for children

Pass it On gives pediatric medical equipment for disabled children up to age 22, including wheel chairs, bathroom equipment, and related items. They deliver to Eastern Massachusetts as far as

Worcester County. While the equipment is free, they ask for help in paying for transporting the equipment. Call 1-800-267-6768. Their web site is passitonforkids.org.

Help with children's clothing

The Children's Clothing Exchange, a program of Solutions at Work, is at the Roosevelt Towers Housing Complex, 391 Evereteze Way, Cambridge, MA 02141. Phone (617) 576-0039. Open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursday: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. and the second and fourth Saturdays of the month from 11-3.

You can obtain clothing for newborns through age 14. They have professional clothing for women and men who are entering a job, by appointment and referral. They also have shoes in all sizes. You can exchange clean, ready-to-wear clothing that your children have outgrown. No money is needed. Families in crisis don't need to exchange on their first visit. Free children's books and toys and baby strollers and car seats are available.

Free and low-cost legal help

Harvard Legal Aid Bureau, 617-495-4408, provides legal services to low-income people on housing issues, domestic violence, appeals of denials of unemployment benefits, wage and hour (minimum wage) discrimination, and benefits. Their services are free to recipients of TAFDC, EAEDC, and SSI, and other low-income people. They serve most areas of Middlesex

or Suffolk counties. They are located at 23 Everett St., Cambridge, MA 02138. They are open from 9 to 5 Monday through Friday. Call for an appointment.

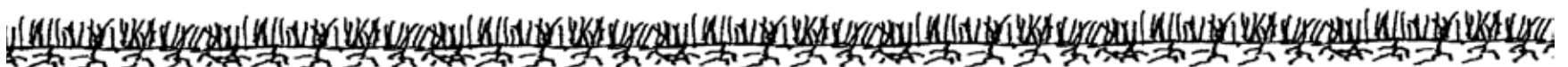
The National Lawyer's Guild provides legal assistance to low- or moderate-income people through their referral service. They handle disability (including SSI and SSDI), criminal, discrimination, employment, family law, landlord-tenant, immigration, civil rights, civil litigation, personal injury, bankruptcy, real estate, and other areas of law. Fees are sometimes negotiated on a case-by-case basis. Spanish and other languages are spoken. Their hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00 - 4:00. Call 617-227-7008. They serve the Massachusetts area.

Disability Law Center of Massachusetts, (617) 723-8455, provides legal advocacy on disability issues to people in Massachusetts who have a wide range of physical, psychiatric, sensory and cognitive disabilities. DLC serves individuals who experience discrimination, abuse or neglect or denial of services because of their disability. They handle these issues: Access to Community Services, Special Education, Health Care, Disability Benefits, and Rights and Conditions in Facilities. DLC does not handle general legal problems such as obtaining a divorce, filing for bankruptcy or trust & estate issues. They are at 11 Beacon St. #925, Boston, MA 02108.

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Diane Dujon addresses the "Occupy4Jobs," Black History Month forum. Photo by Liz Green



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Legal help available for immigrants

Greater Boston Legal Services at 617-371-1234 represents immigrants.

The Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) provides trainings, advocacy, and information to individuals and groups. Call 617-350-5480.

The Irish International Immigrant Center has an Immigration/Citizenship Assistance Program that offers a range of services to all immigrants (not just Irish people) including information and referral, immigration services, a cross-cultural program, and advocacy for immigrant rights. They are accredited by the Department of Justice and can represent people in interviews with the Department. They are located at 100 Franklin St., Lower level, Boston, MA 02111, phone 617-542-7654.

Catholic Charities Refugee and Immigration Office, 617-464-8100, helps refugees, asylees, and Cuban and Haitian parolees (people who have been detained by the U.S. Department of Justice and are now on parole). Their services include: cash assistance, employment assistance, case management, English classes, and social service referrals. They also have ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes.

Asylees can receive services within the first month after getting asylum status and during that month are eligible for more services such as cash assistance and employment services. They are located at 275 W. Broadway, South Boston, MA 02127.

The Political Asylum/ Immigration Representation Project (PAIR) is a nationally recognized pro bono model that works to secure safety and freedom for asylum-seekers who have fled from persecution throughout the world and to promote the rights of immigrants unjustly detained. PAIR provides hope and a new beginning to asylum-seekers, torture survivors and immigration detainees.

PAIR was formed in 1989, a coalition of legal services agencies, civil rights and civil liberties organizations, and bar associations responded to meet an emergency need for legal representation of 83 workers, mostly from El Salvador, whom the INS arrested at the Suffolk Downs racetrack in Revere, Massachusetts.

The Asylum Program is the leading program in Massachusetts to recruit, mentor and train attorneys from private law firms to represent without charge low-income asylum-seekers who have fled from persecution throughout the world. The goal of this program is to secure safety for people who have tried to exercise freedoms we take for granted: the right to express opinions, freedom of speech and assembly, or the right to practice a religion.

The Detention Program, launched in 1990, is the only immigration legal services program with negotiated access to all three major ICE detention centers in Massachusetts. Last year, PAIR advised and represented over 1,000 immigration detainees who originally came from throughout the world. PAIR accomplishes this work through staff attorneys, fellows, pro bono attorneys from the AILA New England Chapter and private practices, and five law school immigration clinical programs. Call for an appointment, 617-742-9296.

Community Legal Services and Counseling Center, 617-661-1010, 1 West St., Cambridge, provides legal services and

counseling on family, disability, immigration, and housing issues. Legal services are free, and counseling services are on a sliding scale. Call the office for information on specific services.

Help for parents under stress

The Parental Stress Line is a toll-free hotline to give support to parents who are under stress. It is available for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They have parent support groups, which are anonymous and confidential. Call 1-800-632-8188.

Higher Education

TERI College Planning Center can help you find scholarships if you are income eligible, choose a college, complete admission and financial aid applications, get your college admission fee waived, and get advice on paying for college. You can talk with an advisor, use their computers to find scholarships, and look through their resource books — all free of charge.

There are 6 Educational Opportunity Centers throughout Massachusetts. Boston and The Boston phone number is 617-536-0200 (in the Concourse level of the Boston Public Library). They are usually open 9-6:30 Monday-Thursday and 9-3:30 Friday and Saturday. For other areas, call the main number at 617-536-0200.

Urban College of Boston (UCB). UCB is a two-year college that provides inner-city residents who might otherwise never go to college a highly supportive environment that integrates a college education with career preparation and skill development, and both encourages and enables students to transfer to four-year institutions to complete their bachelors degrees.

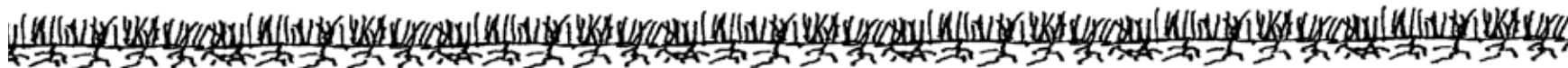
It is located at ABCD (Action for Boston Community Development) at 178 Tremont Street, Boston, MA 02111, phone 617-348-6325. Through its connection with ABCD, UCB offers students extensive support services (including day care, referral health services, personal counseling and job placement) that enable them to stay in school and complete their degrees. The college serves as a “feeder system” for students from literacy, GED, adult education, Head Start (parents and staff) and youth programs into higher education. ABCD, in turn, serves as a “feeder system” to UCB, with many ABCD employees studying at the college or providing referrals to it.

The Urban College offers college credit for job-training and staff development programs, creating a direct link between these programs and the world of higher education. The college also provides relevant internship opportunities for students. Urban College is authorized to provide federal Pell Grants to eligible students.

Scholarship help for low-income women

The Patsy Takemoto Mink Fellowship each year gives scholarships of \$2,000 to assist low-income women to achieve an educational objective. The fellowship is named for the woman who represented her native Hawaii in the U.S. Congress. She fought against welfare reform in Congress. Her daughter Gwendolyn Mink, author of *Welfare's End*, established the fellowship, along with Patsy Mink's husband, to honor her deceased mother. Applications will be accepted beginning May 15, 2012. To apply, go to their web site at www.patsyminkfoundation.org/edsupport.html

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Education and Training

ABCD is offering training for Weatherization and Green Jobs.
Call 617-357-6000, Ext. 6750.

The weatherization program, called WAGE (Weatherization and Green Energy), trains people in weatherization and helps them get jobs. The Green Jobs program teaches recycling and other skills. The program is Monday-Friday, 8 – 4:30. It is a 7-week program.

St. Mary's Women and Children's Center, 617-436-8600, 90 Cushing Avenue, Dorchester, MA, provides job training, computer skills, adult basic education, and GED preparation. Their Women's Learning Center instructs up to 20 students at a time in Adult Basic Education (ABE) and preparation for the General Educational Development (GED) testing series. The program is highly flexible — offering open enrollment, and lessons are tailored to meet students' individual needs.

Project Hope — Free Health Care training programs

Project Hope offers FREE Health Care training programs for entry-level positions with Partners HealthCare, Spaulding Rehabilitation, Brigham and Women's, and Mass General Hospital. They also offer a free job readiness training (called Project 90) through their collaboration with Project Place. For more information on this, visit their web site at <http://www.prohope.org/openhouse.htm#P90#P90>

Workforce Development & Employer Partnerships Open Houses

If you're interested in careers in health care or customer service, we encourage you to get to know us through a personal visit!

Program Descriptions:

- **Partners in Career and Workforce Development (PCWD)** is a free 6-week employment and training program designed for individuals interested in entry-level employment within one of the Partners hospitals. This is an unpaid training program on Monday-Friday from 9am-5pm which includes 3.5 weeks of classroom instruction located on the Massachusetts General Campus and a 2.5 week internship in a basic clerical or support staff position. Graduates receive job search support in Career Club until employment goals are reached. PCWD is a DTA and section 30 approved program. For more information, you can visit the Partners HealthCare website.
- **Community Partners in Health Professions (CPHP)** is a free 10 week job readiness health care training program with a strong emphasis on academics, communication, computers, and employment skills. Classes meet at Project Hope Monday -Thursday from 9a.m. to 4p.m. and Fridays are dedicated to case management. CPHP was designed to support community residents in gaining the skills necessary to be viable candidates for employment in general and administrative health care positions. Graduates receive job search support and referrals to partnering hospitals. CPHP is a DTA approved program.
- **Professional Readiness Employment Program (PREP)** is a series of workshops aimed at developing the skills and techniques necessary to conduct an effective job search.

Classes are administered over a period of four weeks meeting 2 afternoons per week. Participants who successfully complete the PREP workshops series will be eligible to meet one on one with a career coach to create a career plan and determine next steps.

Brigham and Women's Community Partnership (BWH)

Project Hope in collaboration and partnership with Brigham and Women's offers additional job readiness support to those individuals who are actively participating in an Employer Partnerships program, live within specific neighborhoods, and are interested in becoming BWH applicants. This program is designed to support community residents in becoming viable candidates for entry-level general service and supportive staff positions within Brigham and Women's Hospital.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Attend an Open House
- Have a high school diploma or equivalent
- Speak, write, and understand English
- Pass assessments in Reading, Language, and Computer
- Have CORI clearance
- Have at least 1 full year of work experience with one employer
- Be able to attend and complete training

Project 90 (P90)

Project Hope in collaboration with Project Place welcomes Project 90, a free 12-week job readiness-training program focusing on interviewing skills, resume writing, computer skills, employment skills, professionalism, customer service certification and internship placement. Participants receive job placement support and/or enrollment in higher skills training programs.

Eligibility Requirements:

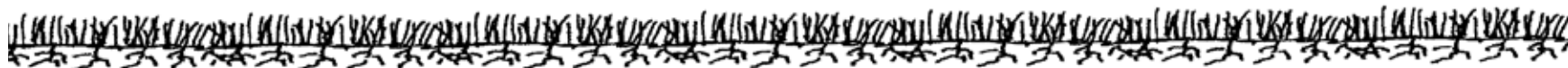
- Be at least 18 years old
- Currently be experiencing homelessness (living in shelter, transitional housing, halfway homes)
- Express motivation to work
- Have a professional attitude
- Have been sober for at least the past 90 days
- Be interested in entry-level employment or higher skills training
- in a variety of settings upon completion of program
- Be eligible to work in the United States.
- Speak, write, and understand English
- Be able to attend and complete training

Interested Candidates: Read the Open House Information and complete the Registration Form. If you have questions, please call 617-442-1880 ext. 218 to leave a message. A staff member will return your call.

YMCA Training, Inc.

This is a 5-month training program for jobs in Medical Office, Insurance, Banking, and Administrative and Office support. There are internship opportunities in an 8-week internship. There is assistance in job matching and job search. There are long-term partnerships with major employers, including: Bank New York Mellon, Beth

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Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston Medical Center, City of Boston, Dana Farber Cancer Institute, Joslin Diabetes Center, One Beacon Insurance, Pilgrim Insurance, Sovereign Bank, Suffolk University, Tufts Medical Center, and Wainwright Bank.

Extra services include: Weekly ESOL English Pronunciation classes; additional tutoring in computers, math, and writing; free beautiful gently used and new business clothing for interviews and work; individual mentors help each trainee and graduate prepare for and conduct successful a job search; support and referrals for medical, counseling, child care, housing, legal, and CORI issues.

The program hours are from 9am-4pm, Mon thru Friday. Must have a High School diploma or GED. This is a professional environment with a dress code.

To apply, call Leigh Payne Hewlitt at 617-542-1800, ext. 128

Emergency birth control

In the United States, women and men age 17 and older can purchase emergency contraception over the counter at most pharmacies. People under age 17 need a prescription. If you have had unprotected sex or think your birth control method has failed, you can use the "morning-after-pill" to prevent pregnancy. Just ask your pharmacist for Plan B One-Step or Next Choice. Emergency contraception works best if taken as soon as possible and within 5 days after sex. If you are sexually active, it is good to have it on hand just in case. If your doctor or hospital refuses to give you a prescription, call the Emergency Contraceptive Hotline, 1-888-not-2-lat (1-888-668-2528), on go to the Emergency Contraception Website, ec.princeton.edu. The Website gives the name of a pharmacy near you where you can get the pill. It also contains advice for people younger than 17.

More useful information

The DTA Recipient Services Office is very helpful in giving information about policy and what you are entitled to. Call 1-800-445-6604.

DTA regulations are available on the Web: www.state.ma.us/dta.

Benefits for Massachusetts residents

MassResources.org describes state and federal benefits available to Massachusetts residents.

Childcare benefits regulations and other information are available on the Web at www.QualityChildCare.org, which is the website for the state Office of Child Care Services.

Coming Home Directory: A Resource Directory for Ex-Offenders Returning to Greater Boston Communities is a comprehensive resource book published by the Crime and Justice Institute. It is available online at www.cominghomedirectory.org. The directory is published by the Crime and Justice Institute, 617-482-2520, ext. 130.

Elder Resource Guide is published by the Brookline Council on Aging and the Brookline Senior Center. It contains a wealth of information for elders. It is available online at www.brooklinema.gov. Click on "Departments," "Council on Aging," and "Elder Resource Guide."



Laurie Taymor-Berry receiving an award for her work called the, Prison Outreach Pioneer Award for PrisonPolicy, Reform and Advocacy. Photo by Dottie Stevens.

Do you have a Criminal Record? Do you have trouble finding jobs or housing because of your CORI? If you have a CORI and need information about jobs, housing, sealing your record, mistakes on your CORI or other problems, call the Legal Advocacy and Resource Center at 617-603-1700. For more information about CORI law, visit www.masslegalhelp.org/cori.

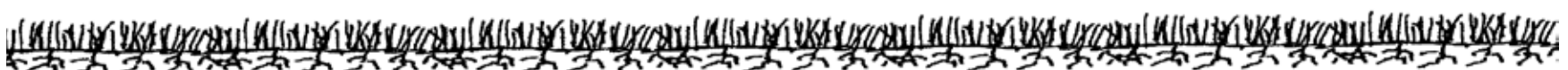
The Massachusetts Alliance on Teen Pregnancy Benefits Access Line, for teen parents and people who work with them. They answer questions about welfare, food stamps, housing, childcare or other services in your area that teens and their children might be eligible for. Call 1-800-645-3750 ext. 115.

Jane Doe, Inc. A hot line, sponsored by the Mass. Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, helps people who are sexually assaulted or fleeing from domestic violence. Call (617) 248-0922.

National Network of Abortion Funds. If you need an abortion but are unable to pay for it, the National Network of Abortion Funds may be able to help you. Visit their website at nnaf.org

Thanks: to Melanie Malherbe of Greater Boston Legal Services, Kelly Turley of Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, Pat Baker of Mass Law Reform Institute, Roxanne Reddington-Wilde of ABCD, Charles Harak of the National Consumer Law Center, The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, and Health Care for All, for their help.

Note: We have checked this information carefully and believe that it is correct at the time of writing, December 2011. However, things sometimes change. Agencies sometimes use up their money or change their policies. We will check the information again before we print another issue, so subscribe to Survival News for the latest survival tips, or go to their web site, survivorsinc.org! These Survival Tips were compiled by Betty Reid Mandell. If you have questions about this information, or if you have a useful survival tip, she can be contacted by phone at 617-327-4219, or by email at mmandell@curry.edu.



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puede imprimir la solicitud en el sitio web del DTA. También puede pedir a la oficina central del DTA que le envíe una copia en papel por correo y, una vez llenada, re-enviársela al DTA.

Si usted tiene poco o nada de ingreso o activo, o si el costo del refugio es mayor a su ingreso y el dinero en el banco, usted puede obtener cupones agilizados (rápidos) de alimentos. Esto significa que puede conseguir los cupones dentro de 7 días, después que el DTA recibe la solicitud firmada. A veces lo mejor es ir personalmente si necesita los cupones enseguida. El DTA le pedirá que verifique quién es usted (su identidad) y le preguntará sobre sus ingresos y gastos para ver si usted califica. No necesita una identificación con foto. Si no tiene ninguna evidencia de identidad pero sabe su SSN (número de seguro social), el DTA puede comprobar su identidad a través de su SSN y la fecha de nacimiento.

Aunque no califique para los cupones agilizados de alimentos, puede aún obtener los cupones en 30 días posteriores a su solicitud, si usted satisface las reglas de elegibilidad. Necesitará entrevistarse y proporcionar pruebas de su ingreso, costo del refugio y otros gastos. Usted recibirá una carta por correo después de la aplicación informándole para cuándo la entrevista será programada y cuáles son las evidencias que usted necesita. A menos que usted necesite cupones agilizados de alimentos, el DTA no toma en cuenta sus activos al determinar si usted califica para los beneficios.

No olvide de informar al DTA si usted paga por el cuidado de sus hijos, cuotas para programas antes/después de la escuela o por el cuidado de un adulto con discapacidad, para que usted pueda trabajar. Puede también reclamar el costo de transporte (público o con su vehículo) al y desde el lugar del cuidado de sus hijos, programas montados en las escuelas, etc. a la tasa federal de millaje de 55 centavos por milla. Usted puede declarar el costo de manutención de sus hijos. El reclamar los gastos de manutención de sus hijos puede aumentar sus cupones de alimentos.

Si alguien de su hogar es discapacitado o tiene 60 años o más de edad, ellos también pueden reclamar el costo de cualquier gasto médico para aumentar los cupones de alimentos. Los gastos médicos que se pueden reclamar incluyen el transporte a la cita con médicos y a farmacias para recoger medicamentos (a 55 centavos por milla). También se incluyen vitaminas, aspirinas, baterías para audífono, anteojos, cremas sin receta usadas para tratar las condiciones de piel y cualquier otro producto médico recomendado por el proveedor, así como los costos de terapias alternativas que no son cubiertas por MassHealth o Medicare (quiropática, acupuntura, terapias de masaje y remedios de hierba). Puede también reclamar y comprobar el costo para los animales de servicio. Usted necesitará proporcionar evidencias de sus gastos médicos y una lista de instalaciones médicas que visita para reclamar el transporte, incluyendo facturas de veterinarios y provisiones alimenticias. Si un familiar de mayor edad (60+) o discapacitado gasta más de \$35/mes en gastos relacionados a tratamientos médicos, el DTA permitirá una deducción estándar de \$90. La deducción puede ser aún mayor si los gastos varios son mayores. **El reclamar los gastos médicos puede aumentar sus beneficios de cupones de alimentos.**

Los estudiantes universitarios pueden obtener cupones de alimentos si consiguen algunos de las siguientes cosas a) el estudiante recibe Federal Work Study (FWS) para pagar su matrícula,

b) trabaja 20 horas por la semana, c) tiene hijos menor de 12 años o recibe TAFDC, d) está discapacitado, e) tiene más que 49 años o tiene menos de 18 años, f) asiste a la universidad con un Programa de Empleo y Formación o la División de Desempleo. Además, algunos estudiantes que asisten a colegios universitarios pueden calificar para cupones de alimentos si estudian en un programa de empleo y formación, o si el colegio universitario cree que el estudiante puede obtener un empleo después de sus estudios. DTA tiene un formulario para colegios universitarios para verificar los programas de los estudiantes que son menos de 22 años de edad y reciben los beneficios “SNAP” de sus padres.

Si se le niegan los cupones de alimentos o no está de acuerdo con el monto de sus beneficios, usted tiene derecho a cuestionar y desafiar cualquier decisión tomada por el DTA, a la cual usted no está de acuerdo. Existe información en línea sobre cómo apelar la denegación de beneficios: www.masslegalhelp.org. Puede también contactar a la oficina de Legal Services de su área para asesoría y representación.

Para Comer el Almuerzo de la Escuela

Si la escuela de su familia está autorizada a proporcionar el almuerzo, debe saber:

- Los niños en hogares TAFDC o SNAP debe ser aprobada automáticamente para recibir comidas gratis sin tener que presentar una solicitud por separado.
- Los niños de crianza temporal deben ser aprobadas automáticamente.
- Los niños sin hogar, fuera de control, y los trabajadores migrantes deben ser aprobadas automáticamente.
- Una vez aprobado, un niño es elegible para el año escolar y los primeros 30 días del próximo año escolar.
- Las familias no necesitan números de Seguro Social para presentar una solicitud para las comidas escolares.
- Las familias no están obligados a proporcionar los talones de cheques, declaraciones de impuestos u otros comprobantes de ingresos con la aplicación.
- Las familias que reciben beneficios de TAFDC o SNAP sólo necesitan dar su agencia DTA número de identificación no, la información de los ingresos brutos, sobre la aplicación.
- Los distritos escolares deben tramitar las solicitudes de comidas escolares en los 10 días siguientes a la recepción.

Fair Foods

Fair Foods distribuya alimentos a comunidades empobrecimientos en Massachusetts y New Hampshire. Puede comprar alimentos de bien calidad, incluyendo frutas y vegetales frescos, por \$2 por una bolsa – traiga su propia bolsa. Llame al teléfono 617-288-6185 y visitar al sitio web www.fairfoods.org. Tienen locaciones en Boston y Dorchester.

Community Servings

Community Servings proporciona gratuitamente comidas y programas de nutrición a las familias y sus cuidadores que tienen un miembro que está gravemente enfermo. Sirven al este de Massachusetts, cubren 225 millas cuadradas. Llame al número

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617-522-7777, Fax: 617-522-7770, or visite al sitio web: www.communityservings.org

Asistencia para combustible durante los meses de invierno

Las personas de bajos ingresos pueden obtener ayuda para pagar el combustible. ABCD administra el programa federal de asistencia para combustibles en Boston, Brookline y Newton. El número de teléfono es 617-357-6012, ext. 11. La asistencia es dirigida para cualquier forma de calefacción — petróleo, gas, electricidad, leña o queroseno. La ayuda se le otorga a aquellas personas que tiene la calefacción incluida en el alquiler de viviendas no subsidiadas. Las personas con subsidios para viviendas pueden obtener ayuda si pagan la calefacción. El período de inscripción es del 1 noviembre al 30 abril. El nivel de elegibilidad es el 60% del ingreso medio de Massachusetts. Una familia de 1 miembro puede ganar hasta \$31,016, de 2 miembros hasta \$40,824, de 3 miembros hasta \$50,429 y de 4 miembros hasta \$60,035. Para más detalles, visita <http://bostonabcd.org/programs/crisis/fuel-assistance/FuelEligibility.html>

Todas las personas que califican para la asistencia de combustibles pueden serlo también para obtener una tarifa reducida para las facturas de los servicios públicos y otros beneficios de ABCD, incluyendo la climatización (insulación de su casa contra el frío), revisión eléctrica y reparación o reemplazo del sistema de calefacción. Si vive fuera de Boston, Brookline y Newton, llame al Departamento de Vivienda y Desarrollo Comunal (Department of Housing and Community Development), al teléfono 1-800-632-8175, para averiguar sobre la agencia cercana a usted.

The Good Neighbor Energy Fund

Esta unidad, entre empresas de energía y The Salvation Army, proporciona dinero a familias que viven en Massachusetts que tienen dificultad para pagar para la calefacción durante el invierno. En 2012, cada familia que califica podría recibir \$350 del Fund. Para calificarse por el Fund, cada familia necesita ganar su sueldo menos de 60 a 80 por ciento del nivel del ingreso medio.

Por ejemplo, una familia de 1 persona necesita ganar su ingreso total entre \$32,908 y \$43,873 para calificar; una familia de 2 personas necesita ganar su ingreso total entre \$39,862 y \$53,149 para calificar; una familia de 3 personas necesita ganar su ingreso total entre \$49,862 y \$66,483 para calificar; una familia de 4 personas necesita ganar su ingreso total entre \$60,168 y \$80,224. Para aplicar por el Fund, visite a un de los 36 sitios del Salvation Army en Massachusetts, y llame 1-800-334-3047 (en MA del este,

codas telefónicas 617, 508, 978, 781) o 1-800-262-1320 (para las familias que viven in MA del oeste). También visite el sitio web <http://magoodneighbor.org/assistance.html>

Mass Energy Consumers Alliance (Alianza para Consumidores de Energía de Massachusetts) le ahorra dinero a usted por el consumo de combustible. Puede ahorrar de \$100 a \$250 por el combustible para la calefacción afiliándose a la Alianza por **\$20, \$10 o, gratis** si recibe ayuda para combustibles. Tiene que proporcionar una carta de aprobación de la agencia que le brinda ayuda para combustibles y enviarla junto con su solicitud. Los miembros ahorran de 10 a 30 centavos por galón comparado al precio regular al por menor. Proveedores confiables de servicio completo entregan el combustible a domicilio y abastecen su sistema. Llame al teléfono 617-524-3950 o al 1-800-287-3950 para más información, en inglés o en español. El sitio web es www.massenergy.org. Su dirección postal es: Apartado Postal 301089, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130.

Ayuda para las facturas de electricidad y gas

Descuentos para el gas y la electricidad, y planes de presupuesto

Los servicios públicos de gas y electricidad en Massachusetts (servicios públicos de la ciudad o el pueblo están exentos) necesitan dar unas tasas de descuento para familias o personas con ingresos

bajos. La mayoría que las familias que reciben ayuda para las facturas de electricidad y gas (Fuel Assistance) será inscrito automáticamente. Si puede calificar, obtenga un formulario de la compañía del servicio (por ejemplo NSTAR o Nacional Grid), rellene el formulario y envíalo a la compañía. También puede llamar a la compañía – deben inscribirse lo antes posibles, y no necesitan esperar a verificar los ingresos. Para el invierno 2010-2011 los ingresos para calificar son: para 1 persona --\$30,751 o menos; para 2 --

\$40,213 o menos; para 3 -- \$49,675 o menos; para 4 -- \$59,137 o menos; para 5 -- \$69,598 o menos.

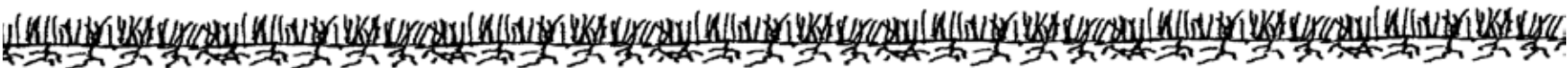
Todos pueden ahorrar dinero con planes de presupuesto
Las utilidades ofrecen planes a nivel de pagos mensuales. Se estima el consumo anual y dividir esa cantidad en 12 pagos iguales.

Todos pueden obtener un “auditoría del uso de energía” gratis
Puede aprender a ahorrar energía y dinero.

Sus Derechos Contra la Desconexión de los Servicios Públicos

Todas las personas en el hogar tienen 65 años o más
A menos que el DPU (departamento de servicios públicos) permite, la mayoría de familias de las personas mayores no tienen utilidades desconectado.

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Plan de pago

Todos los clientes tienen derecho a un plan de pago. Esto permite que el cliente que está atrasado en el pago de sus facturas espacie los pagos a lo largo de varios meses. Si no se le ha suspendido todavía el servicio al cliente, la empresa debe ofrecer un plan de pago de al menos 4 meses. Usted se puede obtener una prórroga mediante la negociación entre la empresa y el cliente. Si necesita ayuda, llame al DPU Consumer Division (la división de consumo) al teléfono 1-877-886-5066. Las empresas deben ofrecer un plan de pago que conecta las utilidades que han suspendidos.

ABCD proporciona servicios de referencia y de promoción para los clientes elegibles que quieren un plan de pago. En Boston, Brookline y Newton, National Grid y NSTAR ofrecen planes de pago. Los clientes pueden tener sus deudas perdonadas entre \$1500-\$2000 por años con un plan de pago.

Llame al teléfono 1-800-233-5325 para hablar con National Grid y al teléfono 1-866-315-2496 para hablar con NSTAR.

Si el Propietario No Paga la Fractura

Todos los inquilinos (ingresos no son importantes) están protegidos cuando el propietario paga la fractura para los servicios públicos. Si el propietario no paga la fractura, los inquilinos tienen 30 días para pagar sus partes de la fractura. Si todos los inquilinos no la pagan, sólo el DPU del estado decide si es necesario a desconectar los servicios públicos. Contacte al DPU rápidamente si los servicios públicos están desconectados en su hogar. Si el edificio está en ejecución de una hipoteca, el propietario debe mantener los servicios públicos.

4 Maneras para Familias de Bajos Ingresos Elegibles pueden Mantener Conectados los Servicios Públicos

Personas Mayores

Las empresas utilidades no deben desconectar el gas o la electricidad si sus clientes tienen 65 años o más. Las empresas utilidades pueden enviarle una forma para protección para personas mayores.

Enfermedades graves

Si alguien en el hogar padece una enfermedad grave, las empresas de servicios públicos no pueden desconectar (y deben reconectar) los servicios. La enfermedad puede ser:

- física (pneumonía, etc)
- mental (depresión, bipolar o trastorno hiperactivo de déficit de atención),
- así como de corto plazo (p. ej. gripe)
- de largo plazo (cáncer).

Las empresas de servicios públicos no llegan a decidir cuáles son las enfermedades graves. Lo único que usted necesita es una carta del doctor. Una llamada telefónica del doctor a la empresa es aceptable al inicio, si luego se envía una carta. El servicio debe ser restablecido el mismo día (en el peor de los casos, al día siguiente) después de recibir la documentación.

Niños menores de 12 meses

La empresa de servicios públicos no puede suspender el servicio si hay un niño menor de 12 meses en el hogar y debe restablecer el

servicio que ha sido suspendido si el niño estaba en el hogar en el momento o antes de la suspensión. Mostrar la edad del niño con un certificado de nacimiento o bautismo, r alguna prueba razonable. También, envíe un formulario de dificultades financieras.

Moratoria para invierno

Las empresas de servicios públicos no pueden suspender el servicio relacionado a la calefacción (es decir, servicio de gas natural, si se lo usa para calentar la casa, o electricidad, si el arrendatario la paga para la calefacción porque la electricidad es necesaria para controlar la caldera) entre el 15 de noviembre y el 15 de marzo si el hogar tiene dificultades financieras.

Egibilidad de Ingresos

- 1 persona: \$31,218
- 2 personas: \$40,824
- 3 personas: \$50,429
- 4 personas: \$60,035
- 5 personas: \$69,641

Contacto

Si usted tiene problema en obligar a la empresa de servicios públicos que cumpla con cualquiera de las medidas de protección o los programas descritos anteriormente, llame a la División del Consumidor del Departamento de Servicios Públicos (Consumer Division of the Department of Utility) al teléfono **1-877-886-5066**. El representante telefónico de atención al cliente debe intervenir en nombre suyo.

Ayuda con la factura del teléfono

Puede ahorrarse en su factura de teléfono para servicios locales a través de los programas **Lifeline** y **Linkup** que ofrece la empresa telefónica. Cualquier persona que recibe Mass Health, SSI, cupones de alimentos, TAFDC, asistencia para combustibles, EAEDC, o el almuerzo gratis a la escuela califica. Puede ahorrar \$10 de su factura de servicio telefónica y Linkup proporciona descuentos para la activación y la instalación. Contacte a su compañía telefónica local y solicite el servicio **Linkup**.

Usted puede también obtener el formulario del trabajador social de su programa. El DTA o la Oficina de Asistencia para Combustibles necesita verificar que usted está inscrito en uno de los programas.

Teléfono Celular Gratis

SafeLink Wireless es un programa apoyado por el Gobeirno que provee un aparato celular gratis y 250 minutos celular cada mes para los clientes con ingresos elegibles. El proceso de calificación para el Servicio Lifeline depende del estado donde usted vive. De forma general, usted califica si...

1. Usted recibe beneficios de algún programa de asistencia, estatal o federal, por ejemplo: asistencia federal de viviendas públicas, cupones de alimentos (SNAP), MassHealth, EAEDC, TAFDC, Y...
2. Ninguna persona en su hogar recibe actualmente el Servicio Lifeline a través de otro proveedor de servicio telefónico.
3. Usted tiene una dirección postal válida dentro de los Estados Unidos. Un apartado postal no es aceptable.

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Además de cumplir con los requisitos anteriormente mencionados, usted deberá presentar la documentación que pruebe su participación en un programa de asistencia o el nivel de su ingreso.

Llame al teléfono 1-800-977-3768 o visite www.safelink.com. También puede obtener el formulario para SafeLink en su biblioteca municipal.

Si su casa está bajo ejecución hipotecaria

Una ley federal proporciona una protección de 90 días a los inquilinos que viven en propiedades bajo ejecución hipotecaria en todo el país. **Todos los inquilinos deben obtener una notificación de 90 días antes que se inicie el proceso de desalojo como resultado de la ejecución hipotecaria.** Además, la mayoría de los inquilinos que tienen contratos de arrendamiento pueden seguir viviendo en sus casas hasta el final del plazo de los mismos.

Los derechos de los inquilinos establecidos en la Sección 8 son también protegidos porque el nuevo propietario bajo la ejecución hipotecaria debe aceptar tanto el contrato de arrendamiento del inquilino como el contrato de pago de asistencia de viviendas (HAP).

City Life/Vida Urbana ayuda a la gente a confrontar la ejecución hipotecaria. La organización les enseña sobre sus derechos, proporciona ayuda legal, organiza manifestaciones contra la ejecución bancaria de hipotecas e impide desalojos. Si usted necesita ayuda, llame al teléfono 617-524-3541. Su oficina está en el 284 Amory St., Jamaica Plain, MA 02130. Su sitio web es www.clvu.org y su fax 617-524-3555. En su sitio web se presenta un video de Bill Moyers Journal, en el cual se muestra el trabajo que realiza la organización y una entrevista de Steve Meacham, un organizador comunitario.

City Life/Vida Urbana organiza a residentes de la comunidad para que obtengan una vivienda más asequible, prevenir desalojos e informar a la gente sobre sus derechos a las viviendas.

Requisito de trabajo para destinatarios de la TAFDC

El gobierno federal está presionando al DTA a forzar a más padres de familias que reciben asistencia social a trabajar en el mercado laboral pagado o bien cumplir con las actividades de requisito de trabajo de 20 a 30 horas por semana. Si el trabajador social le presiona a usted a hacer algo que no puede hacer, como por ejemplo obtener un trabajo o buscar un trabajo u otro programa, solicite ayuda a la oficina de Legal Services. Encontrará alguna información que le puede ayudar en cuanto al requisito de trabajo.

La educación y la capacitación cuentan como requisito de trabajo de la TAFDC por lo menos durante 12 meses. La mayoría de los programas de educación de adultos y de capacitación laboral son tomados en cuenta. Programas universitarios, incluyendo 4 años de licenciatura, pueden ser también tomados en cuenta (tiene que especializarse en algo que lo lleve a un empleo). El tiempo dedicado a la educación y capacitación cuando usted estaba exento del requisito de trabajo no cuenta contra sus 12 meses. Si necesita más de 12 meses, consulte llamando a Legal Services. El hecho de que un programa dure más de 12 meses no constituye un fundamento legal para que el DTA rechace el tomarlo en cuenta al menos por 12 meses.

La búsqueda de vivienda para personas que permanecen en

refugios de emergencia es también tomada en cuenta para el requisito de trabajo. El DTA debe tratar a las familias en los refugios como si estuviesen cumpliendo totalmente con el requisito de trabajo, mientras que las familias satisfagan los requisitos de Asistencia de Emergencia (Emergency Assistance, EA) o búsqueda de vivienda para refugiados, independientemente del número de horas que la familia dedique para la búsqueda de vivienda.

El DTA no debería reducir o suspender sus beneficios por no satisfacer el requisito de trabajo (o los términos de su Plan de Desarrollo de Empleo) si usted tiene una “causa buena” como:

- carece del cuidado adecuado para sus hijos o no hay disponibilidad del mismo;
- carece de transporte asequible y confiable;
- tiene que buscar vivienda;
- no existe disponibilidad de un lugar adecuado de servicio comunitario identificado por el DTA;
- tiene un familiar con enfermedad o discapacidad;
- tiene que cuidar del familiar con enfermedad o discapacidad;
- está en crisis familiar, emergencia u otras situaciones convincentes fuera de su control al cual tiene que atender durante las horas que de otra manera estaría haciendo las actividades requeridas;
- tiene un trabajo o le han ofrecido un trabajo que: viola las leyes del salario mínimo; ha sido discriminatorio en base a la edad, género, raza, religión, origen étnico o discapacidad física o mental; viola los estándares de salud y seguridad; o estuvo disponible debido a una huelga o cierre patronal.

El DTA no debería reducir o suspender sus beneficios sin antes revisar todas las razones de causas buenas arriba mencionadas junto con la familia para ver si algunas se aplican. Si usted piensa que el DTA cometió un error en reducir o eliminar sus beneficios, inmediatamente interponga una petición y contacte a la oficina de Legal Services de su área para solicitar ayuda.

¿Quiere ayudar a mejorar las cosas?

Si quiere unirse a otras personas para mejorar las políticas de la TAFDC, cupones de alimentos, asistencia de emergencia (incluyendo refugios para familias) o viviendas, existen grupos que trabajan en dichos temas, los cuales estarían encantados si usted se afilia. Estos grupos son:

Family Economic Initiative (Iniciativa Económica de la Familia) trabaja en temas relacionados a la TAFDC (asistencia social para familias con hijos). El grupo se reúne una vez al mes en Greater Boston Legal Services en el 197 Friend St., Boston. Contactar a Elizabeth Toulan, al teléfono 617-603-1626, para más información.

Mass Coalition for the Homeless (Coalición de Massachusetts para Personas Desamparadas) trabaja en temas relacionados a la vivienda e indigencia. También aboga por individuos desamparados. El grupo se reúne una vez al mes, normalmente los viernes finales del mes, en Boston. Contactar a 781-595-7570 para más información.

Food Stamp Coalition (Coalición de Cupones de Alimentos) trabaja en el tema de cupones de alimentos, actualmente llamados SNAP. El grupo se reúne una vez al mes. Contactar a Pat Baker en Mass Law Reform Institute (Instituto de Reformas de Leyes de Massachusetts), al pbaker@mlri.org

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Recupere su dinero a través del Crédito Tributario por Ingresos del Trabajo

Usted puede calificar para recibir hasta \$5,036 a través del Crédito Tributario por Ingresos del Trabajo (Earned Income Tax Credit, EITC), un reembolso de impuesto para personas que trabajan. Usted ganó este dinero, de manera que no deje que su reembolso quede sin ser reclamado.

¿Quién puede obtener el EIC y cuál es su valor?

Personas solteras o casadas quienes trabajaron a tiempo completo o parcial por algún período en el 2011 pueden calificarse para el EITC, dependiendo de su ingreso. Estudiantes que ganan Federal Work Study (un estipendio para trabajar durante los estudios universitarios) también pueden calificar por el EITC.

- Familias con ingreso \$36,052 con 1 hijo calificados (\$41,132 si está casado y rinde la declaración de impuestos en conjunto). El crédito máximo establecido es de \$3,094.
- \$40,964 con 2 hijos calificados (\$46,844 si está casado y rinde la declaración de impuestos en conjunto). El crédito máximo establecido es de \$5,112.
- \$43,352 con 3 hijos o más calificados (\$48,362 si está casado y rinde la declaración de impuestos en conjunto). El crédito máximo establecido es de \$5,751.
- Con ingresos bajo \$13,460 sin hijos y entre las edades 25 y 64 años en 31 diciembre 2010 (\$18,470 si están casados y rinden la declaración de impuestos en conjunto). El crédito máximo establecido es de \$464.

Si quiere obtener un estimado del reembolso al cual usted tiene derecho, visite el sitio web del EITC en <http://www.cbpp.org/eic2011>

Puede obtener Pagos Adelantados de EITC en su cheque de salario. Para obtener los Pagos Adelantados de EITC, entregue el formulario W-5 a su empleador. Puede obtener el formulario W-5 de su empleador o bien llamando al IRS al teléfono 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3637). Si usted tiene una cuenta corriente, puede obtener su reembolso de EITC directamente depositado a su cuenta.

Hay personas que pagan dinero a empresas tributarias privadas como H&R Block para obtener asistencia al preparar sus formularios de impuestos o para obtener el dinero inmediatamente. En vez

de hacer eso, trate de obtener asesoría gratuita. Guarde su dinero o ahórrelo y ocúpelo para construir un mejor futuro para usted mismo y su familia. ABCD maneja 13 sitios de preparación de impuestos en Boston. Visite al sitio web <http://masscashback.ehs.state.ma.us>

Los pagos que su familia recibe como Crédito Tributario por Ingresos del Trabajo no son considerados como ingresos al determinar la elegibilidad o los niveles del beneficio de la TAFDC, Medicaid, cupones de alimentos, SSI, actividades de experiencia

laboral (tales como servicios comunitarios) o viviendas públicas. Los estudiantes que están en el programa de trabajo para estudio pueden reclamar el EITC.

Para calcular su EITC, use la hoja de cálculo especial incluida como parte de las instrucciones para el EITC en los formularios 1040, 1040A o 1040EZ.

Los trabajadores de Massachusetts obtienen crédito estatal extra por un valor correspondiente al 15 % de su crédito federal si ganan menos de \$48,362. Puede solicitar el formulario de impuesto y obtener más información llamando al teléfono 617-887-6367 o al 1-800-392-6089.

Crédito Tributario por Hijos: ¡Una deducción tributaria extra para familias trabajadoras!

El Crédito Tributario por Hijos (Child Tax Credit, CTC) es un crédito tributario federal por un valor de hasta \$1,000 para cada uno de los hijos calificados menores de 17 años de edad reclamado como dependiente en la declaración de impuestos del trabajador. Para optar al reembolso de CTC, un trabajador soltero o casado debe:

- tener un hijo calificado menor de 17 años de edad;
- tener el número de Seguro Social o el número de Identificación Individual de Contribuyente.

Los trabajadores inmigrantes que tienen cualquiera de estos números pueden posiblemente reclamar el reembolso de CTC.

El crédito es limitado si su ingreso bruto modificado está por encima de una cierta cantidad. El importe por el que esta eliminación se inicia varía en función de su estado civil. Para los contribuyentes casados que presentan una declaración conjunta, la eliminación comienza en \$110.000. Para los contribuyentes casados que presentan una declaración por separado, comienza en 55.000 dólares. Para todos los otros contribuyentes, la eliminación comienza en 75.000 dólares. Además, el Crédito Tributario por Hijo está generalmente limitada por la cantidad de impuesto sobre la renta que debe, así

como cualquier impuesto mínimo alternativo que debe.

Para obtener el reembolso del Crédito Tributario por Hijos, rinda una declaración federal de impuestos—formularios 1040 o 1040A, pero no puede ser el 1040EZ.

Algunas familias pueden obtener el crédito aunque no deban impuestos sobre la renta. A esto se le conoce como el reembolso de CTC Adicional. Para averiguar si usted es elegible para este crédito, presente el formulario

8812. Este formulario debe ser adjuntado a la declaración de impuestos para que la familia reciba el reembolso de CTC.

Familias trabajadoras pueden obtener tanto el reembolso del Crédito Tributario por Hijos como el Crédito Tributario por Ingresos del Trabajo.

¿Quién le brinda ayuda?

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El Arte de Sobrevivir, con Barbara Lee Funders. Foto por Dottie Stevens



PUNTOS CLAVES PARA SOBREVIVIR

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¿Dónde podrá acudir usted por ayuda para el alquiler, alimentos, dinero, servicios públicos o ayuda para combustibles cuando se agota su dinero de asistencia social o SSI, o cuando usted sea eliminado del programa de asistencia social debido al límite de tiempo?

United Way First Call for Help (Primera Llamada para Ayuda de United Way) es un buen lugar para iniciar su búsqueda. La organización puede proporcionarle información y referencias. Llámelos al 211. La organización atiende día y noche, 7 días a la semana. Hay disponibilidad de servicios de intérprete hasta para 140 idiomas diferentes. Las horas de atención es de 8:00 am a 8:00 pm los días de semana. United Way tiene también **Línea de Ayuda de Abuso Sustancial**, al teléfono 1-800-327-5050. Asimismo le puede dar información sobre **H1N1 o gripe estacional**. Atiende las 24 horas del día.

Caridades Católicas: Con 15 sitios a través de Greater Boston, Caridades Católicas es capaz de proporcionar una amplia gama de apoyo, incluyéndolas despensas de alimentos, alquiler y asistencia de hipotecas, asistencia de servicios públicos, asistencia en la provisión de muebles, artículos para bebé, ropa y otras necesidades, y de temporada y vacaciones asistencia a las familias que no pueden permitirse una comida caliente en Acción de Gracias o regalos para sus hijos en Navidad. Para obtener una lista de las despensas de sus alimentos, haga clic en www.ccab.org/pantries.html, para obtener una lista de sus sitios de las necesidades básicas, haga clic en www.ccab.org/Basic.html

Caridades Católicas locales son los siguientes: **Dorchester**, 617-506-6600; **El Centro del Cardenal**, 617-542-9292; **Centro Haitiano**, 617-506-6600; **Centro Labouré (sur de Boston)**, 617-268-9670; **Somerville**, 617-625-1920; **Caridades Católicas del Norte**, 781-593-2312; **Merrimack Valley (Lowell)**, 978-452-1421; **Brockton**, 508-587-0815; **Milford**, 508-478-9632.

Salvation Army: Vivienda y Servicios a los Desamparados

Hogares de grupo, refugios de emergencia y centros de vivienda transitoria proporcionar vivienda sobre una base temporal para diversos períodos de tiempo. Ellos:

- servir a las personas sin hogar, proporcionando comida y alojamiento durante la noche.
- proporcionar educación, orientación y servicios de formación profesional a las personas sin hogar e indigentes y familias durante largos períodos.
- abordar cuestiones a largo plazo específicas de los jóvenes para quienes el cuidado familiar no es deseable o no está disponible. Educación, orientación y atención de la salud y la formación específica de tratar de satisfacer las necesidades de los grupos, como las adolescentes embarazadas, menores de

edad emancipados, y bajo la tutela del tribunal de menores.

- dirección específica de salud o sociales impulsados por las necesidades de poblaciones específicas.
- Programas para la familia de servicios de ayuda a las familias e individuos necesitados con alimentos de emergencia, vivienda, ayuda para servicios públicos y otras necesidades temporales.

Si no puede encontrar una ubicación cerca de usted, llame a la Sede de las divisiones de Massachusetts 339-502-5900 durante horas de oficina regulares. Sus operadores serán capaces de dirigirlo al lugar correcto donde se va a tratar de ayudarlo.

ABCD en Boston tal vez le proporciona dinero inicial para el depósito de seguridad en el pago de alquiler del primer mes o fondo para el alquiler retrasado, a individuos desamparados y familias en riesgo que viven en refugios, cuando hay disponibilidad de fondos. ABCD ayuda a la gente a buscar viviendas y obtenerlas subvencionadas. Además, ayuda a prevenir la indigencia proporcionando servicios

para la prevención de desalojo, tales como mediación y negociación entre el arrendador y arrendatario, información legal y referencia, y recolección de fondos. El número telefónico es 617-348-6347.

Traveler's Aid Family Services (Servicios Familiares de Traveler's Aid), teléfono 617-542-7286, cuenta con un programa limitado para ofrecer refugios de emergencia de corto plazo a familias de Boston que están en crisis. La organización ayuda en transporte a víctimas

de violencia intrafamiliar. También proporciona asistencia en transporte a personas referidas por el DTA. Asimismo, les paga asistencia parcial en transporte a personas que se encuentran varadas en Boston y que están por trasladarse a un lugar en New England. Para las personas que se trasladan a afueras de New England, les pagan pasajes parciales. El trabajador social tendrá que verificar que usted tiene un lugar donde quedarse cuando está trasladándose.

También hay un programa de prevención de indigencia para ayudar a pagar alquileres retrasados, si hay fondos disponibles.

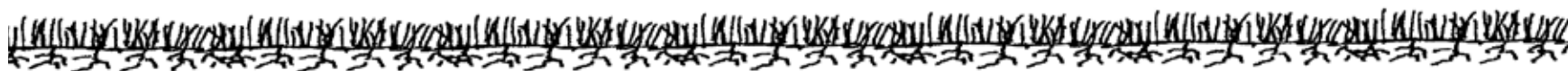
Llame para averiguar los requisitos de elegibilidad. Los trabajadores están disponibles para el servicio de transporte sin cita. Otros servicios se proporcionan con cita y mediante llamadas telefónicas, de lunes a viernes, de 8:30 am a 4:30 pm. Hay disponibilidad de traducción en español. **Municipios:** Algunas organizaciones operan a nivel municipal. Puede encontrar sus números en la guía telefónica o marcando el 411. Entre estas organizaciones están las iglesias locales y clubes cívicos, incluyendo Kiwanis, Elks, Lions, Knights of Columbus, Rotary, Quota, Jaycees y los Masons.

Ayuda para los veteranos

Los veteranos pueden obtener alguna ayuda en Servicios a Veteranos ...a la página 35



*Lenore Pereira habla en contra de la violencia doméstica en el Centro de la Mujeres de la Universidad de Massachusetts / Boston.
Foto por Dottie Stevens*



PUNTOS CLAVES PARA SOBREVIVIR

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de su área. El Departamento de Asuntos de los Veteranos (Department of Veterans Affairs) del Gobierno Federal ha publicado un libro que enumera los beneficios: Beneficios Federales para Veteranos y Dependientes (Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents). Visite al sitio web: www1.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp

Viviendas e indigencia

Si está en riesgo de ser indigente. . .

Departamento de Vivienda y Desarrollo Comunal en Massachusetts ofrece servicios y dinero a personas quienes están en riesgo de ser indigentes a través de las oficinas de la División de Estabilización de Viviendas (Division of Housing Stabilization) ubicadas en las oficinas del DTA. El Departamento evalúa su situación y trata de ayudarle a desarrollar un plan para evitar la indigencia. Si usted está sin hogar y necesita refugio, el trabajador le proporcionará ayuda.

HomeBASE “Asistencia para su familiar” (Household Assistance)

Household Assistance es parte del programa HomeBase nueva para las familias sin hogar con niños y mujeres embarazadas que no tienen lugar para quedarse. Para obtener asistencia de los hogares, es necesario solicitar y ser elegible para Asistencia de Emergencia (AE) refugio. Asistencia Hogar es de hasta \$ 4,000 al año. El dinero es para ayudar a su familia mudarse a mantener o vivienda a corto plazo. El \$ 4.000 puede pagar los gastos para que usted pueda trasladarse a otro lugar, para ayudarle a quedarse con alguien que usted conoce, o para ayudarle a quedarse donde está ahora.DHCD hará que estos pagos a una empresa de propietario de utilidad, o mover la empresa o en forma de tarjetas de regalo para su anfitrión - no para usted.

Asistencia del hogar no puede ser la respuesta correcta para su familia. Usted todavía puede obtener refugio EA si usted lo necesita y su familia cumple con las mismas reglas que estaban en su lugar antes de HomeBase comenzado.

Si usted va a un refugio, obtendrá ayuda para la búsqueda de vivienda que usted puede permitirse por más tiempo. Es posible que pueda recibir ayuda HomeBase Alquiler tarde.

¿Estás seguro de 4.000 dólares es bastante dinero para mantener a su familia en la vivienda por un año completo? Si el conjunto \$ 4.000 que se gasta antes de finales de los 12 meses y se acaba sin hogar de nuevo, usted no será capaz de obtener ayuda más de HomeBase para el resto del período de 12 meses, la normativa vigente.

¿Cómo va a afectar a los hogares de asistencia a la familia te vas a quedar con el? Arrendador de su anfitrión debe estar de acuerdo que su familia pueda estar antes de Asistencia de los hogares será aprobado. Puede que tenga que ser añadido al contrato de arrendamiento. Alquiler de su anfitrión puede ir para arriba. Si la asistencia de los hogares paga la totalidad de la renta de su anfitrión o los servicios públicos, que podría ser considerado como ingresos para su anfitrión. Su anfitrión puede obtener menos beneficios, tales TAFDC, EAEDC, o SSI.

Usted puede presentar una apelación si cree que se vieron obligados a tomar o negado injustamente la asistencia de

los hogares. Póngase en contacto con los servicios jurídicos o de otra persona de su confianza para el asesoramiento o ayuda con su apelación.

Si usted tiene preguntas acerca de Homebase, usted puede llamar a la familia sin hogar de llamadas en la Línea: 617-357-0700 ext 376 o de la Coalición de Massachusetts para los Sin Techo: 781-595-7570. Para encontrar su programa local de servicios legales, llame al Centro de Apoyo Legal y de Recursos: 1-800-342-5297 lunes - viernes de 9am - 1pm o tarde del martes a las 7:30 pm o vaya a www.MassLegalHelp.org/find-legal-ayuda

El número telefónico del Housing Consumer Education Center (Centro de Educación para los Consumidores de Viviendas) de la Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership (Asociación de Viviendas del Área Metropolitana de Boston) es 617-425-6700. Si usted es propietario de una vivienda y quiere hablar con el consejero de ejecución hipotecaria, contacte a Stephen Freeman, al teléfono 617-425-6761. Existen 9 centros en Massachusetts. Puede localizarlos en la web, www.masshousinginfo.org.

También ayudan en alquiler y fracturas de los servicios públicos, para encontrar un apartamento, para obtener una vivienda justa y ayuden con las finanzas personales.

Mass Coalition for the Homeless, teléfono 781-595-7570, brinda información y defensa, además de cabildear mejores políticas para las personas que están en riesgo o experimentando la indigencia. Ha publicado varios folletos en los cuales ofrecen asesoría para hacer frente a los desalojos, obtener un vale de Sección 8, encontrar una vivienda assequible y acceso a refugios y conocer sus derechos a la vivienda. Estos son gratuitos. La Coalición está ubicada en el 15 Bubier Street, Lynn, MA 01901. Su sitio web es: www.masshomeless.org. Allí encontrarán mucha información y materiales.

Residentes de Boston que no tienen donde permanecer después de las 5:00pm y durante los fines de semana pueden llamar a la Línea de Emergencia del Alcalde de Boston, al teléfono 617-635-4500, para información y referencia. Durante los días de la semana, llame a la Comisión de Refugio de Emergencia (Emergency Shelter Commission), al teléfono 617-635-4507, para información y referencia. Familias con hijos y mujeres embarazadas pueden solicitar los beneficios de refugio a través de la oficina del DTA ubicada en el 2201 Dudley Square, Roxbury, teléfono 617-989-6000.

Muebles/artículos de hogar gratuitos

Mass Coalition for the Homeless maneja un banco de muebles para familias e individuos que se están moviendo a una vivienda permanente. Califican aquellas personas que han estado desamparadas durante los 90 días anteriores. El banco de muebles también proporciona frazadas cuando hay disponibilidad. Para solicitar ayuda, se necesita la referencia de una agencia. En Boston, llame al Programa de Asistencia de Donaciones (Donations Assistance Program), al teléfono 781-595-7570, ext. 11. El personal de la Coalición monta el mueble al camión pero la organización no proporciona camiones.

Craigslist tiene muebles y otros artículos gratuitos en línea. La lista es por región. Haga clic en “cosas gratuitas (free stuff).”

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Atención a la Salud

MassHealth

MassHealth es como Medicaid en Massachusetts. MassHealth es un programa público de seguro de salud para personas con bajos o medianos ingresos que viven en Massachussts. Si recibe TAFDC, SSI o EAEDC está automáticamente elegible por MassHealth, y personas discapacitados están elegibles. Llame al teléfono 1-888-665-9993 (TTY: 1-888-665-9997) y pedir por un formulario para calificar por MassHealth. Visite al sitio web www.massresources.org. Para encontrar un médico, dentista o al otro proveedor de medicina, llame al teléfono 1-800-841-2900 (TTY 1-800-497-4648) por MassHealth Customer Service.

Commonwealth Care

Hay opciones diferentes para planes de Commonwealth Care, y estas opciones dependen a su nivel de ingreso en comparación con el nivel de la pobreza. El pago de la prima depende de su ingreso en comparación con el nivel de la pobreza

La solicitud se llama Medical Benefit Request (Solicitud de Beneficio Médico) o MBR. Cuando usted manda la solicitud a MassHealth, se le inscribe al mejor programa a su alcance, el cual es posiblemente Commonwealth Care. Luego, MassHealth le manda una notificación, mencionándole el programa que usted obtiene. Puede obtener la solicitud en su centro de salud u hospital o puede llamar a la Línea de Ayuda de Health Care For All (Atención a la Salud para Todos), al teléfono 1-800-272-4232 para obtener ayuda en el llenado de la solicitud por teléfono. Si usted tiene derecho a Commonwealth Care, puede llamar al teléfono 1-877-MA-ENROLL para escoger el plan de salud o visite la web, www.macommonwealthcare.org. Para ayuda en el escrito del formulario, llame al número 800-792-4355 o escribe un email a helpmeapply@bmchp.org

Health Safety Net (Red de Seguridad de Salud) (anteriormente llamado Uncompensated Care Pool/Fondo Común No Compensado para Servicios Médicos o Free Care Pool/Fondo Común para Servicios Médicos Gratuitos) es un programa que ofrece atención gratuita o a bajo costo en hospitales y centros comunales de salud a residentes elegibles de Massachusetts, dependiendo del ingreso bruto (ingreso antes de la deducción de impuestos), el tamaño de la familia y el tipo de seguro de salud que ya tienen. Llame a su centro comunal de salud u hospital para más información o para una solicitud. El monto de cobertura depende del tipo de seguro de salud que usted tiene. Para obtener más información, llame al Help Desk a 1-877-910-2100.

MCPHS Pharmacy Outreach ofrece información de prescripción y referencias a residentes de Massachusetts sin costo. Llame al teléfono 1-866-633-1617, de lunes a viernes, para obtener información sobre programas que proporcionan medicamentos con prescripción gratuita, o a costos reducidos, programas federales o estatales y ayuda para conseguir dichos medicamentos. El personal clínico, incluyendo docentes y estudiantes de la Universidad de Farmacia y Ciencias de la Salud de Massachusetts (Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences), revisa el perfil de medicación de la persona que llama para evaluar la posible interacción de

medicamentos y darle información sobre alternativas terapéuticas y equivalentes genéricos. Este es un servicio gratuito ubicado en el campus en Worcester de la Universidad de Farmacia y Ciencias de la Salud de Massachusetts. Se atiende sin cita en el centro ubicado en el 25 Foster St., Worcester, MA. La información está disponible en muchos idiomas, incluyendo inglés, español, portugués, chino y vietnamita. Llame para obtener información o programar una cita durante el horario normal de trabajo. <http://www.massmedline.com>

¿Preguntas sobre atención a la salud?

Llame a la Línea de Ayuda de Health Care For All al teléfono 1-800-272-4232 o a Connector al teléfono 1-877-623-6767 (TTY: 1-877-623-7773 para personas con sordera parcial o total). Visite el sitio web Health Care for All: www.hcfama.org.

Atención a la salud para los indigentes

Programa de **Boston Health Care for the Homeless (Atención a la Salud de Boston para las Personas Desamparadas)** proporciona atención a la salud a personas desamparadas en clínicas, refugios en Boston, Centro Médico de Boston (Boston Medical Center) y el Hospital General de Massachusetts (Mass General Hospital). Tiene el Programa de Descanso (Respite Program) para individuos desamparados quienes no están tan enfermos como para ser hospitalizados pero demasiado enfermos para estar en la calle o en un refugio. Llame al teléfono 857-654-1000. Dígame sin falta que usted está llamando acerca del Programa de Descanso si usted desea ser ingresado.

Equipos médicos para niños

Pass it On (Pásalo) proporciona equipos médicos pediátricos para niños discapacitados de hasta 22 años de edad, incluyendo sillas de ruedas, equipos para baño y artículos relacionados. En el área este de Massachusetts, se realiza la entrega a domicilio hasta el Condado de Worcester. Aunque el equipo es gratuito, solicitan ayuda para pagar el transporte del equipo. Llame al teléfono 508-477-6966 o 1-800-267-6768. Su sitio web es www.passitonforkids.org

Ayuda de ropa para niños

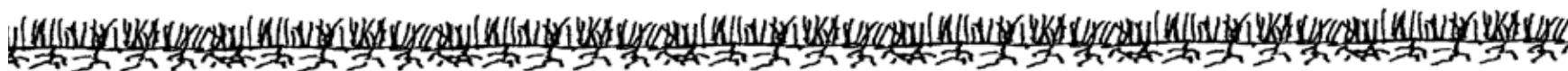
Children's Clothing Exchange (Intercambio de Ropa de Niños), un programa de Solutions at Work (Soluciones en Función) está en el Roosevelt Towers Housing Complex, 391 Everteze Way, Cambridge, MA 02141. El número telefónico es 617-576-0039. Abierto los martes, miércoles y jueves, de 10:00 am a 4:00 pm y los segundos y cuartos sábados del mes, de 10:00 am a 4:00 pm.

Puede obtener ropa para niños, desde recién nacidos hasta 14 años. Tiene ropa de oficina para mujeres y hombres quienes están por entrar al trabajo, sólo con citas previas. También tiene zapatos y alguna ropa para niños mayores. Puede intercambiar ropa limpia y lista para ponerse que le ha quedado pequeña a sus hijos o puede donar su tiempo para trabajar en Exchange. No se necesita dinero. Las familias que están en crisis no tienen que hacer el intercambio en su primera visita. Hay disponibilidad de libros para niños, juguetes, carritos de bebés y sillas para vehículos gratuitos.

Ayuda legal gratuita o a bajo costo

Harvard Legal Aid Bureau (Oficina de Asistencia Legal de Harvard), teléfono 617-495-4408, proporciona servicios legales a

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personas de ingresos bajos sobre problemas de vivienda, violencia intrafamiliar, discriminación en salario y horas (salario mínimo) y beneficios. Sus servicios son gratuitos para los beneficiarios de TAFDC, EAEDC y SSI, así como para otras personas de ingresos bajos. Atiende a la mayoría de las áreas de los condados de Middlesex o Suffolk. Está ubicada en el 23 Everett St., Cambridge, MA 02138. Está abierta de 9:00 am a 5:00 pm, de lunes a viernes. Llame para una cita.

National Lawyer’s Guild (Asociación Nacional de Abogados) proporciona asistencia legal a personas de ingresos bajos y moderados, a través de su servicio de referencia. Maneja discapacidad (incluyendo SSI y SSDI), crimen, discriminación, empleo, derecho de familia, dueño/inquilino, inmigración, derechos civiles, litigio civil, lesión personal, quiebra, bienes inmuebles y otras áreas legales. El honorario es generalmente negociado en base a una escala ajustable. Se habla español y otros idiomas. Su horario de atención es de lunes a viernes, de 9:00 am a 4:00 pm. Llame al teléfono 617-227-7008. Está ubicada en el 14 Beacon St., Suite 407, Boston, MA 02108.

Ayuda disponible para inmigrantes

Greater Boston Legal Services, teléfono 617-371-1234, representa a los inmigrantes.

Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (Coalición de Apoyo a Inmigrantes y Refugiados de Massachusetts, MIRA) proporciona entrenamiento, abogacía e información a individuos y grupos. Llame al teléfono 617-350-5480.

IrishImmigrationCenter(CentroIrlandésdeInmigración) cuenta con el Programa de Asistencia para Inmigración/ Ciudadanía (Immigration/Citizenship Assistance Program) que ofrece una variedad de servicios a todos los inmigrantes (**no solamente a personas de origen irlandés**), incluyendo información y referencia, servicios inmigratorios, asistencia para empleos, programa de cruce de culturas y defensa para el derecho de los inmigrantes. El centro, acreditado por el Departamento de Justicia (Department of Justice), tiene la capacidad de representar a las personas en entrevistas con dicho departamento. Está ubicado en el 100 Franklin St., planta baja, Boston, MA 02111, teléfono 617-542-7654.

Catholic Charities Refugee and Immigration Office (Oficina Católica de Amparo para Refugiados e Inmigrantes), teléfono 617-464-8100, ayuda a refugiados, asilados y personas de nacionalidad cubana y haitiana en libertad condicional (personas detenidas por el Departamento de Justicia de E.E.U.U. y actualmente liberadas bajo juramento). Sus servicios incluyen lo siguiente: asistencia en efectivo, asistencia en empleo, manejo de casos, clases de inglés y referencias de servicios sociales. También realiza clases de ESOL (Inglés para Hablantes de Otras Lenguas). Los asilados pueden recibir servicios dentro del primer mes posterior a la obtención de su estatus de asilado y califican durante dicho mes para más servicios como asistencia en efectivo y servicios de empleo. Está ubicada en el 275 W. Broadway, South Boston, MA 02127.

Pair Project (Proyecto Par), teléfono 617-742-9296, proporciona asistencia legal gratuita a personas de ingresos bajos o sin ingresos que están buscando asilo. También proporciona asistencia a los detenidos por las agencias inmigratorias. Llame para una cita.

Community Legal Services and Counseling Center (Centro Comunitario de Servicios Legales y Consejería), teléfono 617-661-1010, 1 West St., Cambridge, proporciona servicios legales y asesoría sobre problemas de la familia, discapacidad, inmigración y vivienda. Los servicios legales son gratuitos y el honorario para los servicios de asesoría se calcula en base a la escala ajustable. Llame a la oficina para obtener información de los servicios específicos.

Ayuda para padres y madres bajo estrés

Parental Stress Line (Línea de Padres y Madres bajo Estrés) es una línea telefónica de emergencia sin costo para brindar apoyo a padres y madres que están bajo estrés. La línea está disponible durante las 24 horas del día, 7 días a la semana. Organiza grupos de apoyo para padres y madres, el cual es anónimo y confidencial. Llamar al teléfono 1-800-632-8188.

Educación Superior

TERI College Planning Center (Centro de Planificación Universitaria TERI) puede ayudarle a buscar becas si usted califica en términos de ingreso, seleccionar universidades, llenar solicitudes de admisión y ayuda financiera, obtener exención de matrícula universitaria y obtener asesoría para pagar la universidad. Usted puede hablar con un consejero, usar las computadoras para buscar becas y revisar los libros de recursos — todos los servicios son gratis.

Hay 6 Centros de Oportunidad Educativa (Educational Opportunity Centers) en Massachussets. El número telefónico de Boston es 617-536-0200 (en la primera planta de la Biblioteca Pública de Boston). Está usualmente abierto de 9:00 am a 6:30 pm de lunes a jueves y de 9:00 am a 3:30 pm los viernes y sábados. Para otras áreas, llame al número principal 617-536-0200.

Urban College of Boston (UCB) El Colegio Urbano de Boston “UCB” es un programa de 2 años, que ofrece apoyo y educación a prepararse para una carrera o completar un título universitario. UCB está en ABCD (Acción para Desarrollo de la Comunidad de Boston), 178 Tremont Street, Boston, MA 02111, tele: 617-348-6325.

UCB ofrece servicios para cuidar a los niños, referencia para la salud, asesoramiento y servicios para continuar un trabajo, cuando los estudiantes están en el programa “UCB” a si mismo. También ofrece crédito universitario para aprender a un trabajo y desarrollo personal, y ofrece programas de prácticas. UCB están autorizados para ofrecer becas de Pell Grants a estudiantes que tienen elegibilidad.

The Patsy Takemoto Mink Scholarship distribuya becas de \$2,000 para ayudar a mujeres que necesitan asistencia para pagar por un programa de su propio educación. Visite el sitio web <http://www.patsyminkfoundation.org/edsupport.html> . Se aceptarán solicitudes a partir de 15 de Mayo, 2012.

Educación y Entrenamiento

Entrenamiento en educación de niños de temprana edad, salud comunal, climatización y “empleos verdes”

ABCD ofrece entrenamiento en estos campos. Llame al teléfono 617-357-6000 x6750.

El programa de climatización WAGE (ahorra energía con climatización) enseña maneras de climatización y ayuda a los estudiantes para encontrar empleos. El programa de Empleos Verdes enseña maneras técnicas “verdes” como el reciclaje. El programa está Lunes a Viernes, 8 AM – 4:30 PM por 7 semanas.



PUNTOS CLAVES PARA SOBREVIVIR

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St. Mary's Women and Children's Center (Centro de St. Mary para Mujeres y Niños), teléfono 617-436-8600, 90 Cushing Avenue, Dorchester, MA, proporciona capacitación para trabajos, habilidad en informática, educación básica para adultos y preparación para GED. Su Centro de Aprendizaje para Mujeres (Women's Learning Center) instruye hasta 20 estudiantes al mismo tiempo en Educación Básica para Adultos (Adult Basic Education, ABE) y preparación para una serie de exámenes de Desarrollo Educativo General (General Educational Development, GED). El programa es altamente flexible — ofreciendo admisión rodante y la opción de instrucciones a tiempo parcial y completo, y las clases son diseñadas de manera que satisfaga las necesidades individuales del estudiante.

Project Hope — Programas gratuitos de capacitación en atención a la salud

El Project Hope (Proyecto Hope) ofrece 3 programas gratuitos de capacitación con Partners HealthCare, Spaulding Rehabilitation, Brigham and Women's, and Mass General Hospital. Visite al sitio web: <http://www.prohope.org/openhouse.htm#P90#P90>

Socios en el Desarrollo de Carrera y Fuerza de Trabajo (Partners in Career and Workforce Development, PCWD)

Un programa gratis de 6 semanas de capacitación de preparación con Partners HealthCare que se enfoca en habilidades de servicio al cliente, elaboración del currículum y habilidades de entrevista. PCWD está diseñado para individuos interesados en empleo de nivel principiante en uno de los hospitales de Partners. Es un programa de entrenamiento sin salario, de lunes a viernes, de 9:00 am a 5:00 pm, y un programa que se aprueba de DTA y Sección 30. <http://www.partners.org/jobtraining>

Socios Comunitarios en Profesiones de la Salud (Community Partners in Health Professions, CPHP)

Para individuos que desean una carrera en atención a la salud pero que no tienen las habilidades necesarias. CPHP tiene un énfasis fuerte en académico, comunicación, profesionalismo, y habilidades en informática. Es un programa de preempleo de 10 semanas sin salario que se lleva a cabo de lunes a jueves, de 9:00 am a 4:00 pm. Los viernes son dedicados a manejo de casos. Es un programa que se aprueba de DTA.

Programa de Preparación Profesional (PREP)

PREP es un programa que puede mejorar las habilidades de trabajo para personas en nuestra comunidad. PREP encuentra dos veces por la semana y durante 4 semanas. Participantes que completan el programa pueden recibir recomendaciones por el BWH Community Partnership Program (siguiente), CPHP o otros programas.

Sociedad Comunitaria del Hospital Brigham and Women's (Brigham and Women's Community Partnership, BWH)

En colaboración entre Project Hope y el Hospital Brigham and Women's, BWH, se ofrecen servicios de capacitación y empleo específicamente para residentes en las comunidades en el Gran Boston.



Derechos Humanos de la Ciudad de Boston de reuniones. Foto por Dottie Stevens.

Para calificar para estos programas, los aplicantes deben:

- Atender a una reunión informativa (http://www.prohope.org/openhouse_faq.htm)
- tener una diploma de bachiller/colegio o equivalente
- hablar, escribir y entender inglés; pasar evaluación en lectura, lenguaje y computación
- hacer chequeo de CORI
- tener al menos 1 año completo de experiencia laboral con 1 empleador
- ser capaz de atender y completar la capacitación diurno durante 6 semanas.

Project 90 (P90)

El Proyecto 90 es un programa de formación profesional gratis de 12 semanas. Los participantes reciben ayuda para aplicar por empleos y, además, ayuda para aplicar por programas de entrenamiento en especialidades. Visite el sitio web www.prohope.org y complete el formulario en el siguiente sitio www.prohope.org/openhouse_form.htm. Llame a 617-442-1880 x218 si tenga preguntas del programa.

Condiciones a participar en Project 90

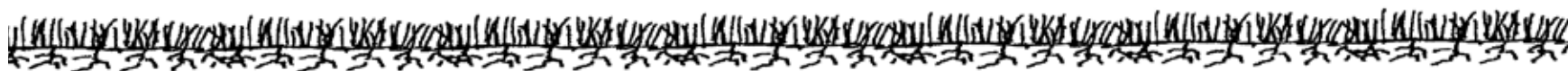
- Su edad es más que 18 años
- No vive en un hogar permanente
- Tiene las ganas de trabajar, estudiar, tiempo para participar y interés en este programa
- Puede hablar y escribir en inglés
- Tiene la capaz para trabajar legalmente en los EEUU
- Está sobrio/a por más que 90 días.

YMCA Training, Inc. (Programa para aprender un nuevo trabajo con YMCA)

El programa es de 5 meses, y ofrece prácticas con oficinas médicas, de seguros, bancos y trabajos de secretaría. Hay asociaciones entre el programa de YMCA y compañías Bank New York Mellon, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston Medical Center, City of Boston, Dana Farber Cancer Institute, Joslin Diabetes Center, One Beacon Insurance, Pilgrim Insurance, Sovereign Bank, Suffolk University y Tufts Medical Center.

Hay otros servicios también: para pronunciar inglés (ESOL), usar la computadora, matemáticas, escritura y ropa para entrevistas.

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PUNTOS CLAVES PARA SOBREVIVIR

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También puede recibir ayuda en encontrar una carrera y referencias para servicios sociales.

El programa está abierto lunes a viernes, 9 AM a 4 PM. Necesita tener un diploma del colegio o GED, y necesita vestir profesionalmente.

Planificación familiar de emergencia

Si ha tenido sexo sin protección o piensa que su método de planificación familiar ha fracasado, puede usar la “píldora de la mañana siguiente” (“morning-after-pill”) para prevenir el embarazo. Esta no es una píldora abortiva como la RU-486. La píldora se llama Preven y Plan B, y efectivamente evita el 89 % de los embarazos si se la usa correctamente. Se la debe tomar lo más pronto posible después del sexo sin protección, dentro de 5 días. Si usted es sexualmente activa, es recomendable tener esta píldora a mano por si la necesita. Simplemente solicite a su fármaco la Plan B One-Step o Next Choice. Ahora está disponible sin prescripción para adultos, pero personas menores de 17 necesitan una prescripción. Si su doctor o el hospital se niegan a darle una prescripción, llame a la Línea de Anticoncepción de Emergencia, 888-not-2-lat (888-668-2528) o visite el Sitio Web sobre Anticoncepción de Emergencia, ec.princeton.edu. En el sitio web encontrará el nombre de las farmacias en su cercanía donde puede obtener la píldora. El sitio web también contiene consejos para personas menores de 17.

Más información útil

La Oficina de Servicios a Destinatarios del DTA (DTA Recipient Services Office) es muy atenta en proporcionar información sobre las políticas y a qué tiene usted derecho. Llame al teléfono 1-800-445-6004.

Los **reglamentos del DTA** están disponibles en la web: www.state.ma.us/dta.

Beneficios para personas que viven en Massachussets.

Visite el sitio web www.massresources.org para aprender más.

Los **reglamentos de beneficios para cuidado de niños** y otras informaciones están disponibles en la web en www.QualityChildCare.org, la cual es el sitio web correspondiente a la Oficina de Servicios del Cuidado de Niños (Office of Child Care Services) del estado.

Guía de Regreso a Casa: Una Guía de Recursos para Ex-Ofensores que Están Regresando a las Comunidades del Gran de Boston (Coming Home Directory: A Resource Directory for Ex-Offenders Returning to Greater Boston Communities) es un libro exhaustivo de recursos publicado por el Crime and Justice Institute (Instituto de Crimen y Justicia). Está disponible en línea en www.cominghomedirectory.org. La guía es publicada por el Crime and Justice Institute, teléfono 617-482-2520, ext. 130.

Guía de Recursos para Personas Mayores (Elder Resource Guide) es publicado por el Consejo de Brookline sobre Envejecimiento (Brookline Council on Aging) y el Centro para Mayores de Edad de Brookline (Brookline Senior Center). Está disponible en línea en www.brooklinema.gov. Haga clic en “Departments (Departamentos),”

“Council on Aging (Consejo sobre Envejecimiento),” “Latest News (Últimas Noticias),” y “Elder Resource Guide (Guía de Recursos para Personas Mayores).”

¿Tiene un Récord Criminal? ¿Tiene problema en encontrar trabajo o vivienda debido a su CORI? Si usted tiene CORI y necesita información sobre trabajos, vivienda, sellado de su récord, errores en su CORI u otros problemas, llame al Centro de Ayuda Legal y Recursos (Legal Advocacy and Resource Center), al teléfono 617-603-1700. Para más información sobre las leyes pertinentes a CORI, visite el sitio web, www.masslegalhelp.org/cori.

Massachusetts Alliance on Teen Pregnancy Benefits Access Line (Línea de Acceso a Beneficios de la Alianza de Massachusetts sobre Embarazos de Adolescentes), es para padres y madres adolescentes y las personas que trabajan con ellos. Le contestará preguntas acerca de asistencia social, cupones de alimentos, viviendas, cuidado de niños y otros servicios en su área para los cuales los adolescentes y sus hijos posiblemente califiquen. Llame al teléfono 1-800-645-3750 ext. 115.

Jane Doe, Inc. Una línea de emergencia patrocinada por Mass. Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence (Coalición de Massachusetts contra el Asalto Sexual y la Violencia Intrafamiliar) ayuda a personas que fueron asaltadas sexualmente o que huyen de la violencia intrafamiliar. Llame al teléfono 617-248-0922.

Red Nacional de Fondos para el Aborto

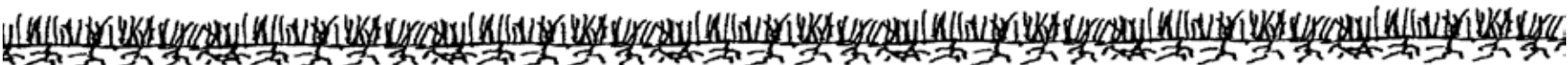
Si necesita tener un aborto, pero no tiene fondos para pagar, La Red podría ayudarle. Visite al sitio web: www.nnaf.org

Gracias a Melanie Malherbe of Greater Boston Legal Services, Kelly Hurley de Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, Pat Baker del Food Stamp Coalition, Roxanne Reddington-Wilde de ABCD, Charles Harak del National Consumer Law Center, The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, y Health Care for All, por su ayuda.

Nota: Hemos revisado esta información cuidadosamente y creemos que está correcta a la fecha escrita, diciembre 2011. Sin embargo, algunas veces las cosas cambian. A veces, las agencias agotan el dinero o cambian sus políticas. Antes de emitir otra edición, revisaremos de nuevo la información. ¡Así que suscríbase al Survival News para obtener los más recientes puntos claves para sobrevivir! Los Puntos Claves para Sobrevivir fueron compilados por Betty Reid Mandell. Si tiene preguntas acerca de la información, o si tiene puntos claves útiles para sobrevivir, puede contactarla por teléfono llamando al 617-327-4219 o enviando correo electrónico a mmandell@curry.edu.



“Siberia”
Watercolor by Claire Cummings



NOTICIAS DE SUPERVIVENCIA

Volumen 24, Número 1

...las voces de las mujeres de bajos ingresos



Diane Dujon, Dottie Stevens, Councilor Charles Yancey, Debbie Ferretti y Prof. Sylvia Magnom aceptar la Resolución de Derechos Humanos de la Ciudad.

Boston es una Ciudad de Derechos Humanos

El día 19 de abril de 2011, el Consejero Charles Yancey y el Consejo de la Ciudad de Boston aprobaron una resolución que proclama a Boston una “Ciudad de Derechos Humanos.” Esto une a Boston a una red de mas de veinte ciudades al nivel mundial (incluyendo a Pittsburgh y a Washington DC) que se han comprometido a incorporar las normas y conocimientos acerca de los derechos humanos en la planificación local, los servicios sociales, y la cultura de la ciudad. Las bases de esta resolución fueron establecidas por el grupo Survivors, Inc. (Los Sobrevivientes) en Mattapan que se dedica a abogacía por los derechos del bienestar, en cooperación con Shulamith Koenig, que en 2003 recibió el premio de las Naciones Unidas en el campo de Derechos Humanos y quien fundó el Movimiento Popular por la Enseñanza de los Derechos Humanos. Este grupo es la agencia auspiciadora internacional de la red de Ciudades de Derechos Humanos, cuya base es la Ciudad de Nueva York.

Esta resolución fue el importante inicio en Boston del movimiento de las Ciudades de Derechos Humanos. Este movimiento quiere avanzar la visión de Eleanor Roosevelt a través de un análisis popular de los derechos humanos y la aplicación de los derechos humanos en la ciudad. Desde abril, el grupo Survivors, Inc. y el Movimiento Popular por la Enseñanza de los Derechos Humanos vienen construyendo en Boston una red de organizaciones de justicia social y comunitarias. Esta red identificará las prioridades para nuestra ciudad con respecto a los derechos humanos, y también hará un análisis del trabajo y las contribuciones de estas organizaciones, desde la perspectiva interconectada de los derechos humanos.

PUNTOS CLAVES PARA SOBREVIVIR

Greater Boston Legal Services puede ayudarle a obtener beneficios

Si usted tiene dificultad para obtener los beneficios a los cuales tiene derecho, contacte a Greater Boston Legal Services (Servicios Legales del Gran Boston) al teléfono 617-371-1234. GBLS puede darle asesoría o representarle para negociar con el Departamento de Asistencia Transitoria (Department of Transitional Assistance, asistencia social) o la Agencia de Viviendas (Housing Authority). Para comunicarse con clientes que no son de habla inglesa, se les proporciona defensores bilingües o intérpretes. Si usted no vive en el área de Boston, GBLS puede remitirle a Legal Services en su área.

Asimismo, puede obtener asesoría legal en línea en MassLegalHelp, www.masslegalhelp.org.

Programas de alimentos

Project Bread (Proyecto Pan) puede darle información sobre cupones de alimentos, decirle cuáles despensas de alimentos o comedores comunitarios son cercanos a su casa y mencionarle los puestos de extensión de cupones de alimentos. El Proyecto tiene a su disposición intérpretes en varios idiomas. Llame a la Línea de Emergencia de FoodSource, al teléfono 1-800-645-8333 o al TTY 1-800-377-1292.

Todos tienen derecho de solicitar los cupones de alimentos (actualmente llamados SNAP, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program/Programa Suplementario de Asistencia Nutricional) en la oficina local del DTA, por Internet o en otros puestos de extensión de cupones de alimentos. Llame al DTA, al teléfono 1-800-249-2007, para averiguar dónde está la oficina local del DTA. Puede también llamar a la Línea de FoodSource del Project Bread al teléfono 1-800-645-8333 para saber de otros puestos de cupones de alimentos en su área. **Usted tiene el derecho de firmar la solicitud en papel el mismo día que visita la oficina local del DTA.**

Puede también aplicarse en el internet a www.state.ma.us/dta y haciendo clic en “Solicitar Cupones de Alimentos (Apply for Food Stamps)” para una solicitud en línea o

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