

January 1, 2024

The Honorable Michael J. Rodrigues, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
State House, Room 212
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Aaron Michlewitz, Chair
House Committee on Ways and Means
State House, Room 243
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairs Rodrigues and Michlewitz:

Pursuant to Chapter 77 of the Acts of 2023, we are transmitting to you this report on the Emergency Housing Assistance Program. In addition to the previous information provided in our report on December 18th, we have also provided additional information on the Emergency Assistance waitlist system as requested.

Sincerely,

Secretary Matthew J. Gorzkowicz,
Executive Office for Administration
& Finance

Secretary Edward Augustus,
Executive Office for Housing and
Livable Communities

MEMORANDUM

TO: House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means
FR: Executive Office for Administration and Finance, Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities
DT: January 1, 2024
RE: Bi-weekly EA report

Background/Narrative

The table below includes key datapoints outlined in Chapter 77 of the Acts of 2023. The data is updated as of December 28, 2023. The Administration continues to pursue key activities related to these datapoints below.

Caseload

Datapoint	Value as of 12/28/23	Notes
Total families in EA who entered as migrants, refugees, or asylum seekers	3,525	Estimate based on citizenship status of families recently entering EA applied to systemwide caseload based on primary language of heads of household.
Total families currently in shelters, hotels or motels, by municipality	See Appendix A	Families are supported across traditional EA shelters, hotels/motels, and temporary emergency shelters.

Work Authorizations

- Work Authorization Clinics:** In partnership with the Department of Homeland Security and multiple Commonwealth agencies, the Administration successfully ran two weeks of work authorization clinics for migrants staying in emergency family shelter (November 13-17 and November 27-30). In total, the work authorization clinics supported 2,910 individuals, completed 1,951 biometrics with USCIS, vaccinated 1,031 adults and children, and facilitated 734 visits to MassHire stations.

Datapoint	Value as of 12/28/23	Notes
Total number of individuals in EA who entered as migrants, refugees, or asylum seekers who have work authorizations	2,713	Adults who entered as migrants, refugees, or asylum seekers in EA shelter system who have self-reported that they have confirmed work authorization plus the number of approved work authorizations resulting from the work authorization clinic as reported by USCIS. This excludes (1) US citizens, green card holders, and other categories of individuals who have not recently migrated but are eligible to work; and (2) those who

		entered as migrants, refugees, or asylum seekers who have applied for work authorization but who have not reported confirmation of approved work authorization.
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Fiscal

- **School District Reimbursements:** DESE is working with districts to collect student enrollment data, and payments are expected to be released in early January pending review of district data.

Datapoint	Value as of 12/28/23	Notes
Total amount expended on the emergency housing assistance program in FY24	\$247 M	Spending to date includes shelter & associated services, National Guard activation, Clinical and Safety Risk Assessment Sites, Temporary Emergency Shelters, Family Welcome Centers. Because the Commonwealth typically pays service providers and vendors monthly, spending to date is largely reflective of costs through November; November and December invoices are currently being received and processed.
Total amount expended on supplemental school district costs, by district	See Appendix B	First tranche of FY24 payments expected to be made in early January. FY23 school district per-pupil emergency aid payments detailed in Appendix B.
Total amount expended on municipal supports, by municipality	None	No funding expended from 1599-0514 as of 12/28/23.
Total amount spent for any other purpose from 1599-0514	None	No funding expended from 1599-0514 as of 12/28/23.
Projected FY24 deficiency	\$224 M	Estimated deficiency accounts for funding available through the FY24 GAA, Housing Preservation and Stabilization Trust Fund, Ch. 268 of the Acts of 2022, Ch. 2 of the Acts of 2023, and Ch. 77 of the Acts of 2023. Estimated spending includes shelter & associated services, staffing, Clinical and Safety Risk Assessment Sites, Family Welcome Centers, school district reimbursements, immigration and refugee

		health, community, and workforce supports, and municipal support.
Projected FY25 costs through the end of FY25	\$915 M	While \$915 M represents projected FY25 costs, when one subtracts assumed FY25 resources consistent with the FY24 GAA, the gap between projected FY25 costs and assumed GAA resources is \$590 M. Estimate includes shelter & associated services, staffing, Clinical and Safety Risk Assessment Sites, Family Welcome Centers, school district reimbursements, immigration and refugee health, community, and workforce supports, and municipal support.

Waitlist

Datapoint	Value as of 12/28/23	Notes
Number of families applying for emergency shelter above the 7,500 capacity limit	1,393	Number of families applying for Emergency Assistance since November 10, 2023, when the system reached its capacity limit.
Number of families on the waitlist for services from the emergency housing assistance program	391	Families determined eligible or presumptively for Emergency Assistance, who are waiting for an EA shelter or hotel placement.
Immediate services provided to such families on said waitlist	Families on our waitlist are provided assistance with transportation to locations within Massachusetts of their choosing and information on additional state resources and assistance in finding housing. For example, EOHLC administers the HomeBASE program, which can provide eligible homeless families with help paying first/last month's rent and security deposits, moving expenses, stipends to help with ongoing housing costs, and other costs that can help families stabilize an existing housing situation or stably rehouse. EOHLC is also partnering with DTA and MassHealth to be able to rapidly connect families with available benefits. Lastly, when space is available, families on the waitlist are offered overnight shelter at state-run overflow sites – in Quincy, Revere, and Cambridge – as well as through sites administered via our partnership with the United Way.	

Blueprint Moving Forward

Healey-Driscoll EA Shelter Funding Blueprint: Addressing Incurred and Anticipated Costs

In September, the Administration filed a \$250 M supplemental budget request to address the expanding needs of the Emergency Shelter System based on the number of families in the shelter system at that time. Since then, the number of families in our shelter system has grown, as has the associated funding need. The Legislature's recent passage of \$260 M in supplemental funding has provided a critical infusion of resources to keep the system operating for the next several months.¹ The shelter system has reached capacity at 7,500 families, and at that level, **requires** additional funding to avoid imminent run-out dates for key programs.

Table 1: Breakdown of FY24 Remaining Deficiency

Item	Funding Available	FY24 Est. Spending	FY24 Est. Deficiency (Before supp)	Ch. 77 of the Acts of 2023 (FY23 closeout supp)	Remaining FY24 Deficiency (After supp)
Shelter & Associated Services	\$ 382	\$ (589)	\$ (208)	\$ 60	\$ (148)
Supplemental Shelter Staffing	\$ 22	\$ (28)	\$ (6)	\$ 6	\$ -
Clinical and Safety Risk Assessment Sites / Temporary Emergency Shelters	\$ 19	\$ (61)	\$ (42)	\$ 42	\$ -
Family Welcome Centers	\$ 1	\$ (3)	\$ (3)	\$ -	\$ (3)
School District Reimbursements	\$ 2	\$ (144)	\$ (142)	\$ 75	\$ (67)
Immigration & Refugee Health & Community Support	\$ 9	\$ (33)	\$ (25)	\$ 15	\$ (10)
Immigration & Refugee Workforce & Work Authorization Programs	\$ 5	\$ (7)	\$ (2)	\$ 5	\$ 3
Additional Municipal Support	\$ -	\$ (7)	\$ (7)	\$ 7	\$ -
Other EA Contracts (Budgeted in FY24)	\$ 10	\$ (10)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Overflow site planning	\$ -	\$ (50)	\$ (50)	\$ 50	\$ -
Total	\$ 448	\$ (932)	\$ (484)	\$ 260	\$ (224)

At the same time, the current average length of stay for families in the system exceeds one year. That means that even with the system's capacity level established, deficiency needs for EA are a two fiscal year problem, requiring a solution that spans FY24 and FY25. Fundamentally, the crisis of family homelessness requires a multi-faceted set of policies including shelter, supportive services, education and workforce training, and affordable housing programs that enable families to leave shelter and ultimately move on to stable housing.

Thankfully, the state has the resources available in Transitional Escrow to put a plan in place that will address FY24 and much of FY25 without requiring offsetting budget cuts to other programs to meet the spending requirements of the family shelter crisis. As of December 2023, the estimated uncommitted balance of the Transitional Escrow Fund (TEF) is approximately \$700 M.²

The Administration is, therefore, proposing to use the remaining balance of Transitional Escrow to fund direct EA costs and related services that help stabilize families and address barriers to shelter exits. The plan also invests in housing production and preservation to make affordable, stable housing options available to more families.

¹Includes the \$250 M originally sought for supplemental funding plus a new \$10 M line item in the closeout supp for resettlement agencies.

² Subject to change.

Specifically, the Administration plans to file a supplemental budget that would move the remaining TEF balance into an Emergency Housing and Community Trust Fund, to be spent in the following prioritized manner:

1. Up to \$150 M to support housing production and preservation, supplementing the investments in the recently filed Affordable Homes Act
2. To fund FY24 EA shelter and related costs and continuing FY25 EA shelter costs
3. Remainder can be used for additional housing production and preservation



When combined with the recently passed \$260 M in supplemental budget funding,³ and continuing the established system capacity levels, this plan covers the full projected FY24 deficiency and more than half of expected FY25 costs. The proposal also creates flexibility in how we address costs in FY25 so that if circumstances change (ex: federal supports, work authorizations, increased exits), resources can be redirected from reacting to the current crises to investing in housing production and preservation.

Table 2: Summary of Proposed EA Funding Strategy

		\$ (In Millions)
FY24	Transitional Escrow Fund (TEF) Total Available as of December 2023	\$ 700
	One-time production & preservation investment	\$ (150)
	Remaining FY24 Deficiency	\$ (224)
	TEF Remaining Balance After Addressing FY24 Deficiency	\$ 326
FY25	FY25 Est. Spending	\$ (915)
	Assuming resources consistent with FY24 GAA	\$ 325
	Remaining anticipated funding need	\$ (264)

³ Includes the \$250 M originally sought for supplemental funding plus a new \$10 M line item in the closeout supp for resettlement agencies.

The Administration's EA Shelter Funding Blueprint covers critical resources for families in the EA Shelter System as well as the communities supporting them, including the following FY24 investments:

Production-Focused Investments

- Up to \$150 M in cash for housing production and preservation to supplement investments in the recently filed Affordable Homes Act and continue addressing long-term solutions to housing insecurity

Shelter System Needs

- \$148 M for supportive services and safe shelter, including:
 - Shelter system at expanded caseloads (7,500 families)
 - Case management, housing search, public health, and community supports
 - Childcare, workforce readiness, English language, and other services to help families exit shelter and achieve stable permanent housing
- \$67 M for support for school districts and unhoused K-12 students, including:
 - School district costs associated with additional student enrollments
 - Special education services and English language instruction
 - Multilingual faculty recruitment and retention
- \$10 M for specialized Immigration and Refugee health and community supports to address the needs of families with complex immigration status issues

The remaining \$326 M in TEF funding will be held in reserve for FY25 needs. Recognizing the fluidity of the situation and the significant need for shelter and services during this crisis, as well as the importance of supporting the local communities in which these families are sheltered, attending school, and participating in everyday life, the proposal will allow spending flexibility to address changing demands in FY24 and FY25.

The Administration plans to file its supplemental budget legislation reflecting this EA Shelter Funding Blueprint in the coming weeks.

Appendix A: Total Families Currently in Shelters, Hotels or Motels by Municipality

Town	Total Families
Acton	12
Amherst	6
Andover	25
Arlington	16
Ashland	2
Attleboro	15
Auburn	33
Ayer	43
Barnstable	33
Bedford	92
Beverly	26
Billerica	24
Boston	1,309
Bourne	46
Braintree	15
Bridgewater	3
Brockton	167
Brookline	33
Burlington	34
Cambridge	34
Chelmsford	4
Chelsea	32
Chicopee	123
Concord	95
Danvers	129
Dartmouth	35
Dedham	159
Devens	12
Everett	110
Fairhaven	35
Fall River	77
Falmouth	9
Fitchburg	8
Foxborough	92
Framingham	157
Franklin	94
Gardner	52

Town	Total Families
Gloucester	5
Great Barrington	4
Great Barrington	15
Greenfield	56
Hadley	11
Hanson	1
Haverhill	71
Holyoke	171
Hudson	44
Kingston	99
Lawrence	54
Leicester	37
Lexington	30
Lowell	163
Lynn	283
Malden	51
Mansfield	38
Marlborough	189
Marshfield	21
Medford	36
Medway	11
Melrose	1
Methuen	84
Middleborough	59
Milford	70
Milton	2
New Bedford	28
North Attleboro	67
Northborough	31
Norton	22
Norwell	15
Norwood	10
Peabody	195
Pittsfield	35
Plainville	56
Plymouth	36
Raynham	48
Revere	63
Rockland	42

Town	Total Families
Salem	163
Saugus	70
Sharon	56
Shrewsbury	73
South Hadley	10
Southbridge	1
Springfield	289
Stoneham	1
Stoughton	194
Sturbridge	46
Sutton	30
Swansea	34
Taunton	164
Tewksbury	27
Wakefield	2
Waltham	65
Watertown	43
West Springfield	107
Westborough	104
Westminster	29
Weymouth	9
Woburn	173
Worcester	302
Yarmouth	36
Total	7,473

Appendix B: Amount Expended on Supplemental School District Costs by District

District					FY23 Total
	Amount (Oct. 1, 2022 - Mar. 1, 2023)	Date	Amount (Mar. 2, 2023 - end of school year)	Date	
Burlington	\$ -		\$ 44,200	8/30/2023	\$ 44,200
Cambridge	\$ -		\$ 11,648	8/30/2023	\$ 11,648
Chicopee	\$ -		\$ 52,416	8/30/2023	\$ 52,416
Concord	\$ -		\$ 39,832	8/30/2023	\$ 39,832
Concord-Carlisle	\$ -		\$ 13,312	8/30/2023	\$ 13,312
Dedham	\$ -		\$ 5,824	8/30/2023	\$ 5,824
Greenfield	\$ -		\$ 18,200	8/30/2023	\$ 18,200
Kingston	\$ 87,984	6/22/2023	\$ 130,416	8/30/2023	\$ 218,400
Marlborough	\$ 38,064	6/22/2023	\$ 104,832	8/30/2023	\$ 142,896
Methuen	\$ 237,952	6/22/2023	\$ 376,480	8/30/2023	\$ 614,432
Norwood	\$ -		\$ 3,432	8/30/2023	\$ 3,432
Oxford	\$ 21,320	6/22/2023	\$ 50,232	8/30/2023	\$ 71,552
Peabody	\$ -		\$ 43,472	8/30/2023	\$ 43,472
Plymouth	\$ 93,496	6/22/2023	\$ 123,864	8/30/2023	\$ 217,360
Revere	\$ -		\$ 11,544	8/30/2023	\$ 11,544
Salem	\$ 52,936	7/10/2023	\$ 231,504	8/30/2023	\$ 284,440
Shrewsbury	\$ -		\$ 102,648	8/30/2023	\$ 102,648
Silver Lake	\$ 27,248	6/22/2023	\$ 64,584	8/30/2023	\$ 91,832
Taunton	\$ -		\$ 61,672	8/30/2023	\$ 61,672
West Springfield	\$ 71,864	6/22/2023	\$ 295,360	8/30/2023	\$ 367,224
Westborough	\$ 44,928	6/22/2023	\$ 142,064	8/30/2023	\$ 186,992
Worcester	\$ 201,240	6/21/2023	\$ 235,040	8/30/2023	\$ 436,280
Total	\$ 877,032		\$ 2,162,576		\$ 3,039,608