

HOUSE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Marjorie C. Decker

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act supporting the development of children experiencing homelessness.

PETITION OF:

| NAME: | DISTRICT/ADDRESS: | DATE ADDED: |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| <i>Marjorie C. Decker</i> | <i>25th Middlesex</i> | <i>1/16/2025</i> |

HOUSE No.

[Pin Slip]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)**

An Act supporting the development of children experiencing homelessness.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 15D of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official
2 Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following section:-

3 Section 19. (a) A family placed in temporary emergency assistance shelter shall be
4 eligible for the department of early education and care’s homeless child care assistance vouchers
5 when the family first arrives at the shelter and at any time the family chooses while residing in
6 the shelter regardless of whether they meet work requirements as determined by the department
7 of transitional assistance.

8 (b) A family who meets the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Act definition of
9 homeless shall be eligible for the department of early education and care’s homeless child care
10 assistance vouchers, regardless of whether they meet work requirements as determined by the
11 department of transitional assistance.

12 (c) A letter verifying shelter residency will qualify a family for a full-time childcare
13 referral from the department of transitional assistance.

14 (d) Upon (i) a family's entry to a temporary emergency assistance shelter, domestic
15 violence shelter, substance abuse and recovery shelter or non-emergency assistance shelter, or
16 (ii) upon family's receipt of a letter from the department of early education and care or its
17 designees verifying that a family meets the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Act
18 definition of homeless, any of the family's children ages zero to three years shall be considered
19 as qualifying for early intervention services according to department of public health operational
20 standards. This qualification shall ensure eligibility for services regardless of the presence or
21 absence of other relevant risk factors, and qualification shall begin on the date of their entry into
22 shelter or receipt of a McKinney-Vento verification letter and continue for one year after their
23 exit from shelter or receipt of McKinney-Vento verification letter or until the day before the
24 child's third birthday, whichever occurs first. Early intervention services shall be rendered once
25 an evaluation and determination of need has been established by an early intervention
26 professional; provided that said evaluation shall occur within thirty (30) days of entry into shelter
27 or receipt of a McKinney-Vento verification letter.

28 SECTION 2. The department shall adopt regulations or policies and remove procedural
29 barriers for the administration of this act within 90 days of the effective date of this act.