

FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET

Status

Signed Into Law

Bill

Chapter 140 of the Acts
of 2024

Public Higher Education, K-12, and Early Education & Care

Highlights

- 1 Creates *MassEducate* & Expands Public Higher Education Opportunities**
 - Invests nearly **\$118 million** to create *MassEducate*, universal free community college and cover tuition & fees
 - Provides **\$80 million** to expand financial aid programs for residents attending state universities through *MASSGrant Plus* and funds scholarships for residents at nearly **\$176 million**
 - Invests **\$14 million** to state universities to provide wraparound services
 - Provides **\$5 million** to implement the *Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Higher Education* law
- 2 Maintains Public K-12 Commitment**
 - Provides *Chapter 70* funding at **\$6.9 billion** and ups minimum aid to **\$104 per student**
 - Funds *universal school meals* at **\$170 million**
 - Provides nearly **\$494 million** for *special education*, nearly **\$100 million** for *regional transportation costs*, and **\$16 million** for *rural school aid assistance*
 - Invests **\$6 million** in *social-emotional* and *mental health* support, **\$3 million** in *genocide education*, and **\$1 million** in *hate crime prevention*
- 3 Expands Access to Quality Child Care**
 - Invests a total of **\$475 million** in *Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) grants* and *makes the C3 grant program permanent*
 - Provides **\$18.5 million** for *Head Start*, **\$65 million** to *increase salaries* for *early educators*, and **\$20 million** for *early literacy initiatives*
 - Invests a total of **\$22.5 million** to support the *expansion of universal pre-kindergarten*, including in Gateway Cities

The Massachusetts Senate's *MassEducate* Program that would make community college free for ALL just passed in the legislature.

Here's answers to the frequently asked questions.

MassSenate

Q : Do I have to make a certain income to qualify?

A : All income levels are eligible. Certain income levels may be eligible for additional stipends.

MassSenate

Q : I'm in my 50s and want to earn my degree. Are there age restrictions for this program?

A : No. This program does not impose age restrictions.

MassSenate

Q : Is there support for books and other associated costs?

A : Yes! For students making up to 125% of the state's median income, *MassEducate* offers a \$1,200 stipend for books, supplies and other costs of attendance.

MassSenate

Q : When would this go into effect?

A : *MassEducate* is in effect as of Fall 2024

MassSenate



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Community Support & Local Aid

Highlights

- Provides **\$1.3 billion** in funding for **Unrestricted General Government Aid (UGGA)** to support additional resources for cities and towns
- Invests **\$204 million** in **Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs)** to support regional public transportation systems that connect all regions of the Commonwealth, including **\$110 million** from *Fair Share* funds
- Funds **payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT)** for state-owned land at **\$53 million**
- Provides more than **\$52 million** for **libraries**, including:
 - **\$19 million** for **regional library local aid**
 - **\$20 million** for **municipal libraries**
 - And more than **\$6 million** for **technology and automated resource networks**
- Supports the local creative economy by investing nearly **\$27 million** in the **Massachusetts Cultural Council** for local arts, culture, and creative initiatives

Expanding & Protecting Economic Opportunities

Highlights

- Invests nearly **\$680 million** to continue efforts to **lift families** out of deep poverty
- Provides nearly **\$60 million** for **adult basic education** services to improve **workforce skills** and **\$10 million** to the **Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund** to connect under- and unemployed workers with higher paying jobs
- Addresses food insecurity with a more than **\$42 million** investment in the **Massachusetts Emergency Food Assistance Program** and a **\$15 million** investment in **Healthy Incentives Programs (HIP)** to maintain access to healthy food options for households in need
- Provides more than **\$10 million** for **Career Technical Institutes** to provide residents access to **career technical training** and **grow the workforce pipeline**
- Funds a **community empowerment and reinvestment grant program** at **\$10 million** to provide economic support to communities disproportionately impacted by the criminal legal system
- Invests **\$5.4 million** in the **Innovation Pathways** program to continue to connect students to training and post-secondary opportunities in STEM fields

Health, Mental Health & Family Care

Highlights

- 1 Expands Access to Quality Health Care**
 - Provides more than **\$20 billion** for *MassHealth*
 - Invests **\$625 million** in nursing facility *Medicaid* rates, including **\$40 million** to *pay nurses competitive wages*
 - Funds *Chapter 257* rates at **\$390 million** to support *direct care providers* across the continuum of care
 - Supports *family and adolescent health* at nearly **\$28 million**, including:
 - More than **\$9 million** for comprehensive family planning services
 - And **\$6.7 million** to enhance federal Title X family planning funding
 - Invests nearly **\$15 million** in *maternal and child health*, including
 - More than **\$10 million** for *pediatric palliative care services*
 - And a policy change that *allows terminally ill children up to age 22* to receive pediatric palliative care services
 - Provides **\$2 million** for *reproductive health* access, infrastructure and safety
- 2 Supports Vulnerable Residents**
 - For the first time, residents are allowed to *identify as non-binary on birth certificates*, along with codifying the right to do so on *drivers licenses*
 - Supports those with *intellectual and developmental disabilities* at nearly **\$3 billion**
 - Invests nearly **\$213 million** in a complete range of *substance use disorder treatment and intervention* services
 - Provides nearly **\$31 million** for *Early Intervention (EI) services* for children with developmental delays and disabilities
 - Provides nearly **\$30 million** for *local Councils on Aging*
- 3 Invests in Mental Health for Everyone**
 - Provides more than **\$622 million** for *adult support services* and more than **\$131 million** for *children's mental health services*
 - Invests nearly **\$34 million** in *Family Resource Centers* for community-based services
 - Continues the important work of the *Behavioral Health, Access, Outreach and Support Trust Fund* with **\$20 million**
 - Invests **\$5 million** in *Children Advocacy Centers*

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Transportation

Highlights

- Provides **\$250 million** for the **Commonwealth Transportation Fund (CTF)** to increase **transportation infrastructure investments** by **\$1.1 billion** over the next five years, including:
 - **\$127 million** to double operating support for the **MBTA**
 - **\$63 million** in debt service to **leverage additional borrowing capacity**
 - And **\$60 million** in operating support for **MassDOT**
- Funds **capital investments** in the **MBTA** by at **\$60 million**, including **\$10 million** for resilient rail services, and provides **\$36 million** for the **MBTA workforce safety reserve**, **\$20 million** to support implementation of **low-income fare relief**, and **\$10 million** for the **MBTA Academy**
- Supports regional transit funding at a total investment of **\$204 million**, including **\$110 million** to support the work of **Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs)** that serve the entire Commonwealth. Fair Share funding includes:
 - **\$66 million** in **direct operating support** for Regional Transit Authorities
 - **\$30 million** for systemwide implementation of **fare-free transit service**
 - **\$10 million** to **incentivize connections** between regional transit routes
 - **\$4 million** to support expanded mobility options
- Funds supplemental **aid for cities and towns for roads and bridges** at **\$45 million**
- Invests **\$7.5 million** in **water transportation ferry services**

Housing

Highlights

- Ends the practice of **home equity theft**
- Prioritizes relief for families and individuals who face financial instability, including more than **\$326 million** for **Emergency Assistance family shelters**, nearly **\$198 million** for **Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT)**, nearly **\$232 million** for the **Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP)**, more than **\$57 million** for **HomeBASE** and **\$27 million** for the **Alternative Housing Voucher Program (AHVP)**
- Provides **\$113 million** to **local housing authorities** and invests nearly **\$111 million** in assistance for individuals experiencing homelessness
- Provides **\$10.5 million** for **Housing Consumer Education Center**, **\$10.5 million** for **unaccompanied homeless youth**, **\$8.9 million** for **supportive permanent housing** and **\$8.9 million** for **Home and Healthy for Good** services to support homeless LGBTQ+ youth