

## Reality of the Housing Crisis and Help Available

### About the Massachusetts Housing Crisis

- Boston ranks the second most expensive in the **world** for a one-bedroom apartment rental (*Numbeo Cost of Living Index, 2025; reported by NBC Boston*)
- Greater Boston has the second highest rate of homelessness among 45 large US cities; behind only New York City. (*Boston Indicators, 8/5/24.*)
- The report says there is a “severe shortage of affordable market-rate housing, limiting the ability of people of more modest means to find decent housing without public support.”

### About Housing Assistance in Massachusetts

There is not enough subsidized (reduced rent) housing and little turnover in the units that do exist. In 2022 the average wait time across subsidized housing waitlists was four years. The longest waitlists are nearly two decades long. Many, if not most, waitlists are not accepting new applications.

You may have heard about “emergency housing” or “priority status”. If you qualify, a priority will get you housing faster—but not immediately; it might open a waitlist to you, or move you higher on the waitlist. While it can be discouraging, if you may be eligible, we encourage you to apply.

### How We Can Help

- **We can** explain your rights if you are facing eviction and if there are any actions you can take that may help you keep your housing.
- **We can** tell you about the emergency homelessness prevention funds, such as the RAFT program, whether you may qualify, and how to apply.
- **We can** refer you to local agencies to ask if they know of other funds or options to keep your housing.
- **We can** give you information about how to start a search for subsidized housing, where to learn more and where you may be able to get help to apply.
  - **We cannot** apply for you or get you housing.
- **If you are unhoused (or about to be) we can** tell you about shelters for individual adults or families and how to apply. Massachusetts family shelters may have waitlists. The state is turning some families away from shelter even if they have no safe place to go.