The Regional Housing Network of Massachusetts

has been in continuous existence for over 35 years. Our member agencies manage approximately 20,000 rental vouchers for low-income families and individuals; provide housing services and support through the Housing Consumer Education Centers; preserve and produce affordable rental apartments and homes for first-time homebuyers; and work closely with our State and Federal partners on legislative initiatives that support a strong affordable housing agenda.

FUNDING & RESOURCES

The Housing Consumer Education Centers work with other local and regional agencies to provide better information and referrals to people in need of assistance. Annually, over 260 agencies routinely exchange information with the HCECs statewide, including advocacy groups, legal service centers, community action agencies, and community health centers.

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The Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development provides substantial funding to the RHN member agencies to support the work of the HCECs statewide. Other support is provided on a regional basis by the funding sources of each individual agency.

People served through HCECs statewide from 2002 - 2013

503,000

Calls routed to the HCECs monthly through the 800 number alone

1,400

Number of people who were turned away when contacting the HCEF

0
Ensuring a Bright Future at MBHP

On Stable Footing with a New Home and Job

Willie knows firsthand how precarious life can be. He lost a good job due to the recession and could no longer afford his rent. He and his young daughter ended up couch surfing with friends until he applied for HomeBASE rental assistance through the Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership (MBHP) HCEC. Willie eventually found temporary employment, but was seriously injured on the job and unable to work. When Willie was well enough to work again, MBHP staff connected him with Jewish Vocational Services (JVS), which identified job leads and prepared him for interviews. A position at Whole Foods seemed a good match. He got the job and was recently promoted to full-time. His housing situation stabilized as well. When his HomeBASE subsidy ran out, Willie worked with MBHP to find permanent housing. Priscilla and Joanea, his case managers, worked doggedly to get him into Boston public housing. His new two-bedroom apartment in the Gallivan is right across the street from his 6-year-old daughter’s school.

Willie is very grateful to Priscilla—who helped in ways that went far beyond her job duties including getting clothing, school supplies and Christmas gifts for his daughter. Joanea has been terrific as well, he added. “I love Joanea. She got me my job and pushed through the BHA housing.”

Helping in a Variety of Ways at Community Teamwork, Inc.

Accessing the Home Modification Loan Program

David, his wife, and newborn child found their way to the HCEC at Community Teamwork Inc. looking for assistance of any kind. David’s unemployment had run out and the family had no resources. Once it was determined that he was a veteran, Veterans Specialist immediately connected the family with access to Chapter 115 benefits to generate income and helped them complete an application for an apartment through the Lowell Housing Authority. Because the housing authority has a veterans preference, David and his family had an apartment within two weeks, and he is now back at work in the manufacturing industry.

Helping a Homeless Veteran Attain Housing

Greg and his fiancé went to Community Teamwork Inc. in Lowell after receiving their First-Time Homebuyer Certification through the Merrimack Valley Housing Partnership. Because Greg is confined to a wheelchair, they knew that whatever home they bought would need to be adapted for his use. After purchasing their home, they applied for and received a Home Modification Loan which allowed them to install a wheelchair ramp and chair lift without putting them in financial peril. Greg and his now wife are happily ensconced in their new home and Greg was able to carry his bride over the threshold the day they were married.

Working with Small Landlords at HAPHousing

Partners in the Business of Helping People

HAPHousing knows that good landlords are an essential component to maintaining housing stability. Sal Cangialosi is one of those good landlords. He works with HAPHousing to find solutions for tenants in crisis. One of Sal’s tenants, a single mother of five and domestic abuse survivor, fell four months behind in her rent after her husband moved out. He directed her to HAPHousing for help. With the assistance of the HCEC staff, she was able to pay her back rent and preserve her tenancy. She has even found a job that will enable her to pay her rent.

HAP’s HCEC provided both Sal and his tenant solid professional support, which led to good outcomes for each. Sal can meet his expenses and the family is still in their home. Recently Sal stopped by the apartment to see how the family was doing. “Sal, am I going to be able to stay in this apartment?” the tenant’s son asked. Thanks to HAP and HCEC Sal was able to say, “Yes you can!”

Mission and Goal of the Housing Consumer Education Centers

The goal of Housing Consumer Education is to provide consumers with the information and skills they need to be self-reliant and successful in the private housing market. Educated and knowledgeable housing consumers often can solve their own housing problems. The Regional Housing Network of Massachusetts created the program in 2001 and our members manage nine Housing Consumer Education Centers across the Commonwealth. These Centers provide a variety of services and materials designed for all types of housing consumers and providers, including tenants, first-time homebuyers, homeowners, and owners of small rental properties. Housing information can also be found on the HCEC website, along with the location and contact information for the Centers: www.masshousinginfo.org

Mission

The HCECs show us what the critical housing needs in Massachusetts are at any point in time.

The number of families & individuals requesting assistance to avoid eviction in the last ten years skyrocketed from 1,454 to 10,849.

HCECs provide more than housing crisis intervention. They offer proactive assistance and education to homeowners and those who want to buy a home.

Each year on average more than 2,587 come to the HCECs for homebuyer education.

and more than 1,772 rental property owners receive information on property management practices.

in FY '06

1,314

People were assisted seeking foreclosure prevention

After the recession in 2008 that number continued to climb and peaked at 4,823.
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PARTNER AGENCIES

Berkshire Housing Development Corporation
1 Fenn St., 3rd floor, Pittsfield, MA 01201, 413-499-1630
Region: Berkshire County, President: Elton Ogden
www.berkshirehousing.com

Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority
1 Fenn St., 4th floor, Pittsfield, MA 01201, 413-443-7138
Region: Berkshire County, Executive Director: Brad Gordon

Community Teamwork, Inc.
155 Merrimack St., Lowell, MA 01852, 978-459-0551
Region: Middlesex & Essex Counties
Executive Director: Karen Frederick
www.comteam.org

Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority
40 Canoe St., Turners Falls, MA 01376, 413-663-5701
Region: Franklin County, Executive Director: Robin Sherman
www.fchra.org

HAP Housing
322 Main St., Springfield, MA 01105, 413-233-1500
Region: Hampden & Hampshire Counties
Executive Director: Peter Gagliardi
www.haphousing.org

Housing Assistance Corporation
460 West Main St., Hyannis, MA 02601, 508-771-5400
Region: Cape Cod and the Islands
President/CEO: Rick Presbrey
www.haoncapecod.org

Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership, Inc.
125 Lincoln St., Boston, MA 02111, 617-859-0400
Region: Greater Boston, Executive Director: Chris Norris
www.mbhp.org

RCAP Solutions, Inc.
12 East Worcester St., Worcester, MA 01604, 978-630-6600
Region: Worcester County
President/CEO: Karen Koller
www.rcapsolutions.org

South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc.
200 Howard St., Framingham, MA 01702, 508-247-2266
Region: Greater Framingham & Metro West
Executive Director: Jim Cuddy
www.smoc.org

South Shore Housing Development Corporation
169 Summer St., Kingston, MA 02364, 781-422-4200
Region: Plymouth & Bristol Counties
Executive Director: Carl Nagy-Koechlin
www.southshorehousing.org

Regional Housing Network of Massachusetts
18 Tremont St., Suite 401, Boston, MA 02108, 617-367-9798
Executive Director: Maureen Fitzgerald
www.regionalhousing.net

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