



# The Alternative Housing Voucher Program

Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Line Item 7004-9030

Established in 1995, the Alternative Housing Voucher Program (AHVP) provides rental assistance to low-income individuals with disabilities under age 60. DHCD's Division of Public Housing and Rental Assistance administers this program.

## Alternative Housing Vouchers

### How do the vouchers work?

- ✓ Participants can use vouchers to rent private market apartments.
- ✓ A tenant pays either 25% or 30% of their net income to the landlord, depending on whether or not all utilities are included in the rent. The local housing authority pays the remainder with AHVP funding. DHCD's Division of Public Housing and Rental Assistance administers this program.
- ✓ Vouchers can be used anywhere in Massachusetts, allowing individuals to lease whatever private market apartments they choose, rather than having to live in specific subsidized developments.

### Who is eligible?

- ✓ Eligible applicants are low-income people with disabilities under age 60 who are eligible under the Ch. 667 elderly/handicapped state public housing program.
- ✓ People with a wide variety of disabilities, including mental illnesses, mobility impairments, sensory disabilities, and developmental disabilities can benefit from AHVP.

### How does an interested participant apply?

- ✓ Applicants can apply at any of the 25 local housing authorities that have received an allocation of Alternative Housing Vouchers. If eligible, their names are placed on a waiting list.

## The Need

### As of October 2014:

- ✓ AHVP had a waiting list of 2,131 people for 17 reporting LHAs (out of 23 that issued vouchers at that time).
- ✓ For Section 8, the waiting list included 99,516 applicants. 30,952 of these were people with disabilities.

### As of December 2015:

- ✓ The federally-funded Money Follows the Person initiative in Massachusetts, which helps people move out of nursing homes with appropriate supports, has increased the need for affordable housing. 99 nursing home residents under 60 are enrolled in MFP and need housing.

As of December 2015, 554 vouchers are available statewide, including 120 new vouchers added after the FY16 funding increase. When AHVP vouchers first became available in 1996, **the program supported 800 vouchers!** The Governor's budget for FY17 level-funded AHVP at \$4.6 million. Advocates are seeking a **\$2.5 million increase, for a total of \$7.1 million**, in order to restore the original number of vouchers and provide stable housing for people with disabilities across Massachusetts.

For more information, contact Allegra Stout or Bill Henning at the Boston Center for Independent Living: 617-338-6665, [astout@bostoncil.org](mailto:astout@bostoncil.org), or [bhenning@bostoncil.org](mailto:bhenning@bostoncil.org).



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## Where Vouchers Are Issued:

Local Housing Authority	Vouchers
Acton	21
Amherst	20
Andover	5
Barnstable	13
Brockton	63
Cambridge	77
Charlton	18
Chelsea	8
Fitchburg	8
Holyoke	20
Ipswich	8
Lynn	23
Marlboro	4
Melrose	2
New Bedford	25
Newburyport	3
Provincetown H. A./HAC	4
Revere	98
Sandwich	23
Sharon	6
Spencer	47
Springfield	20
Westfield	17
Whitman	12
Worcester	4



After 3 years in nursing home care, Sue O'Brien was able to transition into her own subsidized apartment in time to celebrate Christmas 2014 with her family.

Increasing AHVP funding will stabilize individuals and communities throughout Massachusetts.