



# CHAPA Housing Briefs

September 13, 2017

## State Updates

### DHCD to Hold Information Sessions on Upcoming Rental Competitions

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) will hold multiple rental funding competitions over the next seven months. This includes a mini-competition for highly-ready family production projects in October and a rental round for supportive housing projects, with full applications likely due in November. DHCD also expects to hold a full rental round competition in February 2018 as well as a round for small-scale rental projects in March 2018.

DHCD has scheduled two general information sessions on the upcoming rental rounds to be held at DHCD on Thursday, September 28, at 1:30 p.m., and Friday, September 29, at 11:00 a.m. If you would like to attend one of sessions, please **click here** for information on how to register.

### DHCD Announces NOFA for Supportive Housing

DHCD released a **Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)** for supportive housing. DHCD will make available up to \$4.6 million from the National Housing Trust Fund during the December 2017 competition. About 100 MRVPs will also be available, with the potential of \$1,500 per unit per year in service funding attached to each voucher. Pre-applications for the competition will be due on October 5.

### DHCD Announces Comment Period for Regulations for Occupancy Standards and Tenant Participation for State-Aided Public Housing

On September 8, DHCD gave notice for a public comment period on **proposed amendments** to regulations on Occupancy Standards and Tenant Participation for State-Aided Housing (760 CMR 6.00). Written comments on the proposed regulatory amendments are due on October 6.

### MassHousing and DHCD Make Inaugural Awards of the Community Scale Housing Initiative

On August 24, MassHousing and DHCD **announced** \$2.2 million for the inaugural awards of the Community Scale Housing Initiative (CSHI). The awards will support the development and construction of 36 new affordable rental homes. CSHI funds smaller-sized affordable housing projects, between five and 20 units. The pilot program is open to affordable housing projects in communities with populations of 200,000 or less and where the community has committed a significant local match.

### Baker-Polito Administration Awards \$72 Million for Affordable Housing

In August, the Baker-Polito Administration **announced** \$72 million in housing subsidy funds and an additional \$28 million in state and federal low income housing tax credits to 25 projects in 17 communities for the creation, rehabilitation, and preservation of 1,970 housing units, including 1,698 affordable homes and 402 units reserved for very low-income and formerly homeless families.



### JOIN US FOR CHAPA'S 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY DINNER!

On October 26, CHAPA is celebrating 50 years of leadership promoting solutions to critical housing and homelessness issues across the state. Join us to commemorate our shared accomplishments and opportunities for continued collaboration! The early bird deadline and the deadline for sponsorships is September 29!  
**Reserve your seat today!**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**September 18, 2017**

CHAPA Homelessness Committee Meeting

**September 20, 2017**

CHAPA Production & Preservation Committee Meeting

**September 26, 2017**

CHAPA Public Housing & Rental Assistance Committee Meeting

CHAPA Regional Meeting: Boston

**October 4, 2017**

Older Adults, New Ground: Redefining Housing for Our Aging Population

**October 10, 2017**

CHAPA Regional Meeting: Springfield

CHAPA Regional Meeting: Northampton

**October 11, 2017**

CHAPA Regional Meeting: Pittsfield

**October 26, 2017**

CHAPA's 50th Annual Dinner

To view all CHAPA events please visit [www.chapa.org/event](http://www.chapa.org/event).

### WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Help us tell the story of CHAPA's impact throughout the years. Send photos & stories to [eroussinova@chapa.org](mailto:eroussinova@chapa.org).

## Community Meetings on Housing Court Expansion

Now that Housing Court has been expanded statewide, the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute and local partners are hosting a series of meetings to discuss implementation. For more information on the upcoming meetings, please [click here](#).

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# Federal Updates

## President Signs Three Month Continuing Resolution

On September 8, the President signed **H.R. 601**, providing new funds for disaster relief, a temporary increase in the federal debt ceiling, and a three-month continuing resolution (CR) – the latter two end on December 8, 2017. The CR continues all programs at FY2017 funding levels with a 0.68% across-the-board cut to stay within budget caps. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) **notes** that this does not change current funding levels for HUD rental assistance programs since they are funded on a calendar year basis. The \$15 billion in disaster relief includes \$7.4 billion in Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds for state and local governments and allows HUD to waive most CDBG regulations, but it does not change the requirement that 70% of the CDBG funding benefit low and moderate income persons.

## House Debate on FY2018 Omnibus Appropriations Bill Underway

On September 6, the House began debate on a consolidated appropriations bill (**H.R. 3354**) for the eight appropriations bills not yet approved by the full House, including Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD). Leadership hopes to pass a final bill by the end of this week, after working through almost 1,000 **proposed amendments**. As noted last month, final funding levels will depend on Congressional decisions about whether to lift Budget Control Act caps. The proposed funding levels for HUD in the House bill, if enacted, would result in the elimination of over 140,000 rental assistance vouchers next year nationwide, including about 6,600 in Massachusetts (see new CBPP **state fact sheets**). As of early this week, the House had **approved** nine amendments affecting HUD, including one to move \$28.4 million in **Fair Housing Initiatives Program** (FHIP) funds from the Private Enforcement Initiative program operated by nonprofits to the Administrative Enforcement Initiative for state and local governments.

## HUD Issues FY2018 Proposed Fair Market Rents (FMRs)

In a **notice** published on September 1 in the Federal Register, HUD published its **proposed FMRs** for FY2018. The new FMRs will go into effect on October 2 except in cases where HUD receives a request for a re-evaluation. Comments are due no later than October 2. As proposed, FMRs will increase in 18 FMR areas in Massachusetts and decline in one (the Lawrence FMR area), and 10 areas will see two-bedroom FMR increases of 10% or more. The two bedroom FMR for the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy FMR area will rise by 2.9% to a gross rent of \$1,740. The notice describes changes in the calculation method implemented this year to improve statistical reliability, including the use of zip code tabulation area (ZCTA) data this year for small area FMRs.

## HUD Publishes Notice on RAD Selection and Rents Given Increased RAD Authority

On August 23, HUD published a **notice** in the Federal Register discussing the application process for Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) awards, following the enactment of the FY2017 appropriations bill this May that raised the cap on the number of federal public housing units that have their subsidy converted from HUD's public housing fund to Section 8 under the project-based voucher or project-based rental assistance programs. The cap was raised from 185,000 to 225,000 units and the application deadline was extended to September 30, 2020. PHAs that have already submitted a Letter of Interest (LOI) to reserve a place on the RAD waiting list have 60 days from the notice to submit a complete application to HUD. As of August 1, the **waiting list** was 48,708 units, including 6,329 units from two PHAs in Massachusetts (Boston – 5,832 units; and Brookline – 497 units). As of last September, 2,218 public housing units in **Massachusetts** have converted or been approved for conversion.

## Census Bureau Releases 2016 Poverty Rate Estimates Using Supplemental Poverty Measure

On September 12, the U.S. Census Bureau released **updated poverty and health insurance data** for the nation, and updated **Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM)** data. The official poverty rate uses one set of gross income limits for the 48 continental states, meaning it doesn't capture differences in cost of living across regions, and it does not consider the impact of non-cash benefits such as SNAP and housing assistance. The SPM, by contrast, adjusts information thresholds for costs of living, household composition and receipts of many types of benefits. Using data averaged across three years (2014-2016), it found a poverty rate for Massachusetts of 13.7%, compared to 11.6% using the official measure, raising the estimated number of persons in poverty from 779,000 to 925,000.



## Recent Research & Reports

### New Study Examines Role of Neighborhood Environmental Hazards on Health and Potential Interventions

A new **study** published in the Harvard Law and Policy Review, *There's No Place Like Home: Reshaping Community Interventions and Policies to Eliminate Environmental Hazards and Improve Population Health for Low-Income and Minority Communities*, provides an exhaustive review of the role of environmental health hazards, such as lead, mold, pest infestation, radon, and carbon monoxide on individual safety and health, looks at shortcomings in current public policies, including housing policy, and suggests ways to better address these hazards.

### Study Finds HUD-Assisted Adults More Likely to Have Disabilities and Fair or Poor Health

A new **study**, *Health and Health Services Access among Adults with Disabilities who received Federal Housing Assistance*, estimates that 44% of adults (age 18+) receiving HUD rental assistance (housing choice vouchers, public housing, or project-based rental assistance) have a disability and that persons under the age of 62 made up 64% of those with a disability. While more likely to have health insurance, HUD-assisted residents with disabilities were also more likely to report fair or poor health and trouble affording health care.

### Updated State Fact Sheets on the Impact of the Housing Credit

The ACTION campaign has **released updated fact sheets** on the impact of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (Housing Credit) in each state, including data on the homes created or preserved, jobs supported, and local income and tax revenue generated. The fact sheets also include information on the affordable housing shortages by state.

### Study Finds Small Owners' Share of Rental Market Declining

Recent **research** by the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, reported in the **New York Times**, shows that institutional investors own a growing share of U.S. rental properties and units. The share of properties owned by individual investors fell to 74%, and the share of units they own to 48%, in 2015.



## CELEBRATING 50 YEARS!

Join us in celebrating **CHAPA's 50th Anniversary** this year! Help us make a difference in MA and across the nation - because everyone should have a safe, healthy, and affordable place to call home.

[Click here to donate!](#)

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