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CHAPA Housing Briefs

March 2021



State Updates

Ask Your State Legislators to Co-Sponsor CHAPA's Priorities

It's a new legislative session, and CHAPA staff are finalizing CHAPA's policy agenda for 2021-2022. In the meantime, we need your help in asking your legislators to show their support for affordable housing this session. Please [email or call your State Representative and Senator](#) and ask them to co-sponsor these [CHAPA legislative priorities](#). The legislation will create more affordable housing, restore our public housing, promote fair housing, raise resources for affordable housing, and protect tenants facing eviction.

Baker Administration Announces \$46 Million for Affordable Housing

On March 2, the [Baker-Polito Administration announced \\$46 million in affordable housing awards](#). The funds will support 12 projects in 8 communities, creating 572 new homes, including 507 affordable homes with 108 reserved for extremely low-income households. The projects will be supported by 73 project-based MRVP vouchers and 67 project-based Housing Choice vouchers. Additionally, DHCD is allocating \$4.8 million in state housing tax credits and \$10.9 million in federal housing tax credits.

DHCD Announces \$34 Million in CDBG Awards

On March 2, [DHCD announced \\$34 million in Community Development Block Grant \(CDBG\) awards](#) to 41 communities. The awards will help cities and towns rehabilitate more than 350 homes, fund 17 infrastructure improvement projects, and support programming for children, teenagers, survivors of domestic violence, homeless individuals, and the elderly.

Preliminary Guidance Issued on Housing Choice Law

On February 26, DHCD published preliminary guidance for local officials on determining voting thresholds for zoning ordinances and bylaws under the new Housing Choice law. The guidance, along with other information on the changes made to the state's zoning law Chapter 40A, can be found online on the [Mass.gov webpage for Housing Choice and MBTA Communities Legislation](#).

Rep. Arciero and Sen. Keenan Named Chairs of Housing Committee

On February 12, [Rep. James Arciero \(D-Westford\) and Sen. John Keenan \(D-Quincy\) were named the new Chairs of the Joint Committee on Housing](#). Rep. Honan, the longtime Housing Committee Chair, will lead the House Committee on Steering, Policy, and Scheduling. Sen. Crighton, the former Senate Housing Committee Chair, will now lead the Joint Committee on Financial Services.



Federal Updates

Congress Passes \$1.9 Trillion American Rescue Plan Act of 2021

On March 10, [Congress passed the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](#). This COVID-relief package includes \$20 billion for Emergency Rental Assistance, \$10 billion for a Homeowner Assistance Fund, \$5 billion for the HOME program, and \$5 billion in emergency housing vouchers, among other provisions.

HUD Awards \$2.7 billion to PHAs, \$92 million to Mass. PHAs

On February 23, the [Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\) awarded \\$2.7 billion in funding](#) to 2,900 Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) across the country. [Massachusetts PHAs received](#) \$92,409,222.

U.S. Treasury Releases Revised FAQs for Emergency Rental Assistance

On February 22, the [U.S. Treasury released revised FAQs on its Emergency Rental Assistance \(ERA\) program](#). The FAQs describe eligibility requirements and expanded uses for ERA, including internet and late fees.

HUD, VA, & USDA Extend Forbearance Protections through June 2021

On February 16, [HUD, Veterans Affairs \(VA\) and Agriculture \(USDA\) extended the foreclosure moratorium through June 30, 2021](#). Foreclosure protections for homeowners with government-backed mortgages were set to expire in March 2021.



Recent Research

JCHS Finds High-Income Black Homeowners Receive Higher Interest Rates

The [Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies \(JCHS\) released an analysis](#), which finds that Black homeowners have higher median interest rates on their home loans than white homeowners with substantially lower incomes.

Redfin Finds New Affordable Housing Doesn't Hurt Home Prices

[Redfin released a low-income housing report](#) of over 220,000 home sales in 26 metro areas, including Boston, across a 13-year period. Redfin found no consistent relationship between the addition of low-income housing and changes in nearby home prices.

CFPB Issues Analysis of Housing Insecurity and COVID-19 Pandemic

The [Consumer Financial Protection Bureau \(CFPB\) released a report of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on housing](#). CFPB's analysis finds that over 11 million families — nearly 10% of U.S. households nationwide — are at risk of eviction and foreclosure.

UMASS Donahue Institute and Partners Release Greater Springfield Regional Housing Analysis Report

UMASS Donahue Institute, Way Finders, the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, and the Metropolitan Springfield Housing Study Advisory Committee released a [report studying Pioneer Valley housing issues](#). The report found more than half of all renters in the Pioneer Valley are housing cost-burdened.

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 17, 2021
[Municipal Engagement Initiative Office Hours](#)

March 19, 2021
[Municipal Engagement Initiative Office Hours](#)

April 8, 2021
[Rental Assistance Committee Meeting](#)



CHAPA's 2020 Annual Report is here! In case you missed it, check out all that we were able to accomplish together during this challenging year in [CHAPA's 2020 Annual Report](#).

CHAPA IN THE NEWS

CHAPA now has a Press Page on our website! Check it out for recent CHAPA quotes and highlights in the news.

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