

Language Analysis of Senate Ways & Means FY2020 Budget Proposal for Building Blocks Priorities

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BUILDING BLOCKS PRIORITIES

Included below are details on language changes for the Building Blocks Coalition budget priorities as made by the [FY2020 Senate Ways & Means Budget proposal](#). If the budget priority is not included in the text following this table, there were no substantive language changes made to the line-item.

Line Item	Program	FY20 Request	Senate Ways & Means FY20 Budget	House FY20 Budget	Gov FY20 Budget	FY19 Budget
7004-9024	MRVP	\$130,000,000	\$104,000,000†	\$110,000,000	\$100,000,000	\$100,000,000
7004-9030	AHVP	\$8,000,000	\$8,000,000	\$7,550,000	\$6,150,000	\$6,150,000
7004-9005	Public Housing Operating	\$72,000,000	\$72,000,000	\$72,000,000	\$65,500,000	\$65,500,000*
7004-9007	Public Housing Reform	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
7004-3036	Housing Consumer Ed. Centers	\$4,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,750,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
7004-9316	RAFT	\$27,000,000	\$15,274,232**	\$15,274,232**	\$15,274,232**	\$20,000,000
7004-0108	HomeBASE	\$28,000,000	\$25,825,000	\$25,825,000	\$25,825,000	\$32,000,000
7006-0011	Foreclosure Prevention	\$2,050,000	\$2,050,000	\$2,050,000	\$2,050,000	\$1,550,000
7004-3045	Tenancy Preservation Program	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000
7004-0104	Home & Healthy for Good	\$2,390,000	\$2,390,000	\$2,390,000	\$2,390,000	\$2,390,000
4120-4001	MassAccess	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000
4000-0007	Unaccompanied Homeless Youth	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$3,300,000	\$3,300,000	\$3,300,000
7004-0106	New Lease	\$250,000	-	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
NEW	Housing Choice	\$5,300,000	-	-	\$5,301,159	-

* Not including earmarks

** The budget proposals would make \$4,725,768 available to RAFT through the Housing Preservation and Stabilization Trust Fund, bringing total FY2020 funding for RAFT to \$20,000,000

† The Senate Ways & Means budget would allow \$6 million in unexpended MRVP funds from FY2019 to carry over into FY2020, bringing total FY2020 funding for MRVP to \$110,000,000

Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (7004-9024)

Description of Changes:

- Requires that 75% of all new vouchers be targeted to households at or below 30% AMI
- Removes language authorizing LHAs to implement a homeless prevention program
- Raises fair market rent levels for mobile vouchers issued or leased after August 1, 2019, to current fair market rent levels
- Allows administering agencies to determine rent reasonableness
- Adds reporting requirement for the number of days it takes to utilize a voucher and the number of families on the waitlist
- Removes language allowing funds to be used for a voucher management system
- Authorizes \$6 million in unexpended funds from FY2019 to continue into FY2020

Language:

For a program of rental assistance for low-income families and elderly persons through mobile and project-based vouchers; provided, that ~~such~~the assistance shall only be paid under the Massachusetts rental voucher program; provided further, that the income of eligible households shall not exceed 80 per cent of the area median income; provided further, that the department ~~may~~shall require that not less than 75 per cent of all new vouchers administered by each administering agency under contract to the department be targeted to households whose income at initial occupancy does not exceed 30 per cent of the area median income; provided further, that the department of housing and community development may award mobile vouchers to eligible households currently occupying project-based units that shall expire due to the non-renewal of project-based rental assistance contracts; provided further, that the department, as a condition of continued eligibility for vouchers and voucher payments, may require disclosure of social security numbers by participants and members of a participant's household in the Massachusetts rental voucher program for use in verification of income with other agencies, departments and executive offices; provided further, that if a participant or member of a participant's household fails to provide a social security number for use in verifying the household's income and eligibility, then that household shall no longer be eligible for a voucher or to receive benefits from the voucher program; provided further, that the monthly dollar amount of each voucher shall be the department-approved monthly rent of the unit less the monthly amount paid for rent by the household; provided further, that any household that is proven to have caused intentional damage to its rental unit in an amount exceeding 2 months of rent during any 1-year period shall be terminated from the program; provided further, that if the use of a mobile voucher is or has been discontinued, then the mobile voucher shall be reassigned; provided further, that subsidies shall not be reduced due to the cost of inspections; provided further, that notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, each household holding a voucher shall pay at least 30 per cent, but not more than 40 per cent, of its income as

rent; provided further, that the department shall establish the amounts of the mobile and project-based vouchers so that the appropriation in this item shall not be exceeded by payments for rental assistance and administration; provided further, that the department shall not enter into commitments which shall cause it to exceed the appropriation set forth in this item; provided further, that the department may impose certain obligations for each participant in the Massachusetts rental voucher program through a 12-month contract, which shall be executed by the participant and the department; provided further, that ~~such~~the obligations shall include, but ~~shall~~ not be limited to, job training, counseling, household budgeting and education, as defined ~~in~~under regulations promulgated by the department and to the extent ~~said~~the programs are available; provided further, that each participant shall be required to undertake and meet these contractually established obligations as a condition for continued eligibility in ~~said~~the program; provided further, that ~~for continued eligibility, each participant shall execute such 12-month contract~~ not later than September ~~1, 2018~~2, 2019, if ~~said~~the participant's annual eligibility recertification date occurs between June 30, ~~2018~~2019 and September ~~1, 2018~~2, 2019, and otherwise not later than the annual eligibility recertification date, each participant shall execute the 12-month contract for continued eligibility; provided further, that any participant who is over ~~the age of~~ 60 years of age or who is disabled may be exempt from any obligations unsuitable under particular circumstances; provided further, that ~~the department may assist participating local housing authorities at their written request in the immediate implementation of a homeless prevention program utilizing alternative housing resources available~~may take all steps necessary to enable them for low income families and the elderly by designating to transfer mobile voucher program participants in from the Massachusetts rental voucher program ~~as at risk of displacement by public action through no fault of their own into another housing subsidy program~~; provided further, that the department's approved monthly rent levels for mobile vouchers issued or leased after August 1, 2019 shall not be less than the current area-wide fair market rent based on unit size as established annually by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development; provided further, that the rent level for mobile vouchers shall be determined reasonable by the administering agency; provided further, that for mobile vouchers currently leased, the new rent level shall not begin until the anniversary date of the lease; provided further, that not later than March 16, 2020, the department shall report to the house and senate committees on ways and means and the joint committee on housing ~~not later than December 15, 2018~~ on the utilization of rental vouchers during the last 3 fiscal years under this item and item 7004-9030; provided further, that the report shall include, but not be limited to, the: (i) number and average value of rental vouchers ~~currently~~ distributed in the commonwealth, in each county and in each municipality; (ii) average number of days that it takes for a family to utilize a voucher after receiving it from the administering agency; and (iii) number of families waiting for a rental voucher; provided further, that the report shall comply with state and federal privacy standards; ~~provided further, that the department shall expend funds from this item for costs related to the completion of the voucher management system; and~~ provided further, that ~~the department shall make its best effort~~up to complete and implement the voucher management system not later than June 30, \$6,000,000 appropriated for this item in fiscal year 2019 shall not revert but shall be made available for the purposes of this item in fiscal year 2020

Public Housing Authority Operating Subsidy (7004-9005)

Description of Changes:

- Removes requirement for LHAs to offer a first preference for elderly public housing units to elderly applicants receiving MRVP assistance
- Removes language preventing funds from being used for compensation of state employees
- Removes earmarks
- Includes the percentages are the state funds used to supply the \$65.5 million to the line-item.

Language:

For subsidies to housing authorities and non-profit organizations, including funds for deficiencies caused by certain reduced rentals in housing for the elderly, handicapped, veterans and relocated persons under sections 32 and 40 of chapter 121B of the General Laws; provided, that ~~notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all housing authorities operating elderly public housing shall offer first preference for elderly public housing units that are vacant on the effective date of this act, and thereafter, to those persons 60 years of age or older as of June 30, 2018 receiving rental assistance from the Massachusetts rental voucher program; provided further, that the department may expend funds appropriated in~~ the department may expend funds appropriated under this item for deficiencies caused by certain reduced rentals which may be anticipated in the operation of housing authorities for the first quarter of the subsequent fiscal year; provided further, that no funds shall be expended from this item to reimburse the debt service reserve included in the budgets of housing authorities; provided further, that ~~no funds shall be expended from this item in the AA object class for the compensation of state employees; provided further, that~~ the amount appropriated in this item shall be considered to meet all obligations under said sections 32 and 40 of said chapter 121B; provided further, that new reduced rental units developed in fiscal year ~~2019~~2020 eligible for subsidies under this item shall not cause any annualization that results in an amount exceeding the amount appropriated in this item; provided further, that all funds in excess of normal utilities, operations and maintenance costs may be expended for capital repairs; ~~provided further, that not less than \$50,000 shall be expended on the Winchester Housing Authority; provided further, that not less than \$100,000 shall be expended on the Pleasant Street Elderly Public Housing Development;~~ and provided further, that the administration shall make every attempt to direct efforts toward rehabilitating local housing authority family units requiring \$10,000 or less in repairs

Housing Consumer Education Centers (7004-3036)

Description of Changes:

- Removes reporting requirements

Language:

For housing services and counseling; provided, that funds shall be expended as grants to 9 regional housing consumer education centers operated by the regional non-profit housing authorities; [and](#) provided further, that the grants shall be awarded through a competitive application process under criteria established by the department; ~~provided further, that the department shall submit annual reports to the secretary of administration and finance, the house and senate committees on ways and means and the joint committee on housing detailing all expenditures of the program, including each regional housing consumer education center, the total number of persons who received information and referral services, the costs for such services rendered per consumer and the identification of consumer issues and trends; and provided further, that the department shall report to the house and senate committees on ways and means not later than January 4, 2019 on possible savings and efficiencies that may be realized through the consolidation of said services~~

Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (7004-9316)

** Governor Baker expects to make \$4,725,768 available to RAFT through the Housing Preservation and Stabilization Trust Fund, bringing the sum for the program to \$20,000,000*

Description of Changes:

- Requires [\\$4,725,768](#) to be transferred from the Housing Preservation and Stabilization Trust Fund to RAFT, bringing total funding for the program in FY2020 to \$20 million

Language:

For a program to provide assistance in addressing obstacles to maintaining or securing housing for families with: ~~(a)~~ a household income: [\(i\)](#) not greater than 30 per cent of area median income who are homeless and moving into subsidized or private housing or are at risk of becoming homeless; or ~~(b) a household income~~ [\(ii\)](#) greater than 30 per cent but not more than 50 per cent of area median income who are homeless and moving into subsidized or private housing or are at risk of becoming homeless due to a significant reduction of income or increased expenses; provided, that assistance shall be administered by the department of housing and community development through contracts with the regional HomeBASE agencies; provided further, that not less than 50 per cent of the funds shall be provided to households with an income not greater than 30 per cent of area median income, subject to the department's discretion based on data reflecting program demand and usage; provided further, that in distributing 50 per cent of the funds, the department shall prioritize those families most likely to otherwise require shelter services under item 7004-0101; provided further, that the amount of

financial assistance shall not exceed \$4,000 in any 12-month period; provided further, that the combined sum of benefits received by a family in a 12-month period from this item and item 7004-0108 shall not be more than the maximum level of short-term housing assistance in said item 7004-0108; provided further, that residential assistance payments may be made through direct vendor payments according to standards to be established by the department; provided further, that the agencies shall establish a system for referring families approved for residential assistance payments, who the agencies determine would benefit from these services, to existing community-based programs that provide additional housing stabilization supports, including assistance in obtaining housing subsidies and locating alternative housing that is safe and affordable for those families; provided further, that the program shall be administered under guidelines established by the department; provided further, that the department shall ~~report~~ submit quarterly reports to the house and senate committees on ways and means detailing the: (ia) number of families who applied for assistance; (iib) number of families approved for assistance; (iic) minimum, median and average amount of financial assistance awarded; (iid) total amount of assistance awarded to date, ~~including a breakdown~~ delineated by income category; and (ive) number of families falling into each income category; provided further, that the department shall track a family's reason for assistance by the same categories used in item 7004-0101; provided further, that not less than \$3,000,000 shall be expended to provide assistance to households of all sizes and configurations including, but not limited to, elders, persons with disabilities and unaccompanied youths; provided further, that in addition to the amount appropriated in this item, \$4,725,768 from the Housing Preservation and Stabilization Trust Fund established under section 60 of chapter 121B of the General Laws shall be made available to this item; and provided further, that household assistance funds shall be advanced to the administering agencies at the end of each month and before the next month's disbursement, the amount of which shall be estimated based on the prior month's expenditure with a reconciliation not less than annually

HomeBASE (7004-0108)

Description of Changes:

- Removes the \$300,000 cap on the DV/Substance Abuse program
- Corrects the name of Way Finders
- Removes language directing guidance to be developed for the DV/Substance Abuse program

Language:

For a program of short-term housing assistance to help families eligible for temporary emergency shelter under item 7004-0101 in addressing obstacles to maintaining or securing housing; provided, that the assistance provided under this item shall include not less than 12 months of housing stabilization and economic self-sufficiency case management services for each family receiving benefits under this item; provided further, that a family shall not receive more than a combined sum of \$10,000 in a 12-month period from this item and item 7004-9316; provided further, that so long as they meet the requirements of their housing stabilization plan, a family that received

household assistance under this item whose income exceeds 50 per cent of area median income shall not become ineligible for assistance due to exceeding the income limit for a period of 6 months from the date that the 50 per cent level was exceeded; provided further, that a family shall not be deemed ineligible as a result of any single violation of a self-sufficiency plan; provided further, that the department shall take all steps necessary to enforce regulations to prevent abuse in the short-term housing transition program, including a wage match agreement with the department of revenue; provided further, that a family that was terminated from the program or did not make a good faith effort to follow its housing stabilization plan during the term of its assistance shall be ineligible for benefits under said item 7004-0101 and this item for 12 months from the last date the family received assistance under said item 7004-0101 and this item, including housing stabilization and economic self-sufficiency case management services; provided further, that a family's housing stabilization plan shall adequately accommodate the ages and disabilities of the family members; provided further, that families receiving benefits under this program who are found ineligible for continuing benefits shall be eligible for aid pending a timely appeal under chapter 23B of the General Laws; provided further, that families who are denied assistance under this item may appeal that denial under said chapter 23B, including subsection (F) of section 30 of said chapter 23B and regulations adopted to implement said chapter 23B; provided further, that benefits under this item shall only be provided to residents of the commonwealth who are citizens of the United States or persons lawfully admitted for permanent residence or otherwise permanently residing under the color of law in the United States; provided further, that the department, as a condition of continued eligibility for assistance under this program, may require disclosure of social security numbers by all members of a family receiving assistance under this item for use in verification of income with other agencies, departments and executive offices; provided further, that if a family member fails to provide a social security number for use in verifying the family's income and eligibility, then the family shall no longer be eligible to receive benefits from this program; provided further, that the department shall administer this program through the following agencies, unless administering agencies are otherwise procured by the department: the Berkshire Housing Development Corporation; Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance, Inc.; Community Teamwork, Inc.; the Housing Assistance Corporation; the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority; HAPWay Finders, Inc.; Metro Housing Boston; the Lynn Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development; the South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc.; Housing Solutions for Southeastern Massachusetts, Inc.; and RCAP Solutions, Inc.; provided further, that the department shall reallocate financing based on performance-based statistics from under-performing service providers to above average service providers in order to move as many families from hotels, motels or shelters into more sustainable housing; provided further, that the department shall use funds provided under this program for stabilization workers to focus efforts on housing retention and to link households to supports, including job training, education, job search and child care opportunities available, and may enter into agreements with other public and private agencies for the provision of ~~such~~these services; provided further, that a stabilization worker shall be assigned to each ~~such~~ household; provided further, that funds shall be used to more rapidly transition families served by the program into temporary or permanent sustainable housing; provided further, that notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, not less than 90 days before promulgating or

amending any regulation, administrative practice or policy that would alter eligibility for or the level of benefits pursuant to under this program to less than the benefit level available on June 30, 20182019, the department shall file with the house and senate committees on ways and means and the clerks of the house of representatives and senate a report setting forth the justification for such changes including, but not limited to, any determination by the secretary of housing and economic development that available appropriations will be insufficient to meet projected expenses; provided further, that the department shall submit quarterly reports to the house and senate committees on ways and means, which shall include: ~~(a), but not be limited to,~~ the: (i) number of families served; ~~(b) the~~ii) type of assistance given; ~~(e) the number of families assisted through this program;~~ (d) theiii) average, minimum and maximum cost per family of suchthe assistance; and ~~(e) the~~iv) total number of families receiving benefits under 7004-0101 that have received assistance under 7004-0108 during the previous 3 years; provided further, that the department shall expend not less than \$300,000funds under item 7004-0108 on families residing in temporary emergency shelters and family residential treatment or sober living programs under items 4512-0200 and 4513-1130 if suchthe families otherwise meet all eligibility requirements applicable to emergency shelter under item 7004-0101, except that, solely for the purpose of this item, the fact that a family is residing in a temporary emergency domestic violence shelter under item 4513-1130 or in a family residential treatment or sober living program under item 4512-0200 shall not preclude such family from receiving assistance; ~~provided further, that guidance shall be developed by the department, in consultation with the department of public health, to provide that any unit in such temporary emergency shelter or family residential treatment or sober living program vacated through use of funds under this program shall have an opportunity to be filled by a family that is: (a) eligible both for emergency shelter under item 7004-0101 and for such domestic violence or family residential treatment or sober living program; and (b) referred to such temporary emergency shelter or family residential treatment or sober living program by the department~~the family from receiving assistance; provided further, that this item shall be subject to appropriation and, in the event of a deficiency, nothing in this item shall give rise to, or shall be construed as giving rise to, any enforceable right or entitlement to services in excess of the amounts appropriated in this item; and provided further, that household assistance funds shall be advanced to the administering agencies at the end of each month and before the next month's disbursement, the amount of which shall be estimated based on the prior month's expenditure with a reconciliation not less than annually

Home and Healthy for Good (7004-0104)

Description of Changes:

- Removes reporting requirement

Language:

For the home and healthy for good program operated by Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance, Inc. to reduce the incidence of chronic homelessness in the commonwealth; provided, that not less than \$250,000 shall be expended to continue a supportive housing initiative for unaccompanied homeless young adults who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning; [and](#) provided further, that Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance, Inc. shall be solely responsible for the administration of this program; ~~and provided further, that Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance, Inc. shall file a report with the clerks of the house of representatives and senate, the undersecretary of housing and community development and the chairs of the house and senate committees on ways and means not later than January 4, 2019 on the number of people served, the average cost per participant, the demographics of those served, whether participants have previously received government services and any projected cost savings in other state funded programs~~