

Massachusetts Mental Health Coalition

Co-Chairs

Rebekah Gewirtz, MPA

Executive Director
National Association of Social
Workers, Massachusetts
Chapter

Jennifer Warkentin, PhD

Director of Professional Affairs
Massachusetts Psychological
Association

Coalition Members

American Nurses Association
Massachusetts, Inc.
Association for Behavioral
Healthcare
Health Law Advocates
Massachusetts Association for
Mental Health
Massachusetts Association of
Behavioral Health Systems
Massachusetts Association of
Advanced Practice
Psychiatric Nurses
Massachusetts Health and
Hospital Association
Massachusetts Mental Health
Counselors Association
Massachusetts Psychiatric
Society
Massachusetts Psychological
Association
Mental Health Legal Advisors
Committee
National Alliance on Mental
Illness, Massachusetts
Chapter
National Association of Social
Workers, Massachusetts
Chapter
Parent Professional Advocacy
League



Please Co-Sponsor Amendment **#798** A Critical Increase to the Rental Subsidy Program for Department of Mental Health (DMH) clients (DHCD line item 7004-9033)

People who have serious and disabling mental health conditions *and* who are homeless are the most vulnerable among the vulnerable. Their needs are urgent. The time is NOW to:

- Discharge patients whose inpatient treatment course is complete and no longer qualify for acute care, yet are stuck in hospital facilities because of lack of supportive housing
- House the 3,178 people with serious mental illness that experience homelessness on any single night in Massachusetts (US Department of Housing & Urban Development, 2018)
- Meet the needs of people in treatment courts who face jail time without access to quality, affordable housing tied to treatment services
- Provide for unstably housed adults with mental health conditions living with aging or infirm parents
- Further reduce emergency department boarding—people waiting for beds to open in psychiatric inpatient units

“Without a safe, affordable place to live, it is almost impossible to achieve good health or to achieve one’s full potential.”

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

The additional sum of \$1 million in DHCD line item 7004-9033 will provide for new housing vouchers to roughly 80 people who are homeless or stuck in hospitals.

These vouchers will meet a portion of the need among DMH clients for quality, affordable housing as detailed in the DMH Housing Plan. A safe and stable home is critical to their effective treatment and recovery.

Please support this increase to improve the lives of people with mental illness, their families and their communities.

For additional information, contact Jessica Larochelle, MPH at the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health (MAMH): 617-742-7452 or jessicalarochelle@mamh.org