



# Your Journey Home



*“Breathe. Life will try to make choices for you but ultimately you have the power.”* —A MOTHER IN TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

# Applying for Shelter



## Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA)

### Dudley Square Branch

2201 Washington St., Roxbury .....617-989-6000

### Revere Branch

300 Ocean Ave., Revere.....781-286-7800

## Helpful information lines

**Application Information Unit** .....800-249-2007

*Info about how to apply for assistance and for services offered by DTA; however, it is usually best to go to a branch office **in person***

### Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

**Benefits Hotline** .....866-950-FOOD (3663)

*Info about qualifying and applying for SNAP*

**TIP** If you are denied housing, seek support through your advocate or a legal service (see pg. 13). All denials (EA, domestic violence, etc.) can be appealed. See pg. 14 for Special Cases.

## What to expect

When you arrive at DTA you will go through a screening process. **Be prepared to explain how you became homeless.** This will help DTA determine what resources are available to you and your family. If you qualify, you will receive Emergency Assistance (EA).

### Be sure to bring these documents with you:

- Driver's license or state ID
- Birth certificate
- Social security card
- Income tax return
- Documentation on any relevant health issues
- Child support information
- Proof of income
- Immigration documents (if not a US citizen)

**TIP** Expect a long wait at DTA; bring with you books, small toys, snacks, diapers, bottles, etc. for your children.

# Other Shelter Options

The following shelters have non-Emergency Assistance (EA) “community rooms” for short-term stays without a DTA referral and paperwork. Beds are *extremely* limited. Call first; do not just show up.

**Traveler’s Aid Family Emergency Shelter Program**

Boston.....617-542-7286  
*Must be former/current resident of Boston with children under 18*

**Sojourner House**, Roxbury .....617-442-0590

*Child care, housing advocacy, Spanish speaking staff*

**Queen of Peace**, Boston.....617-288-4182

*No teenagers and no male children over five years old*



***“Work hard, pay your bills, do everything you can to make sure that you don’t end up back in a shelter!”***

**—RECENTLY HOMELESS MOTHER OF TWO**

**TIP** These agencies provide free housing search assistance and counseling as well as stabilization services:

**HomeStart**, 678 Mass Ave., Cambridge ..... 617-234-5340

**HomeStart**, 105 Chauncy St., Boston ..... 617-542-0338

**Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD)**

Dept. of Housing and Homelessness Prevention

178 Tremont St., Boston ..... 617-348-6347

**Somerville Homeless Coalition**

One Davis Square, Somerville ..... 617-623-6111

# Housing Search

When you are placed in a shelter you will be assigned a case manager or a housing advocate to help you with your housing search. The housing advocate will become your ally in finding sustainable housing. Your advocate will help you establish your housing history so that you can fill out your new housing applications. The more information you are able to share with your advocate the better equipped they will be to help you.

Your housing advocate will also work with you to get your current

- credit reports
- CORI (if applicable)



**TIPS** Be aware of the voucher programs that are available to you based on your income.

Ask your housing advocate about **all** the housing options available to you: Public, State, State Emergency, Federal, Federal Emergency, and Section 8. If you move, be sure to keep your address current with all your open housing applications.

Work with shelter staff to develop a sustainable budget, including establishing a small savings plan to help with future housing costs.

***“Try to have a positive attitude because there’s a lot of negativity in this type of situation. Don’t let it bring you down.”***

—MOTHER IN SHELTER

# For Kids

**TIPS** If you are staying in an EA shelter, ask your caseworker about a program called **Cradles to Crayons** that provides free toys, clothes, and other supplies for children in need.

Call your school department's Title I coordinator or ask your case manager about early intervention, home-based, pre-school, and after-school programs.

Find out about summer camp opportunities where you're located and remember that families register early in the spring for summer camps.

## Clothes

**Children's Clothing Exchange**, Roosevelt Towers,  
391 Evereteze Way, Cambridge .....617-576-0039  
*T-Th 10am-4pm, every second and fourth Sat 11am-3pm*

## Child Care

**Our Place, Salvation Army**  
402 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge .....617-547-3400  
*Offers homeless women and children access to health care as well as childcare*

**Head Start Day Care**  
66-70 Union Sq, Somerville ..... 617-623-7370 x127

## Cambridge-Somerville Early Intervention

**The Guidance Center, Inc.**  
61 Medford St., Somerville. .... 617-629-3919 x114  
*Serves children from birth to age three who have or are at risk of developmental delays or other conditions*

***"I have to be a pain until something gets done. These children are our future. They need resources to succeed."*** —MOM IN SHELTER

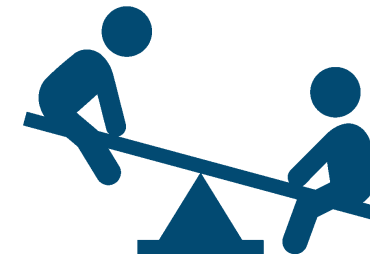
## Other Childcare or After-School Options

**Child Care Resource Center**  
130 Bishop Allen Dr., Cambridge .....617-547-1063

**Cambridge Center for Families**  
70 Rindge Ave., Cambridge .....617-349-6385

**Boston Center for Youth and Families,**  
1483 Tremont St., Boston .....617-635-4920

**Childcare Choices of Boston**, 105 Chauncy St., 2nd Floor, Boston  
Referral Specialist .....617-348-6641  
*M-F, 9:30am-3:30 pm*



## Library Programs

**Cambridge Public Library**  
449 Broadway, Cambridge, Children's Section ... 617-349-4038

**Boston Public Library**  
700 Boylston St., Boston .....617-536-5400  
*Public libraries often feature many free events for kids and parents such as story time or crafts*

# Staying Healthy



## Cambridge Health Alliance

### Cambridge Health Alliance

1493 Cambridge St., Cambridge .....617-665-1305

*Call to find a primary care provider or pediatrician*

If you are pregnant and need to be seen immediately, call either:

### Somerville Women's Health Center

230 Highland Ave., South Building, 5th Floor

Somerville .....617-591-4800

### Cambridge Women's Health Center

1493 Cambridge St., Cambridge .....617-665-2800

## Cambridge/Somerville Health Care for the Homeless

### Cambridge Salvation Army Clinic

402 Mass Ave., Cambridge.....617-547-3400

*Call for clinic times*

## Boston Health Care for the Homeless

**Boston Medical Center**, Boston.....617-638-8000

*Call to find a primary care provider or pediatrician*

**Jean Yawkey Place**, 780 Albany St., Boston.....857-654-1000

**TIP** Ask your doctor about the essential immunizations your child needs to stay healthy.

**TIP** Ask about their *Healthy Child Toolkit for Homeless Mothers*.

### Cambridge Hospital

**Psychiatric Emergency Department** .....617-665-1560

*For mental health care in an emergency*

## Sidney Borum, Jr. Health Center

130 Boylston St., Boston.....617-457-8140

*Adults and youth ages 12-29 only*

*"I realized if you show respect it makes people way more willing to help you."* —MOM IN TRANSITION

# Eating Well

## Pantries

To find a food pantry near you, call  
**Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline** at 800-645-8333

### **Margaret Fuller House Food Pantry**

71 Cherry St., Cambridge .....617-547-4680  
*W: 5pm-7pm, Th-Sat: 9am-12noon*

### **ABCD North End / West End Pantry**

One Michelangelo St., Boston .....617-523-8125

### **Haley House, Inc.**

23 Dartmouth St., Boston .....617-236-8132  
*Weekly food pantry and fresh produce*

### **Cambridge Economic Opportunity Commission (CEOC)**

11 Inman St. (basement), Cambridge .....617-868-2900  
*M, W: 4pm-6pm, T: 12noon-2pm, Th: 11am-1pm*



**TIPS** Learn about how to get food stamps at your local DTA office or call the SNAP hotline, **866-950-FOOD (3663)**

If you are pregnant or your child is under age five, you are eligible to apply for WIC coupons to purchase food.

## Meals

### **Women's Lunch Place**

67 Newbury St., Boston .....617-267-1722  
*M-Sat: 7am-2pm — breakfast 8am-11am, lunch 12noon-2pm*

### **Project SOUP**

Saint Benedict's Church, 15 Franklin St. (rear basement)  
East Somerville.....617-776-7687  
*M, T, F: 10am-2pm, W: 12noon-4pm, Th: 14, Sat: 9am-12noon*

### **Hearty Meals for All**

Somerville Community Baptist Church  
31 College Ave., Davis Square, Somerville  
*Community dinners second Friday of the month  
6:30pm (5:30pm for workshop on nutritional eating)*

### **Community Suppers**

First Congregational Church of Somerville  
89 College Ave., Davis Square, Somerville  
*Mondays beginning at 5pm*

# Training & Education



## For you

### **Crittenton Women's Union**

One Washington Mall, Boston .....617-259-2900  
*Career counseling and education programs  
for low-income women/mothers*

### **YouthBuild Boston**

504 Dudley St., Roxbury .....617-445-8887  
*Job-training and education programs for low-income youth ages 16-24*

### **One Family Scholar**

186 South Street, 4th Floor, Boston..... 617-423-0504 x214  
*A college scholarship program for low-income, homeless single parents*

**TIP** If you are enrolled in school  
(or you work) you may be eligible  
for more benefits, such as discounted  
childcare and transportation vouchers.

## For your child

### **Cambridge Schools**

**Homeless Family Liaison** .....617-349-6551

### **Somerville Schools**

**Homeless Family Liaison** ..... 617-625-6600 ext. 6028

### **Boston Schools**

#### **Homeless Education Resource**

**Network Service Coordinator** .....617-635-8037

## Your child has a right to:

- Remain in her/his old school or transfer to one nearest to where you are currently staying
- K-6 grader living more than a mile away from school can get free transportation to/from school
- 7-8 grader living more than 1.5 miles away from school can get free transportation to/from school
- Begin school immediately even before all paperwork has been completed
- Obtain equal access to all school programs and services
- Receive free school breakfast and lunch

***“Try to use your time wisely. Since you’re gonna be here go to school, do something instead of just sitting here wasting your time.”***

—MOTHER OF TWO IN SHELTER

# Transportation

## MBTA

### **Transportation Access Pass (TAP)**

*If you are disabled, you may qualify for a discounted access pass; ask your health care provider for assistance with the on-line application*

[http://mbta.com/riding\\_the\\_t/accessible\\_services/default.asp?id=17163](http://mbta.com/riding_the_t/accessible_services/default.asp?id=17163)

### **Children 11 and under**

Up to two children ride for free when accompanied by a paying adult

### **School Enrollment**

Junior high and high school students ride for 50% off T fares and are eligible for a \$20/month Student T-Pass good for unlimited travel on bus, subway, express bus, and commuter rail.



**TIPS** As head of household enrolled in school or working, you may be eligible for transportation support. Be sure to check with your DTA worker (and shelter case manager) about possible childcare and transportation help.

Parents can call School Homeless Family Liaison staff (see page 9) for information or help with school transportation for their children.

# Support & Empowerment

## **YogaHope**

*A non-profit outreach organization providing free yoga classes to underserved women; classes are available at:*

- Transition House, Cambridge .....617-591-6909
- Meridian House, Boston .....617-569-6050
- Women's Lunch Place, Boston .....617-267-6803
- Women's Hope, Dorchester .....617-442-0048
- The Family Center, Somerville .....617-628-8815
- Boston Alcoholics Anonymous** .....617-426-9444
- Boston Narcotics Anonymous** .....617-884-7709
- Cambridge Cares About AIDS/AIDS Action**  
17 Sellers St., Cambridge .....617-661-3040

## **Reaching Out About Depression (ROAD)** .....617-591-6909

*A community outreach program for low income women in Cambridge and Somerville in need of emotional support that provides various free and confidential workshops*

## **Somerville Family Center**

366 Somerville Ave., Somerville .....617-628-8815  
*A non-profit family services agency that provides family therapy, parenting workshops, and other family-friendly events*

## **Cambridge Women's Center**

56 Pleasant St., Cambridge .....617-354-8807  
*A women's-only safe space and resource center*

## **The Guidance Center**

5 Sacramento St., Cambridge .....617-354-2275  
*Early childhood and family services*

## **Mass Coalition for the Homeless**

15 Bubier St., Lynn .....781-595-7570  
*Provides help during short-term crisis to homeless or those at-risk to relocate quickly or avoid homelessness altogether*

## **Homes for Families**

14 Beacon St. #615, Boston .....617-227-4188  
*A collaborative of families who have experienced homelessness, they organize and advocate for improved policies that address root causes of family homelessness*

***"Just take it one day at a time."***

**—RECENTLY HOUSED MOM OF THREE**



# Legal Help



## **Cambridge and Somerville**

**Legal Services** .....617-603-2700

## **Greater Boston**

**Legal Services** ..... 617-371-1234 or 617-742-9179

## **SPAN Inc.**

105 Chauncy St., 6th Floor

Boston..... 617-423-0750 or 617-482-2717

*Assistance to formerly or currently incarcerated. Priorities are case management, housing, basic needs, social security benefits, career development, health services, peer support groups*

## **Community Legal Services and Counseling Center (CLSACC)**

One West St., Cambridge .....617-661-1010

*Priorities are family law, housing, immigration, disability benefits*

## **VLP Volunteer Lawyers Project (Boston Bar Association)**

90 Chauncy St., Suite 400, Boston .....617-423-0648

[www.masslegalhelp.org](http://www.masslegalhelp.org)

*Priorities are family law, homeownership, unemployment, bankruptcy, criminal record sealing*

## **Harvard Legal Aid Bureau**

23 Everett St., Cambridge .....617-495-4408

*Priorities are employment law issues, family law/domestic violence, foreclosure, housing, SSI/SSDI, unemployment compensation benefits*

## **Community Legal Assistance Services Project (CLASP)**

Cambridge Multi-Service Center

19 Brookline St., Cambridge .....617-349-6340

*Free legal clinic for Cambridge people who are homeless every Tuesday at 8:30am*

**TIP** If you have a legal issue be sure to get started early; the process of finding a legal advocate and completing your case can be lengthy.

# Family Stabilization Services Once You Are Housed

**Family Stabilization Services** are an important part of maintaining your new household. Typically services include having a case manager or an advocate visit you in your new home to help you connect with your local resources such as a bank, daycare, fuel assistance, school system, parenting groups, food pantry, library, GED, One-Stop Career Center, and more.

Find out what stabilization services your agency offers; work with your case manager to put those in place **before** you move into your new home. Doing this will help ease your and your children's transition into your new home and help you stay there.



*“When you are first housed it is important to hold on to your supports and realize it will take time to get settled.”*

—NEWLY HOUSED MOM

**TIPS** Read your lease thoroughly. If you have questions, ask your landlord or advocate. Learn and understand your rights and responsibilities as a tenant.

Have your mail forwarded to your new address so that you don't miss key communication; it is critical to change your address with the housing authorities that you have applied to as well.

As soon as possible, get connected with a new physician and pediatrician in your new location to maintain good health for yourself and your children. Make sure to update your address with Mass Health or other insurance provider.

# Special Cases

There may be additional services available to you if you have become homeless and you are:

## a victim of domestic violence

Call SafeLink, a 24 hour-hotline, at **877-785-2020** for information

or

## a veteran

Call the Department of Veterans Affairs, Women Veterans' Homelessness Program, at **857-364-4027** or the Cambridge Veterans' Services Dept., 51 Inman St., Cambridge, at **617-349-4761** to learn about benefits

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# Glossary of Terms

**Community Rooms/Beds:** A specific number of beds in a shelter that do not need a DTA/DHCD referral

**CORI:** Criminal Offender Record Information

**DHCD:** Department of Housing and Community Development

**DTA:** Department of Transitional Assistance

**EA:** Emergency Assistance

**Section 8:** a federal housing choice voucher program that sponsors subsidized housing for low-income families and individuals. There are two types:

1) Tenant based: Your subsidies go with you anywhere you want to live

2) Project based: The subsidies apply to a specific apartment and cannot be transferred to another

**SNAP:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program (food stamps)

For additional information or to provide corrections or updates to this guide, please contact the Cambridge Commission on the Status of Women at **617-349-4697**.



A printable pdf of this guide is available at <http://cambridgewomenscommission.org/youfindyourstrength>

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