



METROWEST HOUSING MATTERS



WELCOME TO *METROWEST HOUSING MATTERS*, THE METROWEST HOUSING COALITION'S
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

ABOUT US

>>> THE METROWEST HOUSING COALITION

The MetroWest Housing Coalition (MWHC) is a diverse group of stakeholders who work together to support access to affordable housing in the region. We collaborate to share resources, engage in advocacy opportunities, and address systemic barriers to housing stability. The MWHC is convened by the MetroWest Care Connection.

CHECK OUT THE LATEST ON HOUSING IN MW <<<

We're excited to share the **sixth edition** of our quarterly newsletter! Inside, you'll find updates on housing initiatives, valuable community resources, and upcoming events in MetroWest. Stay informed and connected by subscribing to our newsletter!

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OUR
NEWSLETTER:**

[HTTPS://SHORTURL.AT/CICY3](https://shorturl.at/cicy3)





➤➤➤ MEET OUR NEW COMMUNITY ORGANIZER: CHARLIE CHRIST

Over the past five years, Charlie has organized and advocated within diverse fields such as healthcare, education and professional development, and labor, with an emphasis on confronting all systemic barriers affecting working-class people. Although housing is one of the most far-reaching areas of structural inequality in American life, Charlie believes this provides an opportunity to build broad coalitions committed to providing sustainable housing for all. Beginning at the community level, he is committed to amplifying the voices of those who have been historically marginalized and supporting their visions for a better future—one that recognizes housing as a fundamental human right.



Charlie received his Master's in History from Boston College, where his research focused on U.S. Social Movements, Race and Inequality, and Transnational Antifascism. His most fulfilling historical work has been in collaboration with the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives, an educational non-profit that promotes social activism and the defense of human rights through the memory of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, 2800 American men and women who volunteered to fight fascism during the Spanish Civil War. He is currently pursuing a PhD at Boston College. Charlie is a veteran of the U.S. Coast Guard.

➤➤➤ 2026 FOCUS AREAS & INITIATIVES

This year, the MWHC is continuing to deepen our work alongside residents, community partners, and leaders across the region. With support from the Community Foundation for MetroWest, we are implementing a public education and awareness campaign that will share accessible information about housing resources, housing systems, and pathways for community advocacy throughout the MetroWest region. This work is designed to make essential housing information easier for residents to locate, understand, and act on—whether they're navigating a housing search, facing instability, or seeking to get more involved in local organizing efforts.

We are also entering the third year of our Massachusetts' Community Health and Healthy Aging (MACHHA) grant, which is enabling us to launch our Peer Housing Specialist (PHS) Pilot Program and further build the coalition's capacity. Through this program, individuals with lived experience will be embedded in trusted community settings to provide culturally responsive support to residents navigating housing challenges.

Collectively, these efforts reflect our commitment to building a more informed, connected, and empowered MetroWest.



➤➤➤ EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FAMILY SHELTER WINTER PROTOCOL

The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) has implemented a winter protocol, ensuring that families in the Emergency Assistance (EA) Family Shelter program with exit dates between December 20, 2025 - March 31, 2026 will receive a one-time, 91-day extension to their shelter stay. This extension is automatic and does not require an application.

Families are eligible for the 91-day extension if they:

- Have a shelter exit date that falls within the winter window (12/20/25 - 3/31/26)
- Are actively working with their case manager on their rehousing plan
- Are following EA Family Shelter program rules (they have no terminations)

Families with approved lease bridges will not receive this automatic extension, though they should contact their case manager if their lease falls through. Additionally, families with pending terminations or appeal hearings must comply with the Division of Hearings' decisions. If an appeal is denied, the extension does not override the exit order.

More information on EA winter protocol can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/bridge-shelter-track-emergency-assistance-ea-family-shelter-length-of-stay-policy>

➤➤➤ MARCH ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES

The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless 2026 Legislative Advocacy Day at the State House will be on March 5, 2026 from 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. The morning program will feature speakers with lived experience, service providers, and advocates discussing statewide priorities that strongly align with our MetroWest Housing Coalition focus areas—such as protecting the right to shelter, improving access to homelessness prevention resources, and increasing funding for housing stability programs. Legislators will also share updates on bills related to Mass ID access, the Homeless Bill of Rights, and improvements to RAFT. In the afternoon, attendees will meet with legislative offices — a key opportunity for MetroWest voices to be included in statewide advocacy.

To support strong MetroWest engagement, the February MW Housing Coalition meeting will focus on preparing for Legislative Advocacy Day—offering guidance, message development, and practical tools to help everyone feel confident connecting with legislators.

Register for the March 5 Legislative Advocacy Day here: <https://tinyurl.com/lad2026rsvp>



➤➤➤ JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES (JFS) OLDER ADULT SUPPORTED HOME-SHARE PROGRAM

The JFS Older Adult Supported Home-Share Program is a housing-stabilization initiative that connects individuals who have extra space in their homes with older adults or compatible community members seeking safe, affordable housing. The program is designed to prevent homelessness, support aging in place, and reduce social isolation by making better use of existing housing while providing structured support.

Through careful screening, compatibility matching, and ongoing case management, Home-Share creates living arrangements that are safe, voluntary, and mutually beneficial. Some home-share arrangements serve as short-term bridges while participants wait for subsidized or affordable housing, while others are longer-term or permanent solutions that promote stability and companionship.

By intervening early, before housing crises escalate, Home-Share offers a practical, cost-effective response to the growing housing challenges facing older adults in the MetroWest region of Massachusetts.

If you would like to learn more about how you can work with JFS to lower your housing costs while also helping an individual or family in need, contact Diana O'Brien via email dobrien@jfsmw.org or by phone at 508-875-3100 x 700. There is no obligation to participate - contact JFS today!

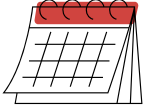
More information on the Home-Share program can be found here:

<https://jfsmw.org/2025/05/15/jfs-home-share-innovative-housing-solution-that-connects-older-adults-prevents-homelessness/>

➤➤➤ HOUSING NAVIGATOR MA

The Housing Navigator MA is a free, statewide online tool that helps residents search for affordable housing across Massachusetts. The platform lists over 200,000 verified affordable homes and is designed to be simple, mobile-friendly, and accessible anytime. Residents can filter housing options based on their needs and connect directly with verified property owners and managers—no app required, and no cost to use.

Explore the tool here: <https://search.housingnavigatorma.org/>



MARK THE CALENDAR

JOIN US FOR THE NEXT MWHC MEETING

FEB 25 FROM 10-11:30 AT THE SMOC

BOARD ROOM

(7 BISHOP ST IN FRAMINGHAM)

PLEASE RSVP HERE:



[HTTPS://SHORTURL.AT/YKGFW](https://shorturl.at/ykgfw)



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