



# DESCRIPTIONS OF THE ON SOLID GROUND FY2019 BUDGET PRIORITIES

## HOMEBASE (7004-0108)

**FY19 REQUEST: \$35 MILLION & Language change**

HomeBASE offers families an alternative to emergency shelter by providing stabilization services and up to \$8,000 in financial assistance. These funds will help prevent families from becoming homeless by supporting the one-time costs for rent, utilities, security deposits, and other expenses that would allow them to stay in their homes, move, or live with another family. In addition to the funds, we also request the language changes that:

- Allow Households to access RAFT assistance, if eligible, to stabilize their housing
- Prevent families and landlords from having to go through the eviction process if furthered assistance can stabilize the tenancy
- Clarify that the loss of HomeBASE qualifies as a loss of income for the purpose of shelter eligibility
- Simplify data and reporting requirements to better assess program outcomes

This will help achieve the program’s goal of ensuring housing stability and reducing the cliff effects.

PROGRAM	FY19 REQUEST
HomeBASE	\$35,000,000
Mass. Rental Voucher Program (MRVP)	\$120,000,00
Child-Care Reserve Fund	\$20,000,000
Learn to Earn	\$1,000,000
Headstart funding	\$12,000,000
Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)	50% of the Federal EITC
Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC)	Language change
Emergency Assistance	Language change

## MASSACHUSETTS RENTAL VOUCHER PROGRAM (MRVP) (7004-9024)

**FY19 REQUEST: \$120 MILLION**

MRVP is the most effective tool to immediately help people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness find homes they can afford by providing a combination of project-based and mobile rental vouchers. \$120 million will increase the number of new vouchers available, help preserve affordable housing developments, and make programmatic fixes that will make vouchers more usable and reduce lengthy lease-up times.

## LEARN TO EARN (7002-1080)

**FY19 REQUEST: \$1 MILLION**

This program will provide credentials and employment for unemployed and underemployed individuals in occupations in high demand fields through partnerships between public agencies, businesses, community-based organizations, and career centers. Increased funding will help support the program and its evaluation for impact and improvement thus providing a path for economic mobility for families.

## CHILDCARE RESERVE FUND (3000-1042)

**FY19 REQUEST: \$20 MILLION**

The Childcare Reserve Funds go towards the reimbursement rates that programs (center based and family child care administration) receive to serve children via child care subsidies. \$20 million

For more information, contact Abhidnya Kurve, Policy Associate & Coordinator at CHAPA & On Solid Ground Coalition, at [akurve@chapa.org](mailto:akurve@chapa.org) or 617-910-7953

funding for childcare support will result in better childcare services for families with extremely low income. Investing to improve support services like childcare allows parents allot more time to professional development thus helping families move forward on the path of economic mobility.

## HEADSTART PROGRAMS (3000-5000)

FY19 REQUEST: \$12 MILLION

The Head Start program is a nationally funded program that promotes school readiness through quality early education and services like health, mental health, nutrition, social services, and parent involvement. State funding of \$12 million would support salaries of early educators and strengthen the program to best prepare children for school. Strengthening early education for children gives them opportunities for economic mobility in life.

## EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT (EITC) (OUTSIDE SECTION 28)

FY19 REQUEST: 50% OF FEDERAL EITC

The state EITC is an effective and efficient tax credit that improves health, rewards work, increases economic mobility, and reduces inequality. We recommend an increase from 23 percent to 50 percent of the value of the federal EITC for all eligible recipients, making Massachusetts the leader in having the highest rate in the country.

## TRANSITIONAL AID TO FAMILIES WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN (TAFDC) (4403-2000)

FY19 REQUEST: Language change

Policy reforms to the TAFDC benefits will help:

- Simplify and streamline program rules
- Increase asset limits and requirements for working families to better incentivize and support employment and employment related activities
- **Lift the Cap on Kids** - cash assistance is capped and denies welfare benefits to children conceived while or soon after the family received benefits.

The proposed reform to TAFDC will improve access to TAFDC program and help mitigate cliff effects.

## EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE (7004-0101)

FY19 REQUEST: Language change

Policy reforms to the TAFDC benefits will help:

- Lessen EA Cliff and also to allow families in shelter to earn money, increase work experience, pay off debt
- allow more flexibility in addressing front door issues
- Allow data reporting requirements on number of children in the system