



Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency
One Beacon Street, Boston MA 02108
TEL 617.854.1000 | VP 866.758.1435 | FAX 617.854.1091 | www.masshousing.com

Contacts

Eric Gedstad: 617.854.1079 | egedstad@masshousing.com
Tom Farmer: 617.854.1843 | tfarmer@masshousing.com

UMass Study Finds MassHousing Tenancy Preservation Program Highly Effective in Preventing Homelessness Among Tenants with Disabilities

Donahue Institute report also concludes that TPP is cost effective in preventing at-risk households from being evicted as a result of behaviors related to mental disabilities

BOSTON – March 25, 2010 – An evaluation by the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute has concluded that MassHousing's Tenancy Preservation Program (TPP) is highly effective in preventing homelessness among tenants with mental disabilities.

The UMass report, which was released today, also found that TPP is exceptionally cost effective in preventing at-risk households from being evicted as a result of behaviors related to a disability. The study concluded that the average cost of a TPP case was just \$2,377.

MassHousing, which funds the TPP program along with a number of state agencies, commissioned the UMass Donahue Institute in 2007 to study TPP's effectiveness and cost benefits.

From January 2008 through June 2009 the Donahue Institute conducted a detailed study of 676 TPP cases that involved 732 adult tenants, 581 minor children and 106 adult children.

"We had always known that TPP was successful, and the Donahue Institute confirmed that for us with some additional hard data," said MassHousing Executive Director Thomas R. Gleason. "It's been very gratifying to watch this program grow from a single court in Springfield into a cooperative effort among all the Housing Courts and other state agencies and really make a difference in keeping people in their homes."

TPP was started by MassHousing in 1999 in Springfield and has since expanded statewide to all five divisions of the Housing Court. TPP attempts to prevent homelessness by addressing tenancy problems of vulnerable residents who are at risk of eviction for lease violations resulting from mental illness, substance abuse, mental retardation, elderly dementia or other mental impairments. TPP functions as a neutral party between the landlord and tenant. In consultation with the Housing Court, TPP works with the property owner and tenant to determine whether the disability can be reasonably accommodated and the tenancy preserved.

"The UMass Donahue Institute report on the Tenancy Preservation Program confirms it is a critical resource for preventing homelessness among some of the most vulnerable members of our society," said Chief Justice of the Housing Court Steven Pierce. "The program is also very cost-effective in keeping tenants with mental health issues from being evicted as a result of issues related to their disabilities and keeping them in safe, stable housing."

TPP is a collaborative effort between MassHousing, the Department of Housing and Community Development, Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Executive Office of Elder Affairs, and regional social service providers.

"This report illustrates the ongoing significance of MassHousing's efforts as our partner to not only create more affordable housing opportunities, but to also prevent homelessness by stabilizing and preserving homes for at risk tenants with disabilities," said state Department of Housing and Community Development Undersecretary Tina Brooks.

About MassHousing

MassHousing (The Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency) is an independent, quasi-public agency created in 1966 and charged with providing financing for affordable housing in Massachusetts. The Agency raises capital by selling bonds and lends the proceeds to low- and moderate-income homebuyers and homeowners, and to developers who build or preserve affordable and/or mixed-income rental housing. MassHousing does not use taxpayer dollars to sustain its operations, although it administers some publicly funded programs on behalf of the Commonwealth. Since its inception, MassHousing has provided more than \$5.6 billion for rental housing and more than \$4.8 billion for homeownership. For more information, visit the MassHousing website at www.masshousing.com.

###