



Special Commission on Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

Status Report



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I WANT TO GET A JOB AND AN
APARTMENT. I JUST WISH THERE
WAS MORE HOUSING AVAILABLE.

—YOUTH TESTIMONY



Executive Summary

“I didn’t really have a choice. My parents said I was no longer welcome in their house and so then I didn’t have a home anymore. It was pretty simple, you know?”

—Youth testimony

The Special Commission on Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (the Commission) was established through Outside Section 208 of the FY2013 Budget, signed into law on July 8, 2012. The

Commission was charged with researching and making recommendations relative to services for unaccompanied homeless youth¹, with the goal of ensuring a comprehensive and effective response to the unique needs of this population. The legislation required that the Commission’s work include: (i) an analysis of barriers to serving unaccompanied youth who are

gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender; (ii) an analysis of barriers to serving unaccompanied youth under age 18; (iii) an assessment of the impact of mandated reporting requirements on youths’ access to services; (iv) an assessment of the Commonwealth’s ability to identify and connect with unaccompanied youth; and (v) recommendations to reduce identified barriers to serving this population.

In order to accomplish this task, the Commission convened four Working Groups to investigate and respond to the issues. The Commission’s Working Groups include: 1) Identification and Connection; 2) Barriers to Serving Youth Under Age 18; 3) Barriers and Services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and/or Questioning (LGBTQ) Youth; and 4) General Services and Housing.

As Massachusetts continues to make strides in addressing the needs of some of the Commonwealth’s most vulnerable youth, the Commission is pleased to be able to submit this status report on our first full year of work. Through the efforts of the Commission, Massachusetts has executed its first-ever statewide census of youth experiencing homelessness. This first-in-the-nation initiative will allow the Commonwealth to begin to appropriately gauge both the scope of need and types of services these young people may require. LGBTQ-identified



¹ The Commission defined “Unaccompanied Homeless Youth” as: A person 24 years of age or younger who is not in the physical custody or care of a parent or legal guardian and who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

youth in particular, who may require specific services (particularly for transgender youth), will have their responses closely analyzed in the review of census data.

Over the course of the year the Commission has conducted research, interviewed staff from state and community-based agencies, and interviewed current and former unaccompanied homeless youth in order to better understand youth homelessness and its underlying causes. Additionally, the Working Groups identified barriers that prevent young people from accessing services in the current system, such as the relationship between service providers and the mandated reporting law, and began to compile an audit of resources and service models available to unaccompanied homeless youth.

In the previous report the Commission issued a series of recommendations that were intended to guide its work over the course of the months to follow. This report serves as a status update on the first full year of the Commission's activities to implement or further the work of those recommendations, and to identify and support youth experiencing homelessness. However, we look forward to submitting a subsequent report when the census data, outlined in the Identification and Connection section, has been fully analyzed.

Identification and Connection

The Identification and Connection Working Group is charged with assessing the Commonwealth's ability to identify and connect with unaccompanied homeless youth and capturing an accurate count of unaccompanied young people who are experiencing homelessness in the Commonwealth.



Recent Activities

Recommendation: Develop a uniform survey tool for statewide use.

Since the previous report, the Working Group began their work by reviewing survey tools used in other communities and analyzing the effectiveness of these tools to determine the most useful and effective approach for conducting a survey of unaccompanied homeless youth. The Working Group reviewed a variety of surveys, including survey tools from the Worcester Teen Housing Task Force, the City of Boston, the Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance, the District of Columbia, the D.C. Alliance of Youth Advocates, and Applied Survey Research (a consultant group whose work has been highlighted by the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness and the National Alliance to End Homelessness). The initial review was conducted primarily by Amanda Benton, an intern from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, with input from other Working Group members. The group assessed aspects of the tools including length, types of questions, strategies for de-duplication, language accessibility, format, and style of administration.

The Working Group decided to use the Worcester and Boston survey tools as starting points for creating a statewide youth homelessness survey tool. The group worked from the December 2012 Boston version, and made changes based on promising practices identified through their analysis, as well as information garnered by the Urban Institute's analysis of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2013 "Youth Count!" pilot. Over six months, the tool was revised to incorporate feedback from a variety of stakeholders, including Commission members, youth-serving providers, Continuum of Care members, and unaccompanied homeless youth. Valuable feedback from youth and young adults was gathered during a series of focus groups conducted this fall on behalf of the Commission by the Executive Office of Health and Human Services and the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, as well as through written questionnaires distributed by providers to youth in their programs. The tool is now complete and was translated into Spanish by Justice Resource Institute for use during the statewide count that took place in January 2014. JRI also provided translation services for Haitian-Creole, Portuguese, and Khmer, but due to late adjustments to the tool these translations were not able to be finalized. The Working Group has identified this as an area for

improvement in future counts to ensure adequate assessment of non-English speaking youth experiencing homelessness.

Recommendation: Outline a robust youth engagement strategy.

The Working Group considered its responsibilities for outlining a youth engagement strategy in two ways: 1) ensuring youth engagement in the Working Group process; and 2) ensuring youth engagement in the administration of a statewide census. First, the group wanted to be sure that as they were planning strategies for conducting a count and survey that they were incorporating youth voices and perspectives into those plans. The Working Group agreed it was critical that the approach to counting unaccompanied homeless youth be culturally sensitive and accessible, and consider the diverse circumstances of youth experiencing homelessness. As such, the Working Group partnered with youth-serving providers to conduct a series of focus groups to gather input into the survey tool and methodology. Those focus groups, along with some written feedback, have informed specific aspects of the tool to help ensure it will collect accurate information.

Second, the group has developed a methodology for conducting the statewide count that is based upon robust engagement of unaccompanied homeless youth. Youth were engaged as volunteers during the count, helping to identify locations where unaccompanied homeless youth can be identified, and administering the survey. The Working Group has prioritized resources to support stipends for youth volunteers, and for paying stipends to youth who complete the survey. Additional details on the methodology can be found below.

Recommendation: Evaluate potential strategies for creating useful typologies of youth.

Activities related to this recommendation have not yet been implemented. The Working Group agreed that developing potential typologies (profiles or categories of unaccompanied homeless youth) could not be considered until after the statewide census data is analyzed, so that any such typologies will reflect the demographics of youth experiencing homelessness here in Massachusetts and will help to guide service delivery. The Working Group anticipates revisiting this recommendation following breakdown of the results of the youth census.

Recommendation: Leverage existing counting efforts to pilot implementation of statewide census of unaccompanied homeless youth.

The Working Group has developed a methodology for conducting a statewide census and survey of unaccompanied homeless youth. In the state's fiscal year 2014 budget, \$150,000 was provided to support the census. The methodology consists of two components: 1) a basic census count on the night of the annual HUD Point-in-Time (PIT) Count in communities across the state; and 2) a more detailed demographic and service and housing need survey to be conducted in the week following the PIT Count.

Both aspects were implemented by leveraging the existing infrastructure of the 18 local Continua of Care (CoC)². Each CoC has been offered a one-time capacity building grant in the amount of \$4,750 to support costs associated with implementing the Massachusetts Youth Count. Boston conducted their PIT Count in December, and all other CoCs conducted theirs in January. In addition, CoCs received technical assistance from the Working Group to share promising practices and ensure standard application of the methodology across sites.

On November 18, 2013, the Working Group held a half-day conference on the Massachusetts Youth Count effort. A total of 75 people attended, with all 18 CoCs represented. A Google Group has also been established to assist in creating a learning community amongst those implementing the count. Additional materials, research, and discussion will be shared via the group.

Upcoming Activities

In the coming year the Identification and Connection Working Group intends to analyze the data from the youth census and submit a summary report on the effort to the full Commission and other interested stakeholders.

Members of the Identification and Connection Working Group

- Co-Chair Liz Rogers, Interagency Council on Housing Homelessness
- Co-Chair Kelly Turley, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless
- Lauren Almquist, MassHealth
- Maurie Bergeron, LUK, Inc.
- Carly Burton, Mass Equality
- Alice Colegrove, Department of Public Health
- Marc Dones, Program Manager, Office of Children, Youth, and Families
- Caitlin Golden, Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance
- Exa Méndez, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless
- Joan Meschino, Massachusetts Appleseed Center for Law and Justice
- Liz Peck, Massachusetts Alliance on Teen Pregnancy
- Sarah Slutterback, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- Linn Torto, Department of Housing and Community Development
- Yonina Wanderer, Massachusetts Appleseed Center for Law and Justice

The Identification and Connection Working Group has been aided by the additional expertise of Dr. Laurie Ross of Clark University, Danielle Ferrier of Justice Resource Institute, and Amanda Benton, formerly of the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

² CoCs are HUD-funded local homelessness prevention and intervention service areas that are also responsible for administering the PIT Counts.

Barriers to Serving Youth Under Age 18

The Barriers to Serving Youth Under Age 18

Working Group is charged with cataloguing the barriers, both in regulation and in statute, which may unintentionally prevent unaccompanied youth from seeking or obtaining services. The Working Group was also directed to research and discuss mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect and licensing provisions that may impact the provision of services to unaccompanied homeless youth.



Recent Activities

Recommendation: Evaluate current training programs for all mandatory reporters; and enhance the working relationship between community providers, schools, and state agencies serving unaccompanied homeless youth.

In the past year, the Working Group developed a plan for exploring the relationship between service barriers and mandated reporting. Mandated reporting plays a vital role in connecting vulnerable youth to essential support services, and it is critical to understand the barriers to connecting youth to these services. Effective implementation of mandated reporting depends not only on appropriate training, but on the nature and quality of the working relationship that exists among community providers and schools, i.e., mandated reporters, and those state agencies to whom they are obligated to report. The Working Group's proposed investigation is designed to better understand the underlying relationship and flow of information between reporters and those to whom reports are made.

Initial recommendations made in the Commission's first Report focused, in part, on training for mandatory reporters. The Working Group believes that understanding potential challenges and current practices around mandated reporting is a prerequisite for making recommendations with respect to such training. This will not only enable recommendations to be made regarding training methods on mandated reporting, but will also help formulate steps that can be taken to strengthen and enhance the working relationships among agencies and individuals directly interacting with young people and children.

Upcoming activities

In the upcoming year, the Barriers Working Group intends to:

- Begin analysis of the ability to share protected information between the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the schools regarding mandatory reporting, as explained above.
- Conduct a review of best practices and additional literature on mandated reporting from around the country.

- Develop, together with the Working Group on Services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and/or Questioning (LGBTQ) Youth an extension of the DESE / DCF project to explore information sharing related to mandated reporting in other service provider contexts.
- Review the survey findings from the youth census coordinated by the Identification and Connection Working Group to inform the continuing work being undertaken by the Barriers Working Group.
- Conduct additional research in order to identify specific barriers to service provision arising from legal frameworks related to confidentiality obligations.

Members of the Barriers to Service for youth under age 18 Working Group:

- Chair, Joan Meschino, MA Appleseed Center for Law and Justice
- Khadejah Ahmad, Office of Rep. James O'Day
- Maurie Bergeron, LUK
- Ann Capoccia, Department of Mental Health
- Marc Dones, Program Manager, Office of Children, Youth, and Families
- Kate Federici, Department of Mental Health
- Danielle Ferrier, Re-discovery / Justice Resource Institute and the Task Force on Youth Aging Out
- Yonina Hoffman-Wanderer, MA Appleseed Center for Law and Justice
- Ayala Livny, Youth on Fire
- Exa Méndez, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless
- Maureen Messeder, Department of Children and Families
- Danielle Morrow, Office of Rep. James O'Day
- Amy Mullen, Department of Children and Families
- Representative James O'Day
- Kelly Turley, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless

Services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and/or

Questioning Youth

The Services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and/or Questioning (LGBTQ) Youth Working Group is charged with an analysis of the specific needs of and barriers facing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and/or questioning unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness, as well as recommending any specific service delivery alternatives that may be needed to address these barriers.



Recent Activities

Recommendation: Increase the number of LGBTQ-specific services.

The data from the youth census filled out by LGBTQ identifying young people will be analyzed to begin a process of service delivery design.

In the interim the Working Group will be studying the implementation and results of the new LGBTQ-specific units and services being provided through the Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance (MHSA) *Home & Healthy for Good* program. This program received \$200,000 in the FY14 state budget to provide a pilot program for LGBTQ young adults who are experiencing chronic homelessness. Using low-threshold permanent supportive housing to address chronic homelessness, this pilot will place young adults in permanent housing with developmentally appropriate support services. MHSA is working with three service providers for this pilot: Justice Resource Institute in Boston, the AIDS Action Committee's Youth on Fire program in Cambridge, and DIAL/SELF Youth & Community Services in Greenfield. The LGBTQ Working Group will continue to work with MHSA to track this program and provide information about its success in a subsequent report.

Recommendation: Increase LGBTQ-inclusive data collection across all youth-serving state agencies.

Collecting data on LGBTQ youth is a very complex undertaking. Each youth-serving state agency (even all of those within EOHHS) collects different pieces of data. Additionally, the methodology for collecting that data differs among agencies, and sharing of data across agencies can be challenging from an information technology and legal perspective. Along with the Commission on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Youth, which counsels state agencies about how to better serve LGBTQ youth, this Working Group has recommended specifically to the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Youth Services and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education ways to improve how they collect data on LGBTQ youth. These agencies were selected based on their direct provision of services to young people. This effort

means revising forms, training staff to ask questions about sexual orientation or gender identity in a culturally competent way and/or creating the opportunity for a young person to self-disclose. All three agencies have implemented or are in the process of implementing some changes to improve their data collection around clients who are LGBTQ.

This past spring, a question was added to the Massachusetts version of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) about gender identity, making that survey trans-inclusive. The Commonwealth is now one of the first states to do this, and address one of the major gaps in data collection, the lack of data about the transgender population specifically. The YRBS data about gender identity can be coupled with the data around housing and homelessness and will give us a better understanding about the number of transgender young people who are experiencing homelessness. This data will be available later this year.

Members of the LGBTQ working group participated in the efforts of the Identification and Connection working group to develop a fully inclusive survey to be used in the statewide count. The current survey includes four questions on sexual orientation and gender identity. Once that data is analyzed, it can be compared to what is learned from the state agencies and gain insight about who or who is not being appropriately served and why.

Recommendation: Increase LGBTQ cultural competency training and awareness campaigns within agencies.

Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) agencies understand the need for cultural competency training. In the past, EOHHS agencies have offered cultural competency training to staff through contracts with outside agencies or through internal training teams. However, through focus groups and conversations with youth-serving providers the Working Group has heard that these trainings are not always regularly offered, tailored to particular staff members (e.g. frontline workers who may have an initial interaction with an LGBTQ youth) or as comprehensive as possible. There are multiple reasons for training gaps but one is a lack of both financial and training resources. Various agencies have begun to address this need through renewed or expanded contracting with outside organizations to provide training to select staff. The Executive Office of Health and Human Services is also working on adding LGBTQ cultural competency to the core trainings it provides to all EOHHS staff. If this effort is successful, it could be a model for other secretariats.

Upcoming Activities

In the upcoming year the Services for LGBT Youth Working Group intends to:

- Continue working with MHSA to track the *Home & Healthy for Good* pilot program for LGBTQ young adults.
- Continue to partner with the LGBTQ Youth Commission – and specifically the agency relations subcommittee – to monitor the success and effectiveness of the training.
- Partner with the Barriers for Youth Under 18 Working Group to research mandatory reporting both in Massachusetts and outside of the Commonwealth.

- Analyze data from the statewide youth census and the youth focus groups about the numbers of LGBTQ youth identified, and whether they are accessing services.

Members of the Services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and/or Transgender Youth Working Group

- Chair, Carly Burton, MassEquality
- Lauren Almquist, MassHealth
- Senator Harriet Chandler
- Tim Daley, Office of Senator Harriet Chandler
- Marc Dones, Program Manager, Office of Children, Youth, and Families
- Caitlin Golden, Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance
- Hannah Hussey, Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth
- Cathy Kristofferson, Get Equal
- Diamond McMillian, Youth on Fire
- Laura Paladino
- Grace Sterling Stowell, Boston Area Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth
- Bobbi Taylor, Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition
- Jorgette Theophilis, Justice Resource Institute
- Kelly Turley, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless
- Allison Wright, Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders

General Services and Housing

The **General Services and Housing Working Group** is charged with examining the reports of the other Working Groups and creating a preliminary list of recommended services and housing interventions. These services and housing interventions may include augmentations to existing services or novel approaches that would begin to create the Commonwealth's systemic response to the issue of unaccompanied youth homelessness.



Recent Activities

Recommendation: Perform an analysis of existing resources by service types and use this information to assess for gaps.

The Working Group has gathered information from programs and providers around the Commonwealth. The Working Group is specifically requesting information about the services and housing options that are available and gaps seen, as well as programmatic information regarding specific populations served, costs, funding streams, and measures of success. Through the efforts of the Working Group, a number of critical findings have emerged. To date there has not been a comprehensive audit of services, including housing options, available to unaccompanied homeless youth in the Commonwealth. Services for unaccompanied homeless youth, including housing, have not been evaluated to see if they are responsive to the expressed needs of young people. Moreover, services, including housing, for unaccompanied homeless youth have also not been evaluated for their adherence to best or promising practices or their ability to generate successful outcomes for youth. The Working Group will compile best and promising practices and then move forward with sharing this information.

To address the need for information, this year the Commission has supported a number of activities including focus groups of youth. This effort identified a lack of youth-focused, low-threshold supportive emergency and transitional housing opportunities. The Working Group also heard that there was a shortage of supportive transitional housing or permanent housing opportunities at all threshold levels. In response to this, the Commission will design a model continuum of supportive housing program models to meet the range of unique needs of unaccompanied youth. The continuum will include the many different types of housing models that can meet the needs of this population, including host homes, housing subsidies, clustered and scattered site housing models, and vouchers, and should include the utilization of current programs, including those of the CoCs. The Working Group intends to design a system that facilitates a youth's ability to become independent, self-sufficient and not rely on federally or state-funded services, whenever possible.

The Working Group is in the process of compiling an initial list of services, including housing options, available to unaccompanied homeless youth through a more formal request for information. A full budget impact analysis is also in process in partnership with the Simmons

College School of Management. Once the information has been gathered and compiled the Working Group will partner with the Identification and Connection Working Group to create a draft model of recommended services, with budget requirements, using the census data to approximate the appropriate scale of the system.

Upcoming Activities

- Conduct additional analysis on service gaps that are not well understood but have been raised by various community stakeholders and youth. These are: Lack of CORI “friendly” services for youth with criminal histories, licensing requirements/restrictions for programs with youth under 18, lack of emergency shelter beds, lack of services for immigrant/undocumented youth/youth with limited English proficiency, lack of services for youth aging out of systems (DCF, DYS, DMH), lack of services for youth with special needs, as defined by an Individual Education Plan (IEP), lack of services for unaccompanied homeless youth in school, insufficient services for youth with mental health and/or substance abuse issues, lack of or insufficient services for pregnant/parenting youth, lack of services specifically for trafficked/exploited youth.
- Review possible policy changes and adjustments to increase access to services and housing. For example, there is a reported inability to obtain a valid ID due to the difficulty in producing the necessary documentation necessary to get a valid ID. The cost of the ID can also prove to be a financial barrier to young people (both amending an ID and applying for a new ID are \$25). In addition, a lack of access to transportation for young people can cause difficulty securing employment or attending educational programming, as well as accessing services.
- Review and make specific policy and regulatory recommendations to be included in the next report to ensure that unaccompanied homeless youth have priority access to mainstream benefits and service resources for which they are eligible.
- Review and make specific policy and regulatory recommendations to housing partners to insure that unaccompanied homeless youth have access to mainstream housing resources, both capital and operating as needed.
- Finalize a list of services and housing options and review to identify gaps.
- Finalize a services and housing model and a model budget in partnership with Simmons College School of Management.
- Recommend a comprehensive services and housing continuum model once all information has been acquired.

Members of the General Services and Housing Working Groups include:

- Co-Chair, Lisa Goldsmith, DIAL/SELF Youth and Community Services
- Co-Chair, Danielle Ferrier, Rediscovery/JRI, Taskforce on Youth Aging Out
- Maurie Bergeron, LUK
- Stephanie Brown, Department of Transitional Assistance
- Ann Capoccia, Department of Mental Health
- Senator Harriette Chandler
- Marc Dones, Program Manager, Office of Children, Youth, and Families
- Rose Evans, Department of Housing and Community Development
- Caitlin Golden, Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance
- Yonina Hoffman-Wanderer, MA Appleseed Center for Law and Justice
- Ayala Livny, Youth on Fire
- Exa Méndez, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless
- Joan Meschino, MA Appleseed Center for Law and Justice
- Linn Torto, Health and Human Services Consultant
- Kelly Turley, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless

Appendix A: Authorizing Legislative Language

Outside Section 208 FY13

SECTION 208. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, there shall be a special commission for the purpose of studying and making recommendations relative to services for unaccompanied homeless youth age 22 and younger, with the goal of ensuring a comprehensive and effective response to the unique needs of this population. The focus of the commission's work shall include, but not be limited to: (i) an analysis of the barriers to serving unaccompanied youth who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender; (ii) an analysis of the barriers to serving unaccompanied youth under 18 years of age; (iii) an assessment of the impact of mandated reporting requirements on unaccompanied youths' access to services; (iv) the commonwealth's ability to identify and connect with unaccompanied youth; and (v) recommendations to reduce identified barriers to serving this population including, but not limited to, extending the time for certain categories of mandated reporters to file reports and establishing special licensure provisions to allow service providers to serve homeless youth under 18 years of age. The commission, in formulating its recommendations, shall take account of best practices and policies in other states and jurisdictions.

The commission shall include: the secretary of health and human services or a designee, who shall serve as chair; the commissioner of children and families or a designee; the commissioner of elementary and secondary education or a designee; the commissioner of public health or a designee; the commissioner of mental health or a designee; the director of Medicaid or a designee; the commissioner of transitional assistance or a designee; the undersecretary of housing and community development or a designee; 2 members of the senate; 2 members of the house of representatives; 3 youth who have experienced homelessness appointed by the office of the child advocate; 3 direct service providers who work with unaccompanied homeless youth to be appointed by the governor; and 1 representative from each of the following organizations: the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, the Task Force on Youth Aging Out, the Massachusetts Appleseed Center for Law and Justice, MassEquality, the Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance, the Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition and the Boston Alliance of Gay, Lesbian Bisexual and Transgender Youth.

The commission shall submit its initial report to the governor, the speaker of the house, the senate president, the joint committee on children, families and persons with disabilities, and the office of the child advocate not later than March 31, 2013. The report shall set forth the commission's findings and any recommendations for regulatory or legislative action with a timeline for implementation, cost estimates and finance mechanisms. Thereafter, the commission shall submit a report by December 31, annually, to the governor, the speaker of the house, the senate president, the joint committee on children, families and persons with disabilities and the office of the child advocate, detailing the extent of homelessness among unaccompanied youth within the commonwealth and the progress made toward implementing the commission's recommendations, along with other efforts to address the needs of this population.

Appendix B: Members of the Commission

Kathy Betts, Chair, Assistant Secretary for Children, Youth, and Families
Lauren Almquist, MassHealth
Cheryl Bartlett, Department of Public Health
Maurie Bergeron, LUK Crisis Center
Carly Burton, MassEquality
Ann Capoccia, Department of Mental Health
Senator Harriette Chandler, Massachusetts Senate
Congresswoman Katherine Clark, Formerly Massachusetts Senate
Danielle Ferrier, Rediscovery at the Justice Resource Institute and the Task Force on Youth Aging Out
Caitlin Golden, Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance
Lisa Goldsmith, Dial/SELF
Representative Kay Khan, Massachusetts House of Representatives
Rose Evans, Department of Housing and Community Development
Diamond McMillion
Exa Méndez, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless
Joan Meschino, Massachusetts Appleseed Center for Law and Justice
Amy Mullen, Department of Children and Families
Representative James O'Day, Massachusetts House of Representatives
Liz Rogers, Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness
Quianna Sarjeant
Sarah Slautterback, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Grace Sterling Stowell, Boston Alliance of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth
Bobbi Taylor, Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition
Kelly Turley, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless
Robyn Kennedy, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Children, Youth, and Families
Marc Dones, Program Manager, Office of Children, Youth, and Families