



MASSACHUSETTS COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

# LEGISLATIVE ACTION DAY



*Committed to ensuring that everyone has a place to call home.*

January 17, 2019

Greetings!

Please [register today](#) for [Legislative Action Day 2019](#), taking place at the Massachusetts State House on Thursday, February 28th. Look forward to hearing from inspiring speakers, learning how to advocate with legislators, and meeting with your state legislators and legislative staff to talk about issues and policy recommendations to address homelessness in Massachusetts.

This year's event will be hosted by State Representative Jim O'Day in the Great Hall (second floor). Registration and light breakfast will begin at 9 a.m., and the formal agenda will run from 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. In the afternoon, participants will meet with legislative offices. Just indicate on your registration form if you need help setting up meetings with your legislators, and we will work to set up appointments for you.

**Registration is quick, easy, and free:** [Register now.](#)

If you would like to be an **event-day volunteer**, please [sign up here](#).

If you are interested in **being a speaker** and sharing your personal testimony at the event, or helping the Coalition identify speakers, please [contact Kelly](#).

Thank you, and we hope you can join us! Please also see below for several policy updates.

In solidarity,

Kelly Turley  
Associate Director  
[kelly@mahomeless.org](mailto:kelly@mahomeless.org)

Molly Schulman  
Community Organizer/Legislative Advocate  
[molly@mahomeless.org](mailto:molly@mahomeless.org)

## The New Legislative Session Is Underway

Tomorrow is the deadline for state legislators to file "timely filed" bills for the 2019-2020 legislative session. We are working with numerous key legislators to file and refile critical legislation related to homelessness, housing, and benefits, such as bills to:

- Re-establish a statewide rental arrearage program to help households avoid homelessness by providing back rent assistance (Representative Marjorie Decker)

- [Add your organization as a Rent Arrearage Assistance Program campaign endorser](#)

- Ensure that families experiencing homelessness do not have to stay in a place not meant for human habitation before being eligible for Emergency Assistance (EA) family shelter and services (Representative Marjorie Decker)

- [Add your organization as an Emergency Assistance campaign endorser](#)

- Ease access to standard Massachusetts ID cards for people experiencing homelessness by eliminating the \$25 fee and allowing alternative ways to verify Massachusetts residency without requiring a permanent address (Representative Kay Khan and Senator Harriette Chandler)

- [Add your organization as an Everyone Needs ID campaign endorser](#)

- Establish a bill of rights for people experiencing homelessness (Representative Smitty Pignatelli and Senator Becca Rausch)

- [Add your organization as a bill of rights campaign endorser](#)

- Improve the Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled, and Children program (EAEDC) (Representative Jim O'Day and Senator Pat Jehlen)

- [Add your organization as an EAEDC campaign endorser](#)

- Eliminate the so-called "family cap rule" that currently prohibits children from receiving Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children program (TAFDC) benefits because their family was participating in the TAFDC program at the time of their conception (or shortly thereafter) and increase monthly grant levels to lift households out of deep poverty (Representative Marjorie Decker and Senator Sal DiDomenico)

- Provide a right to legal counsel for households facing eviction (Senator Sal DiDomenico)

We will be back in touch early next week with links to the bills and to ask for your help in securing legislative cosponsors.

## Massachusetts Youth Count 2018

A report from the Massachusetts Commission on Unaccompanied Homeless Youth on homelessness, housing instability, and access to services among youth and young adults under the age of 25 in the Commonwealth.



Today, the [Massachusetts Commission on Unaccompanied Homeless Youth](#) (the Commission) released its [report on the 2018 Massachusetts Youth Count](#). The [fifth annual Youth Count](#), a survey of youth and young adults age 24 and younger, was conducted between May-June 2018 to examine young people's experiences with housing instability, homelessness, and service access.

The Coalition was proud to be a lead collaborator once again with the Commission to design and conduct the Youth Count. Other key partners were youth, young adults, Continua of Care, and youth providers from all across the Commonwealth.

The insights and data from this report will be used to influence advocacy and programming to address youth and young adult homelessness, including to support the Coalition's FY'20 budget campaign to increase funding for housing and wraparound services for unaccompanied youth and young adults to \$5 million, up from \$3.3 million.

Special thanks to Dr. Laurie Ross of Clark University, who authored the report.

[Youth Count Report](#)

[Statewide Data Overview](#)