

## Lawmakers push to change emergency shelter eligibility for homeless families

More than 600 families with children had to sleep in unsafe places last fiscal year before they were eligible for emergency shelter



By [Elisha Machado \(http://wwlp.com/author/wwlpelishamachado/\)](http://wwlp.com/author/wwlpelishamachado/)

Published: August 22, 2017, 6:18 pm | Updated: August 22, 2017, 6:35 pm



BOSTON (WWLP)—More than 9,000 families have applied for emergency assistance from the state this year. Some families are forced to live in unsafe conditions before they can get help. Now, lawmakers have a proposal that could change that.

More than 600 families with children had to sleep in unsafe places last fiscal year before they were eligible for emergency shelter. Under current law, many families must first spend the night in a place unfit for human habitation, such as an emergency room, car or bus station.

“These are families that just have no where else to turn so to have them prove their need by putting them through this inhumane process is just unnecessary,” said Lerae Kroon, a staff attorney for Massachusetts Law Reform.

Cambridge Representative Marjorie Decker filed a bill that would provide emergency housing assistance to certain eligible families experiencing homelessness before they have to stay in unsafe places. X

### Watch Live: Mass Appeal Lifestyle Show

But the committee will have to weigh the financial costs of approving this proposal. This comes at a time when both lawmakers and Governor Charlie Baker had to make budget cuts for this fiscal year.

“The state is only saving \$100-\$120 a night, but during that night families may be going back to an abusive situation, may be staying outdoors, may be exposing their children to trauma and disease,” said Associate Director Kelly Turley of the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless.

Representative Decker tried to get the legislation passed as a budget amendment, but it didn’t make the final spending plan.

The Housing Committee is currently reviewing the bill before making a recommendation to the state.

Top News



### Springfield reveals memorial park in remembrance of fallen...

In 1985, two Springfield police officers, were murdered in...



/i/1.gif?

wMAIwbkzNjYJdm4JMjg4MTQ0CWUjY2sjYQkyNTYJbWk&fwd=http%3A%2F%2Fdistroscale.com)

### Related Posts

[Lawmakers hope to restore spending cuts by Governor Baker \(http://wwlp.com/2017/07/21/lawmakers-hope-to-restore-spending-cut-by-governor-baker/\)](http://wwlp.com/2017/07/21/lawmakers-hope-to-restore-spending-cut-by-governor-baker/)

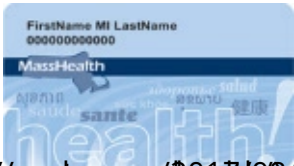


<http://www.fox25.com/2017/08/17/011-lawmakers->



<http://www.fox25.com/2017/08/17/state->

**State legislature looks to restore some funding for local food banks (<http://wwlp.com/2017/08/17/state-legislature-looks-to-restore-some-funding-for-local-food-banks/>)**



<http://www.fox25.com/2017/08/02/baker->

**Baker will agree to new health care fees, fines on employers (<http://wwlp.com/2017/08/02/baker-will-agree-to-new-health-care-fees-fines-on-employers/>)**

Show Comments

WWLP-22News (<http://wwlp.com/>)



(<http://www.nexstar.tv/>)

© 1998-2017 WWLP.com | Nexstar Broadcasting, Inc. | All rights reserved.

Powered by WordPress.com VIP (<https://vip.wordpress.com/>)

utm\_source=vip\_powered\_wpcom&utm\_medium=web&utm\_campaign=VIP%20Footer%20Credit)