The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program is the nation’s largest rental assistance program. More than 5 million people in 2.1 million low-income households use vouchers.

Who Do Housing Choice Vouchers Help?

Nearly All Households Using Housing Choice Vouchers in Massachusetts Include Children or People Who Are Elderly or Disabled

- Adults with children: 33%
- Disabled adults with children: 13%
- Elderly with children: 1%
- Disabled adults: 28%
- Childless adults: 10%

Note: Childless adults are households headed by a person under 62 without disabilities, and without children in the home. Disabled adults are younger than 62.
Source: CBPP tabulation of 2010 and 2011 HUD administrative data.

76,524 low-income households used Housing Choice Vouchers in Massachusetts to afford decent, privately owned housing in safer neighborhoods in December 2012.

Housing vouchers help low-wage working families to make ends meet: in 2010, 71.1 percent of the non-elderly, non-disabled households using vouchers in Massachusetts were working or had worked recently.

Sequestration Sharply Cut Housing Choice Voucher Assistance in 2013

1,431 fewer households were using Housing Choice Vouchers at the end of 2013 in Massachusetts, compared to a year earlier, due to the sequestration cuts implemented in March. 70,000 fewer households nationally were using vouchers.

91 of the 120 agencies administering housing vouchers in Massachusetts reduced the number of households they served as a result of sequestration.

Congress increased HCV funding in 2014, but agencies will be able only to restore less than half of the housing vouchers lost due to sequestration.
Housing Costs Strain Family Budgets

134,304 poor households in Massachusetts pay more than half their monthly income for housing costs.

This is an increase of 24,346 households, or 22.1 percent, since 2007, the beginning of the Great Recession.

In Massachusetts, many households struggle to make ends meet.

- 7% of the labor force was unemployed in 2013.
- 11.9% of the population lives below the poverty line.
- 15.4% of children live below the poverty line.
- 11.4% of households struggle to afford a nutritionally adequate diet.

On a single night in Massachusetts in 2013, 19,029 people were homeless, including 7,259 children and 1,253 veterans.

Rigorous studies show that Housing Choice Vouchers are very effective at making housing affordable and reducing homelessness and instability.

Housing Choice Vouchers Sharply Reduce Homelessness and Housing Instability Among Families with Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total without a home of their own at some point during past year</th>
<th>In shelters or on the street at some point during past year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>44.8%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With voucher</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without voucher</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Chart compares housing status of low-income families who were randomly selected to receive a voucher and used a voucher during the year when families were surveyed about housing status to families in a control group who did not use vouchers.


Housing Choice Vouchers Benefit the Community

Private owners in Massachusetts received $785,835,767 in HCV assistance payments in 2013. This helped owners to pay property taxes and prevent blight by maintaining their properties in good condition, in addition to helping low-income families to afford housing.

In addition to improving the lives of vulnerable low-income people, vouchers can produce savings in healthcare, child welfare, corrections, and other program areas that offset part (in some circumstances all) of the cost of the rental assistance.

For more information on the Housing Choice Voucher program, including Massachusetts-specific information, please see:

Sources and methods: [http://www.cbpp.org/files/3-6-14hous-sources.pdf](http://www.cbpp.org/files/3-6-14hous-sources.pdf)
Local Data on Housing Choice Voucher Cuts Due to Sequestration: [http://www.houserscorner.org/](http://www.houserscorner.org/)