

Department of Housing and Community Development Receives Nearly \$7 Million FEMA Grant

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REGION I – In support of Massachusetts’ efforts to safely house residents during the pandemic, FEMA recently granted the state’s Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) \$6,945,280 to reimburse operators of three Boston area shelters which undertook emergency actions to keep clients safe during the pandemic.

Shortly after Governor Baker issued a State of Emergency declaration on March 10, 2020 in response to COVID-19, the DHCD instructed shelters to institute health and safety precautions issued by the state’s Department of Public Health and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. The DHCD contracted with shelters across the state to provide safe sheltering for high-risk populations vulnerable to COVID-19. To provide the required non-congregate housing, some shelters had to re-configure their existing buildings into CDC-compliant facilities to lessen the likelihood of outbreaks of the virus by providing living spaces with privacy for residents.

This cost reimbursement covers expenses from Casa Myrna, Father Bill’s and Pine Street Inn shelter providers converted their existing operations to non-congregate shelters, during the pandemic. This transition from a traditional shelter required operators to incur significant costs to take medically necessary steps such as depopulation, maximizing social distance, increased hours of operation and heightened cleaning.

FEMA’s Region I Acting Regional Administrator and Federal Coordinating Officer Paul Ford applauded Massachusetts and the DHCD for acting quickly to house vulnerable populations. “It was critical to get this high-risk population into CDC-compliant shelters and give them space and privacy to prevent them from contracting or spreading this deadly virus. FEMA fully supports the state’s efforts to bring COVID under control.”



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This project is funded through FEMA's Public Assistance Program that reimburses eligible applicants for actions taken in the immediate response and during recovery from a major disaster. Eligible applicants include the state, federally recognized tribal governments, local governments, and certain private non-profit organizations. Project applications are submitted from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), which coordinates the process with eligible applicants.

FEMA awarded funding for this project directly to MEMA who works directly with the applicant to ensure all terms and conditions of the award are met before funding is disbursed.

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