

**Homeless Hearings Specialist/Benefits Eligibility & Referral Social Worker C (Homebase: Springfield but floats throughout the Commonwealth) - (240007LY)**

**The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) is seeking a Homeless Hearings Specialist/Benefits Eligibility & Referral Social Worker in the Division of Housing Stabilization!**

**AGENCY MISSION:**

The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) is charged with creating more homes in Massachusetts and lowering housing costs for residents.

Formerly known as the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), EOHLC works with municipalities, local housing authorities, non-profit organizations, and development partners to provide affordable housing options, financial assistance, and other support to Massachusetts communities.

**OVERVIEW OF ROLE:**

The incumbent in this position will work with families experiencing a housing crisis. The incumbent assesses and screens households to determine eligibility for diversion and shelter services; refers families to and monitors their participation in services that will assist them in finding permanent housing; obtains and verifies client information; identifies and refers families to support services such as substance abuse and mental health programs; participates in formulating and monitoring Emergency Assistance self-sufficiency plans; conducts case reviews; performs case management activities and delivers those services required to assist families to transition into permanent housing; and performs related duties as required. In addition, the Homeless Hearings Specialist prepares cases for administrative appeal hearings by gathering supportive documentation pertinent to the case and represents the Department at such hearings.

The incumbent for this position works under the supervision of the Regional Homeless Supervisor.

**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (NOT ALL INCLUSIVE):**

**1) Agency Representative at Appeal Hearings:**

- Prepares cases for administrative appeal hearing by gathering supportive documents pertinent to the case and represents the Department at such hearings.
- Submits all additional documentation required to the Hearing Officer and appellant within timeframes established by the Hearing Officer (if applicable).
- Tracks each appeal decision by region and implements the appeals outcome.

**2) Client Services:**

- Conducts in person and telephonic screening and assessments on households experiencing housing crisis to determine appropriate action including referral to diversion services and temporary emergency shelter placement.
- Processes Emergency Assistance (EA) applications for households that are in need of shelter placement.
- Responds to client requests for services in a compassionate and professional manner. Assists eligible clients in obtaining assistance by referring them to appropriate agencies including the Department of Transitional Assistance if clients need benefits such as transitional assistance, food stamps (SNAP) and/or medical assistance and encourage clients to participate in program for which they are eligible.
- Assesses the special needs of clients to be considered in requesting and making appropriate shelter/motel placements and refers and coordinates with other agencies and resources to address and assist with medical issues, physical handicaps, mental health issues, substance abuse, domestic violence, education considerations for school age children and other pertinent issues.

- Authorizes support services such as transportation to clients and/or providers of services to clients by completing the authorization form.

**3) Mandated Reporting:**

- Reports suspected cases of child, elder, and/or spousal abuse to appropriate authorities by notifying the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and other agencies to assist the affected party and deter future abuse.

**4) Record-keeping:**

- Organizes and maintains applicant/client records in a manner that ensures ready availability and quick access to case information.

**5) Supervision:**

- May exercise direct supervision and is responsible for the overall performance of the unit in the absence of the Regional Homeless Coordinator Supervisor. Completes special projects in accordance with Department policy and established work expectations and represents the Department at appeal hearings. Performs related duties as required.

**6) Interagency Communication:**

- Initiates and maintains communication with other community agencies, shelter providers and state agencies serving clients to ensure that needed resources are made available to ensure permanent housing placements and long-term housing stability.

This position will require in-state travel.

**PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:**

1. At least intermediate proficiency using Microsoft Word and Excel. Is adept at learning new technology, software programs and applications.
2. Knowledge of referral sources available for providing services to clients, including available community support and social services resources.\*
3. Knowledge of the social and economic problems of the diverse client population and the related impact on employability and self-sufficiency, for example, employment problems of minorities and the economically disadvantaged and behavioral problems which form barriers to employment.
4. Knowledge of the principles and correct usage of the English language involved in writing narratives, including grammar, spelling, sentence structure, word meaning and punctuation.
5. Knowledge of interviewing techniques and the ability to deescalate episodic anger when necessary.
6. Ability to balance all components of casework on homeless cases from the initial application process through the placement activity, the noncompliance process and the entire Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SSPS) process through the application of the laws, rules, regulations, programs, policies, procedures, specifications, standards and guidelines governing agency operations and assigned unit activities.
7. Ability to read, interpret, apply and explain the provisions of the laws, rules, regulations, policies, procedures, specifications, standards and guidelines governing agency operations and assigned unit activities.
8. Ability to read, interpret and apply Federal, State and local social services programs, laws, statutes and regulations that affect eligibility for financial assistance, such as: worker's compensation, social security and unemployment insurance.
9. Ability to gather and assemble items of information in accordance with established procedures, i.e., through questioning and observing individuals and by examining records and documents.
10. Ability to understand and apply knowledge of the principles, practices, and techniques of supervision in order to demonstrate ability to supervise in the absence of the unit supervisor, including for example, planning, organizing, assigning and coordinating work according to the nature of the job to be accomplished, the capabilities of subordinates and available resources.
11. Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing, such as, giving written and oral instructions in a precise, understandable manner, accurately recording information provided

orally; and writing concisely with a clear expression of thoughts and the development of ideas in logical sequence.

12. Ability to perform and/or understand and explain arithmetic computations with accuracy (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division).
13. Ability to prepare, interpret and present statistical data, for example, in preparing expected number of redeterminations.
14. Ability to determine the applicability of client data, to draw conclusions and make appropriate recommendations.
15. Ability to deal tactfully, establish and maintain harmonious working relationships with others, including, for example, working in a team setting, functioning successfully in group situations, establishing rapport with persons from different ethnic, cultural and/or economic backgrounds, interacting with and demonstrating empathy to people who are under physical and/or emotional stress and maintaining a calm manner in stressful and/or emergency situations.
16. Ability to exercise sound judgment, including the exercise of discretion in handling confidential information.
17. Bilingual candidate preferred (ability to read, write and speak Cape Verdean Creole, Haitian Creole, Portuguese and/or Spanish).

**COMMENTS:**

**Please upload resume and cover letter.**

This position would be expected to follow a hybrid model of reporting to work that combines in-office workdays and work from home days, as needed.

**The homebase location for this position is 243 Cottage Street, Springfield, MA. The incumbent will be required to float to Worcester, and other locations throughout the Commonwealth upon request.**

Salary placement is determined by years of experience and education directly related to the position and the Human Resources Division's Recruiting Guidelines. In the case of a promotional opportunity, the salary provisions of the applicable collective bargaining agreement will apply to placement within the appropriate salary range.

Education, licensure and certifications will be verified in accordance with the Human Resources Division's Hiring Guidelines. Education and license/certification information provided by the selected candidate(s) is subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law and may be published on the Commonwealth's website.

**PRE-OFFER PROCESS:**

A criminal background check will be completed on the recommended candidate as required by the regulations set forth by the Department of Housing and Community Development prior to the candidate being hired.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

**First consideration will be given to those applicants that apply within the first 14 days.**

**MINIMUM ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS:**

**REQUIRED WORK EXPERIENCE:** At least four years of full-time, or equivalent part-time, professional experience in social work or social casework, claims adjudication, job placement, recruitment, employment counseling, vocational or rehabilitation counseling, credit investigation, educational counseling, legal advocacy, or legal counseling.

**SUBSTITUTIONS:**

- A Bachelor's or higher degree may be substituted for two years of the required experience on the basis of two years of education for one year of experience.
- One year of education equals 30 semester hours. Education toward a degree will be prorated on the basis of the proportion of the requirements actually completed.

**LICENSES:** Based on assignment, travel may be required. Those employees who elect to use a motor vehicle for travel must have a current and valid Massachusetts Motor Vehicle Operator's license or the equivalent from another state.

**Comprehensive Benefits:**

When you embark on a career with the Commonwealth, you are offered an outstanding suite of employee benefits that add to the overall value of your compensation package. We take pride in providing a work experience that supports you, your loved ones, and your future.

Want the specifics? [Explore our Employee Benefits and Rewards!](https://www.mass.gov/commonwealth-employee-benefits-and-rewards) at <https://www.mass.gov/commonwealth-employee-benefits-and-rewards>

**An Equal Opportunity / Affirmative Action Employer. Females, minorities, veterans, and persons with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply.**

The Commonwealth is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, national origin, veteran status, or any other basis covered by appropriate law. Research suggests that qualified women, Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color (BIPOC) may self-select out of opportunities if they don't meet 100% of the job requirements. We encourage individuals who believe they have the skills necessary to thrive to apply for this role.

**Official Title:** Benefits Eligibility & Referral Social Worker (C)

**Primary Location:** United States-Massachusetts-Springfield-243 Cottage Street

**Job:** Community and Social Services

**Agency:** Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities

**Schedule:** Full-time

**Shift:** Day

**Job Posting:** Aug 26, 2024, 12:52:32 PM

**Number of Openings:** 1

**Salary:** \$65,974.48 - \$89,633.44 Yearly

**If you have Diversity, Affirmative Action or Equal Employment Opportunity questions or need a Reasonable Accommodation, please contact Diversity Officer / ADA Coordinator:** Jessica Molina - 8572480160

**Bargaining Unit:** 08-SEIU - Local 509 - Social/Rehabilitation

**Confidential:** No

**Potentially Eligible for a Hybrid Work Schedule:** Yes

**HOW TO APPLY:**

Apply online at <https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=240007LY>