

Massachusetts  
Section 8 Centralized Waiting List  
**Definitions of Preferences**

**NOTE:** *Participating housing authorities may or may not use some or all of the preferences listed below. These definitions are minimum qualifications; housing authorities may have more specific criteria within a particular preference. A housing authority will request documentation of preferences at the time you reach the top of the waiting list and are selected for final determination.*

**Activated Military Personnel to Persian Gulf:** Family whose head or spouse has been called to active duty in the Armed Forces as a result, or in anticipation of, military deployment in Persian Gulf region.

**Board of Health Condemnation:** An applicant who can provide documentation from the Board of Health that they have been displaced most recently or about to be displaced due to the Board of Health condemning their unit.

**Disabled:** Family whose head, spouse or sole member:

- 1) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, learning, breathing and working;
- 2) has a record of or has a history of such an impairment; or
- 3) is regarded as having an impairment or the impairment is treated by the applicant as constituting such a limitation of one or more life activities.

Verification must include one or more of the following:

- 1) Receipt of Social Security Disability or Supplemental Security Income, or
- 2) Letters regarding qualification for SSI payments, or
- 3) Proof of residence in an institution, or
- 4) Documents showing hospitalization for a disability, or
- 5) Letter from another knowledgeable professional, such as a health or service professional or a social worker.

**Displaced by hate crimes, reprisals:** An applicant is involuntarily displaced if the hate crime occurred recently or is of continuing nature, and:

- 1) Family members provided information on criminal activities to a law enforcement agency, or
- 2) One or more members of an applicant's family has been the victim of one or more hate crimes, AND the applicant has vacated the unit or must vacate because the activity interferes with his quiet enjoyment of the premises.

Documentation must be provided by a law enforcement agency that verifies there has been actual or threatened physical violence or intimidation that is directed against a person or his or her property, and that is based on a person's race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, disability or familial status.

**Displaced by Landlord Non-renewal:** Displaced by landlord through no fault of their own, i.e.:

- 1) Condo conversions
- 2) Closure of unit (e.g., rehab)

- 3) Owner wants unit for personal or family use
- 4) Unit sold with applicant's agreement to vacate upon sale
- 5) Any legally-authorized act that results in owner's taking unit off rental market
- 6) Or any other definition set by a particular housing authority

Verification must include documentation of such action an/or court executed documents.

**Displace by Natural Disaster:** An applicant who has been displaced by a disaster recognized by the Federal government, which extensively damaged or destroyed their dwelling, i.e. fire, flood or other natural disaster and documented by the local Buildings Department or Board of Health.

**Displaced by Public Action:** An applicant who has been displaced through governmental action. Verification must be documented by the government agency displacing the applicant.

**Domestic Violence:** An applicant who vacated their unit because of domestic violence or lives in a unit with a person who engages in violence.

Documented actual or threatened violence directed toward self or member(s) of household by spouse or other member of applicant's household must come from a third party source, i.e. shelter advocate, social worker, law enforcement agency, etc.

The domestic violence should have occurred recently or be of a continuing nature.

**Elderly:** An applicant or spouse who is sixty-two (62) years of age or older.

**Near Elderly (55+):** An applicant or spouse who is at least fifty five (55) but less than sixty-two (62) years of age.

**Extremely Low Income:** An applicant whose gross family income does not exceed 30% of the Median income limit for the highest part of the State (Eastern Worcester County area) by family size, currently:

1 person	2 person	3 person	4 person	5 person	6 person	7 person	8 person
\$21,500	\$24,550	\$27,650	\$30,700	\$33,150	\$35,600	\$38,050	\$40,500

**Health Conditions (disability affecting housing need):** An applicant who is or about to be displaced due to:

- 1) A member of the family has a mobility or other impairment that makes the person unable to use critical elements of the unit, AND
- 2) The owner is not legally obligated to make changes to the unit, or
- 3) Any other definition used by a particular housing authority.

**Homeless:** Applicant must be currently homeless and must be able to provide third party documentation of their homelessness that they:

- 1) Lacks fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; OR
- 2) Has primary nighttime residence that is:

A supervised public or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living accommodations. (Welfare Hotels, congregate shelters and transitional housing).

An institution that provides temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized (not incarcerated).

A public or private place not designated or normally used as regular sleeping place for humans.

**Participant in Metco Program in Wayland school:** An applicant with a family member who participates in the Metco Program in a Wayland school is included in the definition of Wayland resident

**Rent burdened 50% of income:** An applicant who can document that they are paying more than 50% of their monthly gross family adjusted income (adjustments for dependent allowance, medical expenses, etc.) toward monthly housing costs (rent and utilities).

**Rent burdened 40% of income:** An applicant who can document that they are paying more than 40% of their monthly gross family adjusted income (adjustments for dependent allowance, medical expenses, etc.) toward monthly housing costs (rent and utilities).

**Resident of Greater Chelmsford Area:** An applicant who lives or works in one of the following towns: Chelmsford, Westford, Groton, Dracut, Tyngsboro, Carlisle, Dunstable, Lowell, Townsend and Littleton.

**Resident of Quincy or Adjacent Community:** An applicant who lives or works in the city of Quincy, or an adjacent community which is limited to Boston, Braintree, Milton, Randolph and Weymouth OR who has been hired to work in the city of Quincy or adjacent community at the time of application and at the time of final determination of eligibility and qualification.

**Resident of South Berkshire County:** An applicant who lives or works in one of the following towns: Alford, Becket, Egremont, Great Barrington, Lee, Lenox, Mill River, Monterey, Mount Washington, New Marlborough, Otis, Richmond, Sandisfield, Sheffield, Stockbridge, Tyringham, Washington, West Stockbridge.

**Single Person:** A one-person family if they meet all other eligibility criteria.  
This includes an elderly person, disabled person and a single pregnant person.

**Substandard Housing (includes homeless):** Applicant who can document through a third party certified to do so, that:

Applicant resides in a unit that:

- 1) Does not provide safe and adequate shelter and endangers the health, safety, or well-being of family; or
- 2) Has one or more critical defects or combination of intermediate defects in sufficient number or extent to require considerable repair or rebuilding (i.e has not satisfied HQS or other regulatory standard used by particular housing authority) .

OR

Applicant is homeless (see 'Homeless'):

**Tenants of Project-Based Units:** An applicant who currently resides in a unit that has been designated for Project-Based Assistance. This Preference selection must be accompanied by a letter of verification from the designated Project-Based landlord.

**Clients for Project-Based Units:** An applicant who has met the qualifications of a designated Project-based unit. This Preference selection must be accompanied by a letter of verification from the designated Project-Based landlord.

**Veteran:** An applicant who can document that they are:

- 1) a veteran with service-connected disability;
- 2) a family of a deceased veteran who's death was service-connected; or
- 3) other veteran that meets the definition of a particular housing authority's administrative plan.

**Working:** An applicant and/or spouse is currently employed.