

MIDDLEBOROUGH HOUSING AUTHORITY

HOUSING SITUATION PRIORITY POLICY

Per 760 CMR 5.11 and effective April 10, 2019, DHCD has promulgated this Policy. The Housing Situation Priority Policy replaces the Emergency Case Policy due to the implementation of the online Common Housing Application for Massachusetts Public Housing (CHAMP) application process.

I. **STATEMENT OF POLICY AND PURPOSE.** Through this Policy, DHCD seeks to establish a fair and uniform standard to be applied to all applicants for Housing Situation Priority Status to the end that similarly situated applicants will receive similar treatment. Requirements as to evidence, documentation and verification employed by the LHA in making determinations of Housing Situation Priority Status shall be reasonable in relation to the realistic capacity and resources of the applicant.

II. **DEFINITION OF HOMELESS APPLICANT.** As required by 760 CMR 5.11 and consistent with the definition in 5.03, the LHA shall define a "Homeless Applicant" as an applicant who has been or is imminently faced with displacement from his/her "Primary Residence" as a result of circumstances described in Section III below, and who:

(A) is without a place to live or is in a living situation in which there is a significant immediate and direct threat to the life or safety of the applicant or a household member which situation would be alleviated by placement in an appropriate unit; and

(B) has made reasonable efforts to locate alternative housing; and

(C) has not caused or substantially contributed to the safety, or life threatening situation; and

(D) has pursued available ways to prevent or avoid the safety, or life threatening situation, by seeking assistance through the courts or appropriate administrative or enforcement agencies.

"Primary Residence" is defined by 760 CMR 5.03 as the principal home (domicile) intended to be occupied by all members of an applicant household not less than nine months of the year.

III. **MHA SHALL GRANT PRIORITY 4 – HOUSING SITUATION PRIORITY STATUS** to an otherwise eligible and qualified "Homeless Applicant" who meets the definition in Section II above, and who is displaced from his/her "Primary Residence" under the following circumstances:

(A) **Homeless and Facing a Significant Immediate and Direct Threat to the Life or Safety of the Applicant or any Household Member for Causes Other Than the Fault of the Applicant or Member of the Applicant Household.** Applicants are "homeless and facing a significant immediate and direct threat to life or safety" if they meet the definition set out in Section II above. "Causes other than the fault of the applicant or member of the applicant household" shall mean causes outside their reasonable control, including an eviction because of a condominium conversion or rehabilitation of the property or because the landlord wants the unit for his own or family use,

(B) **Severe Medical Emergencies.** An applicant is suffering a severe medical emergency if the applicant or member of the applicant household is determined by the LHA to suffer from an illness or injury posing a severe and medically documented threat to life or safety which has been significantly caused by the lack of suitable housing or as to which the lack of suitable housing is a substantial impediment to treatment or recovery.

Approved: May 15, 2019

Reviewed: March 19, 2025