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State distributes \$17.9m in grants to aid homeless

The Boston Globe

By Jenifer McKim, Globe Staff | October 10, 2009

Massachusetts is awarding \$17.9 million in federal stimulus money to 20 nonprofits, communities, and housing authorities to help at-risk families find stable housing.

State officials this week announced the grants to groups that include the Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership, the Springfield Housing Authority, and Father Bill's & Mainspring, a Brockton-based organization that helps the homeless.

"We want to use these rehousing monies to reduce the need for motels by doing a massive effort with our community partners," said Robert Pulster, associate director of the Division of Housing Stabilization at the state Department of Housing and Community Development. "We do have a crisis now."

There are about 3,000 families living in shelters, including 1,009 in state-funded motels at a cost to taxpayers of about \$2 million a month, Pulster said. There are about 3,000 individuals living in shelters, he said.

Funding will go toward helping families move out of shelters and to preventing at-risk families from losing their homes.

The money is part of \$45 million in federal funds awarded to the state by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. About \$1 million is staying with the state for administrative costs, and an additional \$26.1 million is going directly to 20 Massachusetts communities to help local organizations prevent homelessness. ■

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