

Four Cambridge nonprofits receive \$\$ to help end homelessness

Wicked Local Cambridge

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Cambridge — Four Cambridge-based nonprofits are slated to receive funding to help end homelessness in Cambridge and 25 other Greater Boston communities.

The Metro Boston Network to End Homelessness announces the preliminary awarding of contracts to 12 area agencies and organizations to provide Housing First, homelessness prevention and diversion, and housing stabilization services as part of the network's efforts to end homelessness. Additionally, emergency funds to assist with these services will be available to families served by the contracted agencies, as well as to two additional organizations that will be leveraging staff support for these services.

The Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership (MBHP) is the convening agency for the Metro Boston Network.

"I am thrilled these agencies have stepped forward in partnership with the Metro Boston Regional Network to provide a much-needed service that I believe will prove to be replicable and will benefit families at risk of homelessness," said Chris Norris, MBHP executive director.

Each contract, once finalized and accepted, will be for 18 months and will begin July 1.

Cambridge-based preliminary awardees are:

- Community Dispute Settlement Center — \$18,000 for eviction prevention at Cambridge District Court and for leveraging similar services in Woburn District Court.
- Just-A-Start/Mediation for Results — \$44,800 for eviction prevention and housing stabilization with the Chelsea, Malden and Somerville district courts.
- Heading Home — \$44,347 for a Housing First program for Network-area families.
- HomeStart Inc. — \$44,347 for a Housing First program for Network-area individuals.

HomeStart Assistant Executive Director Naomi Sweitzer said the contract would help fund a program that will change lives.

"Long-term homeless, disabled individuals in the region will have the opportunity to move to their own homes surrounded by experienced and caring supportive services staff," she said.

"They will be able to move beyond basic survival and begin on a road to better health and community connections."

Other network preliminary awardees are:

- Affordable Housing and Services Collaborative, a nonprofit arm of Peabody Properties — \$63,000 for eviction prevention and housing stabilization in two Chelsea and Somerville housing developments.
- Brookline Community Mental Health Center — \$20,000 for eviction prevention and housing stabilization with the Brookline Housing Authority.
- Community Action Programs Inter City Inc. (CAPIC) — \$78,000 for diversion from shelter at the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) offices in Revere and, in conjunction with the Community Services Network, Malden, and for stabilization for families who are served and referred by Just-A-Start/Mediation for Results in working with Malden District Court.
- Community Service Network (CSN) — \$21,000 for eviction prevention and housing stabilization with the Woburn Housing Authority, and for housing stabilization on cases referred by Just-A-Start/Mediation for Results and the Community Dispute Settlement Center at the Woburn District Court.
- Tri-City Action Program (Tri-CAP) — \$30,112 for the Four City Tenancy Preservation Collaborative eviction prevention and housing stabilization services through working with Eliot Community Human Services and the Malden and Somerville district courts to serve residents of Everett, Malden, Medford and Melrose.
- Housing Families — \$40,000 for eviction prevention and housing stabilization with the Everett and Malden housing authorities.
- Somerville Community Corporation — \$50,000 for Somerville Tenancy Preservation Collaborative eviction prevention and housing stabilization with the Somerville Housing Authority, individual Somerville rental property owners, and Somerville District Court. Additional partners include Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services, Community Action Agency of Somerville, Somerville Homeless Coalition, and Somerville Mental Health Association.
- The Second Step — \$20,000 for services in conjunction with the Metro Boston Domestic Violence Collaborative for diversion from shelter and housing stabilization services at the Malden and Revere DTA offices.

Beyond the \$470,000 to be awarded to these 12 agencies, an additional \$465,729 in emergency flexible funds will be available. The funds will be used for such necessities as first/last month's rent on a new home, rental arrearages, utility deposits or arrearages, and the like, and dollars must be directly related to obtaining or retaining housing. In addition to the 12 contracted agencies and their partners, MBHP and the Cambridge Multi-Service Center will use the emergency flexible funds to leverage staff services and help residents obtain and retain housing.

For more information about the Metro Boston Network to End Homelessness, call Laura Russell at the Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership at 617-425-6698 or e-mail laura.russell@mbhp.org.