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Metro Boston Network to End Homelessness Announces Preliminary Contract Awards

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A Somerville-based nonprofit, along with 11 other agencies and organizations, is slated to receive funds to help end homelessness in Somerville 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," MBHP Executive Director Chris Norris.

The Somerville Community Corp. will receive \$50,000 for Somerville Tenancy Preservation Collaborative eviction prevention and housing stabilization services with the Somerville Housing Authority, individual Somerville rental property owners, and the 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 12 contracts, once finalized and accepted, will be for 18 months and will begin July 1. The other preliminary awardees are:

- Affordable Housing & 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 Dispute Settlement Center - \$18,000 for eviction prevention at the Cambridge District Court and for leveraging similar services in the Woburn 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.
- 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.
- Housing Families - \$40,000 for eviction prevention and housing stabilization with the Everett and Malden housing authorities.
- Just-A-Start/Mediation for Results - \$44,800 for eviction prevention and housing stabilization with the Chelsea, Malden and Somerville district courts.
- Somerville Community Corp.- \$50,000 for Somerville Tenancy Preservation Collaborative eviction prevention and housing stabilization with the Somerville Housing Authority, individual Somerville rental property owners, and the 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, contact Network Coordinator Laura Russell at the Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership, (617) 425-6698, or e-mail laura.russell@mbhp.org.

Additional Metro Boston Network information...

In December 2008, the Metro Boston Network was one of eight regional networks awarded a collective \$8 million for pilot programs to end homelessness statewide through better coordination, integration and implementation of services.

The Metro Boston Network, which received \$1.18 million and for which the MBHP serves as the convening agency, connects a diverse network of community and municipal leaders, housing authorities, service agencies, faith communities and philanthropists to develop a comprehensive, coordinated approach to the challenge to end homelessness in the Greater Boston region.

Services focus on three major innovative program areas: Housing First, diversion and prevention. Housing First targets chronically homeless unaccompanied adults and families who are chronically homeless and/or facing many complex barriers to housing. The goal is to get them housed first, with services to sustain the housing. The diversion program focuses on interventions that divert families from shelter toward alternative safe housing options. Prevention activities help families avoid eviction to prevent homelessness and avoid a stay in a shelter.

The Metro Boston Network to End Homelessness includes the following communities: Arlington, Bedford, Belmont, Brookline, Burlington, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Lexington, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Milton, Newton, North Reading, Reading, Revere, Somerville, Stoneham, Wakefield, Waltham, Watertown, Wilmington, Winchester, Winthrop and Woburn.

Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership is the state's largest regional provider of rental housing voucher assistance. We serve homeless, elderly, disabled, and low- and moderate-income individuals and families. Our region spans Boston and 29 surrounding communities.

Our mission is to ensure that the region's low- and moderate-income individuals and families have choice and mobility in finding and retaining decent affordable housing; all of our programs and initiatives are designed to encourage housing stability, increased economic self-sufficiency, and enhanced quality of the lives of those we serve. To achieve our mission and to promote efficient service delivery, we work collaboratively with a broad array of service providers and neighborhood-based organizations.

For more information, contact Beth Wagner at (617) 425-6691, or log onto www.mbhp.org.