

Awards help combat homelessness

By Staff reports

Tue Jun 23, 2009, 09:36 AM EDT

Woburn, MA -

Beginning July 1, Woburn and 25 other Greater Boston communities will get more help to end homelessness.

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.

Each contract, once finalized and accepted, will be for 18 months and will begin July 1. Among the awards are:

- 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.

An additional \$465,729 in emergency flexible funds will also 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.