



Public Health
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CITY OF EASTHAMPTON

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Nicole LaChapelle
Mayor

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EASTHAMPTON HEALTH DEPARTMENT HIRES COMMUNITY SOCIAL WORKER

The Easthampton Health Department has hired Elizabeth Plouffe to hold the City of Easthampton's first Community Social Worker position. The position has been a goal of the Health Department for several years, and the COVID-19 pandemic significantly increased the need for the position. The position will focus on outreach, education, referrals, substance use, and mental health for all ages and populations in the city.

Bri Eichstaedt states, "This position has always been a goal of mine after seeing a community in central Massachusetts create a similar position several years ago. As code enforcement inspectors, we come across many situations where a social worker could help connect someone to local resources, such as helping them find stable housing or bringing a current housing situation to a safe, clean, and habitable state. We often rely on outside agencies to assist us, and we're excited to have a city employee dedicated to this work."

Liz attended the University of Connecticut for undergraduate studies, completing a Bachelor of Arts degree in Human Development and Family Studies in 2012, in addition to two minor certificates in Spanish and Puerto Rican and Latino Studies. She later returned to graduate school and earned a Master of Social Work degree from Springfield College in 2018. Liz has been employed as a medical social worker with Baystate Health for the past four years, working on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Emergency Department. Liz is an independently licensed social worker with a passion for public health and helping individuals of all ages.

Liz quotes, "I am honored and excited to join the Health Department and serve the residents of Easthampton. For the last ten years I have worked in human services in Western Massachusetts, most recently as a medical social worker with Baystate Health. I witnessed first hand how devastating the effects of the pandemic have been on the physical, emotional, and



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mental health of individuals and families in the local area. My primary goal in returning to community work is to aid in the recovery from the challenges of the past few years. I am looking forward to collaborating with the existing resources available in Easthampton and implementing new supports along the way.”

The Health Department will conduct a community needs assessment as soon as possible to get an idea of what specific needs the community has and where to focus attention. The survey will be posted on the Health Department website at <https://easthamptonma.gov/167/Health> and Facebook page @Easthampton, MA Health Department or <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100081623238829>.



Elizabeth Plouffe, MSW, LICSW