

**If you are falling behind on your rent or utilities or if you have received a 14 Day Notice to Quit:**

- **IMPORTANT: A Notice to Quit DOES NOT mean you have to leave your apartment. It means that the landlord will file a court case when the notice expires**
- **You may be protected by the National Eviction Moratorium.** To find out if you are covered, visit [www.masslegalhelp.org/covid-19/housing](http://www.masslegalhelp.org/covid-19/housing). You must file the CDC declaration with your landlord.
- **WAYFINDERS** has RAFT funds for **rental arrearage, utility arrearage and in certain cases security deposits and furniture.** They are taking applications online at [www.wayfinders.org/apply-financial-assistance](http://www.wayfinders.org/apply-financial-assistance)
  - You will be required to provide them with proof of income, legal identity, proof of housing crisis or utility shut off and only have 2 weeks from the date of application to provide this information so you may want to gather your documents BEFORE applying.
- **Community Action** has funds for **rental arrears, fuel assistance to help pay your utility bills, and information on accessing food.**
  - **Call the Community Action help line at 413-475-1570** to see what programs you are eligible for.
  - Let them know if you are about to be shut off or if you have less than 1/8 of a tank of oil left! And apply as early as possible! November 1<sup>st</sup> the applications open, and the cutoff date is April 30<sup>th</sup>. Call 413-774-2310 or sign up for an appointment online at: [www.communityaction.us/fuel-assistance](http://www.communityaction.us/fuel-assistance)
- Sometimes churches and community-based groups have small funds available that can help tide you over. Check with your local church or any organizations who help you out.

**If you are in Housing Court:**

- Contact **Community Legal Aid** *Immediately* as they have extra funds to provide attorneys: 855-252-5342
- **Housing Court mediators** can help you and your landlord come to an agreement so you can stay in your apartment. All cases are REQUIRED to go to mediation. Make the most of it! Don't be afraid to ask your landlord to decrease or forgive some of your arrearages or to lower your rent to something you can afford. There's no harm in asking! It helps if you can bring a budget in to show realistically how you can afford moving forward.
- You may want to file a motion or a response asking the court to consider any significant problems in your apartment, especially if it's really bad. Attach photos. You can even sometimes ask the court to order your landlord to put you in a hotel at the landlord's expense until repairs are made. Ask the clerk for a blank motion form and file it the same day.
- The **Tenancy Preservation Program** can help you if you have a disability (mental/emotional, physical, substance abuse) that makes it difficult for you to stay housed. Ask to speak with TPP! They are inside the courthouse. (You can also call MHA, the agency that runs TPP, at 413-734-5376)

**If you are have received 48 hours' notice or your apartment has been condemned:**

- You can file an **emergency motion to stay the physical eviction**. Ask the clerk for a blank motion form at Housing Court and tell them you need to file the emergency motion the same day. Ask the court for extra time so you can find an apartment to move into and access some of the resources on this handout.

**If you have children or are pregnant AND have received 48 hours' notice or are living in your car/on the streets:**

- Go to the **Department of Housing and Community Development** (DHCD) at 243 Cottage Street, Springfield, MA and ask to apply for EA shelter. If you're worried you might not meet their eligibility requirements, you can do a phone screening before going down to Cottage Street – call 866-584-0653. If you do go to Cottage Street, they will try to screen you out without taking an official application, but **don't leave** until you have an official determination of eligibility or ineligibility. You should either be placed in shelter or receive an NFL-9 form. If you don't receive a form, you haven't completed an application. (If you get denied, appeal!) Politely re-state that you want to complete an EA application. Arrive **before 2 p.m.!!!!**
- If you qualify for shelter through DHCD, you can also qualify for **HomeBASE**. You can use HomeBASE to relocate immediately without needing to go into shelter. This can be helpful if your landlord is trying to evict you but can

be convinced to let you stay a week or two until you find another apartment. (Or if your landlord would keep you if you paid off your arrearages!) You must complete an EA application and ask to work with **Diversion** staff.

**If you are alone living in a place unfit for human habitation or fleeing violence:**

- You should try to get into shelter immediately. You will be asked to get a COVID test that the shelter will assist you in getting.
  - **ServiceNet** individual shelters are Grove Street and the cot shelter located at First Churches 129 Main Street Northampton. Call 413-313-5557 for a bed BEFORE going to the church.
  - **Craigsdooor** is currently located at 121 N Pleasant St, Amherst, MA 01002. Call (413) 256-0704 option 2.
  - **Safe Passage**: call the hotline at (413) 586-5066 (domestic violence/sexual assault/sex trafficking)
  - **Safelink** (any domestic violence/sexual assault bed in the state): 877-785-2020

**If you have been homeless longer than one year or if you've been homeless more than 4 times in the last 3 years:**

- Contact **ServiceNet 413-313-5557** and ask to be assessed by their Coordinated Entry program for Permanent Supportive Housing. For this program only, it's important that you tell the worker **everything** about your situation – the more risk factors you have, the sooner you can qualify for housing!

**If you are experiencing food insecurity:**

- There are a number of local food pantries that continue to distribute food.
  - **Easthampton Community Center** located at 12 Clark Street, Easthampton, distributes food outside on:
    - Mondays and Wednesday 9:00 am-Noon and 4:00-7:00 pm
  - **Northampton Survival Center** has a number of drop off locations (Jackson Street School MWF 12-3; Hampshire and Florence Heights, Meadowbrook, the Lumberyard). More information can be found at [www.growfoodnorthampton.org/covid-19-emergency-food-project](http://www.growfoodnorthampton.org/covid-19-emergency-food-project) or call (413) 320-4799
    - You can also go to their head quarters at 265 Prospect Street on the following days for outside food pick up: Monday 2-6; Wed 12-3; Friday 12-3
  - **Amherst Survival Center** provides both food pantry and hot meals at 138 Sunderland Rd, North Amherst
    - Mon-Fri, 12pm-3pm and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month from 12-2pm.
- Hot Meals can be obtained from
  - **Northampton**: visit the MANNA website: [www.mannanorthampton.org](http://www.mannanorthampton.org) for more details
    - Monday & Tuesday, 11:30am-1:30pm @ St. John's Church, 48 Elm St, Northampton, MA
    - Wednesday, 6:00pm-7:00pm, @ Edwards Church, 297 Main St, Northampton, MA
    - Thursday, & Saturday, 11:30am-1:30pm @ St. John's Church, 48 Elm St, Northampton, MA
  - **Amherst**
    - Amherst Survival Center (see above)
    - Not Bread Alone: 165 Main Street, Amherst, Saturday and Sunday at noon; Wed at 4pm

**If you are looking for long term affordable housing:**

- The Community Connection in Amherst is a very helpful resource for assisting in applying to long term, affordable housing. During COVID, they are meeting by appointment only at 236 N. Pleasant St. Amherst, MA 01002. Call or email [ACCinAmherst@gmail.com](mailto:ACCinAmherst@gmail.com) to make an appointment.

**Other resources and information:**

- Look4Help - website with social services listings in Western Mass: [www.look4help.org](http://www.look4help.org)
- Mass 211 - call 211 for information about locally available critical health and human services (government benefits and services, nonprofit organizations, support groups, volunteer opportunities, donation programs, and other local resources) <https://mass211.org>