

New colocation at Roxbury Community College

Roxbury Community College students can now make an appointment to meet one-on-one with MBHP staff members on the RCC campus.

MBHP is proud to announce this new partnership to bring our housing counseling services to RCC students.

“RCC is committed to removing the obstacles that prevent our students from completing their studies,” says RCC president, Dr. Valerie Roberson. “This new partnership between RCC and MBHP, in conjunction with the current services offered by Single Stop, will provide our students with significant assistance in overcoming this all-too-common barrier.”

The partnership kicked off with a three-hour workshop on Affordable Housing Basics.

“We are excited to bring MBHP services to the students of Roxbury Community College,” said MBHP Director of Housing Supports Kate Fulton. “Through this partnership, we are able to take our housing counseling services on the road, making it even easier for students to get the help they need.”



“The affordable housing world can be very confusing to people who are new to it,” said Matthew Gibson, MBHP’s Outreach Case Manager. “We are looking forward to demystifying the process for any RCC students who need help finding housing they can afford.”

With colocations, MBHP comes to you. Through partnerships with other nonprofits and agencies, we are able to meet with clients in the communities we serve, while also giving you a chance to learn about another local resource that may be able to assist you.

Meet with MBHP

For more information about how RCC students can meet with MBHP on campus, contact RCC’s Single Stop at 617.933.7459 or visit Administration Building (2), Room 101.

Not an RCC student? For a complete list of current colocations, please see Page 6.



Start Right Workshop

MBHP isn't just about helping people find homes, we want you to be able to stay there for as long as you choose.

To help, we educate landlords and tenants about working together to resolve issues and maintain a good relationship. And we are adjusting one of our workshops to focus on this important relationship.

Starting in January 2016, MBHP will offer the Start Right Workshop. The updated workshop is designed for tenants, especially those with newly-signed leases, who are looking to start things off on the right foot with their landlord, focusing on the importance of good communication. The workshop will also offer general information on the eviction process, including tenant rights.

“The Start Right Workshop is a great way to help tenants increase their chances of staying in their home for the long-term,” said Regine Chrispin, HCEC Manager at MBHP. “We hope tenants come away learning valuable lessons about maintaining a successful relationship with their landlords.”

Register online at www.mbhp.org (click on “Events”) or contact us at 617.425.6605 or workshops@mbhp.org.



Meet MBHP: Keila Lopez

For Keila Lopez, no two days at MBHP are alike. As one of MBHP's Housing Search Case Managers, she meets with people in a variety of programs, inside and outside the office, to help them apply for and secure housing they can afford.

Hometown. I was born in Guayama, Puerto Rico, the youngest of five siblings, but I was raised in the Bronx, New York City. I used to spend my summers going to the Bronx Zoo, Yankee Stadium, museums. Most of all, I enjoyed going to the World Trade Center.

Hobbies. I like to listen to all types of music. I also love and enjoy arts and crafts.

Food. I like Puerto Rican food, my favorite dish is Arroz con Gandules y Pernil (Rice with Green Pigeon Peas and Pork Shoulder).

Values. Respect, understanding, kindness, and dedication.

Motivation. When I help families and individuals get housed. Knowing that I made a positive impact in someone's life is rewarding.

Accomplishments. The birth of my beautiful daughters.

Personal hero. Dr. Mary Bourque, Superintendent of Chelsea Public Schools, and my former supervisor. She gives so much to the community. She was the reason I decided to work for an organization that helps families going through some hard times.

Stay safe at home this winter!

Carbon monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO), sometimes called the “invisible killer,” is a poisonous gas that has no visible color, taste, or odor. CO is produced whenever any fuel, such as gas, oil, kerosene, wood or charcoal is burned. Below are some tips to avoid exposure to CO:

- Don't leave a vehicle running inside a garage, even if the door is open. Fumes will build up quickly inside the home.
- Do not use a gas oven to heat your home and never use a charcoal grill indoors!
- Check vent pipes, flues, and chimneys for leaks or blockages.
- Check behind your car before starting the engine to make sure snow is not blocking the tailpipes.
- Do not use un-vented kerosene heaters—they are illegal in Massachusetts.
- Never use gasoline-powered engines (generators, chain saws, blowers, weed trimmers, mowers,

or snow blowers) indoors or near doors or windows.

- Have a qualified service technician inspect your appliances yearly, before the heating season.
- Make sure you have working CO alarms on all levels of your home. Landlords are required to install CO alarms in all apartments that have a carbon monoxide source.

Space heaters

Space heaters can be fire hazards if not used properly. Stay warm and safe by following these safety tips:

- Keep the heater three feet away from drapes, furniture, or other flammable materials.
- Place the heater on a level surface away from areas where someone might bump into it and knock it over.
- Avoid using extension cords. If you must use an extension cord, make sure it is a heavy duty cord marked with a power rating at least as high as that on the label of the heater itself.

- Space heaters are for temporary use only. Never leave a space heater unattended or running while you sleep.
- Supervise children and pets when a space heater is in use.
- Keep electric heaters away from water. Never use them near a sink or in the bathroom.
- When buying a heater, look for one that has been tested and labeled by a nationally recognized testing company, such as Underwriter's Laboratories Inc. (UL).
- The sale and use of unvented kerosene heaters is illegal in Massachusetts.

For more safety tips, visit with Massachusetts Department of Fire Safety website at www.mass.gov/dfs.



Have a Christmas tree?
Remember to water it daily. Dry trees are a fire hazard!

Upcoming workshops at MBHP

Start Right Workshop

Start your tenancy out on the right foot!

January 5th, 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Affordable Housing Basics

Learn about criteria, waiting lists, and how to apply for affordable housing.

January 12, 10–11:30 a.m.

Housing Strategies Clinic

Become empowered and effective in meeting your housing goals!

January 19, 10–11:30 a.m.

All workshops are held at MBHP, 125 Lincoln Street, 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02111. Register online at www.mbhp.org or contact workshops@mbhp.org or 617.425.6605. For all reasonable accommodation requests, including sign language interpreters, the use of the building wheelchair platform lift, or the need for an interpreter in a language other than English, please contact us at workshops@mbhp.org or 617.425.6605 at least two weeks prior to the scheduled date of the workshop.

Utility assistance

From November 15 to March 15, Massachusetts law provides protection for residents who are struggling with their heating costs. The “winter moratorium” prevents gas and electric companies from shutting off your heating fuel because of your inability to pay for it. Also, they cannot shut off a service that you need to run your residential heating system.

Charges will continue to be applied during this period and you will still owe the utility company for the provided service, so you should still pay what they can afford during this time.

If you need help with utility costs, the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) may be able to help. Visit <http://bostonabcd.org/fuel-assistance.aspx> or contact ABCD for more information:

- Boston: 617.357.6012
- Brookline: 617.730.2777
- Newton: 617.796.1282
- Malden, Medford, Everett, Melrose, Stoneham, Winchester and Woburn: 781.322.6284



Food assistance programs

A balanced diet can help you stay healthy throughout the cold winter months. The following programs are available through Greater Boston Food Bank.

Brown Bag Program (seniors)

The Greater Boston Food Bank’s Brown Bag program provides supplemental groceries to thousands of seniors every month, ensuring they don’t miss meals and receive the nutritious food they need to stay healthy.

School-Based Pantry

School-based pantries offer a unique opportunity for GBFB to directly reach children and families in need with fresh, healthy food at convenient and safe school locations.

The School-Based Pantry Program is now held monthly in eight area schools:

- James W. Hennigan School in Jamaica Plain
- James Condon School in South Boston
- William P. Connery School in Lynn
- Orchard Gardens school in South Boston
- STEM Academy at the Rogers School in Lowell
- Lawrence High School
- Marshall School in Billerica
- Hill School in Revere

Mobile Market

Through Mobile Markets, GBFB delivers high-quality, perishable food directly to partner sites, where it is set up on tables in the style of a farmer’s market. Clients ‘shop’ at each table, choosing from a diverse selection of fresh produce and dairy products, as well as frozen soup and high-protein items.

Contact programs@gbfb.org or 617.427.5200 to learn more about these programs.

Has an emergency set you back financially? Do you need help catching up? RAFT may be able to help you.

MBHP is accepting applications for RAFT funds. To apply, call MBHP’s Resource Line at 617.425.6700 (para español, llame 617.425.6685), email ResourceLine@mbhp.org, or visit our office. For more information, including eligibility, visit our website at www.mbhp.org/RAFT.

Taking the leap: Kenya's story

A new program for MBHP voucher-holders is helping Kenya gain control of her finances and her future.

Kenya's Massachusetts Rental Voucher helped her afford her rent, but bills, student loans, and other expenses made it hard to feel in control of her finances. She was curious about what more she could do. So when she learned about Mass LEAP, she jumped at the chance.



new-found knowledge came in handy earlier this year when she had to take a leave of absence from work when her mother became ill. She says being able to talk to her financial coach during this time was very helpful, giving her the confidence she needed to make important decisions.

Mass LEAP is a program open to MBHP MRVP voucher-holders that combines rental assistance with financial and career coaching. Kenya began working with a financial coach at Jewish Vocational Service, one of MBHP's partners, learning about ways to improve her credit and pay off

her debt. "It helped me become more aware for how things affect my credit," she says, "and how to not adversely affect it."

She also worked on a household budget and made some decisions to better manage her expenses, including selling her car. That

Kenya is now focused on increasing her income so that she can start escrowing savings. She is looking into taking online courses to finish her college degree, which will put her in a good place for a promotion with her current employer. "I absolutely recommend Mass LEAP," she says.



Mass LEAP

The Massachusetts Learning, Employment and Asset Program
Invest in your future with Mass LEAP!

Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP) participants with children under the age of 18 may be eligible for the Mass LEAP program. This program includes:

- Free support from career and financial coaches at Jewish Vocational Services (JVS) to help increase your income.
- Management of a savings account by MBHP that is activated when you increase your earned income.
- Opportunity to build assets to help you achieve your dreams. Buy your own home, go to college, start a business or save for a child's education.

Hurry, spaces are limited!

Want to learn more?

Please contact Mona Al-Abadi, Mass LEAP Coordinator at: 617.425.6778 or mona.al-abadi@mbhp.org

In partnership with



SKILLS . JOBS . CAREERS

Not an MRVP voucher holder? Opportunities may still be available. Contact our Resource Line at 617.425.6700 or ResourceLine@MBHP.org for more information.





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everyone deserves a place to call home

Find a colocation near you!

Colocations allow you to access MBHP services close to where you live. Our current colocation schedule is below.

Bunker Hill Community College

250 New Rutherford Ave
Boston (Single Stop, USA)
1st and 3rd Fridays, 1–5 p.m.
Linda Johnson or Charles Chear
at Single Stop, (717) 228.3330
(For students of BHCC only.)

Codman Square

Talbot Bernard Apartments
193 Talbot Ave, Dorchester Center
1st and 2nd Wednesdays
10 a.m.–4 p.m.
By referral only.

CONNECT

4 Gerrish Ave, Chelsea
Every Monday, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.
Section 8 recertification: 1st and
2nd Thursdays, 9:30 a.m.–4 p.m.
Evelyn Rodriguez, 617.889.1375
Ext. 0

Interfaith Social Services

105 Adams Street, Quincy
1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 12–5 p.m.
Michelle Morais, 617.773.6203,
Ext. 16

Quincy College

1250 Hancock Street, Quincy
2nd and 4th Fridays, 12–5 p.m.
Amanda Deck, 617.405.5967 (For
students of Quincy College only.)

Roxbury Community College

1234 Columbus Ave, Roxbury
Crossing (Single Stop, USA)
1st Tuesdays starting
February 2016
Lisa Carter at Single Stop,
617.933.7459
(For students of RCC only.)

Somerville Homeless Coalition 1

Davis Square, Somerville
Every Thursday, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.
Section 8 recertification: 1st and
2nd Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m.–4 p.m.
MBHP Resource Line, 617.425.6700

Urban Edge

1542 Columbus Ave, Roxbury
Section 8 recertifications
1st and 2nd Tuesdays
9:30 a.m.–4 p.m.
By referral only.

WATCH CDC

24 Crescent Street, Waltham,
Suite 201
2nd and 4th Fridays, 12–5 p.m.
Daria Gere, (781) 891.6689,
Ext. 200