



# The Housing Crisis: Referring Families in Need

## HOUSING CRISIS

In the face of a persistent housing crisis that leaves too many families struggling to afford stable housing, Making Opportunity Count stands ready to assist through programs that aim to reduce housing costs, prevent homelessness, and shelter families. Through our Navigator and LIHEAP programs as well as specialized referrals to Emergency Assistance (EA) Family Shelter, MOC provides a crucial lifeline for those who are struggling financially to maintain housing or who are facing homelessness. This info sheet is your first step in connecting families in need with the resources necessary to find stability and hope amid uncertainty.

## WHO TO REFER

## HOW TO REFER

### NAVIGATOR/EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

MOC's Navigator can help clients stay in their current housing by providing financial assistance for rent and mortgage payments. **Please note funds are only available seasonally and until they are fully expended.** The Navigator can also help clients apply for MA Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT), a homelessness prevention program which provides short-term financial assistance to families who are facing eviction specifically due to a recent loss of income and/or increase in expenses.

Please send families needing emergency rent or mortgage assistance to MOC's Family Resource Center (FRC). **Include a comment about client's specific need and any information about recent changes to their income/expenses.**

CMS Users can use "Navigator/Emergency Assistance" in the CMS referral module.

All other staff should call FRC and/or send an email to Wendy Lopez (wlopez@mocinc.org). Please mark the referral urgent.

### FUEL ASSISTANCE (LIHEAP)

MOC's LIHEAP program helps homeowners and renters pay home heating bills and past due balances on utility bills. Financial assistance is available for income-eligible households between November 1 - April 30 of each year. LIHEAP staff also have access to emergency utility assistance funding for families whose utilities have been shut-off or who are at-risk of having their utilities shut-off. **Please note funds are only available seasonally and until they are fully expended.**

Please send clients needing emergency utility assistance and/or heating assistance to:  
**fuelassistance@mocinc.org**

CMS Users can also use "LIHEAP" in the CMS referral module. To expedite the LIHEAP application process, please direct **NEW LIHEAP** clients to the online fuel assistance application available at:

**<https://www.mocinc.org/fuelassistance>**

Clients who have received LIHEAP in the past should have already received instructions for the current year's application from MOC's LIHEAP team.

### EA SHELTER REFERRAL

Emergency Assistance (EA) is a state-program that provides emergency shelter and rehousing services to homeless families with children under 21 (including pregnant women). MOC now provides "EA Shelter Referral" for **families who are homeless or imminently homeless and needing emergency shelter.** **PLEASE NOTE: access to shelter is NOT immediate.** Families will have to go through an application and intake process which could take up to a couple of weeks.

Please send families needing a referral for state-funded emergency shelter to MOC's Family Resource Center (FRC). **Include a comment about client's current living situation and why they are in need of shelter.**

CMS Users can use "EA Shelter Referral" in the CMS referral module.

All other staff should call FRC and/or send an email to Migdalia Velez (mvelez@mocinc.org). Please mark the referral urgent.