

CITY OF BOSTON

Amendment #1 HOME-ARP Allocation Plan

**Posted March 20, 2023
for Public Comment**



Michelle Wu, Mayor

**Sheila A. Dillon, Chief of Housing and Director,
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Introduction: The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 appropriated \$5 billion to provide housing, services and shelter to individuals experiencing homelessness and other vulnerable populations. The City of Boston, Mayor’s Office of Housing (MOH) was awarded \$21.6 million in funds through the HOME Investment Partnership Program – American Rescue Plan Program (HOME-ARP). MOH created a budget and plan for spending the \$21.6 million and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approved the Plan in August of 2022. The complete Plan and a two-page summary are posted here: <https://www.boston.gov/departments/housing/policy-development-and-research#plans-and-reports>

Budget Change: MOH is amending the budget as shown in the table below. We are transferring all of the \$7 million in funding for Tenant Based Rental Assistance to Supportive Services for rapid rehousing programs.

HOME-ARP BUDGET (March 2023)			
Activity	Existing	Change	New Total
Supportive Services	\$3,000,000	\$7,000,000	\$10,000,000
Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)	\$7,000,000	(\$7,000,000)	\$0
Development of Affordable Rental Housing	\$9,000,000	\$0	\$9,000,000
Non-Profit Capacity Building	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$1,000,000
Administration & Planning	\$1,597,797	\$0	\$1,597,797
TOTAL HOME-ARP FUNDS	\$21,597,797	\$0	\$21,597,797

This change will simplify the HUD reporting requirements for the households that receive rental assistance thereby reducing the administrative burden for MOH and our subrecipients. ***The number of households we anticipate serving will not change.*** The \$7 million in HOME-ARP funds are estimated to provide rental assistance to 689 households currently assisted with short term, rapid rehousing assistance that is time-limited and due to expire, plus 192 additional households, who have not been selected yet, but would be from among HOME-ARP qualified populations.

Citizen Participation Process: The Mayor’s Office of Housing (MOH) took several steps to notify the public of the release of the draft HOME-ARP Substantial Amendment and the opportunity to comment. The draft Amendment was issued for the required 15-day comment period on March 20. MOH placed a notice and request for comments in the Boston Herald on March 20; comments were encouraged and welcome through April 4 at 5:00 pm. An email of the same notice was sent on March 20 and again as a reminder on April 3 to 634 individuals and organizations subscribed to MOH’s Policy News list encouraging comments and feedback on the Amendment. Additionally, the opportunity to comment was shared with the 11,000 subscribers to MOH’s social media (Twitter and Facebook). The draft Amendment was posted on the Department’s website:

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/housing/hearings-and-public-comment>

General Notifications of this Amendment: MOH placed a legal notice in the Boston Herald and emailed approximately 620 subscribers focused on MOH policy matters that includes a range of organizations and stakeholders who may have an interest in the City’s HUD funding. The public may sign up for this listserv on the Mayor’s Office of Housing website.

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/housing/policy-development-and-research#stay-connected>

Comments Received: MOH received two comments and one request for more information during the public comment period.

Request: a respondent asked for more details on why the \$7 million dollar budget shift was needed.

Response: MOH is currently providing households with rental assistance from funds that will soon be fully expended from the Emergency Solution

Grant program provided under the CARES Act (ESG-CV). Initially, MOH planned to continue to assist these households with HOME-ARP funds under the “Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)” activity. However, after HOME-ARP reporting guidance was issued by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), MOH decided that extending the rental assistance as a “supportive services” activity was less of an administrative burden than “TBRA”. Because the budget change exceeds 10% of the total in HOME-ARP funds, MOH’s Citizen Participation Plan details a public process to afford citizens, public agencies and other interested parties an opportunity to examine and comment on the Amendment.

Comments 1 & 2: a respondent and a nonprofit homeless services agency (Pine Street Inn) expressed support for using HOME-ARP funds for supportive services.

Response: Thank you