

March 8, 2017

# RAFT FY17 UPDATE

## RESIDENTIAL ASSISTANCE FOR FAMILIES IN TRANSITION IN MASSACHUSETTS

### NEED FOR AID IS UP THIS YEAR



Alma lives in Chelsea with her family. She received Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) aid in FY 2016, enabling her family to stay housed and out of shelter. Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership photo

### CLIENT NUMBERS, PAYMENTS INCREASE MORE THAN 32% OVER PRIOR YEAR

More Massachusetts residents are seeking help paying the rent this year than last, a clear signal that rental assistance is needed now more than ever in the commonwealth.

In the first half of this fiscal year, agencies that disburse Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT)

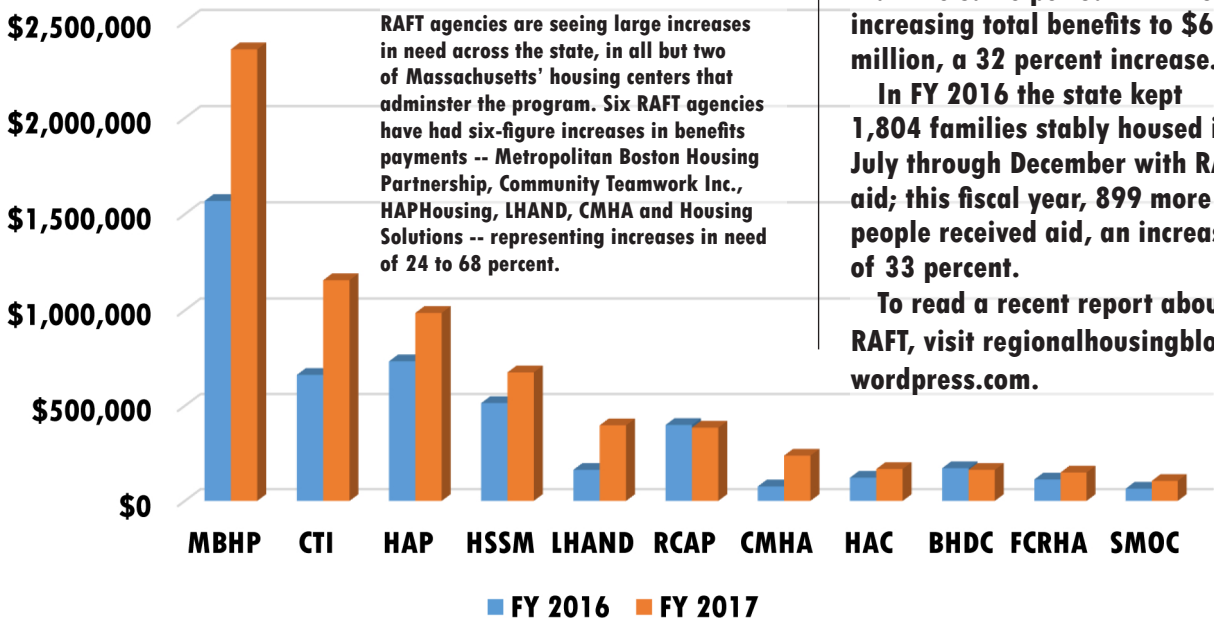
funds needed \$2.2 million more than the same period in FY 2016, increasing total benefits to \$6.8 million, a 32 percent increase.

In FY 2016 the state kept 1,804 families stably housed in July through December with RAFT aid; this fiscal year, 899 more people received aid, an increase of 33 percent.

To read a recent report about RAFT, visit [regionalhousingblog.wordpress.com](http://regionalhousingblog.wordpress.com).

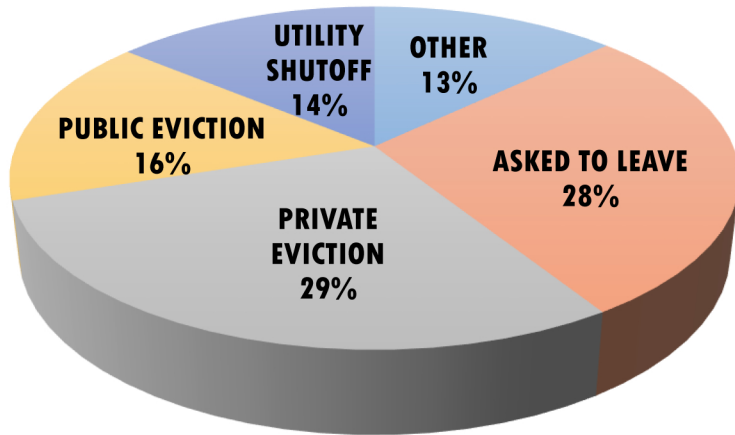


### RAFT SPENDING FOR FY 2016 AND FY 2017: THE FIRST TWO QUARTERS



# RAFT SAVED \$93M SO FAR IN '17

## HOUSING CRISES IN FY 2016 AND FY 2017: THE FIRST TWO QUARTERS



The kinds of housing crises affecting Bay State residents stayed the same in the first half of FY 2016 as compared with the same period in FY 2017. Most RAFT clients are victims of eviction from a private rental; that's followed closely by being asked to leave a residence where they're not the primary tenant; others face eviction from public housing apartments; and yet others have utilities that are shut off or face other problems, such as fire or natural disaster. Housing Assistance Corporation chart



This RAFT program update was prepared by Housing Assistance Corporation for the Regional Housing Network of Massachusetts.

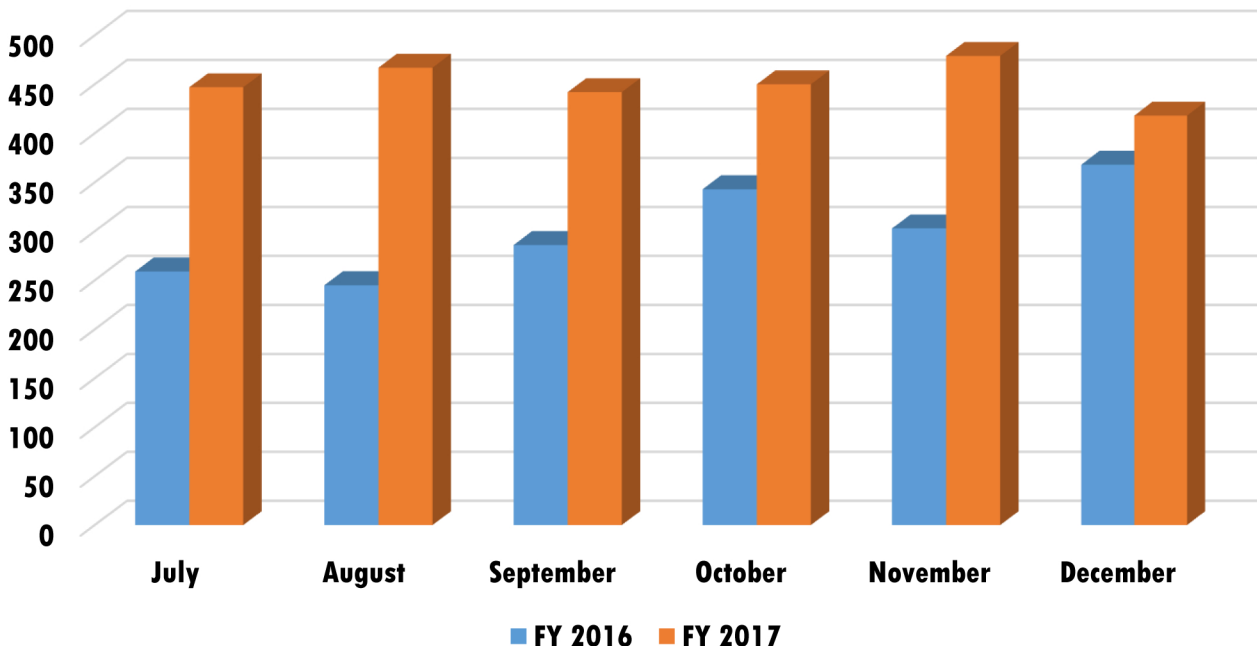
## COST TO PLACE 2,703 FAMILIES IN EMERGENCY SHELTER WOULD BE \$100M

In the first half of this fiscal year, RAFT kept more than 2,700 families stably housed at a cost of \$6.8 million.

It costs \$36,855 to keep a family in emergency shelter for 10.5 months, the average length of stay. If RAFT did not exist, half-year costs would balloon to more than \$99.6 million. The estimated savings are \$93 million because of RAFT.

A full year of emergency shelter at this pace, meanwhile, would cost the state about \$199 million, \$186 million more than with the RAFT program.

## RAFT CLIENT NUMBERS FOR FY 2016 AND FY 2017: THE FIRST TWO QUARTERS



With client numbers up 33 percent across the state, it means more people needed RAFT emergency assistance to help with back rent; first and last months' rent for a new unit; utility payments to avoid a shutoff; rental stipends to help with ongoing payments; and other essential needs. Without the aid, these residents of Massachusetts -- most often single women with two children -- are pushed into homelessness. Housing Assistance Corporation chart