



HOMELESSNESS

Overview

MetroWest homelessness continues to grow in size and related costs. This report assesses 2009 homelessness rates across Massachusetts from the perspective of population, income levels and taxpayer costs as compared to previous assessments. It also includes data on the increased usage of non-shelter emergency housing in MetroWest.

Homeless families in MetroWest finding shelter in area motels, David Riley/Daily News Staff

- **Geography:** MetroWest
- **Year:** September 17, 2009
- **Website:** <http://www.metrowestdailynews.com/news/x1628109926/Homeless-families-in-MetroWest-finding-shelter-in-area-motels>

Key Findings:

- The number of homeless Massachusetts families temporarily living in motels has nearly doubled since this time last year, with 15 in Framingham and 87 in Waltham, say state housing officials.
- Just over 1,000 families are living in rented rooms because roughly 2,000 state-contracted emergency shelter beds are already full, according to the Department of Housing and Community Development.
- That's up from 550 families put up at state expense in hotels and motels in September last year.
- Since June 1, the number spiked 37 percent, a spokesman for the state agency said yesterday.
- "This is an epidemic," said Robyn Frost, executive director of the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless. "I have never seen the numbers of people who are losing their housing and have no alternative for shelter."
- Motel shelter costs taxpayers about \$2.8 million a month, according to state officials.
- As of July 1, to qualify for emergency shelter, families must make no more than 115 percent of the federal poverty line, according to the Department of Housing and Community Development. That adds up to roughly \$25,300 in annual income for a family of four.

Homelessness by Geographic Type, National Alliance to End Homelessness

- **Geography:** State
- **Year:** 2009
- **Website:** <http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/2805>

Key Findings:

- Massachusetts has 17,314 homeless people.

Report of the Special Commission Relative to Ending Homelessness in the Commonwealth, December 28, 2007

- **Geography:** State
- **Year:** Issued December 28, 2007
- **Web Address:** <http://www.chapa.org/pdf/ReportEndingHomelessness.pdf>

Key Findings:

- Homelessness is a significant and increasing problem in the Commonwealth. The Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) supports over 2900 beds for individuals and nearly 1900 units for families at an annual cost to the Commonwealth exceeding \$120 million.

Type of Shelter	Approximate # of current homeless families
Tier 1 (Families w/minimal needs other than affordable housing)	750
Tier 2 (Short-term support required)	500
Tier 3 (Families facing economic challenges)	2,500
Tier 4 (Families facing social & economic challenges)	1,250
Total Families	5,000

- These roughly 5000 families include approximately 10,000 children.

Alternate Source

- SHORE (Statewide Homeless Operations Research Environment) is a web-based application that collects data on homelessness. Organizations can register for access by calling Virtual Gateway Customer Service at 800-421-0938.