



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
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MONICA BHAREL, MD, MPH
Commissioner

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To: Massachusetts State Agency Commissioners
From: Monica Bharel, MD, MPH
CC: Marylou Sudders
Date: April 20, 2016
Re: Voluntary Certification of Alcohol and Drug Free Housing

Chapter 165, Section 37 of the Acts of 2014 required the Department of Public Health (DPH) to establish a process for the voluntary certification of alcohol and drug free (ADF) housing. This legislation limits state agencies and their vendors to referring to certified ADF housing. DPH awarded a contract to the Recovery Homes Collaborative to be the inspecting and certifying body and to Gavin Foundation in collaboration with the Massachusetts Association for Sober Housing (MASH) to be the training and technical assistance vendor.

Beginning in January 2016, the Certifying Vendor, Recovery Homes Collaborative, began certifying ADF Housing operators. The Certifying Body will adhere to the nationally recognized standards and practices that:

- Uphold industry best practices and support a safe, healthy, and effective recovery environment;
- Evaluate the ability of the Operator to support residents in their recovery;
- Provide for appropriate training and satisfactory completion of training for operators and staff;
- Protect occupants of ADF housing against unreasonable and unfair practices in setting and collecting rent payments; and
- Verify good standing with regard to local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and ordinances including maximum occupancy, fire safety and sanitation.

Effective **September 1, 2016**, state agencies and their vendors shall only be able to refer clients to certified ADF homes. Additionally, notice will be going to identified sober homes of this effective date. In order to assure that there are a sufficient number of beds for clients in need, MASH is guaranteeing that any home that submits their application by **July 15, 2016** and meets certification standards will be certified and able to accept state referrals by the September 1st deadline. Any home not certified by September 1, 2016 will not be able to accept clients from state agencies or their vendors until certified.

An up-to-date list of certified ADF houses with contact information, the application form with instructions, the Sober Housing Standards, the grievance form with instructions and vendor contact information are available on the MASH (<http://www.mashsoberhousing.org/>) website. A link to the webpage is posted on the Bureau of Substance Abuse Services website (<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/substance-abuse/>) and through the

substance abuse treatment Helpline (<http://helpline-online.com/>) for state agencies and other interested parties. If there are particular staff members within your agency that should receive this information, please send an e-mail to Kathy Duperval (Kathy.Duperval@state.ma.us) with their contact information.