

Family Services Committee Meeting Minutes - 9/10/28

In attendance: approximately 25 shelter, housing and other community providers

Family Shelter Updates:

CHD noted that they have approximately 28 unused beds in their West Springfield and Northampton hotel shelter locations. This is striking given the extreme unmet demand for shelter across the state. They are reaching out to HLC for an explanation; Pamela will also reach out to statewide advocacy partners to share the information.

Wayfinders noted that when they have a vacancy it is filled almost immediately (those are not hotel sites, wondering whether that is the distinction that makes the difference).

Advocacy continues statewide to urge the Governor to reverse the overflow shelter 5 day stay limit and the 9 month time limit for EA shelter. Protests were held at the State House last week; an online sign-on letter is also being circulated. Learn more from the MA Coalition for the Homeless here: <https://www.mahomeless.org/post/protect-families-access-to-state-funded-shelter-and-supports>

FYI on excellent free dental care available for families - email Sara Jambard at jands.smilepros@gmail.com.

Network Update

The Network is continuing to participate in statewide conversations regarding implementation of the Affordable Homes Act and planning for the next legislative session. Let's stay connected via the Network blog at <http://westernmasshousingfirst.org>. Please be sure to subscribe!