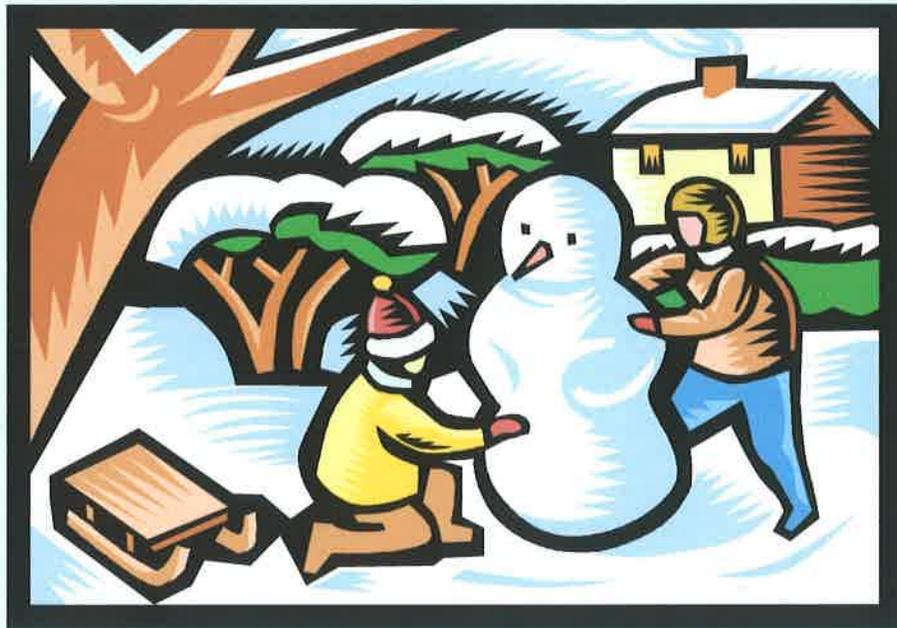


*GETTING READY  
FOR WINTER  
A RESOURCE GUIDE*

*2012-2013*



*Mayor Dean Mazzarella*

*&*

*Office of Planning & Development*



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This is not a comprehensive list of resources

For a full list of programs and additional information about eligibility and benefits visit

[www.massresources.org](http://www.massresources.org)

OR contact the appropriate agency directly

## **Energy Saving Program**

**Name of program:** **Mayor's Energy Assistance Program**  
What do they do: Provide eligible residents of the City of Leominster with assistance in paying for utilities, such as electricity or oil.  
Who is eligible: Extremely low to moderate income residents of the city of Leominster.  
Benefits provided: A maximum amount of \$300 per household/per year to be applied towards utilities such as electricity, heating oil, or natural gas.  
Contact Information: Mayor's office  
Kelly Woodland (978) 534-7500

**Name of program:** **Rotary Club of Leominster**  
What do they do: Provide heating assistance to residents of the City of Leominster Available after January 2011.  
Who is eligible: There are no set income guide lines, but it is often based on recommendations received from the Mayor's office.  
Benefits provided: Same day fuel fill. Oil heat and kerosene available.  
Contact Information: Claire Freda (978) 537-0120

**Name of program:** **Fuel Assistance (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program)**  
What do they do: Help low-income families and individuals pay their heating bills during the winter  
Who is eligible: Both citizens and noncitizen of the U.S. are eligible for this program. Eligibility is based on the current combined gross annual income (before any deductions) from all sources for everyone in the household 18 years or older, as well as on household size.  
Benefits provided: Benefits range from \$700 to \$1165. The amount of benefits received depends on income, type of heating fuel, and heating costs.  
Contact Information: Leominster Housing Authority  
100 Main Street, Leominster , MA 01453  
(978) 537-2861

**Name of program:** **New England Farmworkers Council**  
What do they do: Provide assistance for paying heating bills for both home owners and renters.  
Who is eligible: Low income households. Eligibility is determined based on the gross annual income and the number of people living in the household.  
Benefits provided: Assistance paying for heating bills.  
Contact Information: (978) 342-4520

**Name of program:** **Citizens Energy Heat Assistance Programs**  
What do they do: Help low-income people who cannot afford to pay their heating bills.  
Who is eligible: Anyone who is experiencing a financial hardship and is not eligible for Fuel Assistance (see above).  
Benefits provided: Benefits differ based on heating method:

- Heating with oil: One time free delivery per heating season of 100 gallons.
- Heating with natural gas: A credit of \$150 to eligible households on utility bill.

Contact Information: (877) 563-4645 or (617) 338-6300

**Name of program:** **Good Neighbor Energy Fund / Salvation Army**  
What do they do: Assist people who are facing an unexpected short-term financial crisis.  
Who is eligible: Anyone who is facing a temporary financial crisis and does not qualify for other fuel assistance programs. Must meet specific income guidelines. There are no citizenship requirements.  
Benefits provided: A maximum of \$275 per household per heating season.

- Contact Information:
- Salvation Army  
(978) 342-3300

**Name of program:** **Utility Arrearage Programs**  
What do they do: Helps households pay overdue utility bills. Prevents shutoffs or restores utility service that has already been shut off. Offer payment plans and debt forgiveness.  
Who is eligible: Must meet Fuel Assistance income guidelines, and owe at least \$100 in overdue bills. Must agree to a payment plan and commit to making payments on time.  
Benefits provided:

- Creates an affordable payment plan for past due and current charges
- Avoidance of service termination for non-payment, if payment plan is followed
- Forgive part or all of debt, if payment plan is followed

Contact Information: ● Department of Public Utilities  
1-617-737-2836 or 1-877-886-5066

**Name of program: Utility Discounts**

**What do they do:** Provides lower rates for low-income customers for gas, electricity, and telephone service.

**Who is eligible:** Must be a residential customer. Needs to meet income guidelines and receive assistance from other programs such as Food Stamp, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Fuel Assistance, or Head Start.

**Benefits provided:** Gas and electricity customers may receive discounts that range up to 35% off the standard residential rate, depending on which utility company is used.  
Telephone service customers will be eligible for Lifeline and Link-up discounts.

**Contact Information:** Department of Public Utilities  
1-617-737-2836 or 1-877-886-5066

**Name of program: Utility Shutoff Protection**

**What do they do:** Massachusetts laws prevent utility companies from shutting off service to people with special circumstances.

**Who is eligible:** Elderly, low-income families with infants, and people with serious illnesses.

**Benefits provided:** Utility service cannot be shut off under certain circumstances for the following populations:

- Elderly
- Low-income families with infants
- People with serious illness who cannot pay their bill
- Low-income families who would be left without heat during the winter months

**Contact Information:** Department of Public Utilities  
1-617-737-2836 or 1-877-886-5066

**Name of program: MASS SAVE**

**What do they do:** Offers energy tips and information about free home energy assessments, energy-saving products, loans, rebates, and other incentives for energy-saving home improvement.

**Who is eligible:** Massachusetts residents who want to save money by making their homes more energy efficient. Homeowners or tenants who live in a 1 to 4 unit dwelling and pay their own heat or electricity.

**Benefits provided:** There are many benefits offered to qualified residents:

- Energy tips
- Free home energy assessments
- HEAT Loan Programs
- Weatherization rebates
- Appliance Management Programs

**Contact Information:** (866) 527-7283  
<http://www.masssave.com>

## **Weatherization**

**Name of program:** **Weatherization Assistance Program**  
**What do they do:** Provide eligible households with full-scale home energy conservation services.  
**Who is eligible:** Must meet Fuel Assistance income guidelines  
**Benefits provided:** Homes receive a thorough evaluation of the heating system as well as health and safety testing of all combustion appliances at no cost to the resident.  
Priority service is given to households with:

- Elderly
- Disabled
- Children ages 6 and under

Services include:

- Air sealing to reduce infiltration
- Attic insulation
- Sidewall insulation
- Floor insulation
- Pipe and/or duct insulations
- Energy related repairs

**Contact Information:** Leominster Housing Authority  
100 Main Street, Leominster, MA 01453  
(978) 537-2861

**Name of program:** **Weatherization Program**  
**What do they do:** Provides weatherization services.  
**Benefits provided:** Provides energy audits and client education on energy saving measures.

- Insulation
- Weather stripping
- Pipe/duct wrap.

**Contact Information:** Montachusett Opportunity Council  
(MOC) Energy & Housing Services  
66 Day Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420  
978-342-7025

## Emergency Repairs

**Name of program: Heating Repair & Replacement Program**

What do they do: Provide heating system repairs and replacements for homeowners.

Who is eligible: Must eligible for Fuel Assistance program (see Energy Savings section) .

Benefits provided:

- Heating emergencies 7 days a week.
- Offer referral services to other community agencies focused on fuel efficiency and safety.

Contact Information: Montachusett Opportunity Council  
(MOC) Energy & Housing Services  
66 Day Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420  
978-342-7025

**Program name: Appliance Monitoring & Replacement Program**

What do they do: Helps reduce electric bills

Who is eligible: Must meet income requirements

Benefits provided: Provide income eligible Unitil and National Grid customers with appliance monitoring and replacement of inefficient refrigerators, energy saving light bulbs, showerheads, and faucet aerators.

Contact Information: Montachusett Opportunity Council  
(MOC) Energy & Housing Services  
66 Day Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420  
978-342-7025

## Safety Tips

### Fire

#### Smoking

- Quit smoking
- Do not leave smoking materials unattended
- Never smoke in bed
- If you begin to feel drowsy while watching television or reading, extinguish your cigarette or cigar immediately

#### Smoke Detectors

- Install smoke detectors on every level of your home and outside each sleeping area. If you cannot install one yourself, ask a friend or the fire department to help
- Smoke detectors should be tested once a month
- Replace the batteries in smoke detectors twice a year. A good way to remember this rule is to change the batteries when we change the clocks
- Smoke detectors need to be replaced every 10 years
- Smoke detectors cannot guarantee escape in case of a fire, they can only provide early warning.
- Make and practice a home escape plan
- Keep three essential items by your bedside: your eyeglasses, whistle, and a telephone
  - Eyeglasses will help you see and avoid injury as you escape the fire
  - A whistle will alert other household members to the fire and rescuers to your location
  - A telephone will allow you to phone for help if you cannot escape by door

#### Space Heaters

- When buying a space heater, look for one that has been tested and labeled by a nationally recognized testing company
- Keep the heater at least three feet away from drapes, furniture or other flammable materials.
- Always place the space heater on a level surface, away from areas where someone might bump it and knock it over
- Never leave a space heater unattended or running while asleep
- Keep electric heaters away from water. Never use them near a sink or in the bathroom
- The sale and use of unvented kerosene heaters is illegal in Massachusetts

## Woodstoves

- A building permit must be obtained prior to the installation of fireplaces, wood or coal burning stoves
- Carbon monoxide alarms are required in all homes with chimneys or woodstoves
- Any stove that burns wood or coal must be approved by a recognized testing laboratory
- Check that the damper is open before lighting the fire.
- Do not use flammable liquids to start the fire
- Allow at least 36 inches of space around the appliance to prevent combustibles from coming into contact with a heat source
- Use a fireplace screen to prevent flying sparks and embers from falling out onto the floor.
- Chimney and flue should be inspected regularly and repaired before each heating season
- When cleaning a stove or a fireplace, ashes should be shoveled into a metal bucket with a metal lid, placed outside on the ground, away from the building, to prevent fires
- Never place ashes into a paper bag or cardboard box. Ashes and embers can stay hot for days and ignite combustibles

## Home Safety

### Kitchen

- Make sure to have good lighting over stove and countertop work areas to help prevent accidents
- When cooking, wear short or tight fitting sleeves. Loose sleeve catch fire easily
- Never leave cooking unattended. If you must leave the kitchen while you are cooking, take a potholder or cooking spoon with you as a reminder
- Do not use chairs, boxes, or other makeshift items to reach high places, as this may result in falls. Use only a stepping stool, preferably one with a handrail
- Before using the stepping stool, make sure that it is fully open and stable

### Living Area

- Replace any thick, loose, plush carpeting or throw rugs as they can be a tripping hazard
- Make sure that hallways, stairs, and all living areas are clear of any obstacles to avoid tripping
- Make sure that all hallways and stairways are well lit with no shadows
- If stairs are difficult to see, use brightly colored electrical tape to clearly mark the edge of each step
- Make sure that all electrical and phone cords are placed out of traffic flow as they could cause tripping. Arrange cords to be against walls and behind furniture

### Bathroom

- Bathtubs and showers should have at least one grab bar.
- You should use textured strips or non-skid mats on wet soapy tile or porcelain surfaces
- Adjust water heater temperature to 120 degrees Fahrenheit or below to avoid scalds
- Medications should be stored in the containers that they came in. They should be clearly marked with the contents, doctor's instructions, expiration date, and patient's name
- Dispose of all outdated medicines

## **Food Resources**

### **Name of program: Food Stamps**

**What do they do:** A government assistance program that helps low-income households buy food. It can be used to buy almost anything in the supermarket. Any money leftover can be saved and used towards paying other bills.

**Who is eligible:** U.S. citizens and eligible noncitizens with limited incomes, part time workers, unemployed, receive welfare benefits or other public assistance payments, elderly or disabled, live on a limited income or are homeless are eligible for assistance.

**Benefits provided:** The amount of food stamps provided depend on household size.

Contact Information: (800) 249-2007 / (866) 950-3663

[www.gettingfoodstamps.org](http://www.gettingfoodstamps.org)

- Department of Transitional Assistance  
473 Main Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420  
(978) 665-8700

### **Name of program: Woman, Infants, and Children**

**What do they do:** Food and nutrition program for low-income women and children who are not getting all the nutrients they need. Provides free nutrition education, counseling, nutritious foods, and referrals to health care and other services.

**Who is eligible:** Must live in Massachusetts, and meet certain guidelines. Populations targeted are pregnant women, new mothers, infants, and children under 5 years of age. Women who are in dietary risk, such as poor diet, weight problems, problems during pregnancy, food allergies, vitamin or mineral deficiencies, anemia or other problems.

**Benefits provided:** A monthly check of about \$35 per person in the household will be given along with a list of healthy nutritious foods approved for women and children.

Additional services include:

- Nutrition classes
- Health screening
- Immunizations
- Prenatal and well child checkups
- Referral to other health care programs.

Contact Information: (800) 942-1007

**Name of program:** **Food Pantries and Free Meals**  
What do they do: People can get free food to take home with them to prepare on their own through local food pantries. Free meals programs, such as soup kitchens, are places where people can go to eat cooked meals free of charge.  
Who is eligible: Anyone in need, including noncitizens  
Benefits provided: Provides free food  
• Free packaged or canned food  
• Free cooked meals  
Contact Information: The Project Bread FoodSource Hotline  
(800) 645-8333  
•  
•  
See a list of local food pantries on next page

**Name of program:** **School Meal Programs**  
What do they do: Provide reduced price meals to children from low-income families who are enrolled in Massachusetts schools. Meals included are School Breakfast, School Lunch, and After School Snacks.  
Who is eligible: Both citizens and noncitizens who meet the eligibility requirements based on based family size and income.  
Benefits provided: Free or reduced cost food for any child found eligible age 18 or younger.  
Contact Information: Department of Education  
(978) 534-7700

**Name of program:** **Meals on Wheels**  
What do they do: Meals on Wheels are prepared meals that are delivered to homebound seniors.  
Who is eligible: Seniors over 60, who are homebound and unable to cook their own meals. There are no citizenship requirements.  
Benefits provided: One free hot nutritious meal per day for those who cannot afford to pay. A suggested donation of \$2 per meal is appreciated.  
Contact Information: (800) 882-2003

## Local Food Pantries

### Leominster

#### Ginny's Helping Hands

52 Mechanic Street  
(978) 537-1387  
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday  
and Saturday  
11:00am – 2:00pm  
\* Must have picture ID and proof  
of correct address

#### United Methodist Church

77 Hall Street  
(978) 537-1356  
1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month  
6:00pm – 8:00pm  
2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month  
8:00am – 10:00am

#### Spanish American Center

112 Spruce Street  
(978) 534-3145  
3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month  
2:00pm – 4:00pm

#### First Baptist Church

23 West Street  
(978) 537-2684  
1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month  
9:00am – 11:00am

#### St. Leo's Church

108 Main Street  
(978) 537-7257

### Fitchburg

#### Salvation Army

739 Water Street  
(978) 342-3300  
Monday – Friday  
9:00am – 4:00pm

#### GVNA Community Services

35 Main Street  
(978) 665-9078  
Monday – Friday  
10:00am – 3:00pm

#### Fitchburg/Leominster

#### Community Action

345 Main Street  
(978) 342-8617  
Monday – Friday  
8:30am – 4:30pm

#### United Neighbors Cleghorn

85 Fairmount Street  
(978) 342-2069  
Monday – Friday  
9:00am – 12:00pm

#### Care Aids Services Project

717 Main Street  
(978) 345-4366  
Last Thursday of the month  
9:00am – 3:30pm

#### Highland Baptist Church

27 Cedar Street  
(978) 342-9656  
1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month  
9:00am – 11:00am  
Monday, Tuesday, Saturday.

**Ayer/Devens**

Loaves & Fishes

43 Buena Vista  
(978) 772-4627  
Wednesday and Friday  
10:00am – 12:30pm  
1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month  
9:00am – 11:00pm

**Clinton**

Wheat

44 High Street  
(978) 365-6349  
Monday – Thursday  
9:00am – 12:00pm

**Bethel Seventh Day Adventist**

45 Flagg Street  
(978) 368-1912  
Wednesday  
7:00pm – 10:00pm  
Saturday  
9:00am – 9:00pm

**Gardner**

Montachusett VA Outreach

(For Veterans and their families)  
268 Central Street  
(978) 632-9601  
Monday – Friday  
9:00am – 5:00pm

**Community Action Council**

175 Connors Street  
(978) 632-8700  
Monday – Friday  
9:00am – 1:00pm

**St. Vincent DePaul Society**

166 Cross Street  
(978) 632-9656  
Delivered:  
\* Call for appointment

**Athol**

Salvation Army

107 Ridge Ave  
(978) 249-8111  
Monday – Friday  
8:30am – 3:00pm

**Lancaster**

Seventh Day Adventist Community

129 Bolton Road  
(978) 365-7152  
Tuesday  
9:00am – 12:00pm and  
1:00pm – 3:00pm

**Atlantic Union College**

35 Prescott Street  
(978) 368-2190  
Monday – Thursday  
1:30pm – 4:30pm

**Pepperell**

Knights of Columbus

19 Jersey Street  
(978) 433-5737  
(978) 433-0326

**Westminster**

First Congregational Church

138 Main Street  
(978) 974-7970  
Wednesday  
10:00am – 12:00pm  
Thursday  
6:30pm – 8:00pm

**Winchendon**

Community Action Council

273 Central Street  
(978) 297-1667  
Monday – Friday  
8:30am – 4:30pm

## *Clothing Assistance*

**Name of program: Catholic Charities**

Who is eligible: Assistance is offered on an as-need basis

Benefits provided: Clothing assistance

Contact Information: 196 Mechanic Street, Leominster, MA 01453  
(978) 840-0696

**Name of program: Ginny's Thrift Shop**

Who is eligible: Assistance is offered on an as-need basis

Benefits provided: Clothing assistance

Contact Information: 52 Mechanic Street, Leominster, MA 01453  
(978) 537-1387

**Name of program: Salvation Army**

Who is eligible: Assistance is offered on an as-need basis

Benefits provided: Clothing assistance

Contact Information: 739 Water Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420  
(978) 342-3300

**Name of program: Goodwill Stores**

Who is eligible: Assistance is offered on an as-need basis

Benefits provided: Clothing assistance

Contact Information: 25 Park Ave, Worcester, MA 01605  
(508) 752-4042

## Emergency Cash Assistance

- Name of program:** **Emergency Aid to Elders, Disabled and Children**
- What do they do: Provide cash and medical benefits to needy families and individuals who are not receiving welfare or Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
- Who is eligible: Elderly, disabled people, children and their families who do not qualify for welfare, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or other similar programs. Must be a Massachusetts resident and a citizen or eligible noncitizen. Eligibility is also based on living situation, family size, and income.
- Benefits provided: Amount of assistance received is based on eligibility. Free health insurance through MassHealth will be provided. Emergency benefits may be available.
- Contact Information: (800) 249-2007
- Department of Transitional Assistance  
473 Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Fitchburg, MA 01420  
(978) 665-8700 or 1-800-442-2045
- Name of program:** **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**
- What do they do: Provide cash assistance for people who are 65 or older and for people of any age who are disabled or blind.
- Who is eligible: Must be disabled, blind, or age 65 or older, and have limited income and resources. Must live in the United States and either be a citizen or an eligible noncitizen.
- Benefits provided: Benefits are determined on personal situation. Some of the benefits include:
- MassHealth
  - Food stamps
  - Disaster and moving expenses
  - Burial expenses
  - Fuel assistance.
- Contact information: (800) 772-1213 or [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov)

- Name of program:** **Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (welfare)**
- What do they do:** Provides cash and medical assistance to needy families with dependent children, including pregnant women, to help them meet their children's basic needs.
- Who is eligible:** Families with at least one child under 18 years of age living in the home. Must meet financial requirements, have a social security number. Must be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen and be a resident of Massachusetts
- Benefits provided:** Benefits depend on income and household size. Benefits may include:
- Health insurance through MassHealth.
  - Infant expenses
  - Relocation benefits
  - Transportation assistance
  - Clothing allowance
  - Emergency shelter
  - Education, job search, and job training assistance
- Contact Information:** (800) 249-2007
- Department of Transitional Assistance  
473 Main Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420  
(978) 665-8700

## Homelessness

**Name of program: Emergency Assistance**

What do they do: Gives shelter and other emergency housing services to low-income families with children, and to pregnant women, who are homeless.

Who is eligible: Low-income families with dependent children, or pregnant women, who are homeless that meet income guidelines. Must also be a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen and have a social security number.

Benefits provided: Provides emergency housing assistance program services to low income families:

- Helps homeless families find permanent private, public, or subsidized housing.
- Provides temporary emergency shelter placement for families who cannot find alternative housing on their own.
- Case managers work with families to develop self-sufficiency plans that include budgeting, savings plan, and housing search.

Contact Information: (800) 249-2007

- Department of Transitional Assistance  
473 Main Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420  
(978) 665-8700

**Name of program: Foreclosure Prevention Programs**

What do they do: Different programs that provide free counseling to help homeowners in trouble with their home loans, or think you will be in trouble in the future.

Who is eligible: Anyone who is having trouble paying their mortgage in a timely matter and are at risk of losing their home.

Benefits provided: There are many benefits to the foreclosure prevention program:

- Negotiation services – helps work out a plan with current lender
- Refinancing services - helps get a new loan
- Legal Assistance – protects borrowers rights if lender has broken the law
- Financial Counseling - helps save for future repairs and other home expenses
- Educational and out reach programs

Contact Information: • Housing and Urban Development  
(800) 569-4287

- HOPE for Homeowners  
(888) 995-HOPE / (888) 995-4679
- Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America  
(888) 302-NACA / (888) 302-6222
- Homeowner Options for Massachusetts Elders  
(800) 583-5337

**Name of program:** **Residential Assistance for Families in Transition**  
What do they do: This is a homeless prevention program that gives short-term financial assistance to low income families who are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless.  
Who is eligible: Families of two or more people living together and that have at least one child under the age of 21, who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Must meet income guidelines.  
Benefits provided: Up to \$3,000 depending on needs. Funds can be used for:  

- First and last month's rent
- Back rent or overdue mortgage payments
- Utility payments
- Furnishings such as a refrigerator or bedding if homeless.

Contact Information: (800) 224-5124  
<http://www.masshousinginfo.org/agencies>

**Name of program:** **Transitional Housing Programs for Families**  
What do they do: Give emergency shelter and support services to homeless families to help them become independent.  
Who is eligible: Eligibility and enrollment requirements vary by program.  
Benefits provided:  
Contact Information: 

- Leominster Housing Authority  
100 Main Street, Leominster, MA 01453  
(978) 537-5300
- Montachusett Opportunity Council  
133 Prichard Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420  
(978) 342-7013

**Name of program:** **Family Shelters**  
What do they do: Provides emergency housing and support services for families with children and for pregnant women. People are allowed to stay in these shelters until they can find safe permanent housing.  
Who is eligible: A referral from the Department of Transitional Assistance is often required and the family must meet asset and income eligibility requirements.  
Benefits provided: Family shelters are usually open 24 hours a day and offer a variety of support services until permanent housing is found.  
Contact information: (800) 249-2007  

- Department of Transitional Assistance  
473 Main Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420  
(978) 665-8700

**Name of program:** **Shelters for Adults**  
**What do they do:** Offers emergency shelter and meals to homeless men and women without children.  
**Who is eligible:** Men and women who are 8 years or older, sober and drug free.  
**Benefits provided:** Benefits include

- Emergency shelter and meals.
- Counseling
- Other support services

**Contact Information:**

- Central Massachusetts Shelter for Homeless Veterans, Inc.  
69 Grove Street, Worcester, MA 01605  
(508) 791-5348 or (508) 791-1213  
<http://www.massveterans.org>
- Salvation Army (accepts adults with substance abuse problems)  
Fitchburg office- 978-342-3300
- Mass.Headquarters  
25 Sharmut Road, Canton, MA.02021  
1-339-502-5900

**Name of program:** **Montachusett Interfaith Hospitality Network**  
**What do they do:** Strives to meet the needs of homeless families in the area by providing temporary housing assistance leading to assistance in locating affordable permanent housing. The focus is to provide a positive alternative to traditional homeless shelters so that children can continue with their education, to provide job training and daycare assistance when needed.  
**Who is eligible:** Homeless families and families that are on the verge of homelessness  
**Benefits provided:**

- Provide shelter, meals and case management for homeless families
- Help homeless families find permanent housing
- Referrals to the appropriate agencies for job training or retaining and family services
- Case Management – Includes a Needs Assessment and Budgeting

**Contact Information:** 196 Mechanic Street  
Leominster, Ma. 01453  
978-840-9500

## Housing Resources

**Name of program: Tenants Based Vouchers**

- What do they do: These are rent vouchers that let people choose their own housing anywhere they want to live.
- Who is eligible: One member of the household must be a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen with limited income, whose past history shows that they will be good tenants.
- Benefits provided: The rent will depend on household income, expenses, household size and the rental unit chosen.
- Contact Information: (800) 224-5124

**Name of program: Privately Owned Subsidized Housing**

- What do they do: Affordable privately owned rental housing set aside for low and moderate income families and individuals, elders, and people with disabilities.
- Who is eligible: Must be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen. Must also meet income guidelines and have a show a past history as a good tenant.
- Benefits provided: Rent paid will depend on type of subsidized housing received, household income, expenses, and household size. Generally rent is below market rate.
- Contact Information: (800) 224-5124

**Name of program: Public Housing**

- What do they do: Government owned rental housing for low and moderate income families and individuals, seniors, and people with disabilities.
- Who is eligible: Must be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen. Must also meet income guidelines and have a show a past history as a good tenant.
- Benefits provided: The rent you paid in public housing depends on household income, expenses, and household size.
- Contact Information: Leominster Housing Authority  
100 Main Street, Leominster, MA 01453  
(978) 537-5300

## Child Care and Preschool

<b><u>Name of program:</u></b>	<b><u>Department of Transitional Assistance Child Care</u></b>
What do they do:	Helps current and former welfare families (with in the past 12 months) with free or low cost child care.
Who is eligible:	Must be a Massachusetts resident and be either a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen. A recipient of welfare, either current or in the past 12 months. Recipient of services must have a child in home who qualifies for care. The person requesting assistance must also be either employed, seeking work, or in an approved education or job training program.
Benefits provided:	A voucher certificate that shows the number of hours and days a child has been approved for subsidized care. Parents can select any child care provider who has space available and accepts these vouchers, and may change a provider whenever they choose with appropriate notice.
Contact Information:	(800) 772-1213 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 473 Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Fitchburg, MA 01420</li><li>• (978) 665-8700 or 1-800-442-2045</li></ul>

<b><u>Name of program:</u></b>	<b><u>Early Intervention</u></b>
What do they do:	A program to help infants and toddlers who have developmental delays or are at risk for such delays. The goal is to help children as soon as possible so that they can reach their full potential.
Who is eligible:	Children from birth up to the age of 3 who are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not developing typically for their age</li><li>• Have a physical, emotional, or cognitive condition</li><li>• Are at risk of developmental delays because of biological or environmental factors.</li></ul>
Benefits provided:	Some fees may be applicable depending on income. Benefits may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Physical or occupational therapy</li><li>• Speech or language therapy</li><li>• Psychological services</li><li>• Social service</li><li>• Educational services</li><li>• Nursing care</li><li>• Behavior modification</li><li>• Nutritional counseling</li><li>• Family counseling</li></ul>
Contact Information:	(800) 905-8437 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community Healthlink Lipton EIP</li><li>• 100 Erdman Way, Leominster, MA 01453</li><li>• (978) 840-9354</li></ul>

**Name of program: Income-eligible Child Care**

**What do they do:** Helps low-income non-welfare recipients who are income eligible to receive subsidized childcare for children under the age of 12, or older children with special needs.

**Who is eligible:** Must be a resident of Massachusetts, who can show a need for services. Families must be working, looking for work, in an education or job training program, or are taking part in other approved activities.

**Benefits provided:** Number of hours approved for child care depends on need of service. Fee for service is based on a sliding fee scale according to income and family size.

**Contact Information:** 1-617-988-6600

**Name of Program: Head Start / Early Head Start**

**What do they do:** Free early childhood programs for pregnant women and for children from birth to age 5.

- Early Head Start – birth to 3 years of age
- Head Start – ages 3 to 5 years of age

**Who is eligible:** Must reside within the community. Child cannot be older than 5 years of age. Family must meet income limits.

**Benefits received:** Four main types of benefits are provided:

- Education – Helps child grow intellectually, socially, physically, and emotionally
- Health – Child will be screened for health problems, and will be offered any needed immunizations, medical and dental care
- Parent involvement – Parents will be actively involved in child's development and education, including parenting workshops and training programs.
- Social services – Staff members will visit your home to learn your family's needs and will make referrals and provide support to help you reach your goals.

**Contact information:** (866) 763-6481

- 133 Prichard Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420  
(978) 343-0185

## Healthcare

**Name of Program: Action Health Services**

What do they do: Brings medical care and services directly to you and your family through a mobile medical unit.

Who is eligible: Anyone who is homeless, does not have health insurance, or is homebound.

Benefits provided: Serves the community of north central MA.

- Provides primary medical, dental, and behavioral care
- Supportive services such as health insurance enrolment assistance
- Referrals to housing, fuel assistance, and more
- Helps arrange transportation for additional medically related services.

Contact Information: (978) 878-8110

**Name of program: MassHealth**

What do they do: A public health insurance program for residents of Massachusetts of low and medium income.

Who is eligible: Requirements differ depending on age, family situation, work history, immigration status, and health care needs.  
A non U.S. citizen that meets other eligibility requirements can get benefits. Some noncitizens are allowed to get any coverage type, while others are only allowed to get certain coverage types.

Benefits provided: Benefits and monthly premiums will be determined based type of coverage. Some benefits include:

- Inpatient and outpatient care
- Diagnostic tests, x-rays
- Well child check ups

Contact Information: (888) 665-9993

**Name of program: Health Safety Net Fund (Free Care)**

What do they do: A program for Massachusetts low and medium income residents of all ages who are not eligible for health insurance or cannot afford to buy it.

Who is eligible: Must be a Massachusetts resident. Families with limited income, or large medical bills that cannot be paid. Premiums and co-pays are determined by income eligibility.

Benefits provided: Some of the benefits provided include:

- Medical visits
- Lab, diagnostic testing, and radiology services
- Obstetrics and family planning
- Surgical procedures
- Inpatient and some outpatient services.

Contact Information: (877) 910-2100

**Name of program:** **Health Connector**  
What do they do: A state funded health insurance program for uninsured adult Massachusetts residents of low or moderate income who do not qualify for MassHealth.  
Who is eligible: Residents of Massachusetts 19 or older who do not qualify for Medicare or MassHealth, meets income limits, and are uninsured. Must be a qualified noncitizen, or noncitizen with special status. Undocumented noncitizens cannot get Commonwealth Care.  
Benefits provided: Premiums and co-pays are determined based on plan type and income qualifications.

- Inpatient and outpatient care
- Emergency care
- Mental health and substance abuse services
- Prescription drugs
- Vision, dental services
- Emergency care

Contact Information: (877) 623-6765

**Name of program:** **Children's Medical Security Plan**  
What do they do: A basic health insurance program for children 19 years or younger that provides basic medical and dental care.  
Who is eligible: Children under the age of 19 who are residents of Massachusetts, are uninsured, and are not eligible for MassHealth.  
Benefits provided: Monthly premiums and co-payments are based on income levels.  
Benefits include:

- Routine check ups
- Immunizations
- Lab test, x-rays
- Dental exams and cleaning

Contact Information: (800) 909-2677

<b><u>Name of program:</u></b>	<b><u>Medicare</u></b>
What do they do:	A national health insurance program for people who are 65 or older. It is a basic protection, and does not cover all medical expenses or most long-term care.
Who is eligible:	A U.S. citizen or a lawfully admitted noncitizen who has lived here continuously for five years who is 65 or older and is eligible for retirement benefits from Social Security.
Benefits provided:	Monthly premiums and co-payments are based on selected coverage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospital insurance: inpatient hospital care, skilled nursing care, and home health care.</li> <li>• Medical Insurance: doctors' fees, medical tests, and outpatient care.</li> <li>• Medicare advantage: eye exams, routine checkups, and prescription drug coverage</li> <li>• Prescription drug plans: cover some of the costs of prescription drugs.</li> </ul>
Contact Information:	(800) 633-4227

## **Legal Services**

<b><u>Name of program:</u></b>	<b><u>Legal Services Programs</u></b>
What do they do:	Provide free legal help to low-income and elderly residents for non-criminal matters.
Who is eligible:	Must meet certain income requirements. Some programs may be available only to U.S. citizens, while others are open to everyone.
Benefits provided:	Advice may be given over the phone. A legal services lawyer may be assigned to help in any of the following areas based on your needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Claims for government benefits such as Social Security Income (SSI) and welfare</li> <li>• Housing/homelessness issues such as evictions, tenant/landlord disputes, and housing discrimination</li> <li>• Family law, including divorce, child custody, and domestic violence</li> <li>• Consumer issues</li> <li>• Employee rights</li> <li>• Elder law, such as rights of nursing home residents</li> <li>• Mental health and disability issues, especially where benefits are denied</li> <li>• Immigration law</li> <li>• Other non-criminal legal problems</li> </ul>
Contact Information:	(617) 367-8544

**Name of program:** **Online and Hotline Legal Help**

**What do they do:** Several organizations have free web sites and/or free phone or email hotlines you can use to get help with non-criminal legal problems.

**Who is eligible:** Low income and disadvantaged persons

**Benefits provided:** Educate and provide legal information about rights and refer to social services as needed.

**Contact Information:**

- Massachusetts Legal Help – “Legal Knowledge You Can Use!”  
[MassLegalHelp.org](http://MassLegalHelp.org)
- Live Justice  
<http://www.livejustice.org/index.htm>
- WomensLaw.org Massachusetts – “Legal information and resources for domestic violence”  
<http://www.womenslaw.org>
- Legal Advocacy and Resource Center  
(800) 342-5297  
(617) 603-1700  
<http://www.larcma.org/home>

