

# *The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1054

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**CHAIR**  
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**MEMBER**  
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## **FY25 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS**

The FY25 budget recommends a total of **\$58 billion in spending, a \$2 billion increase over the Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) General Appropriations Act (GAA)**. This spending recommendation is based on a tax revenue estimate of \$41.5 billion for FY25, which is \$208 million less than revenues assumed in the FY24 GAA. This represents nearly flat growth, as agreed upon during the consensus revenue process in January, plus \$1.3 billion in revenue generated from the Fair Share surtax.

As the Commonwealth adjusts to a changing economic landscape and ongoing tax revenue volatility, the FY25 budget adheres to disciplined and responsible fiscal stewardship. It does not raise taxes, nor does it draw down available reserves from the stabilization fund or the transitional escrow fund, while at the same time judiciously utilizing one-time resources to maintain balance. The FY25 budget continues responsible and sustainable fiscal planning for the future by continuing to grow the Rainy Day Fund, already at a historic high of over \$8 billion, to an anticipated balance of roughly \$9 billion at the close of FY25.

### **Fair Share Investments to Grow Our Economy**

Consistent with the consensus revenue agreement reached with the Healey-Driscoll Administration in January, the FY25 budget includes **\$1.3 billion** in revenues generated from the Fair Share surtax of four percent on annual income above \$1 million and invests these public dollars to improve the state's education and transportation sectors.

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Notable Fair Share education and transportation investment highlights include:

<b>Education: 59% of Fair Share Revenues</b>	<b>Transportation: 41% of Fair Share Revenues</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>\$170 million</b> to fully fund universal free school meals programming for every public-school student in the Commonwealth.</li><li>● <b>\$175 million</b> for the Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) program to provide monthly grants to early education and care programs, which is matched with</li><li>● <b>\$300 million</b> in funds from the new Early Education and Care Operational Grant Fund and the High-Quality Early Education and Care Affordability Fund for a total investment of <b>\$475 million</b>.</li><li>● <b>\$117.5 million</b> for MassEducate to provide free community college across the Commonwealth.</li><li>● <b>\$80 million</b> to expand financial aid programs for in-state students attending state universities through MASSGrant Plus, which is in addition to the \$175.9 million for scholarships funded through the General Fund.</li><li>● <b>\$65 million</b> for early education and care provider rate increases, to increase salaries for our early educators.</li><li>● <b>\$20 million</b> for early literacy initiatives.</li><li>● <b>\$14 million</b> for grants to State Universities to provide wraparound supports and services.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>\$250 million</b> for the Commonwealth Transportation Fund (CTF), which will leverage additional borrowing capacity of the CTF and increase investments in transportation infrastructure by <b>\$1.1 billion</b> over the next 5 years. This <b>\$250 million</b> includes:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>\$127 million</b> to double operating support for the MBTA.</li><li>○ <b>\$63 million</b> in debt service to leverage additional borrowing capacity.</li><li>○ <b>\$60 million</b> in operating support for MassDOT.</li></ul></li><li>● <b>\$60 million</b> for MBTA capital investments, including \$10 million for resilient rail services.</li><li>● <b>\$36 million</b> for the MBTA workforce safety reserve.</li><li>● <b>\$10 million</b> for the MBTA Academy.</li><li>● <b>\$45 million</b> for roads and bridges supplemental aid for cities and towns.</li><li>● <b>\$110 million</b> for regional transit funding and grants to support the work of Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) that serve the Commonwealth, which together with general fund spending funds RTA operations at <b>\$204 million</b>.</li><li>● Fair Share funding includes:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>\$66 million</b> in direct operating support for Regional Transit Authorities.</li><li>○ <b>\$30 million</b> for systemwide implementation of fare-free transit service.</li></ul></li></ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>\$5 million</b> for the CPPI Pre-K Initiative, matching <b>\$17.5 million</b> in funds from the general fund, for a total of <b>\$22.5 million</b> to support the expansion of universal pre-kindergarten, including in Gateway Cities.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>\$10 million</b> to incentivize connections between regional transit routes.</li><li>○ <b>\$4 million</b> to support expanded mobility options for the elderly and people with disabilities.</li><li>● <b>\$20 million</b> to support implementation of a low-income fare relief program at the MBTA.</li><li>● <b>\$7.5 million</b> for water transportation funding and operational assistance for ferry services.</li></ul>
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## Education: Early Education and Care, K-12 and Higher Education

The FY25 budget supports students across the full spectrum of the Commonwealth's education system, shaping policies to make high-quality education more accessible and by making significant investments in the education system, from our youngest learners to adults.

To create a new funding source for EEC initiatives, the budget allows the Massachusetts Lottery to sell its products online. A portion of the new revenue collected from online lottery sales, estimated to be **\$100 million** in FY25, would fund C3 grants, which provide long-term stability for high-quality and affordable care for families.

The budget report delivers significant levels of investment in education, including:

- **\$6.9 billion** in Chapter 70 funding, an increase of **\$317 million** over FY24, as well as increasing minimum Chapter 70 aid from \$30 to **\$104 per pupil**, delivering an additional **\$37 million** in resources to school districts across the state.
- Over **\$1.55 billion** investment in the early education and care sector, including:
  - **\$475 million** for the Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) grants.

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- FY25 is the second fiscal year in a row which the annual state budget includes a full year of funding for C3 grants, signaling a historic commitment to maintain this crucial lifeline for our early education and care sector.
- The FY25 budget also makes the C3 program permanent, while including provisions to direct more funds from the C3 program to early education and programs that serve children receiving childcare subsidies from the state and youth with high needs.
- **\$117.5 million** for free community college across the Commonwealth, covering tuition and fees for students.
- **\$493.2 million** for the special education (SPED) circuit breaker.
- **\$99.5 million** to reimburse school districts for regional school transportation costs, representing an 85% reimbursement rate.
- **\$18.5 million** for Head Start grants.
- **\$16 million** for rural school aid assistance.
- **\$6 million** for Social Emotional Learning Grants to help K-12 schools continue to bolster social emotional learning supports for students, including \$1 million to provide mental health screenings for K-12 students.
- **\$5 million** for grants to support implementation of the Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Higher Education law, including **\$3 million** for grants offered through the Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment initiative to help high school students with intellectual disabilities ages 18–22 access higher education opportunities; and **\$2 million** for the Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Trust Fund.
- **\$3 million** for genocide education grants to facilitate teaching students the history of genocide.
- **\$1 million** for hate crimes prevention grants to support the prevention of hate crimes in public schools.

The FY25 budget codifies several provisions that transforms the early education sector by improving affordability and access for families, increasing pay for early educators, and ensuring the sustainability and quality of early education and care programs.

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In K-12 education, the FY25 budget follows through on the Legislature's commitment to fully fund and implement the Student Opportunity Act (SOA) by Fiscal Year 2027, investing **\$6.9 billion in Chapter 70 funding, an increase of \$319 million over FY24, as well as increasing minimum Chapter 70 aid from \$30 to \$104 per pupil, delivering an additional \$37 million in resources to school districts across the state.** With these investments, the Legislatures continues to provide crucial support to school districts confronting the increasing cost pressures that come with delivering high-quality education to all students.

In addition to the record levels of investment in early education and K-12, the FY25 budget removes barriers to accessing public higher education by **codifying into law MassEducate, a \$117.5 million investment in universal free community college program that covers tuition and fees for residents,** aimed at supporting economic opportunity, workforce development, and opening the door to higher education for people who may never have had access. The FY25 budget permanently enshrines free community college into law in an affordable and sustainable manner across the Commonwealth, while leaving no federal dollars on the table.

## **Food Systems**

This budget makes historic investments in food security, farms, and our local food system with these key budget provisions:

- **\$170 million** for universal school meals
- **\$42.36 million** for the Massachusetts Emergency Food Assistance Program (MEFAP)
- **\$15 million** for the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP)
- **\$15 million** for Food Security Infrastructure Grants (FSIG)
- **\$1 million** for farm to school grants and school wellness coaching
- **\$800,000** for Buy Local organizations
- **\$500,000** for the hunger-free campus grant initiative

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Additional critical funding went to UMass Extension, local food policy councils, Project Bread, the senior farmshare program, and more.

## **Health, Mental Health and Family Care**

Investments in the FY25 budget allow more than two million people to receive continued access to affordable and comprehensive health care services. Health care investments include:

- **\$20.36 billion** for MassHealth, representing the largest investment made in the state budget.
- **\$2.9 billion** for a range of services and focused supports for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- **\$622.4 million** for Department of Mental Health (DMH) adult support services.
- **\$625 million** for nursing facility Medicaid rates, including **\$40 million** in additional base rate payments to maintain competitive wages in the Commonwealth's nursing facility workforce.
- **\$390 million** for Chapter 257 rates to support direct-care providers across the continuum of care.
- **\$212.7 million** for a complete range of substance use disorder treatment and intervention services.
- **\$131.4 million** for children's mental health services.
- **\$33.8 million** for Family Resource Centers to grow and improve the mental health resources and programming available to families.
- **\$30.9 million** for Early Intervention services, ensuring supports remain accessible and available to infants and young toddlers with developmental delays and disabilities.
- **\$29.6 million** for grants to local Councils on Aging to increase assistance per elder to \$15 from \$14 in FY 2024.
- **\$27.9 million** for family and adolescent health, including **\$9.2 million** for comprehensive family planning services and **\$6.7 million** to enhance federal Title X family planning funding.

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- **\$20 million** to recapitalize the Behavioral Health, Access, Outreach and Support Trust Fund to support targeted behavioral health initiatives.
- **\$14.7 million** for maternal and child health, including **\$10.4 million** for pediatric palliative care services for terminally ill children and a policy adjustment to ensure that children up to age 22 can continue to be served through the program.
- **\$5.5 million** for Children Advocacy Centers to provide critical supports available to children that have been neglected or sexually abused.
- **\$2 million** for grants for improvements in reproductive health access, infrastructure, and safety.

**The FY25 budget, for the first time in Massachusetts' history, allows an individual to be identified with a non-binary 'X' sex designation on their birth certificate and enshrine into law the current practice of allowing an individual to select a non-binary 'X' gender designation on their driver's license. This step ensures that all residents—including trans and nonbinary people—can secure government documents that accurately reflect who they are.**

The FY25 budget also includes language that allows the Department of Public Health to implement expedited partner therapy (EPT). EPT is an effective clinical management practice for patients with treatable sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) as an efficient and sound way to treat STD patients' current sex partners to prevent reinfection and curtail further transmission.

Additionally, the FY25 budget recognizes that the cost of fertility preservation should not be a barrier to starting a family for Massachusetts residents with cancer or other serious medical conditions. It therefore requires health insurance carriers to cover fertility preservation treatments for individuals who have a medical diagnosis or who are going through medical treatments that may impact fertility. It also includes coverage for the procurement, cryopreservation, and storage of gametes, embryos, or other reproductive tissue.

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## Housing

The FY25 budget invests **\$1.15 billion** in housing, dedicating resources for housing stability, residential assistance, emergency shelter services, and homelessness assistance programs, ensuring the state deploys a humane, responsible, and sustainable approach to providing families and individuals in need with an access point to secure housing.

The budget prioritizes relief for families and individuals who continue to face challenges brought on by the pandemic and financial insecurity, including **\$326.1 million** for [Emergency Assistance Family Shelters](#), in addition to the **\$175 million** in resources passed in the recent supplemental budget, to place the Commonwealth's shelter system on a fiscal glidepath into FY25. Housing investments include:

- **\$231.7 million** for the [Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program](#) (MRVP), including **\$12.5 million** in funds carried forward from FY24.
- **\$197.4 million** for [Residential Assistance for Families in Transition](#) (RAFT).
- **\$113 million** for assistance to local housing authorities.
- **\$110.8 million** for assistance for individuals experiencing homelessness.
- **\$57.3 million** for the [HomeBASE](#) program.
- **\$27 million** for the [Alternative Housing Voucher Program](#) (AHVP), including **\$10.7 million** in funds carried forward from FY24, to provide rental assistance to people with disabilities.
- **\$10.5 million** for assistance for unaccompanied homeless youth.
- **\$10.5 million** for Housing Consumer Education Centers (HCECs).
- **\$8.9 million** for sponsor-based supportive permanent housing.
- **\$8.9 million** for the Home and Healthy for Good re-housing and supportive services program, including funding to support homeless LGBTQ+ youth.

The FY25 budget includes important consumer protections, including ending the practice of home equity theft, a practice where cities, towns, and even private companies can foreclose on a home for taxes owed, sell it, and pocket the profits. With this crucial step, the Legislature strikes a balance to ensure equity is returned to

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homeowners and taxpayers, while municipalities will be made a whole and protected moving forward.

The budget also includes **\$2.5 million** to launch a statewide Access to Counsel pilot program to provide lawyers and a legal lifeline for low-income tenants facing eviction.

## **Expanding and Protecting Economic Opportunities**

The budget includes a record investment in the annual child's clothing allowance, providing **\$500 per child** for eligible families to buy clothes for the upcoming school year. The budget also includes a **10 per cent increase** to Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) and Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled and Children (EAEDC) benefit levels compared to June 2024. Other economic opportunity investments include:

- **\$496.2 million** for Transitional Assistance to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) and **\$183.2 million** for Emergency Aid to Elderly, Disabled and Children (EAEDC) to provide the necessary support as caseloads increase, and continue the Deep Poverty increases.
- **\$59.8 million** for adult basic education services to improve access to skills necessary to join the workforce.
- **\$42.4 million** for the Massachusetts Emergency Food Assistance Program.
- **\$15 million** in Healthy Incentives Programs to maintain access to healthy food options for households in need.
- **\$10.4 million** for Career Technical Institutes to increase our skilled worker population and provide residents access to career technical training opportunities.
- **\$10 million** for the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund to connect unemployed and under-employed workers with higher paying jobs.
- **\$10 million** for a community empowerment and reinvestment grant program to provide economic support to communities disproportionately impacted by the criminal justice system.

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- **\$5.4 million** for the Innovation Pathways program to continue to connect students to training and post-secondary opportunities in STEM fields.

## Community Support

The FY25 budget further demonstrates the Legislature's commitment to partnerships between the state and municipalities, dedicating meaningful resources that touch all regions and meet the needs of communities across the Commonwealth. This includes **\$1.3 billion** in funding for Unrestricted General Government Aid (UGGA), an increase of **\$38 million** over FY24, to support additional resources for cities and towns.

In addition to traditional sources of local aid, the FY25 budget includes the following local and regional equity investments:

- **\$204 million** for Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) to support regional public transportation systems, including **\$110 million** from Fair Share funds to support our RTAs that help to connect all regions of our Commonwealth.
- **\$53 million** for payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT) for state-owned land, an increase of **\$1.5 million** over FY24. PILOT funding is an additional source of supplemental local aid for cities and towns working to protect and improve access to essential services and programs during recovery from the pandemic.
- **\$52.4 million** for libraries, including **\$19 million** for regional library local aid, **\$20 million** for municipal libraries and **\$6.2 million** for technology and automated resource networks.
- **\$26.9 million** for the Massachusetts Cultural Council to support local arts, culture, and creative economic initiatives, with \$25.9 million, a historic amount, dedicated for the organization, as well as \$955,000 for 20 earmarks, which provide mandated funding for local projects and organizations as secured by legislators.
- **\$14 million** for a newly established Emergency Disaster Relief and Resiliency Fund to provide emergency disaster relief associated with catastrophic agricultural loss.

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Additionally, the FY25 budget creates a special statewide commission addressing anti-semitism.

## **LOCAL INVESTMENTS IN THE 3RD HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT**

The following local investments are included in the FY25 budget:

- **\$125,000 for the Amherst Fire Department** to purchase fire safety equipment to protect the health and safety of Amherst firefighters
- **\$50,000 to the Amherst Regional High School Performing Arts Department** for equipment upgrades.
- **\$50,000 to the Granby Fire Department** to purchase portable communication radios for its firefighters
- **\$15,000 to the Amherst Senior Center** to furnish and supply a game room to foster socialization and connection.
- **\$10,000 to the Granby Veterans Memorial Project** for construction and landscaping
- **\$10,000 to the Granby Free Public Library** to support the resource collection

Having passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, the FY25 budget now moves to the Governor's desk for her consideration.