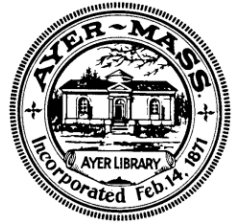


**Office of the Select Board
Office of the Town Manager**



Town of Ayer| Ayer Town Hall| 1 Main Street| Ayer, MA 01432|978-772-8220| www.ayer.ma.us

Town of Ayer

Public Notification

Governor's Homelessness State of Emergency: Migrant Shelter in the Town of Ayer

September 12, 2023

AYER - On Friday September 8, 2023, the Town was made aware that due to the recently declared State of Emergency by Governor Maura Healey and as part of the State's "Right to Shelter" law, a motel in Ayer will be used to house up to 35+ migrant families, equaling approximately 150 people. The "Right to Shelter" law obligates the State to provide housing for families with children and pregnant women who are homeless, and the State's policy is to place these families in motels in cities and towns through the State without the need for local approval and in many instances, without prior notice.

On Monday September 11, 2023, Town Manager Robert A. Pontbriand and Assistant Town Manager Carly M. Antonellis convened a meeting of all relevant Town Departments, including the Ayer Shirley Regional School District, to discuss the impact of this decision made by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

As the Town understands it, the State has partnered with Making Opportunities Count, Inc. (MOC), a Fitchburg Non-Profit, to run the shelter. Information coming from the State to the Town of Ayer has been non-existent to date. Town Social Worker, Brittany Beaudry has been on the ground seeking information from both the owner of the motel and MOC. The Town has also reached out to State Senator Jamie Eldridge's Office to convey the Town's concerns with the lack of communication from the Governor's Office. Additionally, many cities and towns across the Commonwealth are dealing with the same situation; we have reached out to our counterparts across the State to seek information so that we are most effectively prepared.

The Town of Ayer is preparing to comply with the State's decision by meeting with MOC and the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities in the next several days to coordinate logistics and open lines of communication. These preparations include planning by the Ayer Shirley Regional School District with respect to enrolling students in accordance with the State's "Right to Shelter" law. The Town will be seeking State and Federal support to provide the additional Town resources needed to address impacts at the school level and deliver appropriate levels of public safety resources. The Town will be working with the Governor and her staff, our State delegation on Beacon Hill, and our Federal delegation in Washington to ensure these resources are delivered.

For more information or questions regarding the State's "Right to Shelter" law and the Governor's State of Emergency please contact the Governor's Office at 617-725-4005.

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