

Town of Norfolk

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement of the Town of Norfolk Regarding Arrival of Migrant Families

NORFOLK -- The following is a statement by the Town of Norfolk:

The Town was informed on Friday that the decommissioned Bay State Correctional Center has been designated as a temporary emergency shelter by the Healey Administration.

This decision was made as part of its ongoing response to the number of migrant families arriving in Massachusetts. The Town had no role in this decision and was not consulted prior.

Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll spoke with town officials on Saturday and provided additional information and context. The Town was told that:

- The shelter will be managed 24/7 by a shelter operator determined by the Executive Office of Health and Human Services through competitive bid.
- The shelter will house up to 140 families, or up to 450 people total, who are deemed eligible for emergency assistance.
- Some families are currently housed at Logan Airport.
- The shelter will operate for six to 12 months.

By law Massachusetts is a "right to shelter" state. The state must provide adequate living spaces, clean and decent surroundings, pure air and water, sanitation, and other civic amenities to families, pregnant women, and migrant families in an

attempt to reduce homelessness. Emergency shelters have opened in communities of all sizes across the state.

An unexpected influx of a large number of families poses many logistical challenges to Norfolk. Town Administrator Justin Casanova-Davis, Police Chief Timothy Heinz, Fire Chief Erron Kinney, Norfolk School Superintendent Ingrid Allardi, King Philip Superintendent Rich Drolet, and other department leaders will be meeting regularly in the coming days. This group will develop a comprehensive list of potential impacts to the town and develop strategies to continue to deliver regular municipal services without interruption.

We also will have regular conversations with state officials to ensure the Town's concerns are heard, and to work collaboratively on creative solutions that are in the best interests of Norfolk.

Most importantly, the Select Board and Town staff are committed to transparency and regular updates to the community as we work through this transition. Please reach out to Town Administrator Justin Casanova-Davis at jcasanovadavis@norfolk.ma.us if you have questions.

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A message from the Town of Norfolk

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