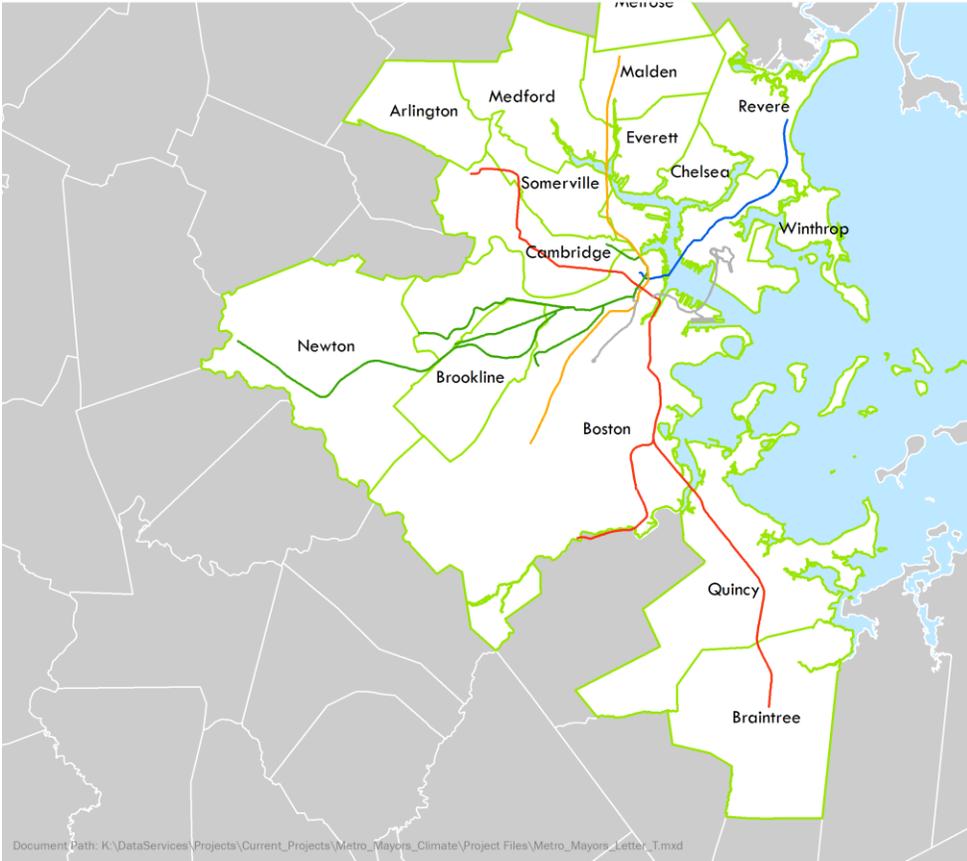




2022

Migrant Arrival Emergency Best Practice Guide



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1. Introduction

The Metropolitan Mayors Coalition (MMC) is a group of cities and towns in the urban core of Metro Boston whose leaders gather to exchange information and create solutions for common problems.

Recently, communities in greater Boston have seen an increase in the number of migrants seeking to access basic services such as housing and employment as they await immigration proceedings. These migrants have often traveled to the Boston area via the Southern Border of the United States where they asked for asylum status under US and international law. MMC leaders asked MAPC, which supports the Coalition, to help them consider methods of addressing the needs of these migrants when they arrive in their communities.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on possible courses of actions MMC communities can consider to support migrants in the initial 48 hours after the arrival of migrants, document available resources and identify gaps in preparedness for such an occurrence. This document should supplement municipalities current emergency plans and procedures.

1.3 Planning Assumptions

- Individual Cities and Towns will be responsible for coordinating immediate short-term response should they receive a group of migrants and should reference their plans and policies.
- Local resources shall be used first. An influx of a migrant population could however overwhelm all municipal governmental, and nongovernmental systems in the region and a city or town is likely to require state and/or federal assistance, especially if the migrant numbers are significant and emergency needs persist beyond 48 hours.
- The arrival of a migrant population can occur at any time, with little or no warning, and have a severe impact on resources in a receiving municipality.
- Internal and external communications and messaging will be a key component in the response.
- Additional planning should be completed to identify appropriate courses of actions and services the individuals and families may need after the initial 48 hours of arrival.
- The term “large group of Migrants” and “small group of Migrants” should be defined by each municipality based on resources available in the specific municipality.
- This document describes response a number of possible scenarios, but does not list all possible scenarios.

2. Scenarios

This guide is developed around scenarios that the MMC agreed would be the most likely to occur. Scenario based planning allows municipalities to prepare for multiple situations and potential courses of action to mitigate and reduce the levels of impact as it can provide a predetermined framework for response efforts.

This document suggests initial potential courses of actions for the following four (4) scenarios:

- a. Rumor of migrant arrivals
- b. Known date and time of large group of migrants
- c. Unannounced arrival of large group of migrants
- d. Arrival of small group or family

2.1 Scenario 1: Rumor of Migrant Arrivals

Your municipality has received multiple unverified notifications stating a bus carrying over fifty (50) individuals and families of a migrant population will be arriving within twenty-four (24) hours and will be seeking assistance. Rumors have slowly started to spread of the arrival on local social media accounts.

Suggested Courses of Action

1. Contact MEMA's 24x7 Communications Center at 508-820-2000. MEMA will work with State agencies to attempt to validate or discredit rumors.
2. Determine if an Incident Command structure will be activated.
3. Notify all individuals who may have a response role to be on alert should you receive confirmation the rumor is true.
4. Establish communications with your Public Information Officer (PIO), if you do not have one someone should be appointed.
5. In conjunction with your PIO and Incident Command Team, determine communication messaging for both internal partners and external partners.
6. Determine whether a public information campaign is needed in order to mitigate any additional spread of rumors.

2.2 Scenario 2: Known date and time of a large group of Migrants

Your municipality has received credible information confirming that a bus transporting 55 individuals and families will arrive at City Hall on December 9th at 1:30PM. These individuals will require immediate assistance and resources.

Suggested Courses of Action

1. Identify immediate resources the migrants will need for the next 48 hours including shelter, food, water, and medical care. These resources should be available when the individuals arrive.
2. Contact MEMA's 24x7 Communications Center at 508-820-2000. Inform MEMA of the arrival and request any known or anticipated resources you may need.
3. Contact the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) at 617-573-1100 to request any known or anticipated resources you may need.
4. Activate your Incident Command System and notify all individuals who will have a response role.
5. Establish communications with your Public Information Officer (PIO), if you do not have one someone should be appointed.
6. In conjunction with your PIO and Incident Command Team, determine communication messaging for both internal partners and external partners.
7. Determine if the arrival location will be suitable to provide the appropriate support needed for the individuals arriving. If another location would be better suited, attempt to contact the bus to redirect to an alternate location. If you are unable to contact the bus, begin to develop a plan to move individuals to a safe alternate location.
8. Establish a perimeter and security at the arrival site for the safety of the migrants. Keep in mind that the individuals on the bus likely have experienced varying levels of trauma and when possible the response should be made to reduce any further trauma.
9. Establish the ability to provide translation services, both spoken and written.
10. Determine what transportation assists are available to transport migrants to temporary housing.
11. Consider activating regional resources or MOUs for support.

2.3 Scenario 3: Unknown date and time of a large group of Migrants

A charter bus transporting 55 individuals and families arrives with no notice or warning in front of City Hall on December 12th at 3:00PM. These individuals will require immediate assistance and resources.

Suggested Courses of Action

1. Identify immediate resources the migrants will need for the next 48 hours including shelter, food, water, and medical care. These resources should be available as soon as possible after the individuals arrive.
2. Contact MEMA's 24x7 Communications Center at 508-820-2000. Inform MEMA of the arrival and request any known or anticipated resources you may need.
3. Contact DHCD at 617-573-1100 to request any known or anticipated resources you may need.
4. Establish a perimeter and security at the arrival site for the safety of the migrants. Keep in mind that the individuals on the bus likely have experienced varying levels of trauma and response efforts should be sensitive to this fact and focus on not perpetuating any further trauma.
5. Activate your Incident Command System and notify all individuals who will have a response role.
6. Establish communications with your Public Information Officer (PIO), if you do not have one someone should be appointed.
7. In conjunction with your PIO and Incident Command Team, determine communication messaging for both internal partners and external partners.
8. Determine if the arrival location offers the appropriate support needed to the individuals arriving. If another location would be better suited, determine what means of transportation can be utilized to move individuals.
9. Establish the ability to provide translation services, both spoken and written.
10. Consider activating regional resources or MOUs for support.

2.4 Scenario 4: A family or small group of Migrants

Your municipality has received credible information that a family of four (mother, father, 6 year old and 2 year old) and 4 adult individuals will arrive at a known date and time to an identified location in your city/town. These individuals will require immediate assistance and resources.

Suggested Courses of Action

1. Identify immediate resources the migrants will need for the next 48 hours including shelter, food, water, and medical care. These resources should be available when the individuals arrive.
2. Contact DHCD at 617-573-1100 to request any known or anticipated resources you may need.
3. Establish the ability to provide translation services, both spoken and written.
4. Determine what transportation assets are available to transport Migrants to temporary housing.
5. Move Migrants to a safe and secure location. Keep in mind that these individuals likely have experienced varying levels of trauma and response efforts should be sensitive to this fact and focus on not perpetuating any further trauma.
6. Determine if you need to activate, or partially activate, your Incident Command System and notify all individuals who will have a response role.
7. Determine if the arrival location will provide the appropriate support needed to the individuals arriving. If another location would be better suited, determine what means of transportation can be utilized to move individuals.
8. Determine if you need to activate regional resources or MOUs from neighboring communities for support.

3. Probable Resources Required and Best Practices

Whether the date and time of migrants are known or unknown, municipalities should be prepared to provide at a minimum basic service (e.g., shelter, food and medical care) for at least 48 hours. This will allow the municipality time to work with state agencies to develop and deploy additional resources for a longer-term solution for the migrants.

This section details a variety of issues municipalities should consider as they plan for the initial 0-48 hours of support for migrants. Additional areas should be considered as municipalities plan for past the 48-hour mark.

3.1 Sheltering

Determine what options your municipality has for sheltering migrants at least temporarily. A community should be able to provide shelter for at least 48 hours until additional resources can be provided. When considering options keep in mind your city or town should ideally identify separate spaces in shelters for families and individuals. Security of the site/s should be top priority and media and other unapproved agencies should not be allowed in the location/s. Options to consider may be one or more of the following:

- a) Placement in preexisting shelters
- b) Activating your municipality's Emergency Shelter Plan
- c) Using Host families
- d) Partner with Religious organizations, preferably with potential shelter space available
- e) Hotels/motels

Best Practice 1: *Partner with the Red Cross and/or Salvation Army to provide shelter support and comfort kits at shelters.*

Best Practice 2: *Shelter locations should be prepared to provide basic medical care potentially through the support of the local Medical Reserve Corps.*

Best Practice 3: *If your municipality does not have an Emergency Shelter Plan consider developing one for your municipality or consider developing a regional shelter that could be activated to temporarily house migrants.*

3.2 Transportation

Depending on the arrival location individuals may need additional transportation to shelter or short-term housing. Migrants may also need transportation to and from medical care that cannot be provided at the short-term housing location. Ensuring the safety and security of migrants during their transportation is a top priority.

Best Practice 1: *Utilize municipal public transit assets.*

Best Practice 2: *Develop agreements with school transportation companies.*

Best Practice 3: *Develop agreements with private transit companies.*

Best Practice 4: *Repurpose municipally owned vans such as vans the Public Works or Health Departments may have.*

Best Practice 5: *Develop agreements with your local Council on Aging.*

3.3 Emergency Medical Care

It is highly probable that the individuals arriving will need immediate medical care. Commonly seen medical issues are dehydration and broken bones, with psychological first aid also often being provided.

Best Practice 1: Partner with your local Medical Reserve Corps and Community Health Center in your planning and response as both have a variety of resources, services and support that they may be able to provide.

Best Practice 2: Establish a relationship with your local hospital in the event migrants need to be transported to the hospital. Determine potential logistics regarding providing care and transporting the individual/s back to the shelter or temporary housing.

Best Practice 4: Develop relationships with local colleges and universities that may have nursing students who would be willing to provide basic medical care.

3.4 Translation Services and Providers

Translation services for migrants will most likely be needed immediately. This will be a key component to a successful response. Your municipality will need to be able to accommodate a variety of languages and have resources to translate documents from English to the native language and from the native language to English.

Best Practice 1: Develop a list of municipal employees who can speak languages other than English and a list of employees who can translate written documents.

Best Practice 2: Identify MRC members with language skills and organizations that can offer translation of languages beyond the capacity of municipal staff.

Best Practice 3: Coordinate with local ethnic media providers including radio, television, print, online, and social media, to potentially be able to provide services.

3.5 Involvement of State Partners

Understand which state partners could have a role in assisting in the response. Document the points of contact for partner agencies and what resources or support they potentially may provide.

Best Practice 1: MEMA can work with your municipality to provide a variety of resources throughout the response. MEMA can also work with additional state agencies to assist in coordinating aid. All Local Emergency Managers should establish a relationship with their Local MEMA Coordinator to understand potential resources and assistance available.

Best Practice 2: DHCD, through its community and business partners, provides affordable housing options, financial assistance, and other support to Massachusetts communities. Your municipality should establish relationships with DHCD to understand potential resources and assistance available.

3.6 Legal Assistance

Individuals may be at various stages of the immigration process and will likely need a variety of legal assistance. Common legal services needed may include, but are not limited to, naturalization, asylum, special immigrant juvenile status, family-based immigration petitions/applications, consular processing, adjustment of status applications, work authorization, and green card renewal applications.

Best Practice 1: Develop agreements with legal service agencies who can provide emergency assistance to migrants. Determine what specific assistance can be provided.

Best Practice 2: Consider partnering with local colleges and universities that may have students or professors willing to assist.

3.7 Community Service Providers

A whole community approach is crucial in both planning for and responding to an influx of migrants. Many of these organizations provide services to residents on a daily basis that can easily be transitioned to support the needs of migrants. Having a culturally diverse group of service providers can also provide comfort and a sense of security to migrants. It is also likely that many community service providers will have a greater understanding of the needs of the migrants as they may provide assistance to similar individuals on a routine basis.

Best Practice 1: Determine what social services and programs already exist in your municipality that can be repurposed or redirected to provide services to migrants.

3.8 Communication Plan (Internal and External)

Internal and external communications will be a key component for your municipality in any of the scenarios described in this document. Internally, your municipality should begin to notify all individuals who may have a response role if your municipality receives migrants. All staff should be on standby and be prepared to activate if necessary. External communications should begin with the public early on. Ideally, this will reduce the spread of any rumors and instill confidence in the residents that your municipality is preparing for any next steps that may be necessary. Consider identifying staff to monitor local social media for any rumors or situational awareness that can be forwarded to the PIO. Ensure that messaging going to the public is consistent across all platforms.

Best Practice 1: Message Mapping can assist your municipality in creating effective messaging during an emergency. The message mapping process uses proven crisis communication techniques for developing public information of all types. Message Mapping can help determine what information is appropriate for internal partners and what information is appropriate for external partners. See example:

<https://wrhsac.org/projects-and-initiatives/message-mapping/>

4. Findings and Recommendations

All municipalities in the Metro Mayors Coalition are committed to welcoming migrants into their communities. Their goal is to make the transition of the migrants in their communities as seamless as possible. This can be done only with the support and collaboration of community, municipal, and state partners.

The following findings and recommendations were developed based on meetings, surveys, and interviews MAPC staff conducted with municipal stakeholders, all of whom will have an important role in assisting migrants to their community.

Finding 1: Municipalities can provide most basic services to migrants who arrive one at a time or one family at a time. The challenges increase significantly as the number of migrants grows.

Finding 2: Municipalities should be in touch with relevant state partners (MEMA, DHCD) before receiving any migrants understand what information and documentation they should gather prior to reaching out to partner agencies at the state.

Finding 3: Municipalities should take a phased approach when planning for an influx of migrants. In the first 48 hours they should look to provide basic needs such as shelter, food, water, and medical care. Once basic needs have been met, municipalities can partner with community and state agencies to determine the next set of services.

Recommendation 1: Determine if any resource/s can be shared across the Metro Mayors Coalition and develop a process for accessing and supporting that resource/s. For example, determine if the Coalition could regionally purchase a van or secure translation services that can be shared across municipalities to support migrants.

Recommendation 2: Consider the development of a Regional Plan to support the influx of migrants. This would include the development of a regional emergency shelter that could operate for a minimum of 48 hours until resources were able to be brought in from state partners.

Recommendation 3: Determine if, as a Coalition, there is funding to support community agencies that work with multiple municipalities such as PAIR and La Colaborative.

Recommendation 4: When funding is not available to provide a missing service, look within your own municipality and community agencies to determine if a similar service can be repurposed temporarily.

5. Areas to Explore

Legislation: On November 18, 2022, Governor Baker filed a \$139 million Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) supplemental budget to support the Commonwealth's response to the substantially increased demand on the state's emergency assistance shelter system. The targeted funding and policy changes in this bill would provide resources to expand emergency shelter capacity for migrants.

Temporary State Housing: On November 22, 2022, Massachusetts announced they will open a temporary intake shelter for the homeless and migrants in December 2022. The shelter will be run by MEMA and will be open for four months. It will be located at the Bob Eisengrein Community Center in Devens and will support up to 60 families (125 people maximum). Stays at the center will be short, with transfers to other facilities after an assessment period. The shelter will be equipped to provide short-term congregate lodging, food, and laundry services for resident families. Families will receive housing counseling, among other services.

6. Resource Starter Kit

The following section highlights key resources in Metro Mayors Coalition communities that will most likely be needed to support migrants. This Resource Starter Kit will allow a municipality to identify what is in the Coalition and if there is any space to share resources or learn from each other. This section of the

document will be expanded with additional data from municipalities once received. Once all data is received we will be able to determine if there are any overarching resource gaps in the Coalition.

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Brookline

Resource	Agency	Point of contact	Do you have a current agreement or contract with this organization?	Does this resource support families or individuals?	Does this organization or agency work outside of your municipality?	Limitations	Additional Information
Housing	Brookline Emergency Shelters		Yes	Approximately 100 people - both families & individuals	No	Current plan would use an unoccupied school building to house people; there are no shower facilities, so this would be 24-48 hours maximum hold.	Shelter would be operated by the Town of Brookline, using a combination of paid staff and trained volunteers (CERT & MRC)
Food (1)	Brookline Food Pantry		Yes, verbal	Approximately 100 people - both families & individuals	No	The Brookline Food Pantry operates almost entirely by volunteers, and is currently providing food to 600+ families/individuals each week.	
Food (2)	Brookline Public Schools Food Services		Yes, verbal	Approximately 100 people - both families & individuals	No		if we needed to house people overnight, School Food Services could provide meals with notice.
Medical (1)	Transformative Healthcare/Fallon Ambulance		Yes - they provide ambulance services to Brookline, and have at least	Both Families and individuals	Yes		

			two crews in town.				
Medical (2)	Brookline Medical Reserve Corps		Yes	Both families & individuals; we currently have over 400 volunteers registered.	Brookline MRC primarily works only in Brookline; however, volunteers can be sent to other communities in MA.	All volunteers, availability depends on who accepts the request for support	Members include doctors, nurses, pharmacists, EMTs, behavioral health, social workers, and those without medical training.
Transportation (1)	Brookline Departments		Variety of assets (vans, buses) including some wheelchair accessible assets across several departments.(C OA, Rec, Schools)	Both families and individuals, 100+	No	Some assets may be in use, and not able to respond immediately; however, we feel confident we could quickly make transportation available.	We would not use police vehicles for this purpose.
Transportation (2)	Brookline Private Schools		Informal emails confirming assets & availability (reconfirmed every 2 years, last reconfirmed Sept. 2021)	Both families and individual; 100+	No	Assets may be limited during school hours and may take time to obtain drivers outside of school hours	The list includes Beaver Country Day School, Brimmer & May, Dexter/Southfield and Park School
Transportation (3)	MBTA		Under development/discussion	Both families and individuals	Yes; Metro Boston	We need an agreement & procedure to request buses in an emergency	
Legal (1)	Boston University		Unsure, but town has utilized services prior				
Legal (2)	Harvard Legal Aid		No				
Translation (1)	Language Line		Yes	Both families and individuals	Yes	Not pro bono	The town is currently working to develop a language policy & plan

Translation (2)	Brookline Medical Reserve Corps & Community Emergency Response Team volunteers		Yes, through the Health Dept and Police Dept	Both families and individuals	No	They are volunteers, we have some who can act as ad hoc translators, but we don't have all languages available.	
Immigration Services (1)	MIRA Massachusetts Immigrant & Refugee Advocacy Coalition		No	Both families and individuals	Yes, unknown who		Staff advise residents to connect with MIRA
Immigration Services (2)	Immigration Advancement Committee	Jessica Chicco jessica.chicco@gmail.com	No	Unknown	Yes, unknown who		
Immigration Services (3)	Brookline Center for Community Mental Health		Yes	Both families and individuals	No		No formal immigration support at the facility, but they do have a list of referrals they can make.
Other	Faith Based Partners		We have verbal agreements with both a temple and a church to provide short term shelter for migrants while we set up overnight accommodations	Both families and individuals 100+	No	Depending on the day / time of day we would use one or the other site.	

Chelsea

Resource	Agency	Point of contact	Do you have a current agreement or contract with this organization or agency?	Does this resource support families or individuals?	Does this organization or agency work outside of your municipality?	Limitations	Additional Information
Housing	DHCD / Emergency Assistance		No, clients are connected this resource on a case-by-case basis	For families with children only. Clients must be in the US under the "color of the law."	Yes, statewide	Capacity, responsiveness, and eligibility requirements that prohibit services to undocumented residents	There are opportunities to reform Emergency Assistance regulations and program guidelines to better serve migrants
Food (1)	Luz De Cristo		No	Yes, they can support up to 50 to 80 households per week at the food pantry, which operates each Friday		Capacity, variety of food products	
Food (2)	St Lukes Church		Yes, the City maintains a contract for food pantry operations. The food pantry operates on Saturdays by appointment only	Yes, approximately 20-30 per week	No	Capacity, personnel, variety of food products	
Food (3)	La Colaborativa		Yes, the City maintains a contract for food pantry operations, which occur multiple times per week	The food pantry serves 300-500 persons per week	This organization primarily works in Chelsea	Capacity, funding, availability of supplies, staffing	

Medical (1)	MGH		No	Unsure	Yes, regionally	Health insurance coverage is an issue, although they offer a range of services to uninsured	
Medical (2)	Beth Israel		No	N/A	Regionally: Chelsea, Revere and Everett	Insurance coverage	
Transportation							
Legal Services (1)	City of Chelsea Housing Legal Services / Housing Families		Yes	Yes, they can support approximately 25-35 new clients per quarter, depending on the level of housing legal services	Yes, Malden, Everett, Medford, Revere	Capacity, funding. Only focuses on housing legal services	
Legal Services (2)	PAIR		No	Yes, but unsure of capacity	Regionally	Funding, staffing, capacity	
Translation Services							
Immigration Services	La Colaborative		Yes, a small contract	35-75 per year in the CDBG Immigration and Citizenship Services Program	Yes, regionally	Funding, staffing, capacity	The program is too small to address recent influx of migrants

Resource	Agency	Point of contact	Do you have a current agreement or contract with this organization or agency?	Does this resource support families or individuals?	Does this organization or agency work outside of your municipality?	Any Limitations	Additional Information
Housing	Housing Families, Inc.	781-397-7000 x5721	Yes	Both individuals and families, unknown capacity	Unknown		
Food (1)	Malden Community Fridges				No	Availability is based on community donations	
Food (2)	Bread for Life	781-397-0404	Unknown	Both individuals and families	Yes		
Medical (1)	Cambridge Health Alliance	(781) 338-0055	No	Both individuals and families	Yes	Unknown	
Medical (2)	Cataldo Ambulance	(781) 873-4301	Yes	Individuals	Yes		
Transportation	School and MTBA Buses						
Legal Services	Housing Families	781-397-7000 x5721	Yes	Both individuals and families	Unknown	unknown	
Translation Services	Rosetta Languages	617-865-2273	Yes	Individuals			
Immigration Services							

