



Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance Seeks Executive Director

Recognizing the dignity of all, the Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance (CMHA) leads a collaborative response to homelessness that fosters long-term housing stability through prevention, quality services, education and advocacy. CMHA aims to create a community where everyone has a home through accessing the tools and resources to obtain residential and economic stability.

About CMHA

CMHA was formed in 1994 as the result of a merger of two longstanding housing organizations in Worcester, the Housing Information Center (a tenant's rights organizing group) and the Worcester Committee on Homelessness and Housing, which advocated for and developed a well-coordinated homeless shelter and service network. Over the last 25 years, CMHA has expanded its programs and services to encompass the following:

Family Shelters – CMHA provides emergency shelter and support services to families (269 in FY19), and of those, 185 families were successfully housed out of shelter with follow up services. In partnership with the Worcester Community Action Council's Secure Jobs Program, 169 residents of family shelters were assisted in seeking employment opportunities.

HomeBase Program – Working with local housing authorities and private landlords, CMHA utilizes the Commonwealth's HomeBASE flexible assistance resources to allow families to quickly move to sustainable housing with follow up case management and supportive services. The coordinated Rapid Re-Housing Strategy has proven to be a critical piece in reducing the costs of housing families in emergency shelter for long stays and eliminating the practice of housing families in hotels.

Worcester County Continuum of Care (CoC) – As the convener of the Worcester CoC, CMHA fosters long-term planning to develop the most effective and humane approach to reducing homelessness in the region.

Housing Counseling and Homelessness Prevention – This longest standing and highest volume CMHA program (serving 7,283 clients last year) is rooted in a prevention first model and provides counseling, education, and mediation to tenants and landlords as to their rights and responsibilities. Community resources, state and local prevention funds, and other resources are brought together to address issues that place families at risk of homelessness, where intervention leads to housing stability.

Public Education & Advocacy – The heart of CMHA's mission is addressing the root cause of homelessness. CMHA works to raise awareness of the real issues of homelessness and lack of affordable housing opportunities. For 35 years, CMHA has hosted an annual Walk for the Homeless.

Elder Home Repair & Maintenance – Collaborating closely with partners in the Elder Service and Health Care Network, CMHA assists elder homeowners to remain living independently in their own homes by providing repairs and routine maintenance to keep elders safely and independently housed while preventing long and costly institutional stays. This program is critical for hundreds of senior homeowners and works to protect their safety and quality of life as well as protecting valuable affordable housing stock for the long term.

Hope for Housing (HFH) – HFH is a partnership developed with the Interfaith Coalition to prevent family homelessness and to raise community awareness, ultimately utilizing the collective buying power of congregations to prevent family homelessness.

Donations Clearinghouse – This program gathers reusable furniture and home goods from Worcester County residents and offers them, free of charge, to those who need them to help make their house a home.

Youth Against Homelessness – CMHA partners with area high schools to increase students' knowledge of current issues in the community and works collectively to explore real solutions that they can initiate within their schools and neighborhoods. Students become active and involved citizens in the betterment of their community.

With its primary offices in Worcester, MA, CMHA employs approximately 80 staff, many with long-standing commitments to the issue of homelessness as well as substantial tenures at CMHA. With a \$15 million budget, CMHA is overseen by an 11-member Board of Directors comprised of community and business leaders deeply committed to CMHA's mission. CMHA is currently led by Interim Executive Director, Ann Gibbons-Smith, who took over from Grace Carmark, whose deep devotion, steady hand and unwavering commitment as CMHA's leader for 26 years brought it to where it is today.

Opportunity Going Forward

The Executive Director will have the opportunity to lead a prominent, incredibly stable and highly respected agency in greater Worcester steadfastly committed to its mission of homelessness prevention, affordable housing, and housing stability, while also collaborating with and mobilizing partners and the community to support systematic change. High priorities for the Executive Director include:

- Managing effectively and efficiently the daily operations and directing and empowering a team of 80 experienced and passionate professionals of a mission-driven, nonprofit with a \$15 million budget.
- Transitioning and building relationships with political, City, community, agency and business leaders, ensuring that CMHA is a present, engaged and trusted collaborator and partner committed to the unified mobilization of the sector.
- Developing a short- and long-term strategy for CMHA's growth and sustainability that considers:

- The challenging housing market trends in Worcester and Worcester County;
- The potential impact of the COVID virus on CMHA clients, shelters, programs and staff;
- Gaps that may need to be filled and opportunities that may arise as some nonprofits struggle to meet the challenges associated with the pandemic;
- The scale, scope and sustainability of individual programs as well as potential property ownership to house shelters; and
- Approaches to diversifying CMHA’s revenue base.
- Serving as the public spokesperson for CMHA to advocate for its mission and clients, while leading the agency’s revenue generation efforts to secure government grants, raise philanthropic grant funds, and engage private donors.
- Developing and supporting a senior leadership team and work culture that values a passionate commitment to mission, collaboration, accessibility, flexibility and customer service, while also raising the level and consistency of accountability and data-driven decision making throughout the organization.
- Improving and utilizing technology to create greater awareness of CMHA and to expand access to its programs.
- Expanding the diversity and influence of the Board of Directors while building and sustaining a strong and collaborative relationship based on open and direct communications, transparency, and mutual accountability.

Desired Credentials/Profile of the Ideal Candidate

- A minimum of five years of senior leadership, or equivalent experience
- Knowledge of and commitment to the homeless and affordable housing
- Experience working with diverse communities and people reflective of those served by CMHA

Skills and Experience

Experienced, Dedicated and Mission-Driven Leader

- Proven nonprofit and/or business leadership at an organization of CMHA’s scale and size with financial and budget acumen
- Strategic thinking skills, with the ability to position CMHA as a comprehensive service provider and to create a systems-wide approach that integrates CMHA’s programs
- Ability to track and use data to inform decision making
- Be a partner to the Board of Directors to expand its impact on the organization
- Demonstrate passion for the issues of homelessness and affordable housing, and the ability to connect with CMHA’s clients and to walk in their shoes
- Professional or personal pursuits that demonstrate a strong commitment to and understanding of CMHA’s mission

Politically Savvy Networker, Collaborator and Partner

- Proven networker with the ability to position CMHA as a sector leader, the “go to” organization for homelessness and housing in Worcester County

- Political skills and knowledge of the inner workings of municipal, county and state government
- Ability to create and hold mutually beneficial community, government and business relationships, collaborations, and formal partnerships
- Understanding of and connections to the City of Worcester would be advantageous

Spokesperson with Strong Communication Skills

- Strong verbal and written communication skills and able to communicate equally well with all constituencies
- Commitment to being highly visible in and available to the community
- Ability to represent CMHA as its primary, passionate, and articulate spokesperson
- Be an honest broker, truth teller and trusted collaborator

Culture and Teambuilder

- Skilled at developing a positive, warm, welcoming, and compassionate culture and climate
- Skilled at assembling a strong senior management team, creating performance standards and holding staff accountable
- Be a present and accessible leader of a staff
- Able to professionalize management practices and oversight, while not micromanaging
- Offer a fresh, outside perspective to an organization long led by one individual

Revenue Generator

- Commitment to diversifying CMHA's revenue sources
- Ability to compete for, secure and manage government contracts
- Fundraiser with the ability to cultivate funder relationships and write and secure grants

Application Guidelines

Candidates must include a resume and a cover letter that describes how their qualifications and experience match the needs and mission of CMHA, along with salary requirements. Applications will be accepted until the position has been filled. Send required documents to:

<https://eostransitions.applicantpool.com/jobs/>

Salary is commensurate with experience and within the framework of the organization's annual operating budget. CMHA is an Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer which encourages applications from candidates from diverse backgrounds and cultures, particularly candidates of color and/or candidates who know and/or represent the communities CMHA serves.

This executive search is being conducted by Eos Transition Partners consultant John Tarvin. All submissions will be acknowledged and are confidential, and any questions must be submitted to John at: jtarkin@eostransitions.com.