

Massachusetts

When a family or individual is faced with a progressive condition such as DM1 or DM2 they are often presented with additional financial expenses as well as loss of a steady income. This section attempts to gather financial resources that are available on a state level for persons living in the United States. By no means is this section complete; we invite you to share with us any resources you've identified.

This is an on-going project. We will add more resources as we gather them; please send us resources you know of that are not currently listed.

Please be advised that each organization has its own eligibility and application requirements. None of these organizations are affiliated with the Myotonic Dystrophy Foundation. We hope you will share your experiences with us – let us know if you are successful in finding a good resource to help your family.

Employment

Applying for unemployment insurance benefits: <https://www.mass.gov/applying-forunemployment-benefits>

Eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits:
<https://www.mass.gov/servicedetails/check-eligibility-for-unemployment-benefits>

Disability Benefits: The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) can help you understand how working may affect your benefits.
<https://www.mass.gov/disabilitybenefits>

Refugee Employment Services (RES): Employment services include many programs supported by federal and state funds to ensure successful employment for the refugees and immigrants in Massachusetts. Employment programs provide integrated, targeted services leading to both early and long-term economic self-sufficiency, including employment-related case management, English language instruction, employment readiness, vocational skills development, and job placement/retention/upgrade.
<https://www.mass.gov/refugee-employment-services-res>

SNAP Path to Work: is the Department of Transitional Assistance's voluntary Employment and Training program. It provides SNAP clients with supports to find and keep good paying jobs. <https://www.mass.gov/snap-path-to-work>

TAFDC Employment Services Program (ESP): TAFDC helps with finding, getting, and keeping a good paying, career-track job. It offers a variety of training, education, and job search programs to define and build career goals, produce skills, and meet work requirements. <https://www.mass.gov/tafdc-employment-services-program>

Vocational Rehabilitation: this program helps job seekers with disabilities obtain and maintain a job. Vocational rehabilitation helps people with physical, cognitive, intellectual or mental health conditions manage the modern workplace. <https://www.mass.gov/vocational-rehabilitation>

Food & Nutrition

Emergency SNAP benefits: Emergency SNAP benefits are for SNAP applicants that need food assistance within 7 days. These benefits are typically issued for one month while applicants gather the verifications that the Department needs to approve a full SNAP application. <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/emergency-snap-benefits>

Nutrition Program for Seniors: The Nutrition Program consists of 27 programs that serve over 9.1 million meals to seniors each year. More than 400 congregate meal sites serve meals. Meals are also delivered to elders in their homes. The goal of the program is to provide at least one daily balanced meal to seniors. People age 60 or older and their spouses are eligible to receive nutrition services. The program helps elders maintain independence so they can continue to live in their homes. <https://www.mass.gov/nutrition-program-for-seniors>

Nutrition Program Sites: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/nutrition-program-sites>

SNAP benefits (food stamps): SNAP provides assistance for help buying fresh, nutritious foods. <https://www.mass.gov/snap-benefits-formerly-food-stamps>

Women, Infants, & Children (WIC) Nutrition Program: this program keeps pregnant and breastfeeding women and kids under 5 healthy. <https://www.mass.gov/women-infantschildren-wic-nutrition-program>

Financial

Economic assistance (cash benefits): The Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) offers economic assistance (cash benefits) programs to help families and individuals to meet basic needs. <https://www.mass.gov/economic-assistance-cash-benefits>

SSI and Public Benefits Training and Technical Assistance: Connect with a Public Benefits Specialist to learn more about public benefit and health financing programs such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI). A key role of the Division for Children & Youth with Special Health Needs is to keep health care providers and consumers informed about the complex system that families rely on to finance health care for children with disabilities or chronic illnesses. The Public Benefits Specialists provides up-to-date training and information as federal and state laws and regulations change. <https://www.mass.gov/ssiand-public-benefits-training-and-technical-assistance>

Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC): is for families with children under 18, including teen parents or pregnant women whose children will be born in four months or less. For more information visits <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/checktafdc-eligibility-and-how-to-apply>

Housing

Emergency Housing Assistance Programs: find information about who can assist you in this time of need and give you guidance on shelter services. <https://www.mass.gov/emergency-housing-assistance-programs>

First Time Home Buyer (FTHB): The Commonwealth of Massachusetts offers a variety of programs to help potential homeowners navigate the home buying process. Partner agencies in Massachusetts provide education, mortgage programs and more assistance for families and individuals to find the right home. <https://www.mass.gov/servicedetails/first-time-home-buyer-fthb>

Home Energy Assistance Programs: Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), known commonly as Fuel Assistance, provides eligible households with paying a portion of their winter heating bills. Additionally the Heating System Repair & Replacement Program (HEARTWAP) provides emergency heating system repair and replacement services to low-income households. Additionally, the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is funded by the US Department of Energy and provides eligible households with full-scale home energy conservation services.

<https://www.mass.gov/home-energyassistance-programs>

One Mortgage Program: offers homebuyers affordability and financial security and is based on the SoftSecond Loan Program. To be eligible, one must be a first-time homebuyer with an income at or below the area median income. For more information visit <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/one-mortgage-program>

Public Housing Assistance Programs: There are different types of housing available for low-income families, elderly persons, and those with disabilities Congregate and supportive housing with assisted living services may also be available.

<https://www.mass.gov/public-housing-assistance-programs>

Rental Assistance Programs: provide financial aid to help low-income persons rent apartments other than apartments in public housing developments. There are different types of rental assistance in Massachusetts. The 3 largest programs are: The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP), the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP), and the Alternative Housing Voucher Program (AHVP).

<https://www.mass.gov/rental-assistance-programs>

Medical & Health-Related

Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund (CICRF): provides financial assistance to qualified families caring for children with special health needs and disabilities. The CICRF can help families with certain medical and related expenses that are not covered by insurance, public benefits, or other financial sources.

<https://www.mass.gov/catastrophicillness-in-children-relief-fund-cicrf>

Check a Physician Profile: this is a resource to help consumers find information about physicians licensed in Massachusetts. <https://www.mass.gov/check-a-physician-profile>

Family Caregiver Support Program: this program allows a Caregiver Specialist to create a plan and offer tips and support for caregiving. For eligibility requirements and more information visit, <https://www.mass.gov/family-caregiver-support-program>

In-Home Services/The Home Care Program: home care services are available to help eligible elders continue to live independently and safely at home. The Home Care Program offers a variety of fee for service in home assistance based on income levels. <https://www.mass.gov/in-home-services>

Massachusetts Technology Assistance Resource Team (MASSTART): A free service supported by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Providers help families and schools plan for the health care and safety of children with special health care needs, especially those who are assisted by medical technology, so that they can attend schools safely in Massachusetts.

<https://www.mass.gov/massachusetts-technology-assistanceresource-team-masstart>

MassHealth: is a combination of Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in Massachusetts. MassHealth members may be able to get doctors visits, prescription drugs, hospital stays, and many other important services. The following link gives information for MassHealth applicants, members, different types of health plans, initiatives, provider information, publications, and additional resources.

<https://www.mass.gov/topics/masshealth>

MassHealth information for people with disabilities: access resources for MassHealth including information for individuals, families, people with disabilities, seniors and others needing long-term-care services, applying and enrolling in MassHealth, the Health Safety Net, or CHIP, help enrolling long-term-care services, and/or how to appeal a MassHealth decision. <https://www.mass.gov/information-for-people-with-disabilities>

MRC (Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission) Assistive Technology Services: Assistive Technology is any device that improves a person's ability to live more independently. Many different items are considered assistive technology, including adaptive computer equipment, walkers, hearing aids, memory enhancement aids, print magnifiers, wheelchairs, vehicle modifications and more. Some home modifications and vehicle purchases also are covered.

<https://www.mass.gov/mrc-assistive-technology-services>

Ombudsman Programs: these advocacy services offers a way for older adults to voice their complaints and have concerns addressed so they can live with dignity and respect. Programs include advocacy for assisted living, community care, and long term care.

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/ombudsman-programs>

Options Counseling Program: is a free service that can help an older person, an adult of any age with a disability, their family members or care givers make decisions on supportive services if they don't know where to turn. Call MassOption toll free at 1-(844)-422-6277 to speak to an options counselor in your area or visit

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/options-counseling-program>

Orientation and Mobility (O&M): an individual experiencing vision loss encounters many new challenge. One challenge is navigating around one's home and community. MCB's Orientation and Mobility Department consists of Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists (COMS) who provide individualized travel training programs within one's home, workplace and community.

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/orientation-andmobility-o-m>

Shine Counseling: SHINE counselors can answer your questions about Medicare and also help you make decisions about your benefits.

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/howcan-a-shine-counselor-help-me>

Additional Resources

Community Support Line: call 1 (800) 822-1435 (toll free). This Community Support Line provides information, technical assistance and resources for families with children and youth with special needs and the providers serving these families.

<https://www.mass.gov/community-support-line>