

November 27, 2023

Dear Paulist Center friends of immigrants and racial justice:

We are writing today because the humanitarian crisis in our state has dramatically worsened in the last couple of months, culminating in the governor's (temporary, we hope) suspension of the Commonwealth's Right to Shelter law. For example, the number of Haitian and Dominican immigrants being assisted by the Watertown Citizens Refugee Support Group has mushroomed just in the past 2 weeks from 44 people to 96, with more coming every day.

The Office for Refugees and Immigrants is searching for people to temporarily host recently arrived migrant families until they are able to get a place in the state's Emergency Assistance Shelter program. While the state has made some improvised arrangements, they're not enough to meet the need.

The families have immigration status and are eligible for shelter; but the state presently has no place for them. These families are gracious, resilient, courageous people who have had to evacuate their home countries with their young children. Massachusetts will work with them to get shelter, work permits, English proficiency and resettlement; but there is now a waitlist to get into shelter, and the need is truly urgent.

Many families have opened their homes but many more are needed. If you are able to host a family for any amount of time, please contact:

Ronnie Millar  
Director of Strategic Initiatives  
MA Office for Refugees and Immigrants  
617-710-4668  
[Ronnie.Millar@mass.gov](mailto:Ronnie.Millar@mass.gov)

The "vetting" process is accelerated, and Ronnie will walk you through it.

Thank you for considering this request. Please share it with your networks you see fit.

Yours in Christ,

Chris O'Keeffe & Ed Marakovitz (Immigrant Advocacy Group)  
Tom Sharkey (Racial Justice Advocacy Group)  
Susan Rutkowski (Paulist Center Social Justice Minister)