



For Immediate Release

Media Contact

NASW-MA: Rebekah Gewirtz | rgewirtz.naswma@socialworkers.org | 617.645.4773

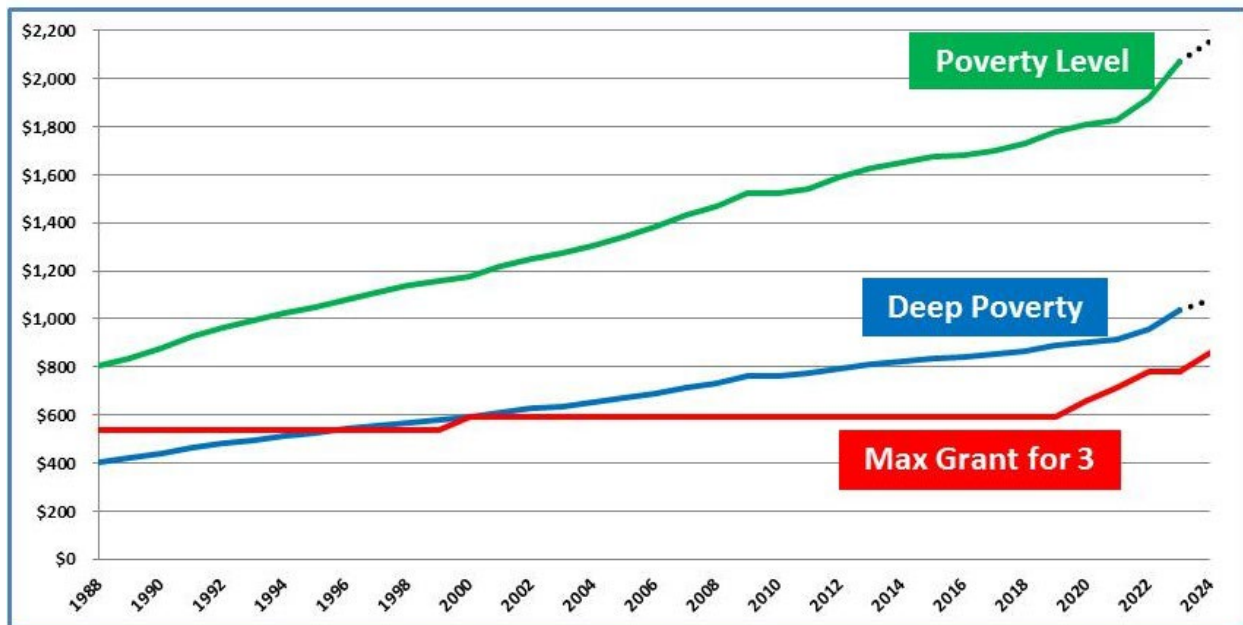
PRESS RELEASE

Conference Budget Includes 10% Cash Assistance Increase Starting April 2024

BOSTON, MA (July 31, 2023) – The Massachusetts FY 24 budget includes a 10 percent increase in cash assistance benefits starting April 2024, marking another historic step forward for families in Deep Poverty. This is the fourth increase in four years after decades of frozen benefit levels. These successive increases demonstrate our legislative leaders’ moral commitment to our most vulnerable children, older adults, and people with disabilities.

With this increase, the cash assistance grant for a family of three with no income will be \$861 a month starting next April. This is still well below half of the federal poverty level – known as the Deep Poverty level – projected to be \$1,077 a month for a family of three in 2024.

Grants still below Deep Poverty



"I applaud the Senate budget's and Conference Committee's inclusion of a 10 percent increase in cash assistance," said Senator Sal DiDomenico, lead sponsor of the Senate bill to raise cash assistance grants. "Thanks to the Senate President's leadership, this marks another historic step toward lifting up and supporting low-income families. I am committed to continuing our work and pushing for further bold action to ensure that no child lives in Deep Poverty. Now more than ever, lifting kids out of Deep Poverty must be one of the highest priorities for the legislative session."

"I am happy that with the release of the FY24 budget today many families who continue to live in poverty are assured that they will see another increase of cash grants in the coming months," said Representative Marjorie Decker, lead sponsor of the House grant increase bill. "While these increases don't move people out of poverty or Deep Poverty, they do give families additional resources that help them put food on the table, buy diapers, and buy shoes that fit their children. Every increase we make is a policy choice to help alleviate the suffering of families who live in poverty, and I will continue to work towards and advocate for increases that will lift our families out of Deep Poverty. I am grateful to the House of Representatives and my Senate colleagues for continuing to support this important work in the FY24 budget."

"It is unconscionable that anyone in Massachusetts should go to bed hungry, and yet for tens of thousands of children, elders, and people living with disabilities, that happens all too often, especially near the end of the month, when cash benefits — having been spent on daily necessities — have run out," said Rebekah Gewirtz, Executive Director of the Massachusetts chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. "We are incredibly grateful to our legislative champions and to the conference committee for prioritizing our most vulnerable residents."

The [Lift our Kids Coalition](#) – 160 member organizations – salutes the Senate President, the Speaker, and the Ways and Means Chairs for making this important further progress towards addressing the state's woefully low welfare grants. We are grateful to Senator Sal DiDomenico and Representative Marjorie Decker for spearheading the effort to end Deep Poverty in Massachusetts. Thanks to our legislative leaders, cash assistance grants continue to be raised and we can look forward to a future when no child is consigned to live in Deep Poverty.

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