



BOSTON CITY COUNCIL

Committee on Housing and Community Development
Liz Breadon, Chair

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REPORT OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

December 6, 2024

Dear Councilors,

The Committee on Housing and Community Development was referred the following docket for consideration:

Docket #1674, Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of Four Million Four Hundred Sixty Thousand Eight Hundred Ninety-Seven Dollars (\$4,460,897.00) in the form of a grant, for the FFY24 Lead Paint Hazard Reduction Grant Program, awarded by the United States Department of Housing & Urban Development to be administered by the Mayor's Office of Housing. The grant will fund abatement, inspection, risk assessment, temporary relocation, and interim control of lead-based paint hazards in eligible privately owned, single-family and multi-family housing units that are occupied by low-income families.

This matter was sponsored by Mayor Michelle Wu and referred to the Committee on November 20, 2024.

Summary of Legislation

Docket #1674 is an order authorizing the acceptance and expenditure of a federal grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to be administered by the Mayor's Office of Housing (MOH) of the City of Boston.

The grant is for the federal fiscal year 2024 (FFY24) Lead Paint Hazard Reduction Grant Program in the amount of \$4,460,897.00. The funds support MOH's work in the abatement, inspection, risk assessment, temporary relocation, and interim control of lead-based paint hazards in eligible privately owned, single-family and multi-family housing units that are occupied by low-income families.

Information Received

Due to scheduling limitations on the City Council calendar, the Committee could not hold a hearing on this docket before the end of the 2024 municipal year. In lieu of a public hearing, the Chair requested written communication from the department expending the grant funds. The Chair received a memorandum dated December 4, 2024, from Sheila Dillon, Chief of Housing and Director of the Mayor's Office of Housing. According to the memorandum, the period of performance for the grant is 48-months, from December 15, 2024 to December 15, 2028.



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Chief Dillon reported that for 30 years, the Lead-Safe Boston (LSB) program has used a combination of federal, state and local resources to address lead-based paint hazards in more than 3,100 housing units in the City of Boston. The FFY24 award represents the fifteenth grant from HUD to MOH's LSB program.

The LSB program operates citywide with a special focus on those units that have an Order to Correct Violations from the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) in households where a young child has an elevated blood lead level (BLL). Eligible units can receive up to \$12,000 to address lead hazards and up to \$5,000 in healthy homes funding to remediate housing hazards that affect health and safety. The funding terms are a no-interest, 3-year forgivable loan.

According to Chief Dillon, the LSB program's achievements and its successful implementation of funds are due to the effective collaboration among partners including the BPHC, the Suffolk County Housing Court, other public and nonprofit entities, and faith-based organizations.

Chief Dillon's memorandum further informed the Chair that this collaboration, with significant HUD support, has created an infrastructure to address lead poisoning in children and undertaken an aggressive community outreach and education campaign with a focus on "disadvantaged communities" to increase awareness of the severe risks of lead in the living environment. The work supported by this grant will meet the high standards of the Massachusetts Lead Law and applicable federal regulations. The primary activities funded by the grant include:

- Lead based risk assessment/paint inspection and testing in 170 units of eligible housing;
- Lead hazard abatement in 160 units;
- Healthy Homes inspections and interventions for 80 units;
- Temporary relocation of occupants during abatement; and
- Expanded community outreach and education

The Chair extends her appreciation to the Chief and MOH staff for the information provided.

Committee Chair Recommended Action

As Chair of the Committee on Housing and Community Development, I recommend moving the listed docket from the Committee to the full Council for discussion and formal action. At that time, my recommendation to the full Council will be that this matter **OUGHT TO PASS**.

Liz Breadon, Chair
Committee on Housing and Community Development