

OFFERED BY CITY COUNCILOR JULIA MEJIA



**CITY OF BOSTON
IN CITY COUNCIL**

IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-SIX

**ORDER FOR A HEARING ON WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
HOUSING FOR CITY OF BOSTON EMPLOYEES**

- WHEREAS,** The City of Boston Code Section 5-5.3 states that “Every person first employed by the City of Boston on or after July 1, 1976, shall be a resident of the City of Boston, and shall not cease to be a resident of the City of Boston during his employment by the City; *and*
- WHEREAS,** As of February 2025, the average rent in Boston, MA is \$3,393 per month. This is 118% higher than the national average rent price of \$1,555/month, making Boston one of the most expensive cities in the US according to data from Apartment.com; *and*
- WHEREAS,** The Department of Health and Human Services set the 2025 federal poverty level at \$37,650 for a family of four, while the Boston Planning and Development Agency works with developers to create housing opportunities primarily available to renters with incomes up to 70% of the area median income (AMI), which is \$114,240 for a family of four; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Data from the 2025 City of Boston Employee demographic dashboard shows that roughly 11,167 individuals on the city’s payroll earned a yearly wage below the AMI of 70% at \$114,240; *and*
- WHEREAS,** In a time when housing prices are increasing beyond the means most people can afford, and many residents are choosing to leave the City to find affordable homes elsewhere, City employees are forced to find subsidized or substandard housing to keep their jobs with the City; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Cities and towns across the United States are creating housing subsidies or building units explicitly designated for city and county employees; *and*
- WHEREAS,** On March 8, 2024, New York City announced that it had partnered with trade unions to fund workforce housing for the City’s unionized workers at

80% to 140% of the AMI, funded in part with \$100 million contributed by union pension funds. Teton County, Wyoming, currently owns 24 employee rental units, which they rent out to public servants. The Residences at Government Center in Washington D.C. was built on previously vacant county-owned land and is open to low- to moderate-income county and private-sector employees, and; *and*

WHEREAS, In 2023, the City Council approved allocating \$750,000 in ARPA funding to Boston City employees experiencing a housing emergency or housing instability; however, this allocation is insufficient to meet the needs of all our employees; *and*

WHEREAS, The City of Boston has a hardworking and dedicated workforce who deserve to have access to resources, financial assistance, and housing that allows them to stay in the City of Boston; ***NOW THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED, That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council holds a hearing to discuss workforce development housing for City of Boston employees. Representatives from the City of Boston, including the Office of Fair Housing and Equity, the Mayor's Office of Housing, the Office of Workforce Development, and the Boston Housing Authority, in addition to housing advocates and members of the public are encouraged to attend.

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