

# Day shelter for migrants and homeless families opens in Chelsea

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State House News Service

A day shelter for migrants and homeless families is slated to open Tuesday at La Colaborativa, a Latina-led organization in Chelsea, to help accommodate people who are staying at the state's overnight overflow shelter in Cambridge.

The new walk-in shelter, which will offer case management and wraparound services to up to 200 individuals daily, is funded through a \$5 million grant program launched by the Healey administration and the United Way of Massachusetts Bay. The shelter will operate five days a week from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., United Way said as it announced its latest grant recipient late Friday.

"As we're facing an unprecedented state of emergency, it's critical that all residents have access to safe, dignified shelter, especially over the frigid winter months," Gladys Vega, CEO of La Colaborativa, said in a statement. "Recognizing the countless lives at risk, we're grateful to collaborate with the United Way and Healey-Driscoll Administration to deploy our unique, trauma-informed model of providing a culturally familiar, welcoming day center with comprehensive housing, economic, and wraparound services, which are vital to the wellbeing of homeless families."

La Colaborativa will coordinate transportation to its new headquarters – 318 Broadway – for families being accommodated at the Cambridge overflow shelter, United Way said. The shelter will also support Chelsea community members.

The Middlesex South Registry of Deeds Building in east Cambridge, which the Healey administration opened in December amid a crush of new arrivals coming to Massachusetts, hosts families from 6 p.m. to 7 a.m., state officials previously said.

In Chelsea, case managers will support families in accessing economic, immigration and housing services, such as helping them obtain their work authorization permits and find employment opportunities. Case managers will also help connect people to public benefits, mental health services and other health care.

“A longstanding lifeline for immigrant populations and residents of Chelsea, these funds will expand and enhance the capacity of La Colaborativa to provide critical day services for families, expediting exits of families from shelter systems and helping to enable them to stabilize and contribute to our economy and communities as quickly as possible,” Bob Giannino, CEO of United Way of Massachusetts Bay, said.

United Way last week said it’s distributed \$3 million in grants so far to support eight safety-net shelters that serve about 100 families per night. They’re located in Greater Boston, as well as Worcester and Hampden counties.