

SENATE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Cindy F. Friedman

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to a livable wage for human services workers.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Cindy F. Friedman

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Fourth Middlesex

SENATE No.

[Pin Slip]

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. 84 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)**

An Act relative to a livable wage for human services workers.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Chapter 6A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby
2 amended by adding the following section:-

3 Section 110. (a) As used in this section, the following words shall, unless the context
4 clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:

5 “Human service provider,” a community-based human services organization with a
6 human services program funded by the executive office of health and human services, the
7 executive office of elder affairs or the executive office of housing and livable communities.

8 “Human services worker,” an employee of a human service provider who provides
9 treatment, support or services to clients or their families.

10 “Disparity amount,” the monetary calculation of the average difference in salary between
11 human services workers and direct care workers, nurses, clinicians or other comparable
12 employees employed by the commonwealth’s state-operated programs for human services.

13 “Rate,” the reimbursement rate paid by the executive office of health and human services,
14 the executive office of elder affairs, the executive office of housing and livable communities or
15 the department of early education and care to a human service provider to deliver services to
16 clients on the commonwealth’s behalf.

17 (b) Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the executive office of
18 health and human services, the executive office of elder affairs and the executive office of
19 housing and livable communities shall increase the rate of reimbursement for human services
20 providers by an amount that reduces the disparity amount, as defined by subsection (a), to:

21 (1) 50 percent on or before July 1, 2026;

22 (2) 30 percent on or before July 1, 2027;

23 (3) 10 percent on or before July 1, 2028;

24 (4) Zero percent on or before July 1, 2029, and shall remain at 0 percent thereafter.

25 (c) All increases in the rate of reimbursement provided for in this section shall be used to
26 increase the compensation of human services workers.

27 (d) The executive office of health and human services, the executive office of
28 administration and finance, the executive office of elder affairs and the executive office of
29 housing and livable communities shall adopt regulations to implement this section.

30 (e) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the elimination of the disparity
31 amount prior to July 1, 2029.

32 SECTION 2. On or before July 1, 2026 and annually thereafter until the disparity amount
33 is eliminated for human services workers, the executive office of health and human services, the
34 executive office of elder affairs and the executive office of housing and livable communities, in
35 collaboration with the Massachusetts Council of Human Service Providers, Inc., shall provide a
36 report to the senate and house committees on ways and means, the joint committee on children,
37 families and persons with disabilities, the joint committee on elder affairs, the joint committee on
38 health care financing, the joint committee on mental health, substance use and recovery, the joint
39 committee on public health and the joint committee on state administration and regulatory
40 oversight that includes the following information:

41 (1) the current disparity amount, as defined in subsection (a) of section 110 of chapter 6A
42 of the General Laws, between the salaries of human services workers, as defined in subsection
43 (a) of section 110 of chapter 6A of the General Laws, employed by human service providers, as
44 defined in subsection (a) of section 110 of chapter 6A of the General Laws, and direct care
45 workers, nurses, clinicians or other comparable employees employed by the commonwealth's
46 state-operated programs for human services;

47 (2) the amount of annual increases in the rate of reimbursement, as defined in subsection
48 (a) of section 110 of chapter 6A of the General Laws, to human service providers under contract
49 with their department necessary to reduce and eliminate the disparity amount by July 1, 2029
50 pursuant to the schedule articulated in subsection (b) of section 110 of chapter 6A of the General
51 Laws;

52 (3) the amount needed to be appropriated annually to achieve the reductions in the
53 disparity amount described in paragraphs (1) through (4), inclusive, of subsection (b) of section
54 110 of chapter 6A of the General Laws by July 1, 2029; and

55 (4) the implementation of rates necessary to eliminate the disparity amount by agency,
56 job description and start date of implementation.