A Message from the Secretary of the Commonwealth

Dear Student:

Thank you for choosing Massachusetts as the place to continue your education. With over 150 public and private institutions of higher learning and a combined student population of a half million, our Commonwealth is recognized worldwide for its academic heritage and reputation. Indeed, the intellectual and cultural energy generated by students adds immeasurably to the character, economy, and quality of life in the Bay State.

Your college experience will not be limited to spending time in lecture halls, libraries, or on the internet. Massachusetts is an outstanding place to work, to travel throughout, and to live and have fun. It is even a great place to own a business. As a result, you will need essential information about transportation, landlord/tenant regulations, voter registration, and numerous other practical matters that affect your daily lives.

This booklet, *A Student’s Guide To Living in Massachusetts*, has been prepared by my office to provide you with much of the useful information you will need as Massachusetts collegians. Use the contact numbers within this document to call any of the specific divisions of my office.

College life in Massachusetts will be an exciting and rewarding experience for you. Enjoy it, and keep *A Student’s Guide To Living in Massachusetts* as one of your guides to practical knowledge about our Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

Be sure to visit our web site at [www.sec.state.ma.us/cis](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/cis)
General Information

Official Name
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

State Capital
Boston

Population
6,547,629 (2010 U.S. Census Bureau)

Population Rank
14th of 50 states (2010 U.S. Census Bureau)

Area
8,257 square miles (land and water)

Population Density
839.4 persons per square mile (land area) (U.S. Census Bureau)

Communities
312 towns; 39 cities

State Government
Six constitutional officers elected for four years: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the Commonwealth, Attorney General, Treasurer and Receiver General, Auditor

Statehood
Massachusetts is one of the original thirteen colonies and became the sixth state of the Union on February 6, 1788

Legislature
Official Name: General Court. Two branches with members elected for two years; House of Representatives: 160 members; Senate: 40 members
**Table of Contents**

- Secretary of the Commonwealth Divisions .............................................. 1
- Residency ................................................................................................. 5
- Voter Registration .................................................................................. 6
- Consumer Protection ............................................................................... 7
- Landlord/Tenant ..................................................................................... 8
- Employment ............................................................................................ 9
- Student Opportunities ........................................................................... 10
- Tax Structure .......................................................................................... 11
- Financial Aid .......................................................................................... 13
- Motor Vehicles ....................................................................................... 14
- Identification Cards ................................................................................ 17
- Drug Laws ............................................................................................... 18
- Drinking Age .......................................................................................... 18
- Bottle Law ............................................................................................... 18
- Gun Laws ................................................................................................ 19
- Health ...................................................................................................... 20
- Individuals with Disabilities .................................................................. 22
- Public Transportation ............................................................................ 23
- Recreational Information ...................................................................... 25
- Holidays ................................................................................................... 26
Secretary of the Commonwealth Divisions

Citizen Information Service

For more than 30 years, Citizen Information Service (CIS) has made state government more accessible to residents of the Commonwealth. It has responded to nearly two million telephone inquiries, and has been able to provide immediate answers to approximately ninety-nine percent of those calls.

The goal of Citizen Information Service has been to assist citizens connect to the many state agencies where they may seek information on programs and or to seek assistance or redress with the government offices that we citizens interact with. While we cannot answer every question the public is invited to send us their questions as they relate to state government. Please understand we do not provide any legal services or opinions, nor do we advocate on behalf of the citizens. You may call, fax or e-mail us at the contact information below.

In addition, CIS produces and distributes a series of publications on a diverse range of topics such as the Citizens’ Guide to State Services, Motor Vehicle Excise Information, Safe & Sanitary Housing for Massachusetts Residents, and many more.

Citizen Information Service
One Ashburton Place, Room 1611
Boston, MA 02108-1512
Tel: (617) 727-7030
Toll Free: 1-800-392-6090 (within Mass. only)
TTY: (617) 878-3889
Fax: (617) 742-4528
Hours: M-F, 8:45 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
E-mail: cis@sec.state.ma.us
Website: www.sec.state.ma.us/cis
Elections Division
The Secretary of the Commonwealth is the state’s chief election official. The Elections Division administers state elections, from the distribution and receipt of nomination papers to the printing of ballots for all federal, state and county elections in Massachusetts.

In addition, the division conducts public education, outreach and voter registration campaigns, and is constitutionally required to print the Information for Voters booklet, which describes all statewide ballot questions and which is mailed to every household in the Commonwealth.

The state of Massachusetts, through the Elections Division, has also been a national model in implementing the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, assuring polling place access for the disabled and elderly, and the National Voter Registration Act (Motor Voter), which established a state central voter registry and allows persons to register to vote at numerous public agencies throughout the state.

Elections Division
One Ashburton Place, Room 1705
Boston, MA 02108-1512
Tel: (617) 727-2828
Toll Free: 1-800-462-VOTE (8683)(within Mass. only)
Fax: (617) 742-3238
Hours: M-F, 8:45 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
E-mail: elections@sec.state.ma.us
www.sec.state.ma.us/ele

State Bookstore
The State Bookstore, a component of the State Publications and Regulations Division, is responsible for the sale of our own documents, as well as numerous other state publications, such as the School Directory, List of Mortgage Rates and Massachusetts Election Statistics. It also has copies of recently passed state laws and a collection of souvenirs to accommodate the 100,000 tourists who visit the State House each year. Continually expanding its retail scope, the State Bookstore averages more than $1 million in annual sales.

State Bookstore
State House, Room 116
Boston, MA 02133
Tel: (617) 727-2834
Fax: (617) 973-4858
Hours: M-F, 8:45 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Email: regs@sec.state.ma.us
www.sec.state.ma.us/spr
**State House Tours & Government Education Division**

Established by an act of the legislature in 1969, the State House Tours Division guides approximately 90,000 visitors annually through the halls of the state’s capitol building. It provides an Architectural/Historical Tour and a Legislative Process Tour, as well as a number of brochures explaining the history of the State House and the passage of legislation.

The division, in addition to providing State House information in eight different languages, operates a desk which assists with questions on state government, locating personnel and various tourist inquiries. It also has resource notebooks containing a wealth of information for school groups, journalists, historians and travel professionals. The Tours Division manages the operation of the State House Gift Cart, which has souvenirs, books, and other materials relating to the State House.

**State House Tours**  
State House, Room 194  
Boston, MA 02133  
Tel: (617) 727-3676  
Fax: (617) 742-4722  
Tours: M-F, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
www.sec.state.ma.us/trs

**Massachusetts Archives & Commonwealth Museum**

The Massachusetts Archives preserves access to state government records that are of long-term value to support government operations. Those records relate to government goals, objectives, and actions, or represent documentation of the state’s citizens and history.

The Archives is mandated to acquire, describe, preserve, and provide access to those records. The division’s Records Management Unit works with state and local agencies to ensure that records are properly maintained. In addition, this division trains records custodians in appropriate management techniques, including the appraisal and disposition of government records.

The Archives is also the repository of more than 370 years of Massachusetts history, housing such artifacts and documents as early probate and court records, genealogical, and immigration information, and other historical data. The Archives, in conjunction with the National Endowment for the Humanities, is currently preserving and indexing several thousand records from the colonial era of 1630 to 1776.

**Massachusetts Archives & Commonwealth Museum**  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02125  
Tel: (617) 727-2816  
Fax: (617) 288-8429  
Hours: M-F, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Email: archives@sec.state.ma.us  
www.sec.state.ma.us/arc
Regional Offices

The Regional Offices provide many of the services which exist at the principal location of the Secretary of the Commonwealth in Boston, MA. Residents of western and southeastern Massachusetts are able to receive and file corporate documents, take their oaths of office, file nomination papers, and obtain a variety of state publications.

Southeastern Office
218 South Main Street, Suite 206
Fall River, MA 02721
Tel: (508) 646-1374
Fax: (508) 646-1473
Hours: M-F, 8:15 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Email: barry.sullivan@sec.state.ma.us
www.sec.state.ma.us/wso

Western Office
436 Dwight Street, Room 102
Springfield, MA 01103
Tel: (413) 784-1376
Fax: (413) 784-1379
Hours: M-F, 8:15 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Email: cathy.molta@sec.state.ma.us
www.sec.state.ma.us/wso

Other Divisions

The other divisions of the Secretary of the Commonwealth’s Office are Corporations, Securities, Registry of Deeds, Public Records, Massachusetts Archives, Massachusetts Historical Commission, Commonwealth Museum, State Records Center and Address Confidentiality.
Residency...

There is no formal procedure for establishing a legal residence in Massachusetts. Voter registration, automobile registration, a driver’s license, the appearance of a person’s name on a city or town street list, and rent, utility,
mortgage or telephone bills normally provide tangible proof of residence. However, individual public or private agencies or institutions may have their own requirements for proof of residence. To be eligible for the resident tuition rate at a public institution of higher learning, the applicant must be able to demonstrate that s/he is a resident and intends to remain permanently or for an indefinite time. For state universities and state colleges, the length of residency is twelve months; for community colleges, it is six months. It is important to check with the institution as several factors are taken into consideration in determining residency.

Voter Registration...

If you are a U.S. citizen, a Massachusetts resident, and you will be 18 years old on or before Election Day, you may register to vote at any city or town hall in person, or by mail, by contacting any city or town clerk’s office. Social service, welfare, Registry of Motor Vehicle offices, and offices providing services for the disabled also have walk-in registration services available. Colleges, universities, high schools, and vocational schools have registration availability for enrolled students. Registration in Massachusetts is permanent, but you must register again if you move or change your name.

(For more detailed information ask the Elections Division for the publication entitled Registering and Voting in Massachusetts.)
Consumer Protection...

If you have a complaint involving the purchase and/or sale of goods and services in a private business transaction, you can contact the local consumer council in your city or town. If your city or town does not have a consumer council, contact the Consumer Protection Division of the Office of the Attorney General.

The Consumer Protection Division receives and processes citizen complaints, working closely with consumer complaint groups throughout the state. To file a complaint, obtain a form directly from the Consumer Protection Division or online. The division will accept individual written complaints and take legal action if a widespread pattern of fraud is found. For more information, contact:

Consumer Protection Bureau
Mailing Address: Office of the Attorney General
One Ashburton Place, 19th Floor
Boston, MA 02108
Tel: (617) 727-8400 or
Springfield Area Office: (413) 784-1240
www.mass.gov/ago

The Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation serves as an informational resource to consumers throughout the Commonwealth by publishing brochures on consumer rights in many areas. These include such topics as Mechanics of Auto Repair, Consumer’s Guide to Home Improvement, information on Small Claims Court (web only), and three brochures on lemon law for autos (new, used and leased), Tenant Rights and Responsibilities, and many more. The office will be pleased to send you a publication in your area of concern. For more information, contact:

Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation
10 Park Plaza, Suite 5170
Boston, MA 02116
Tel: (617) 973-8787
Toll Free: 1-888-283-3757 (within Mass. only)
www.mass.gov/consumer
Landlord/Tenant...

Sanitary Code
The Massachusetts Department of Public Health establishes regulations detailing the standards which must be maintained by landlords and tenants. The Sanitary Code standards, entitled Minimum Standards of Fitness for Human Habitation, apply to every dwelling unit or rooming house unit in Massachusetts which is used for living, sleeping, cooking and eating. For information about these regulations, call your local board of health which has the primary responsibility for their enforcement. You can also obtain from Citizen Information Service a pamphlet entitled Safe and Sanitary Housing for Massachusetts Residents which highlights these regulations.

Security Deposit / Last Month’s Rent
When requesting a security deposit (which cannot exceed one month’s rent), a landlord is required to give the tenant a receipt and statement of condition which must contain a comprehensive list of any damage existing in the premises. The deposit, upon which is based the going interest rate up to 5%, must be paid at the end of each full year of tenancy and is to be placed in an escrow account. A landlord may also request a last month’s rent. The landlord is required to pay the going interest rate up to 5% interest on the last month’s rent at the end of each full year of tenancy or at the end of the tenancy if less than one year. Interest on the rent for the last month which is used as a rental payment is not required. The last month’s rent does not have to be put into an escrow account.

For information and referrals about housing matters, contact your local tenants groups or Citizen Information Service. The Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation publishes and has available upon request and online: Tenant Rights and Responsibilities.

Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation
10 Park Plaza, Suite 5170
Boston, MA 02116
Tel: (617) 973-8787
Toll Free: 1-888-283-3757 (within Mass. only)
www.mass.gov/ocabr
Employment...

Wage Requirements

The minimum wage in Massachusetts is currently: $8.00 per hour. It is scheduled to change on January 1, 2015 to $9.00 per hour, on January 1, 2016 to $10.00 per hour and on January 1, 2017 to $11.00 per hour.

Wait staff, service employees and service bartenders may be paid the service rate of $2.63 per hour if they regularly receive tips of more than $20 a month, and if their average hourly tips, when added to the service rate, are equal to or exceed the basic minimum wage. M.G.L. Chapter 151, section 7.

Employers may allow a tip credit of 40% on the minimum state wage for those employees who earn at least $30.00 a month in tips. For more information about state wage requirements, contact:

Fair Labor and Business Practices Division
Office of the Attorney General
100 Cambridge Street, 12th Floor
Boston, MA
Mailing Address: One Ashburton Place, Room 1813
Boston, MA 02108
Tel: (617) 727-3465
www.mass.gov/ago

Taxation

If you are a student who lives and works in Massachusetts while attending school, you must file a Massachusetts income tax return if your income exceeds $8000.00 If your anticipated income is less than $8000.00, you may ask your employer not to withhold taxes by filing a Massachusetts Employee’s Withholding Exemption Certificate (form M-4) with your employer.

On the federal level, you must file a tax return if your income is in excess of $4440.00 You can only claim exemption from withholding if last year you did not owe any federal income tax and had a right to a refund of all income tax withheld, and you do not expect this year to owe any federal income tax and expect to have a right to a refund of all income tax withheld. File a Federal Employee’s Withholding Allowance Certificate (form W-4) with your employer.

These figures are applicable to students who are single. Check with the Massachusetts Department of Revenue or the federal Internal Revenue Service for further information.

Department of Revenue
100 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02204
Tel: (617) 887-6367
Toll Free: 1-800-392-6089 (within Mass. only)
www.mass.gov/dor

Internal Revenue Service
15 New Sudbury Street
Boston, MA 02203
Tel: (617) 316-2850
Toll Free: 1-800-829-1040
www.irs.gov
Student Opportunities...

Volunteer Solutions in Boston maintains a list of a great variety of volunteer jobs. The website has contact information with many public and non-profit agencies. For information, contact:

Volunteer Solutions
United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley
51 Sleeper Street
Boston, MA 02210
Tel: (617) 624-8000
http://volunteer.truist.com/boston/volunteer

City Year, an AmeriCorps program, is a national service organization which unites young adults, ages 17 to 23, from diverse racial, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds for a demanding year of full-time community service, leadership development, and civic engagement. The corps includes college graduates, high school graduates, and young people without high school diplomas.

City Year’s comprehensive educational program includes required GED classes for corps members who have not graduated from high school, college and career counseling, and overnight training retreats. Upon graduation Corps members are eligible for exclusive scholarships to dozens of colleges and universities, future service opportunities, access to online career resource center, and networking opportunities with more than 15,000 alumni. City Year is an innovative and multifaceted service organization which seeks to address unmet community needs, break down barriers of class and race, inspire citizens to civic action, and strengthen the bonds of community. By tapping the energy and commitment of young people, City Year is “putting idealism to work.”

City Year Boston
287 Columbus Avenue
Boston, MA 02116
Tel: (617) 927-2500
Fax: (617) 927-2560
www.cityyear.org/boston

The Division of Career Services maintains job-matching centers for general employment across the state. Although the division is mainly oriented toward providing permanent employment, there are limited opportunities for temporary and/or part-time work. For more information, contact:

Department of Career Services
Executive office of Labor and Workforce Development
19 Staniford Street
Boston, MA 02114
Tel: (617) 626-5300
www.mass.gov/dcs
**Tax Structure...**

**Personal Income Tax**
A 5.2 percent tax on earned income from such sources as wages and salaries, unemployment compensation; alimony; Massachusetts bank interest; rents and royalty income; taxable pensions and annuity income; IRA/Keogh distribution; profit or loss from a business or profession; winnings and prizes; unearned income such as dividends and interest (other than Massachusetts savings deposit interest); and capital gains.

A declaration of estimated tax must be filed by those who expect to receive more than $500.00 of income subject to Massachusetts taxation which is not subject to Massachusetts withholding.

**Sales and Use Tax**
A 6.25 percent tax on the retail sale of all items unless exempted by statute is imposed. A 6.25 percent tax on tangible personal property which is used or stored in Massachusetts and upon which a sales tax has not been paid is also paid. Exemptions include food, clothing up to a value of $175.00, fuel for heating, newspapers, ticket sales and prescription drugs. In addition, there is a sales tax on telecommunications services, utilities, and energy (including non-residential electricity, gas, steam, and heating fuel).

**Sales Tax on Meals**
A 6.25 percent tax is imposed on restaurant and take-out meals. Generally, a food product sold as a grocery item is exempt from the sales tax on meals.

**Gasoline Tax**
“Tax per gallon”, shall be 24 cents per gallon for automobiles and trucks. Contact the Department of Revenue for information on other types of fuel at (617) 887-5070 or visit www.mass.gov/dor

**Cigarette Tax**
Massachusetts, and the U.S. Federal government implement an excise tax on tobacco products and cigarettes. The Federal tax on cigarettes is overseen by the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau. The Federal tax varies depending on the type of tobacco product. The Federal tax rate equals $1.0066 per pack of 20 cigarettes. The Massachusetts state tax equals $2.51 per pack of 20 cigarettes, and $3.1375 per pack of 25. The revenue from the Massachusetts cigarette excise tax provides money for existing funds, generally directed toward health programs and smoking prevention projects.
Automobile Excise Tax

An annual tax is levied by the state but collected at the local level. The rate is $25.00 per thousand dollars of the car’s value, as determined by the manufacturer’s list price (without options) in the year of manufacture. The tax is figured according to the percentage of the list price. The percentages are as follows:

- Year preceding the designated year of manufacture: 50%
- Year of designated manufacture: 90%
- Second year: 60%
- Third year: 40%
- Fourth year: 25%
- Fifth and subsequent years: 10%

For more detailed information ask Citizen Information Service for the publication entitled Motor Vehicle Excise Information or visit this online link: www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cisexc/excidx.htm.
Financial Aid...

The Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) is primarily responsible for the management and oversight of all state funded financial aid programs and advises the Board of Higher Education about financial aid policy matters of concern to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In addition to its financial aid responsibilities, OSFA is the principal agency for promoting access to higher education through early awareness initiatives that foster the recognition of college as a viable postsecondary option and the availability of financial aid resources to help students and families meet college costs.

**Office of Student Financial Assistance**  
Department of Higher Education  
454 Broadway, Suite 200  
Revere, MA 02151  
Tel: (617) 391-6070  
www.osfa.mass.edu

Since 1956 American Student Assistance (ASA) has been helping students to successfully fulfill a program of higher education, originally by making guaranteed student loans possible and more recently by helping students complete a program of higher education financing and repayment. ASA is a private nonprofit whose public purpose mission is to empower students and alumni to successfully manage and repay their college loan debt.

**American Student Assistance**  
100 Cambridge Street  
Suite 1600  
Boston, MA 02114  
Toll Free: 1-800-999-9080  
www.asa.org

The Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority (MEFA) is a not-for-profit quasi-public entity serving students and families in Massachusetts and out-of-state students and families pursuing higher education in Massachusetts. MEFA’s mission is to increase access and college affordability across the Commonwealth through low-cost financing alternatives, college savings programs and educational financing expertise on planning, saving and paying for higher education.

**Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority (MEFA)**  
160 Federal Street, 4th Floor  
Boston, MA 02110  
General Information (617) 261-9760  
www.mefa.org
**Motor Vehicles...**

**Registration**

Massachusetts residents are required to register their cars. You may do so at any branch office of the Registry of Motor Vehicles. Proof of ownership must be presented in the form of the title to your car. If you come from a state which does not require titles, a bill of sale or a past registration will be accepted. Prior to registering your car, you will also need insurance certification issued by a licensed Massachusetts insurance company, indicating that your car is insured in accordance with Massachusetts laws. For more detailed information go to the Division of Insurance web page at [www.mass.gov/doi](http://www.mass.gov/doi).

Registration costs $60.00 for two years and $60.00 to renew thereafter. Note: Costs are subject to change. Other costs can be found at [www.massrmv.com/Portals/30/docs/20141.pdf](http://www.massrmv.com/Portals/30/docs/20141.pdf)

**Inspection**

Within seven days after registering your car in Massachusetts, you must have it inspected at any gas station or automobile repair shop which has been certified by the Registry of Motor Vehicles as an official inspection station.

An inspection maintenance program requires both a yearly safety and emissions level inspection of motor vehicles. Motor vehicles that are more than 15 years old, that have a maximum speed of 25 m.p.h. or less, that have a diesel engine, that have a registered weight of 8,500 pounds or more, are motorcycles, or are new vehicles being registered for the first time are exempt from the emissions part of the inspection.

The Mass vehicle check for a combined safety and emissions inspection or a safety only inspection is $35.00.

**Sales Tax on Automobiles**

If you move into Massachusetts within six months of purchasing a new or used car, you must pay either the full sales tax on the car or the difference between the Massachusetts sales tax and that of the state where the car was purchased. More specifically, if Massachusetts:

- has a reciprocity with the state and you have proof that the sales tax was paid in that state, you have only to pay the difference between the tax rates of the two states.
- does not have a reciprocity with the state where the car was purchased, then you must pay the full Massachusetts sales tax. No sales tax has to be paid if the car was purchased out of state more than six months prior to your move.
**Seat Belts**

All passengers in vehicles must wear seat belts. Violators must pay a $25.00 fine if a driver is stopped for a motor vehicle infraction and an officer finds that any passenger is not wearing a seat belt. Under the combined safety and emissions inspection regulations, safety belts are required for motor vehicles where such safety belts were installed as original equipment. In addition, each passenger over 16 years of age not properly fastened in will be fined individually. Children five years of age or under must be protected with an approved child passenger restraint such as an infant, toddler, convertible, or booster seat until they reach 80 lbs. Under the Child Passenger Safety Law, M.G.L. ch. 90, s. 7AA, passengers who are under age eight years old must be fastened and secured by a child passenger restraint, (child or booster seat as appropriate) unless such passenger measures more than 57 inches in height. The child passenger restraint shall be properly fastened and secured according to manufacturer’s instruction. Unless required to be secured by a child passenger restraint device such as a child or booster seat, all children less than 13 years of age shall wear a seat belt adjusted and fastened according to manufacturer’s instructions. Child passenger restraint devices are specifically designed seating system which meets the US Department of Transportation Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards as established in: 49 CFR 571.213 For more information, contact:

**Injury Prevention and Control Program**
Department of Public Health
250 Washington Street, 4th Floor
Boston, MA 02108-4619
Tel: (617) 624-6070
Toll-free: 1-800-227-7233 (CAR-SAFE)
TTY: (617) 624-5992
www.mass.gov/dph/injury
Driver's License (Class D)

If you have a valid license to drive from any state in the U.S. or province of Canada, you are not required to take a driving test to obtain a Massachusetts license. You are, however, required to take a written examination if you have an old license that has expired. At the branch offices of the Registry of Motor Vehicles you may fill out an application form and make an appointment to take the written exam. If you pass the exam and an eye test, a photo license will be issued. Both the license conversion and the new license issued following the written exam is $115.00. It is valid for 5 years. After this, the renewal fee is $50.00. For more information, contact:

**Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV)**
Registry of Motor Vehicles
Massachusetts Department of Transportation RMV-Division
25 Newport Avenue
Quincy, MA
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 55889
Boston, MA 02205-5889
Tel: 857-368-8000 (for those in area codes: 617, 339, 781, 857, or out of state)
Toll Free: 1-800-858-3926 (for those in area codes: 508, 774, 978, 351, 413)
Toll Free TTY: 1-877-768-8833 (RMV-TTDD)
Ombudsman Office: 857-368-9455
Registrar's Office 857-368-4636
Toll Free: 1-800-472-9829 (I-PAY-TAX Anonymous tipline for reporting vehicle registration and excise tax evasion in MA)
Toll Free Automated Assistance and Fax on Demand Forms Line: 1-866-627-7768
www.massrmv.com
Identification Cards...

Identification Card for Non-drivers
If you are 14 years of age or older, a Massachusetts resident and do not have a valid motor vehicle license, you may apply to a branch office of the Registry of Motor Vehicles for a photo identification card. To apply for the card if you are under 18 years of age, you must have three documents to ascertain your identity, one document providing date of birth, parental consent on the class D, M or D/M license and ID card application, and social security number (SSN) that the RMV can verify with the U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) as having been issued to you OR an acceptable Denial Notice from the SSA. If you are over 18 years of age or older you must also have documents proving signature and Massachusetts residency. Home mortgage papers, a pistol permit, a high school yearbook with a person’s picture or a W-2 yearly income tax form are other types of documents which are acceptable. The cost is $25.00 and the ID expires every 5 years. If the I.D. is lost, a replacement also costs $25.00. An amended I.D. card also costs $25.00.

Liquor Purchase Identification Card
If you are 21 years of age or older and you do not have a Massachusetts driver’s license, you may apply for a liquor purchase identification card. Application is made in person to any office of the Registry of Motor Vehicles. The cost is $25.00 and renewal is necessary. The ID is valid for 5 years. If the card is lost, the entire application procedure must be completed again and a new fee paid of $25.00. The following documents must be presented with the application:

- a driver’s license permit if one has been issued, and
- a social security number (SSN) that the RMV can verify with the U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) as having been issued OR an acceptable Denial Notice from the SSA. If you present a Denial Notice, you must also present proof of acceptable visa status, and I-94 (Record of Arrival and Departure), and a current non-U.S. passport.
- a birth certificate or certificate of naturalization, and
- one of the following (or two, if there is no driver’s license):
  - a school or college record with the signature of the dean attesting to the date of the applicant’s birth and with applicant’s signature; passport; armed services discharge papers; college I.D. card with picture and signature; employment I.D. card with picture and signature; baptismal record (not preferred but acceptable); U.S. immigration record (not preferred but acceptable).

No photocopies of any record are acceptable. Records and documents of the following type will not be accepted to establish your age: draft cards, charge cards, health insurance cards, vehicle registration, welfare cards. An amended liquor I.D. card costs $25.00.
Drug Laws...

Conviction for the possession of more than one ounce of marijuana in Massachusetts is punishable by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than six months or a fine of $500.00, or both (M.G.L Ch.94C :34. Possession of one ounce or less of marijuana shall be a civil offense with a $100.00 fine and forfeiture of the marijuana (M.G.L Ch.94C :32L).

Any person who is convicted for the first time and who has never been convicted of any offense relating to narcotic or harmful drugs shall be placed on probation unless the court files a written memorandum stating the reasons for not doing so.

Possession with intent to distribute or the manufacture of PCP or Angel Dust carries a one-year mandatory prison sentence in Massachusetts.

Possession of large quantities of illegal drugs with intent to distribute carries various mandatory prison sentences based on the quantity of the drug.

The sale of drug paraphernalia in Massachusetts is illegal.

Drinking Age...

The legal drinking age in Massachusetts is 21 (since 6/1/85). Proper identification is a Massachusetts driver’s license or a liquor purchase identification card issued by the Registry of Motor Vehicles.

Bottle Law...

Glass, plastic, metal, aluminum and bi-metal containers holding beer and other malt beverages, carbonated soft drinks, and artificially carbonated mineral water are subject to mandatory deposit requirements. Wine, dairy products, natural fruit juices, and alcoholic beverages other than beer and malt are exempt.

The refund value is five cents, but may be less in certain instances. Empty containers may be returned to redemption centers or retail outlets which sell or have sold within the past 60 days the same brand, type and size of container. For more information, contact:

Department of Environmental Protection
One Winter Street, 4th floor
Boston, MA 02108
Tel: (617) 292-5500
DEP Infoline: 1-800-462-0444 (within Mass. only)
www.mass.gov/dep
E-mail: dep.infoline@state.ma.us
Gun Laws...

In 1998 under the Gun Control Act (M.G.L. c. 140, s. 131), Massachusetts enacted one of the toughest gun control laws in the country. This law has significantly changed the requirements regarding the purchase, possession, carrying, storage, and licensing of firearms. The summary below highlights a few of the key points. However, it in no way sets forth all of the obligations and rights of individuals with regard to firearms laws.

Local police departments have the authority to issue gun permits. Such permits include licenses to carry (L.T.C.) and firearm identification cards (F.I.D.). There are two types of licenses to carry. A Class A license to carry allows an individual to purchase, possess and carry large-capacity handguns, rifles, shotguns and feeding devices. It is the only permit that authorizes a holder to carry a concealed and loaded firearm. A Class B license to carry permits a holder to purchase, possess, and carry non-large capacity handguns and large-capacity rifles and shotguns.

As a result of the Gun Control Act of 1998, any F.I.D. card issued prior to 10/21/98 expired on 6/30/2000. There are two types of firearm identification cards. Unrestricted firearm identification cards allow for the possession of non-large capacity rifles and shotguns. The restricted version of the card is available solely for the possession of chemical sprays such as mace or pepper spray.

Massachusetts gun laws require that all firearms, rifles, and shotguns be stored in a secured, locked container or equipped with a tamper resistant mechanical lock or other safety devices properly engaged as to render the weapon inoperable by unlawful users. Moreover, every firearm and large capacity weapon sold in the Commonwealth must be equipped with a safety device (trigger lock) designed to prevent its discharge by an unauthorized user.

New residents have 60 days to obtain proper licenses. Non-residents may obtain temporary licenses to carry through the Firearms Record Bureau in order to possess and transport firearms through the Commonwealth. All non-residents must comply with all Massachusetts laws regarding transportation and storage while in the Commonwealth.

No one may possess, transport or store any type of gun in a building or on the grounds of any school without prior authorization by the board in charge of the school.

Chapter 150 of the Acts of 2004 converted the ban on certain assault weapons, extended the term of FID cards and LTC (License to Carry) from 4 to 6 years (applicable to licenses issued on or after Sept.14, 2004), added a
provision for a 90-day grace period following the expiration of a license, and exempted the LTC renewal fee for active law enforcement officers.

For more information please contact your local police department or:

**Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security**
One Ashburton Place, Suite 2133
Boston, MA 02108
Tel: (617) 727-7775
www.mass.gov/eopss

To check for criminal or gun records, contact:

**Department of Criminal Justice Information Services**
Executive Office of Public Safety
200 Arlington Street, Suite 2200
Chelsea, MA 02150
Tel: (617) 660-4600
www.mass.gov/cjis

**Health...**

**AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome)**

For information and referral, contact:

- Statewide AIDS Hotline: 1-800-235-2331
- Centers for Disease Control: 1-800-232-4636 (CDC-INFO)

For information on sites in Massachusetts and scheduling for the anonymous alternative blood testing program for HTLV-III Antibody, contact:

**Massachusetts Department of Public Health**
250 Washington Street, 3rd Floor
Boston, MA 02108
Tel: (617) 624-6000
Toll Free: 1-800-443-2437
TTY: (617) 624-6001
www.mass.gov/dph

**Communicable and Venereal Diseases/STs**

The Division of Sexually Transmitted Disease Prevention works with state venereal disease clinics in the outpatient departments of general hospitals to provide diagnosis, laboratory work, and treatment of venereal diseases. The basic services of the clinics are free of charge. For referral to these clinics, students may contact their college infirmary, private hospitals in their area, or regional offices of the Department of Public Health.

**Division of Sexually Transmitted Disease Prevention**
Department of Public Health
305 South Street
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
Tel: (617) 983-6550
www.mass.gov/dph/cdc/std
Drug Rehabilitation

The Bureau of Substance Abuse Services provides a comprehensive program for drug abuse treatment and prevention. The office also encourages statewide, regional, and local programs for the prevention and treatment of drug dependency through cooperation of interested public agencies and private organizations. Contact the Bureau for referrals.

**Bureau of Substance Abuse Services**
Department of Public Health  
250 Washington Street  
Boston, MA 02108-4609  
Toll Free: 1-800-327-5050  
TTY Toll Free: 1-888-448-8321  
Fax: (617) 624-5185  
www.mass.gov/dph/bsas

Poison Prevention

The Poison Prevention Program is administered by the Injury Prevention and Control Program in partnership with the Regional Center for Poison Prevention and Control. The mission of the Regional Center for Poison Control and Prevention is to provide assistance and expertise in the medical diagnosis, management and prevention of poisonings in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The Center is located at Children’s Hospital, Boston, MA and operates a toll-free, 24-hour phone line for poisoning emergencies and information.

**Regional Center for Poison Control and Prevention**
300 Longwood Avenue  
Boston, MA 02115  
Toll Free: Emergency: 1-800-222-1222  
Toll Free: Emergency TTY/TDD: 1-888-244-5313  
www.maripoisoncenter.com

Mental Health

The Department of Mental Health is responsible for coordinating and providing services for the mentally ill and for citizens in need of help in coping with problems. The range of mental health care services includes outpatient counseling services, crisis intervention, inpatient care at state hospitals, residential programs, day treatment, and after care services, and social rehabilitation clubs. Services are organized on an area basis. Contact the Department of Mental Health for a referral to the appropriate area office.

**Department of Mental Health**
25 Staniford Street  
Boston, MA 02114-2575  
Tel: (617) 626-8000  
Toll Free: 1-800-221-0053 (within Mass. only)  
TTY: (617) 727-9842  
www.mass.gov/dmh

The Samaritans is an international suicide prevention organization whose trained volunteers provide telephone befriending 24 hours a day for people who are suicidal, lonely, or depressed. Certain centers are also open for
personal visits seven days a week from 9:00 am to 10:00 pm. This service is both free and confidential. It is not affiliated with any religious organization. To contact the Samaritans, call:

The Samaritans of Greater Boston
41 West Street
Boston, MA 02111
Tel: (617) 536-2460
Statewide Helpline Toll Free: 1-877-870-4673 (HOPE)
http://samaritanshope.org

Individuals with Disabilities...

The Massachusetts Office on Disability provides information and referral to handicapped individuals seeking the services of governmental and private organizations whose function is to meet the special needs of the handicapped. For more information, contact:

Massachusetts Office on Disability
Executive Office for Administration and Finance
One Ashburton Place, Room 1305
Boston, MA 02108
Tel: (617) 727-7440
V/TTY Toll Free: 1-800-322-2020 (within Mass. only)
www.mass.gov/mod/

The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission provides people who have disabilities with information in a variety of areas: career and educational opportunities, accessibility, financial aid, legal assistance, coping skills as well as social, recreational and travel resources. For more information, contact:

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
600 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02111
Tel: (617) 204-3600
Ombudsman: (617) 204-3603
TTY Toll Free: 1-800-245-6543
www.mass.gov/mrc
Public Transportation...

Airports

(General Edward Lawrence) Logan International Airport is the largest passenger and air cargo terminal in New England. It is located within the boundaries of Boston. For more information, contact:

Logan International Airport
Massachusetts Port Authority
One Harborside Drive, Suite 2005
Boston, MA 02128-2905
Tel: (617) 561-1800
Toll Free: 1-800-235-6426 (23-LOGAN) or the individual airline.
www.massport.com/logan
For a listing of all airlines and terminals, contact:
www.massport.com/logan-airport/airlines-at-boston-logan/
For a listing of all airports in Massachusetts contact:
MassDOT Aeronautics Division
Logan Office Center
One Harborside Drive, Suite 205N
Boston, MA 02128-2909
Tel: (617) 412-3680
www.massdot.state.ma.us/Aeronautics/

Bus, Subway and Trolley MBTA

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) operates bus, subway and trolley lines, in Boston and surrounding communities. Unlimited, flexible travel passes offer additional savings to Greater Boston commuters. To obtain a pass, visit the CharlieCard Store located at the Downtown Crossing Concourse, 7 Chauncy Street, Boston MA 02111. There you will be able to obtain and add value to CharlieCards, CharlieTickets, and all other passes. You can also get your CharlieCard or CharlieTicket from MBTA service agents, station vending machines (tickets only), online at mbta.com, and at licensed retail locations throughout the greater Boston area. For additional information and a current list of licensed retail locations visit mbta.com.

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)
10 Park Plaza, Suite 3910
Boston, MA 02116-3975
Main Switchboard: (617) 222-5000
Toll Free: 1-800-392-6100
Lost and Found: (for referral to exact line) (617) 222-5000
MBTA Police (617) 222-1212
Route Maps and Schedules: (617) 222-3200
Semester Pass Program: (617) 222-2556
Complaints or commendations: Toll Free: 1-800-392-6100
www.mbta.com

Private Bus

Massachusetts is served by many private bus companies which operate in our larger communities and may be served by smaller bus companies in our smaller communities. Check your local listings for fare and schedule information.
Amtrak Trains

Amtrak, a nationwide passenger railroad, offers direct service from Boston to New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Washington D.C., and other points along the eastern corridor. For fare and schedule information, contact:

Tel: (617) 345-7460 or 1-800-872-7245 (USA-RAIL)
www.amtrak.com

Commuter Rail Trains

Keolis Commuter Services has been awarded an MBTA contract to run the commuter rail service in Massachusetts. For fare and schedule information contact:

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)
10 Park Plaza, Suite 3910
Boston, MA 02116-3975

North Shore Commuter Services leaves Boston at North Station and services communities as far as Rockport, Haverhill, Lowell, Ipswich, and Fitchburg. For more information, contact:
Tel: (617) 222-3200

South Shore Commuter Services leaves Boston at South Station and services communities as far as Worcester, Franklin, Stoughton, and Providence, RI. For more information, contact:
Tel: (617) 222-3200
www.mbta.com/schedules_and_maps/rail

Highways

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation’s Highway Division includes the roadways, bridges, and tunnels of the former Massachusetts Highway Department and Massachusetts Turnpike Authority. The division oversees the Thomas P. “Tip” O’Neill, Jr., Ted Williams, Lieutenant William F. Callahan, William H. Sumner tunnels as well as the Leonard P. Zakim Bunker Hill and Maurice J. Tobin bridges. The Division also includes many bridges and parkways previously under the authority of the Department of Conservation and Recreation. The Highway Division is responsible for the design, construction and maintenance of the Commonwealth’s state highways and bridges. The Division is responsible for overseeing traffic safety and engineering activities including the Highway Operations Control Center to ensure safe road and travel conditions. Massachusetts Highway maps are available from this office.

Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
Highway Division
10 Park Plaza, Suite 4160
Boston, MA 02116
Tel: (857) 368-4636
TTY: (857) 368-0655
Traffic Information on a cellphone: 511
Traffic Information via landline for Metro-Boston area: (617) 986-5511
Traffic Information via landline for Central Mass area: (508) 499-5511
Traffic Information via landline for Western Mass area: (413) 754-5511
www.massdot.state.ma.us/highway
Recreational Information...

Performing Arts
Bostix, in Quincy Market and Copley Square, Boston, sells tickets for museums, performing arts groups, and other tourist attractions at full price. In addition, you can purchase half-price tickets for day-of-performance, nonprofit, and commercial events, subject to availability.

Arts Boston Administrative Office
31 St. James Avenue, Suite 360
Boston, MA 02116
Tel: (617) 262-8632
www.artsboston.org

State Parks
MassParks maintains the state’s beaches, pools, skating rinks, golf courses, fishing areas, boating facilities, bicycle paths, tennis courts, zoos, athletic fields, and historic monuments. For maps and pamphlets, and further information contact:

MassParks
Department of Conservation and Recreation
251 Causeway Street, Suite 600
Boston, MA 02114
Tel: (617) 626-1250
Toll Free Campground Reservations/Information: 1-877-422-6762 (I-CAMP-MA)
www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr

Tourism
The Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism disseminates information on tourist areas in the state. Specific brochures listing ski areas, agricultural fairs, and coming events in Massachusetts are also available. For more information, contact:

Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism (MOTT)
Department of Business Development
10 Park Plaza, Suite 4510
Boston, MA 02116
Tel: (617) 973-8500
Toll Free: 1-800-227-6277 (MASS) (U.S. and Canada)
www.massvacation.com
Holidays...

In Massachusetts certain holidays are subject to laws which restrict the type of work that may be performed as well as the kind of business and commercial activities that may remain open. Only those holidays marked with asterisks (*) have certain restrictions. On holidays listed without asterisks, business and commercial activities may operate as usual. Please Note: Only retail establishments may open during the holidays of Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day. Retail establishments which operate on New Year’s Day, Columbus Day after 12:00 noon, or on November 11 after 1:00 pm are required to pay their employees time and one-half. Retail establishments which operate on Memorial Day, Independence Day, or Labor Day are required to pay time and one-half if at least eight employees are on the payroll in the week prior to the holiday. For questions on holidays, contact:

Citizen Information Service (CIS)
Secretary of the Commonwealth
One Ashburton Place, Room 1611
Boston, MA 02108-1512
Tel: (617) 727-7030
Toll Free: 1-800-392-6090 (within Mass. only)
TTY: (617) 878-3889
Fax: (617) 742-4528
Hours: 8:45 am - 5:00 pm, M-F
www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cisidx.htm
E-mail: cis@sec.state.ma.us
The chart below lists all legal holidays observed in Massachusetts. State, county, and municipal offices are closed on all of these days. Federal offices are only closed on holidays which the federal government recognizes (New Year's Day, Martin Luther King's Birthday, George Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas). The term “federal holiday” is not applicable to individual states and the private sector since each state has jurisdiction over its holidays.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holiday</th>
<th>Date/Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Year’s Day</td>
<td>January first</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday</td>
<td>Third Monday in January</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington’s Birthday</td>
<td>Third Monday in February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evacuation Day</td>
<td>March 17th (Suffolk County only, most state offices are open)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patriot’s Day</td>
<td>Third Monday in April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorial Day**</td>
<td>Last Monday in May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunker Hill Day</td>
<td>June 17th (Suffolk County only, most state offices are open)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence Day</td>
<td>July 4th**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Day**</td>
<td>First Monday in September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus Day*(2)</td>
<td>Second Monday in October (Restrictions until 12 noon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans’ Day*</td>
<td>November 11th* (Restrictions until 1pm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving *(1)</td>
<td>Customarily the fourth Thursday in November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas *(1)</td>
<td>December 25th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* - Full restrictions apply for ALL commerce
** - Restrictions apply except to retail
(1) Liquor Stores must be closed for Memorial, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Days.
(2) Many companies operate all day on these holidays, pending obtaining a local permit.
(3) All holidays falling on Sunday must be observed on Monday, under state law. Saturday holidays are observed on Saturday.

Questions about wages paid to employees on holidays should be directed to:

**Fair Labor and Business Practices Division**
Office of the Attorney General
100 Cambridge Street Boston
Mailing Address: One Ashburton Place
Boston, MA 02108
Tel: (617) 727-3465
TTY: (617) 727-4765
www.ago.state.ma.us