Welcome to Massachusetts
Practical Information About Living in the State
Massachusetts, located in the heart of New England, is the region’s most populous state. Lively urban areas, picturesque seaside communities, and tiny rural towns offer a unique ambiance which each year attracts many new residents. This pamphlet is designed to provide people contemplating a move to Massachusetts and those who have recently come here with specific information on the practical aspects of residency. I hope that new residents and those considering a move to the Bay State find this publication a good source of useful information.

William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth
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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.

Elections Division
Offices of the Secretary of the Commonwealth
One Ashburton Place, Room 1705
Boston, MA 02108
Tel: 617-727-2828
Toll Free: 1-800-462-8683 (VOTE) (within Mass. only)
www.sec.state.ma.us/ele
Hours: M-F 8:45 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

For more detailed information ask the Elections Division for the publication entitled Registering and Voting in Massachusetts.
Automobiles, Motorcycles

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)
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

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/ocabr/government/oca-agencies/doi-lp/mass-div-of-insurance.html).

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.mass.gov/rmv/fees/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 that 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 fee for a combined safety and emissions inspection or a safety only inspection is $35.00. For further information, visit the Massachusetts Vehicle Check website at: massvehiclecheck.state.ma.us

**Seat Belts (M.G.L. ch. 90, s. 13A)**
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:

**Division of Violence and Injury Prevention**
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Bureau of Community Health and Prevention
250 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02108
Tel: 617-624-5463
Toll free: 1-800-227-7233 (CAR-SAFE)
TTY: 617-624-5992
www.mass.gov/dph/injury

To find a Child Passenger Safety Technician in Massachusetts and have your child’s seat belt checked, contact the Highway Safety Division at: www.mass.gov/highwaysafety or 1-877-392-5956.

**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.

Department of Revenue
100 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02114
Tel: 617-887-MDOR (6367)
Toll Free: 1-800-392-6089 (within Mass. only)
www.mass.gov/dor

Tax Structure

Personal Income Tax
A 5.15 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. For more information, visit the department’s website at: www.mass.gov/dor

Sales and Use Tax
A 6.25 percent tax on the retail sale of all items is charged unless exempted by statute. 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 must be paid. Exemptions include food, clothing up to a value of $175.00, fuel for heating, newspapers, 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). For more information, visit the department’s website at: www.mass.gov/dor
Sales Tax on Meals
A 6.25 percent tax on restaurant and take-out meals is charged. Generally, a food product sold as a grocery item is exempt from the sales tax on meals. Further material can be found at www.mass.gov/dor

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 (M.G.L. ch. 64C, s. 7B)
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 $3.51 per pack of 20 cigarettes, and $4.38 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. For more Information, call the Cigarette Excise Unit of the Department of Revenue at 617-887-5090, or visit www.mass.gov/dor

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 www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cisexc/excidx.htm

**Estate Tax**
The Estate Tax is a transfer on the value of the descendent’s estate before distribution to an beneficiary. For dates of death occurring on or after January 1, 2003, the Massachusetts estate tax is “decoupled” from the federal estate tax system. For these dates of death, the Massachusetts estate tax is imposed on estates using the International Revenue Code in effect on December 31, 2000. For estates of decedents dying after 2002, the applicable exclusion amount was $700,000 in 2003 and increased to $1,000,000 in 2006. Future changes to the federal estate tax law will have no impact on the computation of the Massachusetts estate tax. For more information, call the Estate Tax Unit at 617-887-6930

For more information on taxes in general, contact:

**Department of Revenue**
100 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02114
Tel: 617-887-MDOR (6367)
Toll Free: 1-800-392-6089 (within Mass. only)
www.mass.gov/dor

**Licenses and Permits**

**Marriage**
All persons who wish to be married in Massachusetts must have a marriage license issued within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Out-of-State marriage licenses cannot be used in the process to obtain a Massachusetts marriage certificate (M.G.L. ch. 207, s. 28).
You may apply for a marriage license from any Massachusetts city or town hall. The license does not have to be from the community in which you live or where the event takes place so long as the marriage is performed in Massachusetts.

1) Both parties must apply in person and at the same time to any Massachusetts city or town Clerk’s office. Some city and town Clerks require a birth certificate, not a copy of one. Calling ahead is recommended.

2) Applicants must be 18 years of age; the Clerk may request a birth certificate. A court waver would permit underage marriage.

3) There is a mandatory three-day waiting period before the license may be issued, while Saturdays and holidays are usually included in the three days, the day of application is often not, be sure to check with the Clerk. A court waver can dispute the waiting period. The license, once issued is valid for 60 days.

4) As of January 2, 2005, medical certificates are no longer required.

5) If you wish to have an out-of-state clergyperson solemnize your wedding in Massachusetts they need to acquire, fill out, and return a form called Certificate of Authorization. Application for an out-of-state clergyperson can be downloaded through the “Commission” Section’s website: www.sec.state.ma.us/pre.

Applications should not be sent more than six (6) weeks in advance, yet prior to the wedding, (Within two weeks preferred) to the Division of Public Records.

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**Division of Public Records**

Commissions Section
State House, Room 117
Boston, MA 02133
Tel: 617-727-2836
Hours: M-F 8:45 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. closed most holidays

6) If you wish to have an out-of-state Justice of the Peace, a layperson (family member or friend) solemnize your wedding they must obtain
a special one-day appointment from the Governors’ office. This takes approximately 6 weeks. Contact the Office of the Governor at:

**Office of the Governor**
State House, Room 208
Boston, MA 02133
Tel: 617-725-4055
www.mass.gov/gov (search for “One Day Marriage Designation Instructions” for information and forms.)

For additional information about marriage licenses please contact your city or town clerk’s office or:

**Citizen Information Service**
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
www.sec.state.ma.us/cis
E-mail: cis@sec.state.ma.us
Hours: M-F 8:45 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Fishing/Hunting**
Licenses to hunt and fish in fresh water (inland waters) are required of anyone 15 years and over. Trapping licenses are required for anyone 12 years old and over. Anyone under 15 can fish without a license, required that the young person must follow all other freshwater fishing laws. Persons between the ages of 12-14 may hunt only when accompanied by a licensed hunter 18 years or older, provided that a single bag limit is shared and single firearm/bow is shared between the two people. Only one minor per adult is permitted. All other hunting laws and regulations must be followed. Licences are issued at various walk-in locations as well as online. For more information contact the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife or Department of Fish & Game:
Boats and Recreational Vehicles
State law requires the registration of all boats that are powered by a motor and operated on public waterways and any ATV or snowmobile in accordance with the provisions of the law (M.G.L. Ch.90B). Registration must be with the Division of Law Enforcement. This can be done either at one of the regional offices or in the Boston office. For more information, contact:

Massachusetts Environmental Police
Registration Bureau - Main Office
251 Causeway Street, Suite 101
Boston, MA 02114
Tel: 617-626-1610
www.mass.gov/eea/agencies

Drinking Age (M.G.L. ch. 312, acts of 1984)
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. For more Information, contact the Registry at 857-368-8000 or visit www.massrmv.com/license/13liqID.htm

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.

**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 criminal or gun records, contact:

Department of Criminal Justice Information Services
Criminal History Systems Board
200 Arlington Street, Suite 2200
Chelsea, MA 02150
Tel: 617-660-4600
www.mass.gov/cjis

Professions and Trades

Boards of Registration

Licenses are required for certain professions and trades in Massachusetts. State licenses are issued within Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation by the following Boards of Registration:

• Division of Professional Licensure
• Allied Health Professions (Athletic Trainers, Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists)
• Allied Mental Health and Human Service Professions (Marriage/Family Therapist, Rehabilitation (Alcoholism) Counselor, Mental Health Counselor)
• Architects
• Barbers
• Chiropractors
• Cosmetologists (Hairdressers, Manicurists, Estheticians)
• Dietitians and Nutritionists
• Dispensing Opticians
• Drinking Water Supply Facility Operators
• Electricians (Firewarning, Alarm, and other Power-Limited Systems Technicians and Contractors)
• Electrologists
• Embalming and Funeral Directing
• Engineers (Professional) and Land Surveyors
• Health Officers (Certified)
• Hearing Instrument Specialists
• Home Inspectors
• Landscape Architects
• Massage Therapists
• Optometry
• Plumbers and Gasfitters
• Podiatry
• Psychology
• Public Accountancy
• Radio and Television Technicians
• Real Estate Appraisers
• Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen
• Sanitarians
• Sheet Metal Workers

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• Social Workers
• Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology
• Veterinary Medicine

For more information contact:

**Office of Consumer Affairs & Business Regulation (OCABR)**
Division of Professional Licensure
1000 Washington Street, Suite 710
Boston, MA 02118-6100
Tel: 617-727-3074
www.mass.gov/dpl

The Division of Health Professions Licensure is comprised of eight boards of registration. They are: Dentistry, Genetic Counselors, Nursing, Nursing Home Administrators, Perfusionists, Pharmacy, Physician Assistants, and Respiratory Care Therapists.

**Division of Health Professional Licensure**
Department of Public Health
239 Causeway Street, Suite 500
Boston, MA 02114
Toll Free: 1-800-414-0168 (within Mass. only)
www.mass.gov/dph/boards

**Teachers**
Teachers and other professional education personnel must be certified by the Department of Education. For more information, contact:

**Teacher Certification and Licensing**
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148
Tel: 781-338-6600
www.doe.mass.edu/educators
Lawyers
The Board of Bar Examiners may, in its discretion, excuse the applicant from taking the regular law examination on the applicant’s compliance with the following situations: The applicant has been a current practicing or teaching lawyer in another state for 5 of the past 7 years immediately preceding petition for admission, teaching or practice of law is so vigorous to prior admission it satisfied the Board of Bar Examiners of his or her good moral character and professional qualities; graduates of U.S. Law schools that, in the opinion of the Board, are equivalent to standards set by the American Bar Association; and graduates of law schools in foreign counties that, in the opinion of the Board, are equivalent to standards set by the American Bar Association. For more information, contact:

**Board of Bar Examiners**
Edward W. Brooke Courthouse
224 New Chardon St., 1st Floor
Boston, MA 02114
Tel: 617-482-4466
www.mass.gov/bbe

Other Occupations
In addition to these occupations, many other occupations are licensed by the state or at the local level. Check with Citizen Information Service for further information.

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

**Education (M.G.L. Ch. 69 & 71)**

**Public Schools**
The Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, consisting of citizens appointed by the governor, sets policies and establishes state standards for educational programs in all public elementary and secondary schools. Cities and Towns run their school systems individually with the guidance of the board.

Under the Education Reform Act of 1993, seven core academic areas make up what are called the Curriculum Frameworks: Arts, English, Health, Math, Science, Social Studies, Technology/Engineering, and World Languages. The curriculum frameworks are designed for teachers to use in preparing their lesson plans, and for districts to use...
in planning local curricula and are considered key areas of learning required of all students in Massachusetts at the elementary level.

Each town and city school board shall establish the permissible and mandatory ages for school attendance and shall consider the advisability of raising the minimum age for attendance in the first grade to the national average age for such attendance. The age varies from 5-6. To view specific city’s and town’s kindergarten admittance age and month, visit the following site: www.doe.mass.edu/kindergarten/default.htm

For reports on public schools and school systems, visit the following site: profiles.doe.mass.edu

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148-4906
Tel: 781-338-3000
www.doe.mass.edu/

Private Schools
Information on private schools, such as accreditation, can be obtained from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and from the following association:

New England Association of Schools and Colleges
3 Burlington Woods Drive, S. 100
Burlington, MA 01803-4514
Tel: 781-425-7700
Toll Free: 1-855-866-3272
www.neasc.org

Higher Education
There are 122 institutions of higher learning, public and private, located in Massachusetts. The state institutions include 15 two-year community colleges, nine four-year state colleges, and five state university campuses. In addition, the state colleges include two schools with specialized curricula: Massachusetts Maritime Academy, and the Massachusetts College of Art. The University of Massachusetts
campuses are spread across Massachusetts, with the flagship campus in Amherst, the medical school in Worcester, as well as campuses in Boston, Lowell, and Dartmouth. To be eligible for the resident tuition rate, the applicant must be able to indicate residency (physical presence) and twelve months domicile in Massachusetts with intent to stay prior to the date of entry into the state college or university (six months for community colleges).

Massachusetts Department of Higher Education
One Ashburton Place, Room 1401
Boston, MA 02108
Tel: 617-994-6950
www.mass.edu

Housing & Job Opportunities
Massachusetts’ 351 communities offer housing in a variety of geographical settings. Cost and availability vary according to location. The Department of Housing and Community Development oversees state programs relating to the concerns of the Commonwealth’s cities and towns addressing their municipal management and community development agendas. It has direct management responsibility for over 70 different housing and community development programs. The Department of Housing and Community Development contact:

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 300
Boston, MA 02114
Tel: 617-573-1100
www.mass.gov/dhcd

The MassAccess Housing Registry helps people to find affordable housing in Massachusetts. A key feature of the Registry is to highlight homes for people with disabilities who need accessible or barrier-free housing. For more information please visit the following website, where additional need-based contacts are listed:

www.massaccesshousingregistry.org/
Employment opportunities are found in a wide range of manufacturing and commercial enterprises in such diverse fields as computer science, technological research, textile, and tourist industries. One of the best places to get information on the jobs and housing available in Massachusetts is the classified section of a local newspaper. For the greater Boston area, the most complete classifieds are available in the Sunday editions of The Boston Globe or The Boston Herald.

**The Boston Globe**  
135 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02107  
Tel: 617-929-2000  
www.boston.com/globe

**The Boston Herald**  
70 Fargo St.  
Boston, MA 02210  
Tel: 617-426-3000  
www.bostonherald.com

The Massachusetts Division of Career Services assists applicants in obtaining permanent jobs. It maintains job-matching centers throughout the state for general employment placement. DCS also runs state-wide centers for job matching in specialized areas. You must apply in person. For more information, contact:

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

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Helpful Hints

Doctors
To locate a doctor in your area, contact:

Massachusetts Medical Society
Waltham Woods Corporate Center
860 Winter Street
Waltham, MA 02451-1411
Tel: 781-893-4610
Toll Free: 1-800-322-2303 x7311
Email: info@massmed.org
www.massmed.org

You can also call local hospitals and ask for a list of physicians. To locate a specialist, call any teaching hospital (in Boston, Massachusetts General Hospital, Beth Israel Hospital, Brigham and Women's Hospital, and Tufts-New England Medical Center) and ask for the appropriate department for references.

To check the background, disciplinary history of a physician, or licensing/credentialing/complaint info, contact:

Board of Registration in Medicine
Department of Public Health
200 Harvard Mill Square, Suite 330
Wakefield, MA 01880
Tel: 781-876-8200
Physician Profiles: 1-800-377-0550
www.massmedboard.org

Dentists
To locate a dentist in your area, contact:

Massachusetts Dental Society
2 Willow Street, Suite 200
Southborough, MA 01745
Tel: 1-800-342-8747
www.massdental.org
Day Care
The Department of Early Education and Care will provide lists of licensed day care facilities if you call or write:

Department of Early Education and Care
51 Sleeper Street, 4th Floor
Boston, MA 02210
Tel: 617-988-6600
www.mass.gov/eec

Return of Bottles
(M.G.L. ch. 94, s. 321-327 and 301 C.M.R. 4.00)
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

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

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

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 on the following page 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>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Year’s Day - January first</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday - Third Monday in January</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington’s Birthday - Third Monday in February</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evacuation Day - March 17th (Suffolk County only, most state offices are open)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patriot’s Day - Third Monday in April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memorial Day**(1) - Last Monday in May</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bunker Hill Day - June 17th (Suffolk County only, most state offices are open)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independence Day - July 4th**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labor Day** - First Monday in September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus Day*(2) - Second Monday in October (Restrictions until 12 noon)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veterans’ Day*(2) - November 11th* (Restrictions until 1pm)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving *(1) - Customarily the fourth Thursday in November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas *(1) - December 25th</td>
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</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, Room 1813  
Boston, MA 02108  
Tel: 617-727-3465  
TTY: 617-727-4765  
www.mass.gov/ago