

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT



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To: Honorable Chairperson and Members of the Somerville City Council
From: Doug Kress, Director of Health and Human Services, and Nicholas Antanavica, Director of Inspectional Services
Date: January 14, 2020
Re: Residential Rodent Control Assistance Program Update

In an effort to more effectively and fully utilize the Residential Rodent Control Assistance Program to reduce rodent populations in the City of Somerville, the Inspectional Services Department, in collaboration with the Department of Health and Human Services, has expanded the program's eligibility to include non-owner-occupied properties. Previously, the program was only available to residential properties at which the owner currently resided, which leaves many residential properties ineligible to receive this assistance. This expansion will allow the City to assist a larger number of residents with addressing rodent issues in their neighborhoods. Increased access to residential properties through this program will also make the City's rodent control efforts more successful, allowing us to treat rodent activity on more of a neighborhood scale. At this time, the unit restriction still stands, and the program is still only available to properties with three or fewer units. Once the non-owner-occupied expansion has been in place for enough time to measure its impact, we can re-evaluate to determine whether an additional increase in the number of eligible properties based on number of units is appropriate.

With this change in eligibility comes a new access agreement that must be signed not only by the property owner, but by all current tenants in order to proceed with the program on any properties. Previously, only the owner's signature was required to proceed. This change will help the City ensure that all those currently living at the property are aware that the property is enrolled in the program, and thus toxic substances will be used for the purpose of rodent control.

We are looking forward to implementing this improvement to the City's rodent control plan.