

### **Food insecure?**

The Boston Living Center provides a delicious and nutritious lunch Monday through Friday.

### **INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER?**

Please contact our front desk staff at 617-236-1012 ext. 0 to schedule an intake appointment.

### **The Boston Living Center (Member Hours)**

**Monday 7:30am - 6:30pm**

**Tuesday - Friday 7:30am - 4:30pm**

**Continental Breakfast is served 7:30am to 10:30am**

**Mon., Tues., Thurs. & Fri.**

**'Sunny Side Up' (Hot Breakfast) on Wednesdays**

**7:30am to 10:30am**

**Lunch is served 12 noon to 1:30pm Monday through Friday**

**Dinner is served ONLY Mondays 5pm - 6pm**

**29 Stanhope Street**

**Boston, MA 02116**

**<http://www.vpi.org/blc>**

**(617) 236-1012 ext. 0**

**(617) 236-0334 fax**



**victory**  
**programs**  
Boston Living Center

**August**  
**2025**

## Staff Directory: August

<b>Ana Berbel</b> – Psychosocial Support Nutritionist	<b>257</b>
<b>Alyssa Collaro</b> – Program Director	<b>245</b>
<b>Future Coleman-Arroyo</b> – Milieu Engagement Manager	<b>222</b>
<b>Christiana Fonesca</b> – Receptionist	<b>200</b>
<b>David Foust</b> – Harm Reduction Specialist	<b>187</b>
<b>Jessica Karasik</b> – Food and Nutrition Services Manager	<b>227</b>
<b>Jonathan Luna-Alcaraz</b> – HIV Non-Medical Case Manager	<b>254</b>
<b>Melissa Morales</b> – Peer Reentry Support Specialist	<b>273</b>
<b>Faith Parker</b> – Sous Chef	<b>236</b>
<b>Walter Peavy</b> – Chef	<b>236</b>
<b>Ezekiel Russell</b> – HIV Non-Medical Case Manager	<b>253</b>
<b>Chris Santana</b> – Peer Support Services Advocate	<b>259</b>
<b>Bryan Toapanta</b> – LGBTQ+ Health Advocate	<b>254</b>

## TESTING (BY APPOINTMENT)

**MON-FRI 9:30AM-3:30 PM**



- **Hepatitis C**
- **HIV**
- **Chlamydia**
- **Gonorrhea**
- **Syphilis**

*\*\*Gift cards offered for getting tested\*\**

### **Available Drop In Supplies**

- Hygiene Kits
- Injection Kits
- Crack & Meth Pipes
- Safer Sex Kits
- Wound Care Kits
- Fentanyl Testing Strips
- Sniffing Kits
- Narcan
- & More

**Mobile Prevention Team**  
**Call or Text**  
**617-519-6355**





If you are going to wear a mask please wear your mask properly over the mouth and nose.

Face coverings (masks) are encouraged. Protect yourself from cold & flu and covid viruses.



We encourage washing your hands with soap and water.



Notes 7.14.2025



Led by: Sarah Porter- President and CEO, Melinda Giovengo- Chief Program Officer, Laura Holton- Division Director, Katie Weixler- Deputy Director, Alyssa Collaro- Program Director



### Opening Address: Sarah P.

VPI faced a difficult fiscal landscape this year due to federal changes (HIV, HUD, Medicaid and other programs were affected.) Operating Budget has seen a decrease of several million dollars from last year and as a result VPI needs to decrease spending as a whole.

VPIs goal remains providing services at the current level and we face the question of how do we do this while being fiscally responsible?

The answer was we had to make cuts. We looked at each program we operated and ended up eliminating roles based on funding across 9 programs while still maintaining services.

The Division of Prevention was deeply impacted by the loss of funding.

The Mobile Prevention Team was merged into the Victory Connector and the BLC. A total of 9 positions were eliminated based on funding alone. No decisions were based on performance. We looked at all levels of staffing, from the Division Director down and we had to eliminate the following positions: Katie Weixler-Deputy Director, and 4 positions at the BLC held by Kevin Koerner, Jeff Webb, Robert Fleury and Keny Brooks.

Those affected responded incredibly professionally and we are very proud of how the team responded to the news.

### Question and Answer

What does the mean for you and the BLC

- We are dedicated to maintaining programming
- Goal is to preserve programming--there is no plan to close BLC or shift core functions

How do the members help support?

- Advocacy--continue to show up and learn
- Understand that we have to do more with less
- Open to bringing in new referrals

How many staff does VPI employ?

- Now with the layoffs 360

Who is picking up the slack for those we lost?

- We are working on plans and hope to have better answers by beginning of Aug, but again we are leaning on each other and continuing to learn to do more with less.

What about important programs for peers?

- We will continue to look into who is the best person for the role to ensure its continuation. Understand the importance that CHAT has for the peers.

Want to re-instate CAB vs CAC--why it worked.

- Overall importance is ongoing communication and methods of feedback, how do we ensure voices are being heard and there is follow-through.

Why? What is the BIG PICTURE WHY?

- Anticipate that 400k people will lose MA health. Current administration is cutting money from those who need it most.
- YOU MUST ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELVES!
- MA's stance is that they want to support those who are most in need--they are doing the best they can at the state and local level to fight the federal admin policies.



**Cooking Class**  
**Watermelon**  
**JUICE**  
**SALAD**  
**FREEZER**  
**POPS**

WEDNESDAY | 1:45pm  
**August 20, 2025**

SEE ANA TO SIGN UP!

# **Solution Time!** **Let's See How You Did**

How many did you get right? Learning is the real win!



**Across**

- 3 H2O is the chemical symbol for
- 9 This is high in fiber and taste great with milk and raisins for breakfast
- 10 Veggie is short for
- 13 The tomato is not a vegetable, instead it is a
- 14 The color of the grains group
- 15 High fiber foods (fruits and veggies) make your stomach feel

**Down**

- 1 Bread's main ingredient
- 2 Spaghetti and penne are types of
- 4 Red and delicious is my favorite type of
- 5 Cherrios and Kix have this; same goes for whole wheat bread.
- 6 Chef
- 7 Chicken, rice and make a great taco; They are high in fiber too.
- 8 A sandwich needs two pieces of whole grain
- 11 What do most kids eat for breakfast?
- 12 Oatmeal and beans are high in



# FOOD PANTRY

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Get fresh + seasonal harvest  
and shelf-stable produce

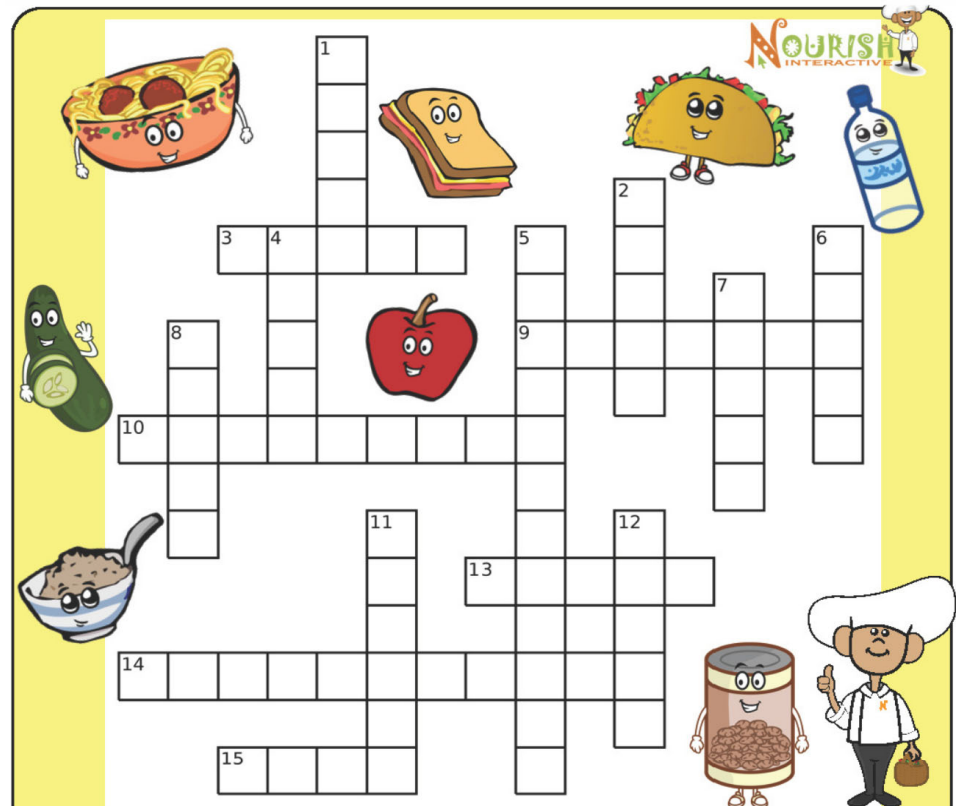
**AUGUST** 14 & 15  
28 & 29

12pm - 1:30pm  
in the Dining Room



For more information please contact Jessica or Ana in Nutrition

## Exercise Your Mind, Nourish Your Knowledge



Across

- 3 H<sub>2</sub>O is the chemical symbol for \_\_\_\_\_  
 9 This is high in fiber and taste great with milk and raisins for breakfast  
 10 Veggie is short for \_\_\_\_\_  
 13 The tomato is not a vegetable, instead it is a \_\_\_\_\_  
 A drink that is the color of the grains group  
 15 High fiber foods (fruits and veggies) make your stomach feel \_\_\_\_\_

Down

- 1 Bread's main ingredient  
 2 Spaghetti and penne are types of \_\_\_\_\_  
 4 Red and delicious is my favorite type of \_\_\_\_\_  
 5 Cheerios and Kix have this; same goes for whole wheat bread.  
 6 Chef \_\_\_\_\_  
 7 Chicken, rice and \_\_\_\_\_ make a great taco; They are high in fiber too.  
 8 A sandwich needs two pieces of whole grain \_\_\_\_\_  
 11 What do most kids eat for breakfast?  
 12 Oatmeal and beans are high in \_\_\_\_\_

## Calling all Artists!



## BEAT THE HEAT

### ICE CREAM IN A BAG – CHEMISTRY IN ACTION!

When you mix salt with ice, the salt makes the ice melt faster —



but in order to melt, the ice needs energy.

As the ice absorbs that heat, the temperature drops really low —



then, with the shaking motion, the creamy mixture begins to freeze!



### How to Make Ice Cream in a Bag

No freezer needed!

- 1 cup half-and-half
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla

- 3 cups ice
- 1/3 cup rock salt

- Seal bag #1 and place it inside bag #2
- Seal bag #2
- Shake the bags for 5-10 minutes
- Remove the ice cream



quart zipper bag #1



gallon zipper bag #2





## National Watermelon Day August 3, 2025

### NUTRITION FACTS



Supports digestion with its fiber and water content.

hydrate

Watermelon is 92% water, keeps you hydrated all day.



Packed with vitamin C, it strengthens your immune system.



Contains lycopene, which helps protect your heart.



Supports healthy skin with vitamins A and C.

Low in calories, making it great for weight loss.



Natural sugars provide quick energy without crashes.

Rich in antioxidants, protecting cells from damage.

Helps reduce muscle soreness after workouts.

Keeps your kidneys healthy by flushing out toxins.



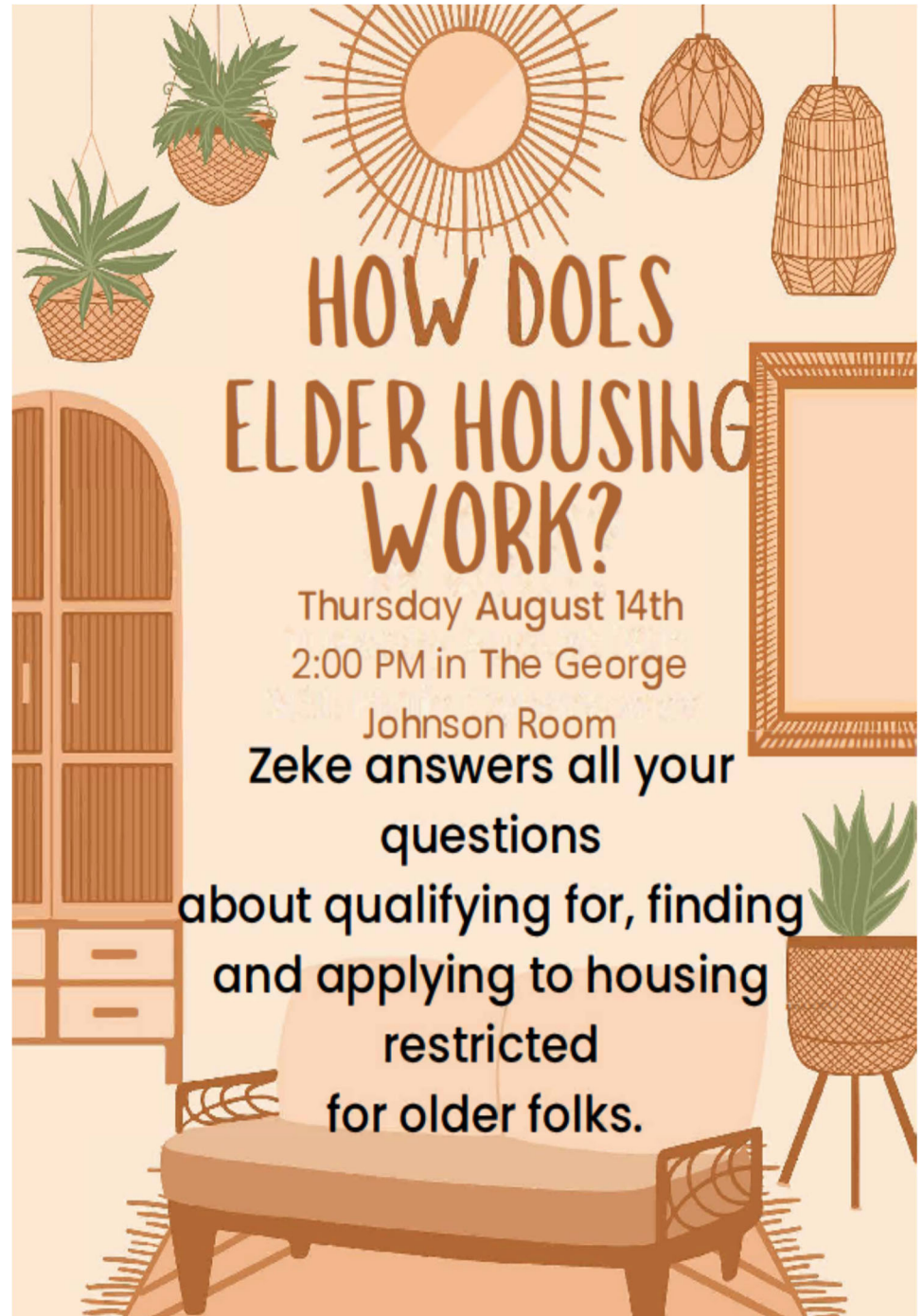
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## HOW DOES ELDER HOUSING WORK?




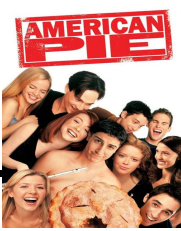
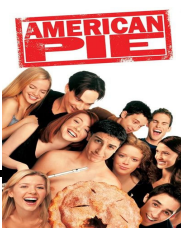
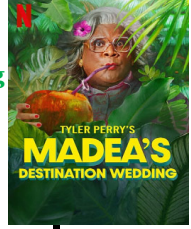
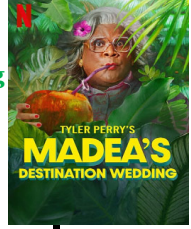
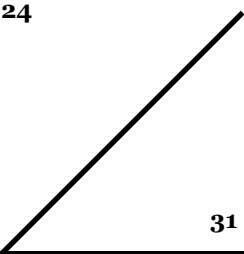

Thursday August 14th  
2:00 PM in The George

Johnson Room  
Zeke answers all your  
questions

about qualifying for, finding  
and applying to housing  
restricted  
for older folks.



# Boston Living Center Calendar of Events for August

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>Bridges Support Group</b> M-F 11a-12p in the Library. <b>Breakfast</b> is served 8a-10:30a & <b>Lunch</b> is served 12p-1:30pm M-F. <b>Dinner</b> is on Mondays 5p-6pm	<b>WHAT'S HAPPENIN' @ THE BLC?!"</b> Check it out! Located at the top of the main staircase				<b>1</b> 11:00a Yoga <b>1p Creative Writing</b> 1:45p Friday Flick: <b>Grown Ups</b> 	<b>2</b> 
<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 1:00p Walking Group	<b>5</b> <b>11-12:30p INFORM2 Tabling</b>	<b>6</b> 9:30a Morning Meditation <b>11:00a-1 Acupuncture</b> <b>1:30p B.I.G. Recovery Grp</b> 1:45p Julia's Dance Party	<b>7</b> 12:00p The Fenway MGH Grp table	<b>8</b> 11:00a Yoga <b>1p Creative Writing</b> 1:45p Friday Flick: <b>Jurassic Park</b> 	<b>9</b> 
<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 1:00p Walking Group	<b>12</b> 1:30p Beaded Jewelry w/ Sarah <b>1:45p Crochet Class</b> 2-3p Keepin' it 100	<b>13</b> 9:30a Morning Meditation	<b>14</b> 12:00p The Fenway/ MGH Grp table <b>12p Pantry</b> <b>12:30p Women THRIVE</b> <b>2-3p Finding Home</b>	<b>15</b> 11:00a Yoga <b>12p Pantry</b> <b>1p Creative Writing</b> 1:45p Friday Flick: <b>American Pie</b> 	<b>16</b> 
<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 1:00p Walking Group	<b>19</b> <b>1:30p-3 Manicures</b> 1:45p My Cozy Home	<b>20</b> 9:30a Morning Meditation <b>11:00a-1 Acupuncture</b> 12p Community Servings table <b>12:30p Karaoke!</b> <b>1:30p B.I.G. Recovery Grp</b> 1:45p Julia's Dance Party <b>1:45p Cooking Class</b>	<b>21</b> <b>10a-12p Creative Workshop</b> 12:00p The Fenway/ MGH Grp table	<b>22</b> 11:00a Yoga <b>12p Pantry</b> <b>1p Creative Writing</b> 1:45p Friday Flick: <b>Madea's Destination Wedding</b> 	<b>23</b> 
<b>24</b>  <b>31</b>	<b>25</b> 1:00p Walking Group	<b>26</b> 1:30p Beaded Jewelry w/ Sarah <b>1:45p Crochet Class</b> 2-3p Keepin' it 100 <b>3-4p Finding Home</b>	<b>27</b> 9:30a Morning Meditation 1:30p Julia's Dance Party	<b>28</b> 12:00p The Fenway/ MGH Grp table <b>12p Pantry</b> <b>12:30p Women THRIVE</b>	<b>29</b> 11:00a Yoga <b>12p Pantry</b> <b>1p Creative Writing</b> 1:45p Friday Flick: <b>Happy Gilmore 2</b> 	<b>30</b> 