

# Card to Culture Info Session

Beyond Walls Festival

By: Eltono & RAW Art Works



*Power of culture*

# Card to Culture: What is it?

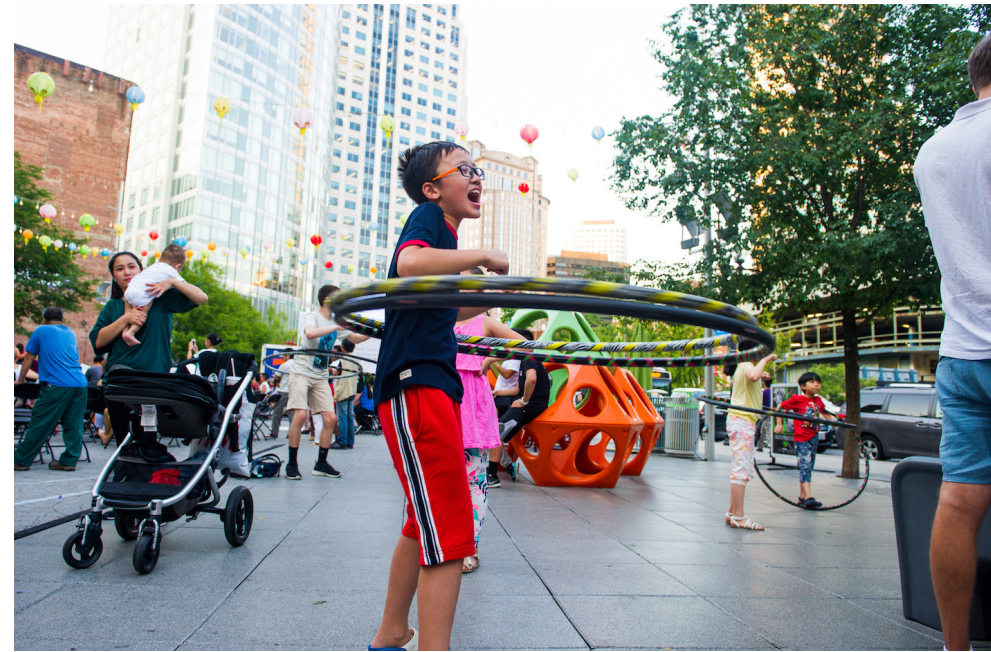
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-A voluntarily non-grant program where participating cultural organizations offer steep discounts to low-income families.

- No reimbursements/stipends

-A partnership involving four state agencies and 400+ organizations.

-Launched in 2017; 1M admissions by 2023



Community and arts festival

# Card to Culture: Who Does What?

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**We** recruit/onboard organizations, statewide promos

**Organizations** implement discount, report usage data

**Agency Partners** promote to their cardholders

- [Department of Transitional Assistance](#)
- [Women, Infants & Children \(WIC\) Nutrition Program](#)
- [Massachusetts Health Connector](#) (ConnectorCare)



# EBT Presenter

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Mary Loughlin

SNAP Outreach Coordinator

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# Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA)

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DTA's mission is to assist and empower low-income individuals and families to meet their basic needs, improve their quality of life, and achieve long-term economic self-sufficiency.



Serves 1 in 6 MA residents; as of January 2024, there are:

- 665,243 SNAP households = 1,097,655 recipients
- 43,160 TAFDC households = 112,570 recipients
- 29,378 EAEDC households = 29,597 recipients

# Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) Programs

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## To apply:

- Call the DTA Assistance Line:  
**877-382-2363**
- Go to [DTAConnect.com](http://DTAConnect.com)
- For SNAP assistance, contact a SNAP Outreach partner:  
[mass.gov/info-details/snap-outreach-partners](http://mass.gov/info-details/snap-outreach-partners)
- Mail or fax an application to:  
Document Processing Center  
P.O. Box 4406  
Taunton, MA 02780  
Fax: (617) 887-8765

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) formerly known as food stamps

Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC)

Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled, and Children (EAEDC)

# SNAP Program

SNAP is a federal nutrition program, administered by DTA that provides a monthly benefit to buy food

- Must be low-income and a U.S. citizen or eligible immigrant (restrictions apply)
- Not considered in a “**public charge**” test
- SNAP eligibility is based on who is in the household, income and certain expenses

Assistance Unit Size	200% of Federal Poverty Level Effective 2/1/24	Maximum SNAP Allotment Effective 10/1/23-9/30/24
1	\$2510	\$291
2	\$3407	\$535
3	\$4303	\$766
4	\$5200	\$973
5	\$6097	\$1155
6	\$6993	\$1386
7	\$7890	\$1532
8	\$8787	\$1751
For each additional member add:	\$897	\$219



# TAFDC Program

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Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) is an economic assistance (cash benefit) program that helps pregnant individuals, families and caregivers of children 18 or younger

- Eligibility is income based
- DTA provides two cash payments per month



# EAEDC Program

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Emergency Aid to the Elderly and Disabled Children (EAEDC) is an economic assistance (cash benefit) for disabled individuals and adults over 65 years old and waiting for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments to begin

- DTA provides two cash payments per month

# EBT Cards

MA residents receiving SNAP, TAFDC & EAEDC get their benefits on an EBT Card

- TAFDC & EAEDC recipients can also get their benefits deposited into their bank account
- The cards are valid with or without a photo



# Program Promotion

- Flyer distribution
- Encourage visitation
- Twitter (@DTA\_Listens)
- Website promotion:
  - <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/ebt-card-to-culture-organizations>



Department of Transitional Assistance (dta) | Mass Cultural Council

## EBT CARD TO CULTURE

The Department of Transitional Assistance and the Mass Cultural Council have partnered to offer discounted admissions to many of the Commonwealth's museums and cultural institutions. Because of the generosity of the participating organizations, DTA clients can receive free or discounted admissions by showing their EBT card.

**Participating organizations include:**

- Boston Children's Museum
- Springfield Museums (Art, History, Science, Dr. Seuss Sculpture Garden)
- Mass MoCA
- Boston Symphony Orchestra
- Worcester Art Museum
- New Bedford Whaling Museum
- Peabody Essex Museum

*and so many more!*

FOR COMPLETE LIST & MORE INFORMATION VISIT: [MASS.GOV/CARDTOCULTURE](https://www.mass.gov/CARDTOCULTURE)

# WIC Nutrition Program

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WIC (Women, Infants & Children) is a federal nutrition program that provides nutrition and health education, healthy foods, breastfeeding support, and other services like referrals to families who qualify.





# Who is eligible?

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WIC's programs and services are available for all parents and legal guardians of children under 5 (and pregnant women) who:

- Live in Massachusetts
- Have a nutritional need
- Have a family income less than [WIC guidelines](#) (185% FPL; a single parent could not earn over \$27K)
- \*People receiving TAFDC, SNAP, or MassHealth/Medicaid benefits



# WIC Card

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- 87K cardholders statewide:
- No photo
- One per family
- No common identifying number

Massachusetts WIC card

## -Social Media Posts:

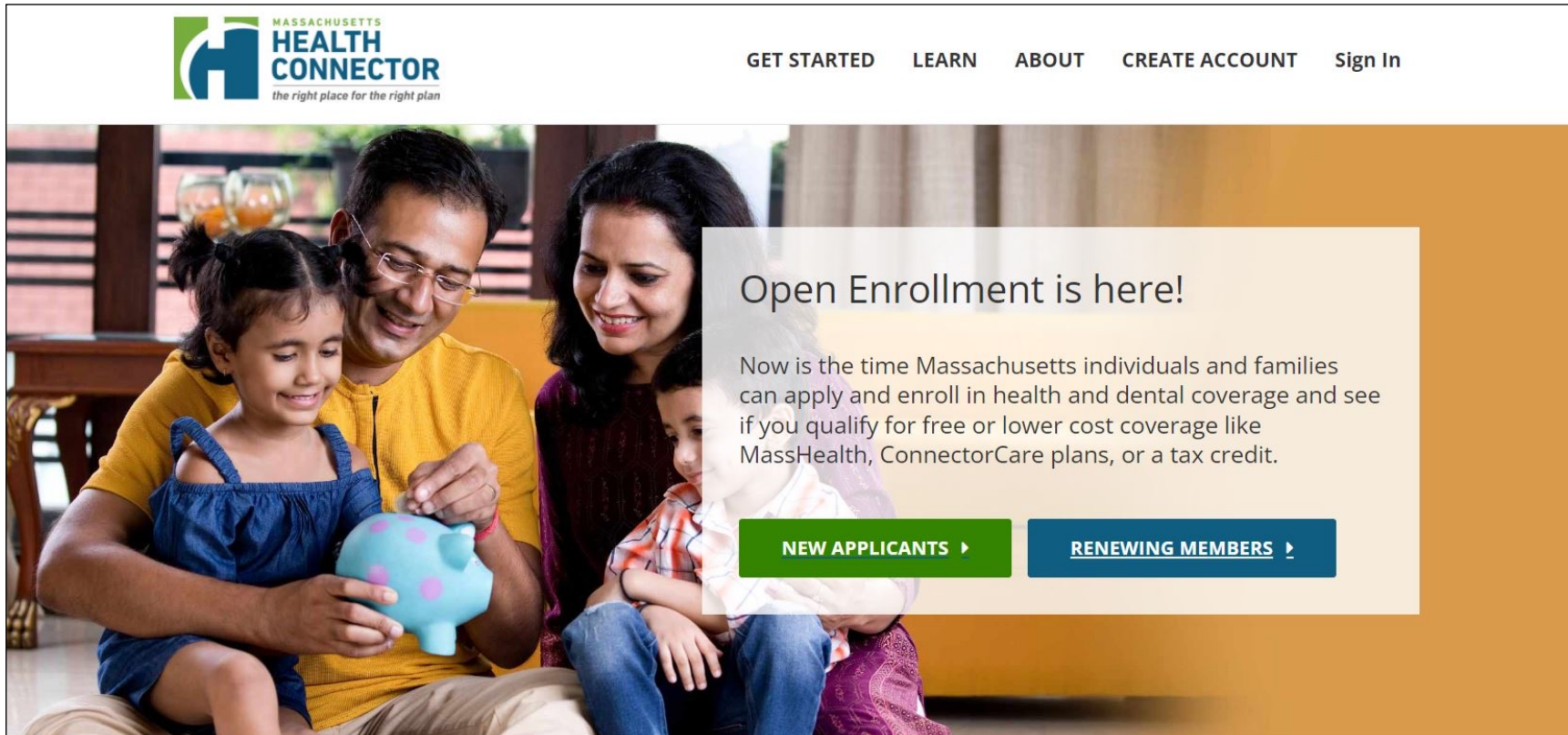
- 31 Local WIC Programs  
(Community Coordinators);  
122 Regional Offices

- Card to Culture webpage

# Massachusetts Health Connector

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The Massachusetts Health Connector provides health and dental insurance to 299,000 people, and many get financial help paying for their coverage.



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Massachusetts Health Connector website. At the top left is the logo with the text "MASSACHUSETTS HEALTH CONNECTOR" and the tagline "the right place for the right plan". To the right of the logo are navigation links: "GET STARTED", "LEARN", "ABOUT", "CREATE ACCOUNT", and "Sign In". The main visual is a photograph of a family (father, mother, and two children) sitting together. Overlaid on the right side of the photo is a white box with the heading "Open Enrollment is here!". Below the heading, the text reads: "Now is the time Massachusetts individuals and families can apply and enroll in health and dental coverage and see if you qualify for free or lower cost coverage like MassHealth, ConnectorCare plans, or a tax credit." At the bottom of this box are two buttons: a green button labeled "NEW APPLICANTS ►" and a blue button labeled "RENEWING MEMBERS ►".



# ConnectorCare Health Insurance

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-The ConnectorCare program provides significant financial help to people who earn \$17,000 - \*\$72,900 a year.

-**185K** cardholders

-[ConnectorCare Overview](#)

-[\\*2024 Income Limits](#)



# ConnectorCare ID Cards

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In 2024, eight plans will offer coverage through the Health Connector.

-Each carrier has its own ID card, which includes its logo, member ID information, and other plan details



# ConnectorCare ID Cards (Con't)

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- All ID cards for ConnectorCare members include “ConnectorCare” somewhere on the card.
- Not all Health Connector members are ConnectorCare members. Only those who qualify for ConnectorCare have that on their cards.



# Promoting Card to Culture

The Health Connector encourages members to use their access to great opportunities throughout the state:

- Social media content, including Facebook live videos at participating organizations
- Member emails, with regional ideas for visiting Card to Culture locations
- [Card to Culture webpage](#)

## The Health Connector on Social Media



Facebook: @healthconnector

Twitter: @healthconnector

Instagram: @healthconnector

YouTube: @TheMAhealthconnector



# Cultural Organizations

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Over **400** cultural organizations across Massachusetts:

- Dance, Music, and Theater-Performance Groups & Venues, Art Schools & Centers, Museums, Zoos, and many others.
- Their discounts include free or steeply discounted rates for tickets, classes, camps, memberships, gift shops, etc.



Chameleon Arts Ensemble (Photo Credit: Matthew Wan).



# Discount Criteria

CJT Dream Dance at the 15th Annual  
Malden Lunar New Year Celebration  
with Chinese Culture Connection



# Creating Your Discount Offer

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**Mission:** To make cultural programming accessible to low-income families by breaking down the financial barriers that limit participation.

**Proposed discounts** must provide free or steeply discounted access to active and consistent programs in their entirety using accessible and equitable practices.



North End Music & Performing Arts Center



# Steep Discounts

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**Steep Discounts** provide free access or at least a 50% discount to an organization's active/consistent programs.

- Organizations that run free programs can participate only if all their programming is entirely free and publicly available. Otherwise, they would need to offer a discount.



North Andover Music Association

# Programs (Active)

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**Active Programs** incorporate some level of activity.

- An outdoor mural/statue in a public space void of an engagement component (e.g., Artist Talk, etc.) would be ineligible since it is passive and static on its own.



Chameleon Arts Ensemble (Photo Credit: Matthew Wan).



# Programs (Consistency)

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**Consistent Programs** have set or planned scheduling (e.g., weekly, monthly, annually, etc.), or other continuity.

- Ad hoc programs (i.e., programs that will run “if funding allows”) are excluded.



Boston City Singers



# Programs (Entirety)

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**Entirety** means every performance or event within a series or seasonal program or every class or workshop within a curriculum or semester.

- Exceptions can include fundraisers, non-self-presented works, and events put on by performing groups that rent your venue.



North Shore Children's Museum

# Accessible & Equitable Practices

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**Accessible and Equitable Practices** include processes, policies, and protocols for how an organization administers its Card to Culture discount. Examples include:

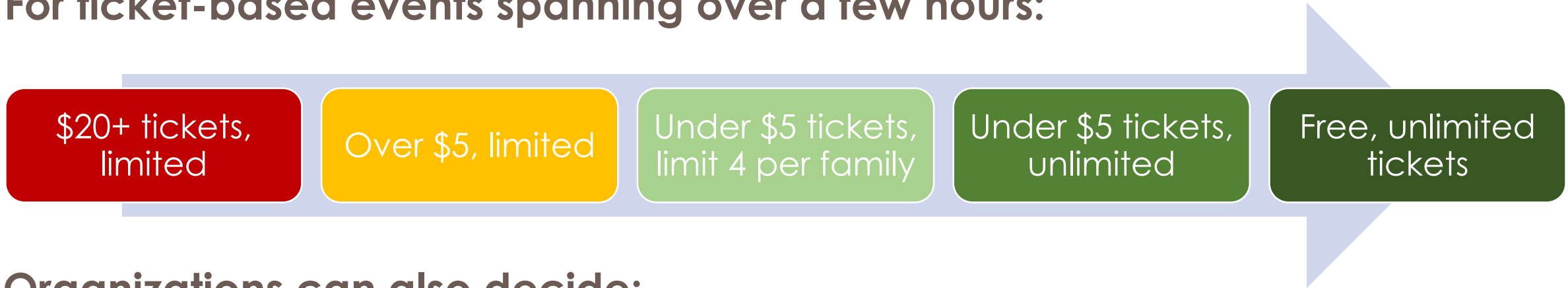
- Discount Availability & Clarity
- Cardholder Present & Photo ID
- Payment Methods & Online Discount Codes

Check out [Resources for Organizations](#) for additional support.

# How are discounts structured?

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For ticket-based events spanning over a few hours:



**Organizations can also decide:**

- Which cards to accept and programs to discount
- How many people are allowed to receive the discount per card
- To set limitations if there is a limited capacity for a class, performance, etc.
- The processes, policies, and protocols for administering their discount

# What other discounts can we offer?

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## \*Sky's the limit!

- Financial aid or scholarships toward arts education programs
- Free memberships, tours, etc.
- Discounted products, studio time, etc.
- “Pay what you can” models

\*If it incurs a charge, it can be discounted



Boston Children's Museum



The background of the slide features a photograph of a string ensemble, specifically the City Strings United Boston, in a rehearsal space. The musicians are seen from behind, seated at their instruments with sheet music on stands. The room has dark walls and green exit signs are visible in the background. A large, diagonal orange shape overlays the right side of the image, serving as a background for the title and logo.

# How To Get Started

City Strings United Boston





# Participation Overview

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- 1.) Watch Info Session; read program guidelines
- 2.) Submit Application (with a discount offer in mind)
- 3.) Confirm Discount & Processes; Update Website
- 4.) Train Staff & Announce Participation
- 5.) Complete Annual Final Report

# Apply Using Grants Management System

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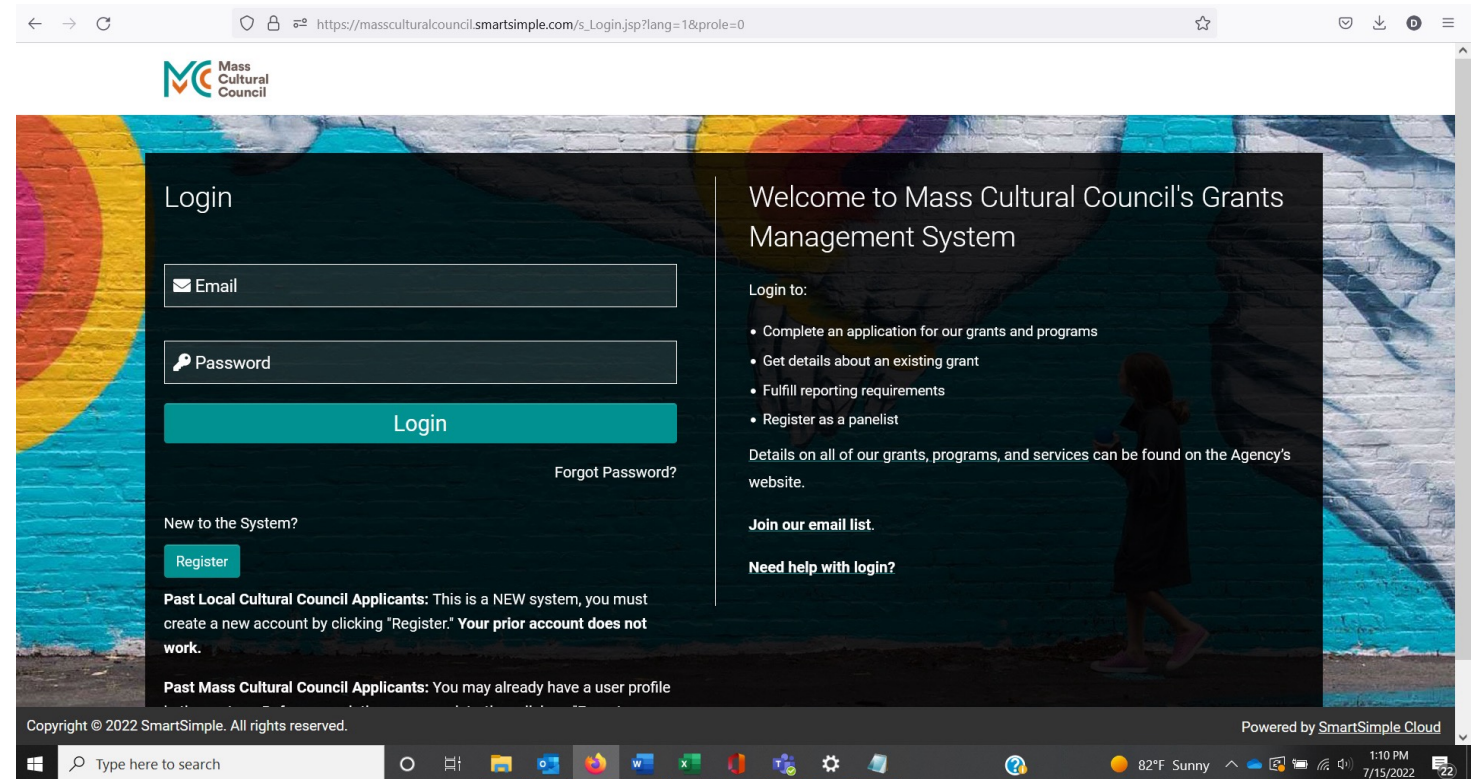
<https://massculturalcouncil.smartsimple.com>

Your email address is your username - your unique ID

Have you applied to past Mass Cultural Council grants?

**Yes** – log in or click “Forgot Password?”

**No** – click “Register” to create Profile as an Organization



# Website/Collateral Update

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- Approved applicants receive a detailed email about updating their website and wherever else they regularly advertise discounts
  - Include any instructions patrons must follow to receive it
- Reference and link back to the [Mass Cultural Council's Card to Culture Program](#)
- Reference the agency partners & link back to the full list of participating organizations offering [EBT](#), [WIC](#) & [ConnectorCare](#) discounts)

# Staff and Volunteer Training

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## CHEAT SHEET FOR STAFF

### ABOUT THE PROGRAM

EBT Card to Culture is a collaboration between the **Mass Cultural Council** and the **Executive Office of Health and Human Services' Department of Transitional Assistance**. It ensures the state's best cultural and educational experiences are accessible to low-income residents. There are more than 100 organizations participating all across the state of Massachusetts – including museums, symphonies, theatre companies, community arts and music schools, environmental science organizations, and more. Please refer your patrons to [mass.gov/cardtoculture](https://mass.gov/cardtoculture) for the full list.

### HOW IT WORKS

Patrons use their Electronic Benefits Transfer card to identify they are eligible for the discount your organization has identified. The EBT card is used for ID only, to indicate they are eligible for the discount; the card is not for payment. If your institution is taking monies, they should be collected in the regular methods that your institution uses (cash, credit card, etc.)



"Cheat Sheet for Staff" PDF

-Review the [Resources for Organizations](#); add to training SOP

-Train all FOH staff and volunteers:

- To answer program questions
- To identify cards
- To apply discounts/process payments
- Track usage

# Tracking Attendance/Final Report

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- GMS note goes out in December
  - Due in January/February of the following year
- How many times was this discount used?
  - Track EBT, WIC & ConnectorCare discounts separately
- Optional Fields
  - Staff & Guest Testimonials
  - Logistics & Promotional Best Practices
  - Training Recommendations & Overall Feedback



# Keep in Mind/FAQs

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- EBT, WIC, and ConnectorCare cards are not used to pay for admission
  - They are only used as an identifier
- Process should feel welcoming
- Honor your discount(s) through the end of the calendar year.
  - Applications are automatically renewed the following year unless organizations opt-out



Clark Art Institute



# Want to follow-up?

Mass Cultural Council:

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