

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



NEW STONE HOUSE BUILDING IN ROXBURY HIT BY DEVASTATING FLOOD

Building Designed To Help Thousands of Domestic Violence Survivors Was Set To Open This Month

Elizabeth Stone House, supporting adult and child domestic violence survivors since 1974, suffered serious flooding in its nearly completed new domestic violence center in Roxbury. Nancy Owens Hess, the executive director of Stone House, said, "We're a scrappy crew here, and we've faced many obstacles before, including a fire 14 years ago. We've always met the challenges that came our way. We'll meet this one, too."

After several years of planning and fundraising, and months of construction through the COVID-19 global pandemic, Stone House was less than two weeks away from a grand opening of its new facility when this devastating hurdle arose. In the early hours of January 11, 2021, severe flooding occurred at the new building, resulting in extensive water damage.

The construction team believes the flooding started in a third floor unit, when the building's sprinkler system activated when responding to a burst pipe. Water ran unabated for nearly thirty minutes causing significant flooding to approximately half of the brand new apartments, the agency office space, and the new child care center.

Owens Hess was relieved that the building was unoccupied at the time of the flood but knows this delay will cause added stress for families waiting to move into the 32 affordable housing units, receive domestic violence counseling, or take advantage of the trauma-informed child care center. Her team is already working to get the building opened up as soon as possible.

"We have seen a 46% increase in urgent domestic violence client needs already due to the pandemic - that number is added to an already alarming domestic violence rate throughout the City of Boston," said Nancy Owens Hess. "This flood has cost us dearly in time, funding and client safety. We were preparing to open this new safe site before the end of January. We are now delayed until early April, and must now secure the funds needed to both rebuild and maintain operations at a very high demand. Even a day in the life of a survivor - especially a child - can feel like a lifetime."

The Stone House will need additional funds for flood relief costs not covered by insurance and for continued operations and recovery. A GoFundMe Charity page has been set up with a link [HERE](#) to the *Stone House Flood Relief and Emergency Operations Fund* or you can go directly to Stone House's secure website at www.elizabethstonehouse.org and click the donate button to help.