



Overview of MTW Program

Moving to Work (MTW) is a demonstration program, established by Congress in 1996, that offers a limited number of “high performing” Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) the opportunity to propose and test innovative, locally-designed approaches to administering housing programs and self-sufficiency strategies. The program permits PHAs to combine federal funds from the Public Housing (PH) operating fund, Capital Fund Program (CFP) and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program into a single, agency-wide funding source known as a “block grant.” It is important to note that the MTW designation does not provide PHAs with additional funding from HUD, but rather allows each agency to use their funding in a more flexible manner.

With the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) approval, PHAs participating in the MTW program are allowed to waive certain statutes and regulations in the United States Housing Act of 1937 to explore different and creative ways to improve their housing programs. These policy changes allow PHAs to address challenges for low-income families that are unique to their local needs. In doing so, each of the activities proposed and implemented must address at least one of three MTW statutory objectives:

- Increase housing choices for low-income families.
- Give incentives to families with children where the head of household is working, is seeking work, or is preparing for work by participating in job training, educational programs, or programs that assist people to obtain employment and become economically self-sufficient.
- Reduce costs and achieve greater cost effectiveness in federal expenditures.

Summary of RHA’s MTW activities

Approved FY 2014 MTW activities:

1. Authorization to assign PBVs to RHA owned/controlled units without going through a competitive process.
2. Implementation of a Mobility Demonstration that offers qualified PH families, who otherwise lack mobility options, the opportunity to move to low poverty neighborhoods throughout Reno, Sparks and Washoe County with higher economic opportunities.
3. Implementation of a Rent Reform Controlled Study within the HCV program to determine if self-sufficiency is created when rents are not tied directly to income levels.
4. Expansion of self-sufficiency activities through the creation of the FSS Lite Program designed to promote resident self-sufficiency through streamlined FSS service delivery.
5. Simplification of rent calculations and increase the minimum rent.
6. Creation of community partnerships to provide housing to at risk families.

Approved FY 2015 MTW activities:

1. Elimination of all negative rents and the simplification of HCV utility allowances.
2. Authorization to allow RHA staff to inspect all HCV and PBV units rather than using a third party contractor, regardless of ownership or property management status.
3. Authorization to assign PBVs to 100% of units in a non-Public Housing/RHA-owned property/building.

Approved FY 2016 MTW activities:

1. Establish simplified medical deductions for all elderly/disabled households based on the household's total gross income.
2. Redefine "near elderly" to include persons who are at least 55 years of age but below the age of 62 to determine eligibility and referral to Public Housing units.
 - a. In FY 2020, RHA will expand the use of this definition to its PBV program and allow for PBV sites, which define elderly as 55 years of age and older, to be considered an elderly property.
3. Allow HCV participants, at their option, to lease units that exceed the 40% maximum rent burden to provide them more housing choice.
4. Eliminate Earned Income Disallowance (EID) for HCV and Public Housing tenants.
5. Disregard, for rent purposes, all earned income for Public Housing household members, age 18-20, who are not the head of household or co-head.
6. Implement a \$75 fee for each additional HQS inspection when more than two inspections are required due to the owner/manager's failure to complete the necessary repairs.
7. Expand the Project Based Voucher Program to allow for the allocation of up to 50 PBVs to privately owned properties in exchange for the owner's commitment to provide affordable housing to individuals and/or families who are experiencing homelessness or participating in workforce development activities.

Approved FY 2017 MTW Plan activities:

1. Increase verified application data to 120 days within the HCV program. Allow stable income verifications to be valid for the current year.
2. Establish an asset threshold to determine eligibility for admission to RHA's housing programs.

Approved FY 2018 MTW Annual Plan activity:

1. Creation of a Landlord Incentive Program (LIP) that allows for additional Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) under certain conditions.
 - a. In FY 2020, RHA will amend this activity slightly and expand upon the conditions that must be met to participate in the LIP.

Approved FY 2019 MTW Annual Plan activities:

1. Redetermination of rent reasonableness as a result of a change in contract rent. The requirement for rent reasonableness determinations, provided that the new requested rent amount is a change of 10% or less, has been waived.
2. Provide incentives to \$0 HAP households. The HCV program eligibility for households at \$0 HAP has been extended from six months to 12 months and participants at \$0 HAP are allowed to self-certify income and accrue escrow.

PH modernization improvements completed utilizing single fund flexibility:

- Removal of significant areas of turf at three Public Housing complexes, replacing it with water saving xeriscape landscaping.
- Replacement of 900 aluminum frame windows throughout the Mineral Manor complex with energy star rated, highly efficient, thermal pane windows.
- Installation of tankless water heaters to replace old traditional style water heaters in use at a number of PH community rooms and laundry facilities.