

HRHA's Moving to Work (MtW) Plan

Summary of Proposals

October/November 2020

The Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority (HRHA) has been selected to participate in Cohort #1 of the HUD Moving to Work (MtW) expansion. Participation in MtW allows HRHA to develop local policies and allocate funds with more flexibility, to meet MtW objectives. Programs and activities would still be subject to the full range of HUD monitoring, oversight, and evaluation. All proposed changes are open to public comment. We welcome any and all feedback related to our MtW proposals.

Public comment closes November 16, 2020.



Increase Participant Self-Sufficiency

Proposed Activities:

- 1. Replace Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) escrow/savings model with incentive-based program.**
Current participants earn escrow only when income increases (rent goes up) from initial rent at program start. In the proposed model, participants earn immediate cash incentives for reaching milestones related to income, finance, education, health, and other self-sufficiency goals.
- 2. Transition to a participant-driven coaching model** that better supports participants in meeting their goals.
- 3. Provide coaching support up to six months AFTER a participant graduates** from the FSS program.



Increase Housing Choice

Proposed Activities:

- 1. Landlord recruitment & retention efforts** to increase landlord participation.
- 2. More help with the housing search,** including rental application fee aid and one-on-one support in locating affordable rentals, paid by utilizing funding flexibilities.
- 3. Increased flexibility to project-based voucher (PBV) rental assistance.**
 - a) Remove limits to number of PBV units in property buildings.
 - b) Increase number of vouchers available to project-base.
 - c) Eliminate procurement process for HRHA owned units.



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Improve Program Cost Effectiveness & Reduce Administrative Burden

Proposed Activities:

1. **Accept partner agencies' inspections** to meet Housing Quality Standard (HQS) requirements.
2. **Reduce the frequency of household certifications** to allow participants to keep more of their income increases, and to reduce the burden on both participants and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) specialists in acquiring, submitting and processing paperwork. Changes include switching to a triennial certification schedule and limiting interim certifications to one annually.
3. **Simplify rent calculations:**
 - a. Increase the elderly/disabled allowance and eliminate medical expenses deductions. This lowers tenant payment for vast majority of participants, saving both time and money for participants and HRHA. Hardship exceptions allowed for any participant where this change would create a rent burden.
 - b. Increase the dependent allowance and eliminate child care deductions. Similar results and exemptions above apply.
 - c. Simplify the utility allowance schedule.
 - d. Only require documentation of assets over \$50,000.
4. **Increase the portability term in Franklin Heights** units from one year to two years.

