

Simplifying Administrative Tasks

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Increasing cost effectiveness of Federal expenditures is one of the statutory objectives of the Moving to Work (MTW) demonstration program. To help meet this objective, many MTW agencies have implemented activities that simplify operating the voucher and public housing programs. This document discusses some MTW flexibilities that help agencies simplify administrative tasks. Simplifying these tasks can help agencies reduce staff time and other costs. Some agencies take advantage of saved staff time by implementing new programs that provide important services to low-income families. The waivers discussed below are related to reexaminations, calculating income, rent, and utility allowances.

Simplifying Income and Rent Calculations: In traditional assisted housing programs, families may choose to pay rent based on household income or, for the public housing program, a flat rent. In either case, the agency must determine the family's income to calculate rent payments. If a family wishes to pay rent based on household income the agency must reexamine it annually. When determining a family's income, agencies must comply with several regulatory income inclusion, exclusion, asset, and adjusted income requirements.

Agencies can spend significant staff time and other resources complying with income examination and rent calculation requirements. This includes tracking reexamine dates, meeting with families, printing, copying, and mailing documents, and monitoring various rent payments. To address this challenge, some MTW agencies use their flexibilities to waive certain reexamination and rent calculation requirements to reduce the frequency of reexaminations and simplify determining rent payments.

An example of this is combining a tiered rent activity to waive certain rent calculation requirements and a biennial reexamination activity. The tiered rent activity allows an agency to implement a rent calculation policy based on income bands; this eliminates the need to recalculate rent whenever there is an incremental increase or decrease of household income. The biennial reexamination activity reduces the amount of time agency staff must spend reexamining household income.

Simplifying Utility Allowances: Another task that can consume significant staff time in the traditional voucher and public housing programs is establishing utility allowances. MTW agencies can establish one utility allowance schedule rather than providing separate utility allowances for different bedroom sizes and localities. Using a single utility allowance schedule may require less staff time and is also easier for program participants to understand.

Authorizations

MTW Agencies Operating under the MTW Operations Notice:

- 1.a-1.w – Rent Reform
- 3.a-3.d – Alternate Reexaminations and Self-Certification of Assets

Legacy Agencies Operating under the Standard Agreement:

- D.2 – HCV Rent Policies and Term Limits
- C.11 – Public Housing Rent Policies and Term Limits
- C.4 – Initial, Annual and Interim Income Review Process