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Report Examines HUD’s Moving to Work Demonstration

The Moving to Work (MTW) demonstration gives public housing agencies (PHAs) and HUD flexibility to design and test approaches for providing and administering housing assistance that:

- Reduce cost and achieve greater cost effectiveness in Federal expenditures.
- Give incentives to families with children where the head of household is working, seeking work, or is preparing for work by participating in job training, educational programs, or employment or economic self-sufficiency programs.
- Increase housing choices for low-income families.

Over 10 years into this demonstration, HUD has assessed four main policy areas informed by MTW and offered lessons learned to shape the years through 2018. Below is a summary of how agencies have used their MTW flexibility to more effectively manage their rental assistance programs.

Preserving and Revitalizing Public Housing. Over the past 15 years, 150,000 public housing units have been demolished and disposed of because of obsolescence and poor quality. When MTW agencies project-base vouchers on a large scale, they can preserve public housing developments and leverage long-term, stable funding. Converting public housing to project-based assistance maintains and improves properties while often allowing tenants to remain in place.

Streamlining Housing Assistance. MTW flexibilities and waivers provide incentives for agencies to be creative with their administrative structuring. MTW agencies receive funds only from the traditional primary funding sources (HCV, Public Housing Capital and Public Housing Operating Funds), but are able to allocate the funds interchangeably for activities approved under MTW. Many MTW agencies have adopted policies and procedures that eliminate redundancy and inconsistency between their housing programs, saving valuable staff time and resources, and allowing them to house more families.

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Rent Reform. MTW agencies are required to develop alternative rent structures that encourage self-sufficiency and employment of participating families. MTW flexibilities support a variety of unique alternate rent policies, including tiered rents, flat rent structures, term limits, alternative re-examination structures, minimum earned income calculations, and alternative methods to determine earned income and tenant rent. Before implementing the policy, an agency must perform an impact analysis and formulate a hardship policy.

Additional Nontraditional Services. The ability to combine Federal funds enables MTW agencies to provide additional services, including self-sufficiency, supportive services, and service-enriched housing. MTW agencies can create holistic approaches to help residents move toward self-sufficiency. One model is to designate some vouchers as “sponsor based” by linking to a supportive services agency. The PHA chooses an eligible resident to live in the unit while receiving services. Other agencies have created innovative self-sufficiency programs that house families while providing case management, financial literacy training, and other programming.

Read *Moving to Work: Interim Policy Applications and the Future of the Demonstration*, at:
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/mtw/index.cfm>

PIH Notices

PIH 2011–50, “Project-Basing HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Vouchers” issued September 15, 2011. The purpose of this notice is to reinstate Notice PIH 2010-23 on the same subject with a significant revision in this section and the addition of section 2e. Section J of the Implementation of the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Program (Operating Requirements) published in the Federal Register on May 6, 2008, stated that the Department will consider, on a case-by-case basis, requests from a public housing agency (PHA) to project-base HUD-VASH vouchers in accordance with 24 CFR part 983. This notice provides continued guidance to those PHAs that have been awarded HUD-VASH vouchers that are interested in project-basing a portion of those vouchers. Previously no more than 50 percent of a PHA’s allocation of HUD-VASH vouchers could be project-based. Please note that this limitation has been removed in order to provide PHAs with additional flexibility in administering their HUD-VASH program. However, the number of HUD-VASH project-based units must still be within the 20 percent maximum budget authority that may be allocated to project-based voucher (PBV) assistance in accordance with 24 CFR Section 983.5(a).

PIH 2011–51, “Promoting Partnerships to Utilize Housing as a Platform for Improving Quality of Life” issued September 20, 2011. This notice outlines for Community Planning and Development (CPD) and Public and Indian Housing (PIH) grantees, including Public Housing Agencies (PHAs), suggested ways in which to forge partnerships with public and private agencies at the federal, state, and local levels to promote resident connections to health care, education, employment, and other social services in an effort to improve quality of life and provide a foundation for successful housing outcomes. While the guidance delivered in this notice is not meant to be exhaustive, it does include a great number of resources and tools for strengthening such partnerships. We encourage you to explore and refer to this notice often.

PIH 2011–52, “Reporting, Turnover, and Other Requirements for the Family Unification Program” issued September 20, 2011. The purpose of this notice is to establish reporting, turnover, and other requirements for the Family Unification Program (FUP). This Notice has no application to HUD’s Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) voucher program or the Non-Elderly Disabled (NED) voucher program. Guidance for these programs will be provided under a separate Notice.

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PIH 2011-54, “Guidance on the Project-Based Voucher Program” issued September 20, 2011. The purpose of this notice is to clarify certain issues related to the project-based voucher (PBV) program. HUD intends to issue a more in-depth guidebook related to this program. However, this notice is intended to address specific concerns that have come to the attention of the Department recently. Please note that this notice is not inclusive of all requirements related to the PBV program. If a PHA decides that it wants to implement a PBV program, it must establish various policies and procedures prior to such implementation.

PIH 2011-55, “Public Housing Operating Subsidy Calculations for Calendar Year 2012” issued September 26, 2011. This notice provides public housing agencies (PHAs) with instructions for operating subsidy calculation submissions in Calendar Year (CY) 2012 as funded from Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2012 appropriations. It also informs PHAs that in an effort to reduce their reporting burdens HUD will use information in its systems of record to determine operating subsidy eligibility. HUD is committed to providing eligibility information to PHAs prior to the start of CY2012. This notice also addresses the allocation adjustment to operating subsidy proposed in the President’s FFY 2012 budget, the methodology for the adjustment, the allowable requests for exclusion from the reserve calculation, and the submission and processing of allowable reserve exclusion requests. Although this adjustment has not yet been enacted by Congress, HUD is providing PHAs with this information and the procedures for implementation so that PHAs are able to plan accordingly.

PIH 2011-56, “Emergency Safety and Security Funding as it Relates to the Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011” issued October 4, 2011. This Notice provides guidance to public housing agencies (PHAs) seeking Emergency Capital Needs funding for safety and security measures utilizing FY 2011 funds. This Notice provides instructions regarding the application and funding process for emergency safety and security funding only. This Notice does not apply to funding for unforeseen or unpreventable emergencies or for non-presidentially declared natural disasters. The Department has the discretion to set aside a portion of the \$19,960,000 specifically for emergency safety and security funding. This amount may be increased or decreased annually at the Department’s discretion. For FY 2011, the Department will set aside \$2,000,000 for emergency safety and security funding.

PIH 2011-57, “Instructions for Public Housing Agency on Fiscal Year End Changes” issued October 6, 2011. This notice provides instructions to public housing agencies (PHAs) on submitting requests for fiscal year end (FYE) changes. The process ensures that HUD has information for approval or denial and provides sufficient lead time for HUD to update required databases. PHAs have the option to revise program operations, subject to HUD review and approval. A request to revise FYE dates may come from PHAs that operate only the Public Housing (Low Rent) program, PHAs that operate both Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) programs (a “combined” PHA) and PHAs that operate only the HCV program. An FYE revision requires HUD to make changes to databases on behalf of the PHA(s) that in turn impact program operations, required submissions, and scheduling.

HUD’s PIH Notices can be viewed online at:

http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/publications/notices

Contact us:

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Resource Center (PIH IRC)
2614 Chapel Lake Drive
Gambrills, MD 21054
Toll free number: 1-800-955-2232
Fax number: 1-443-302-2084
E-mail: pihirc@firstpic.org
(Put “HUD PHM Newsletter” in the subject line)

Upcoming Events

NeighborWorks Training Institute
December 12-16, 2011
Washington, DC
<http://www.nw.org/network/training/upcoming/DCTrainingInstitute.asp>

