

Questions and Responses from September 29, 2020 Tenant meetings regarding the Washington County CDA becoming a Moving to Work (MTW) Agency

In August of 2020, the Washington County CDA was notified that it was eligible to become a Moving to Work (MTW) agency. MTW is a designation that allows a Public Housing agency to develop local flexibilities and policies regarding the Housing Choice Voucher and Public Housing programs. HUD requires the MTW plan contain these three objectives:

- 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 programs that assist people to obtain employment and become economically self-sufficient.
- Increase housing choices for eligible low-income families.

On September 29th, 2020 CDA staff held two tenant meetings to discuss the development of the Moving to Work plan with tenants of the Public Housing and the Housing Choice programs. In accordance with HUD requirements, the CDA has developed this question and answer document to post on the website.

Question: Will there be a requirement for employment or job search?

CDA response: In the initial plan the CDA has not set up a work requirement. It is possible that this could be developed later. Future updates of the plan may include a work requirement. Future updates will require that the CDA hold tenant and public meetings so tenants will have an opportunity to have input into the plan.

Question: Will the plan address deductions for working families for medical expenses and medical insurance? As income increases, families are no longer eligible for medical assistance or other benefits. The costs of these benefits and insurance are a dis-incentive to working.

CDA response: The MTW designation comes with no extra budgetary resources so when considering the changes that could be made the budget becomes a driving force. HUD requires the same number of households to be served with the same amount of money. When developing the plan this needs to be taken into consideration. At this point in the plan development, the CDA is considering an exclusion of earned income to help address some of these concerns.

Question: Can child support be calculated in a different way?

CDA Response: The CDA will still use child support as an income that would be included in the calculation of rent portion. Currently child support is calculated using child support received over one year. The CDA may need to consider a hardship policy for when child support stops during the year.

Question: Is it the same as the Family Self Sufficiency Program?

CDA Response: MTW is not only about increasing self sufficiency for tenants, but also about increasing efficiencies in delivering services and increasing housing choice. MTW does not have an escrow component. In the current plan, there is not a requirement for work.

Question: Is the Housing Choice Voucher program changing? Will this change my rent?

CDA Response: MTW effects the Housing Choice Voucher and Public Housing programs. MTW is an opportunity for public housing agencies to develop local flexibilities and efficiencies that could make the programs easier to administer and easier to understand. Depending upon the local policies adopted, rent portions may change.