

Question- What is the Moving to Work program through HUD?

One of the most challenging aspects of the CWIC's responsibilities is staying abreast of the many local variations of programs that may affect beneficiaries as they pursue employment. The Earned Income Disallowance (EID) is a valuable work incentive offered to families in public housing, but may be altered or not offered in some areas, due to the regulations being waived under demonstration grants.

Moving to Work (MTW) is a demonstration program for public housing authorities (PHAs) that provide them the opportunity to design and test innovative, locally-designed strategies that use Federal dollars more efficiently, help residents find employment and become self-sufficient, and increase housing choices for low-income families. MTW gives PHAs exemptions from many existing public housing and voucher rules and more flexibility with how they use their Federal funds. MTW PHAs are expected to use the opportunities presented by MTW to inform HUD about ways to better address local community needs.

The Office of Public Housing Investments (OPHI), within the Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH) at HUD headquarters, oversees the MTW Demonstration.

PHAs selected for the demonstration are permitted to seek exemption from many existing Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher program rules found in the United States Housing Act of 1937 in pursuit of the three MTW statutory objectives:

- Reduce cost and achieve greater costs effectiveness in Federal expenditures;
- 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; and
- Increase housing choices for low-income families.

PHAs in the MTW Demonstration also have the flexibility to combine Federal funds from the public housing operating and modernization programs and Housing Choice Voucher program into a "block grant" to help them better meet the purposes of the demonstration and the needs of their communities.

While MTW agencies have considerable flexibility, they must still abide by all other federal rules and regulations, including the Fair Housing Act, the Civil Rights Act, labor standards, environmental rules, procurement guidelines, demolition and disposition procedures and relocation regulations. For all activities that affect their residents' rent payments, PHAs must also conduct an impact analysis that recognizes the unforeseen circumstances that may affect their residents and develop an appropriate hardship policy. These safeguards help minimize any potentially negative impact of MTW on residents and communities.

There are currently 30 participating sites under the MTW program, with three new sites soon to be added. To see a listing of the participating sites and read more about their agreements with HUD, go to:

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/mtw/mtwsites.cfm>

To learn more about the MTW program, go to the following link:

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/mtw/index.cfm>

CWICS can check to see if there is an MTW demonstration program in their geographical area, and how work incentives such as the EID may be affected. This is important information to have on hand in order to provide accurate advisement to beneficiaries.