

WHAT IS MOVING TO WORK (MTW)?

MTW is a federal program that gives public housing authorities regulatory and funding flexibility to respond to local needs.



ATP's Bring Your Child to Work Day

Participating agencies have the ability to design and test approaches for providing housing assistance that address one or more of the following statutory objectives:

OBJECTIVE #1

Provide incentives to families with children whose heads of household are either working, seeking work, or are participating in job training, educational or programs that assist in obtaining employment and becoming economically self-sufficient;

OBJECTIVE #2

Reduce cost and achieve greater cost effectiveness in federal expenditures; and

OBJECTIVE #3

Increase housing choices for low-income families.

The MTW program provides DCHA with the flexibility to combine funding and adapt policies to best serve our community.



DCHA program participants learn CPR

MTW INNOVATIONS

First, DCHA proposes an initiative, then HUD reviews and grants a waiver of certain federal rules so DCHA can test the innovative strategy.

DCHA may close initiatives after they are tested and achieve the stated goal, or learn through implementation that the innovation does not work as intended. In other cases, initiatives are closed because HUD regulations and policy have evolved and all agencies now have the flexibility to implement the program or policy.

46

Total proposed MTW initiatives since 2003

31

MTW initiatives tested and closed out as of FY2025 MTW Plan

15

MTW initiatives active and in implementation as of FY2025 MTW Plan

Learn more about how DCHA is changing the lives of residents in Washington, DC.



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HOUSING AUTHORITY

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(202) 535-1000 <https://www.dchousing.org>



Developing strategies to best serve our low-income communities in the nation's capital city.

2003

Joined the MTW Program

1 of 39

Original MTW Agencies

DCHA MOVING TO WORK



SINGLE FUND FLEXIBILITY

Through its MTW single fund flexibility, DCHA is able to provide funding to support:

- Public Housing operations, modernization efforts, and repair of deferred maintenance necessary to keep and bring units online for occupancy
- operations of the agency's workforce development center
- operations of the agency's Customer Call Center
- purchasing and maintaining public safety equipment and tools to improve safety and security in and around DCHA's Public Housing communities



DCHA congratulates new homeowners

CREATING HOMEOWNERS

As one of the first initiatives proposed, DCHA used MTW flexibility to create options for public housing and voucher participants to become homeowners.

The homeownership program for voucher participants enables them to transition voucher assistance towards paying their mortgage. Participants work with a homeownership coordinator that provides coaching and connects them with local partners. When families are ready to purchase a home, they can use their voucher to help pay the mortgage. The minimum down payment is 3% with no minimum required from the family's personal resources. DCHA designed a mechanism to recapture a portion of the homeownership (mortgage payments) assistance if the family leaves the property in the first 10 years.

A SIMPLER

FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM (FSS)

DCHA used its MTW authority to transition from the traditional Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS) model to one that supports DCHA's multi-pronged approach to moving families toward self-sufficiency. A simplified financial incentive structure replaces the traditional escrow model.

FSS participants choose one of three "Pathways to Self-Sufficiency" based on the goal they want to focus in during the FSS Program.



Homeownership/
Renting



Education



Employment

Each pathway has a different "Program Incentive Investment," including earned income exclusion, rent cap, educational stipend, mortgage down payment/rental grant or employment grant. The simpler program design and clearer incentive structure makes it easier for new participants to weigh their options. The incentive structure allows DCHA to anticipate costs more accurately and eliminates the administrative burden of calculating and maintaining individual income-based escrow accounts.

DCHA used MTW flexibility to create a place-based public housing homeownership program at two sites that started in 2012 and closed out in 2024. A total of 11 families purchased homes through the program.

DCHA considers the program a success since none of the homeowners had to utilize a voucher to purchase their homes, an unexpected outcome of the program as DCHA anticipated families would need voucher assistance to purchase. DCHA closed out this initiative because the program model is no longer viable since the public housing communities have either converted to RAD or will convert. Public housing residents now have opportunities to work toward homeownership through the Family Self-Sufficiency Program Homeownership Pathway.



AN APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM (ATP)

As part of the FSS Program restructure, DCHA created the Modified Apprenticeship Program (ATP) for DCHA residents and Section 3 participants.

ATP is a six-month work-based training opportunity in which participants learn job skills through on-the-job training, earn income while they learn, and increase the likelihood of permanent employment opportunities. At the end of each cohort period, the top performers compete for permanent full-time positions within DCHA, contractors who do business with DCHA and local business/government partners.

DCHA uses its MTW authority to exclude income from rent calculations for ATP participants currently living in public housing or receiving HCV voucher subsidy while they are in the program.



A HUB FOR INNOVATION

DCHA first established the Southwest Family Enhancement and Career Center (SWFECC) in 2016 as the epicenter of the agency's workforce development efforts. The funding that created the center and the continued opportunities made available through the SWFECC are possible because of the MTW single budget flexibility.

The Center offers workforce development services, including intake assessments, case management, job development and training, and impact events that empower and support participants to improve their overall quality of life. In 2018, HUD designated the SWFECC as one of the inaugural EnVision Center demonstration locations.