



Oakland Housing Authority



FACT SHEET

Information provided is current as of
May 17, 2016

OHA MISSION STATEMENT

To assure the availability of quality housing for low income persons and to promote the civic involvement and economic self-sufficiency of residents and to further the expansion of affordable housing within Oakland.



What is MTW?

Moving to Work (MTW) is a demonstration program of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for public housing authorities. It provides them the unique opportunity to design and test innovative, locally-designed strategies that use Federal dollars more efficiently to help residents secure employment, become self-sufficient, and increase housing choices for low-income families in Oakland. The MTW designation gives housing authorities exemptions from many existing public housing and voucher rules providing greater flexibility with how they use their Federal funds.

What are the goals of MTW?

The United States Congress established the following three statutory goals for MTW:

1. Reduce costs and achieve greater cost effectiveness in Federal expenditures;
2. 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
3. Increase housing choices for low income families.

How long can OHA participate in MTW?

OHA is one of 39 public housing authorities in the nation designated as an MTW agency (out of about 4,000). OHA was selected to participate in MTW in 2001 and executed its first agreement with HUD in March of 2004 for a seven year term.

In February of 2009, OHA signed an Amended and Restated Moving to Work Agreement with HUD. The new agreement extended OHA's participation in the MTW program through June 30, 2018. On December 16, 2015, Congress approved the 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act extending existing MTW Agreements through 2028, and authorizing HUD to expand the MTW demonstration program by an additional 100 high performing Public Housing Agencies over seven years. These agencies will be added in cohorts and will be directed to implement at least one specific policy to facilitate comparison and evaluation.

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What is OHA doing under the MTW program?

As an MTW agency, OHA has the ability to pilot programs and housing models designed to meet the specific needs of our local community. Some examples of local initiatives designed using MTW flexibility are:

Increase Self-Sufficiency

1. Creating a Family and Community Partnerships Department focused on creating partnerships and linkages to education and employment resources and programs for OHA families.

Education - In 2010, OHA entered into a data sharing MOU with our local school district identifying all our youth attending public schools. This agreement informed the creation of two pilot programs addressing Chronic Absenteeism and Parent Engagement that are now in seven district schools. The school district and OHA are now renewing our MOU, expanding it to include all alternative/charter school students and, alongside the Superintendent, are exploring how we can meet the educational needs and goals of youth, particularly focusing on those that are not thriving in the current system.

Employment – OHA supports employment and economic development activities for our families in multiple ways, including support for Summer Youth Employment, funding dedicated slots with Cypress Mandela Training Center for OHA residents. In 2016, OHA began implementing the Jobs Plus West Oakland program in partnership with the Oakland Private Industry Council, Alameda County Department of Social Service, and a host of other providers.

2. Providing housing assistance through local housing programs developed by OHA with both the City and County that target special needs families and individuals using service enriched housing models.
3. Providing funds for the Oakland Housing Authority Police Department, a community based police force working to make neighborhoods safer by encouraging community stability and supporting our working families.

Increase Housing Choice

1. Affordable Housing Development – Using MTW authority by the end of FY 2015, a total of 1,574 new homes were created and occupied using MTW authorities and flexibility. In FY 2015 alone, 317 new units were placed in service. We currently have 130 new units in two properties under construction, Prosperity Place and 94th & International, and more in our development pipeline.
2. Owner Incentives Program (in development) – This program is designed to provide support and additional benefits to existing Section 8 owners in Oakland to incent them to continue participation and incent new owners to join.

Reduce Costs and Achieve Greater Cost Effectiveness

1. Automatic Rent Increase (in development)– This program is designed to offer owners an automatic rent increase on their HAP contract anniversary date to facilitate the rent increase process and decrease processing time, increasing efficiency and providing a less burdensome process to owners.
2. Alternative Recertification Schedule – Changes the reexamination of income for elderly and disabled households on fixed incomes to every three years and every two years for wage earning households, allowing assets earned through work to be retained.

MTW Funding

OHA does not receive additional funding under the MTW program, however a key feature of the MTW program is the ability to blend funds from several programs silos with funding restrictions, into one “block grant,” and use these funds interchangeably to help better meet the purposes of the demonstration program and the needs of the local community.

MTW allows OHA to offer the critical housing and family support programs mentioned above and provide essential community safety services to residents to help them thrive in their communities.



Oakland Housing
Authority