

# DOVER HOUSING AUTHORITY

DOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE



## MOVING TO WORK

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**MOVING TO WORK PLAN 2020**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	page
PART I	
(a) Vision for Local Moving to Work Program	1
(b) Plan for Future Community/Resident Engagement	3
(c) Operating and Inventory Information	4
(d) Plan for Local MTW Program	6
(e) Proposed Use of MTW Funds + Initiatives to Meet Community Needs	6
(f) Evidence of Significant Partnerships	7
(g) Significant Dates and Milestones for Local MTW Program	8
PART II	
Appendix 1: Moving to Work Certifications of Compliance	9
Appendix 2: Public Process Documentation	9
Appendix 3: Required Standard Forms	10
Appendix 4: Supporting Documentation	

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## MOVING TO WORK PLAN 2020

### PART I

#### *Vision for the Moving to Work Program*

The Moving to Work (MTW) program is a program offered by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD is the federal agency that regulates housing authorities across the nation. MTW seeks to allow housing authorities to engage in innovative solutions to address local issues. There are three (3) main goals for MTW agencies:

- To increase cost effectiveness through efficiencies
- To promote self-sufficiency for residents and voucher holders
- To increase choices in affordable housing

There are over 4,000 housing authorities in the United States. The MTW program was started in 1996 with 39 housing authorities selected across the country as MTW housing authorities. HUD is seeking to expand the number of housing authorities in the MTW program. The Dover Housing Authority has been invited to apply. The DHA is applying for Cohort #1 of the MTW expansion, a cohort specifically designed for housing authorities with less than 1,000 households.

The Dover Housing Authority has a proud history of innovation and supportive services for residents and clients. MTW will allow the innovation to continue in order to benefit the Residents and Participants of the Dover Housing Authority. Examples of innovations and support services are:

- 1983 Community Policing program started in the family neighborhood
- 1989 New Headstart building constructed and celebrated by a ribbon cutting by William Bennett, the new Drug Tsar appointed by President Ronald Reagan
- 1991 Established the first in the nation off-site resident owned business, Whitmin's laundromat, which received HUD's "Quality of Life" award
- 1999 Family Self-Sufficiency program initiated; presently serving 80 households
- 1990 Construction of the Seymour Osman Community Center in the family neighborhood
- 2000 21st Century educational grant obtained to start the Afterschool Program at the Woodman Park Elementary School

- 2007 DHA joins with the City of Dover in developing the Waterfront area
- 2017 Conversion of the public housing family neighborhood residencies to PBV/LIHTC under the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) project; renovation of 184 family apartments

The Dover Housing Authority intends to use the flexibility of MTW to continue providing permanent housing and supportive services for people with low incomes in the Seacoast area of New Hampshire. Since the first families moved into the family development of Mineral Park in December 1953, Commissioners of the Dover Housing Authority have endeavored to engage with community partners to serve low income families, seniors and individuals with disabilities. MTW will enhance the ability to continue serving these populations.

Today, the Dover Housing Authority provides rental subsidies and support services for 880 households per month. We live in a vibrant area. The City of Dover New Hampshire is the fastest growing city in the State of New Hampshire with a population of approximately 32,000. Dover is located between two major metropolitan cities--one hour north of Boston and one hour south of Portland, Maine. Rents are rising in the Seacoast, and the lack of affordable housing is increasing. The unemployment rate in New Hampshire is historically low. New Hampshire has jobs, the Seacoast area has people, we seek to put the two together.

Our **Vision** for the Moving to Work Program is simply stated “**Opening Doors to Opportunities**”. Our Vision breaks down into 3 key objectives.

#1 Cost effectiveness Vision. Our goal is to restructure the tasks of applications, admissions, eligibility, record keeping, income certifications and inspections to achieve a more cost-effective delivery of permanent housing for our residents and voucher holders. Restructuring these areas of the DHA operations will benefit residents, voucher holders and staff by allowing resources to be moved from administration to support services.

#2 Self-sufficiency Vision. The DHA is committed to promoting self-sufficiency. Residents and Participants will benefit from the expansion of support services. Currently, our Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) caseload is eighty (80) households. We seek to expand participation in the FSS program towards full enrollment.

As part of the expansion of clients, we seek to address local issues. Recent meetings with residents, and voucher holders as well as input from community leaders identified local issues and challenges. The issues and challenges are:

- Transportation
- Internet access
- Education
- Training
- Isolation

We seek to remove barriers experienced by our residents and voucher holders including transportation barriers, internet access barriers and educational and training barriers as well as isolation experienced by seniors and individuals with disabilities.

#3 Housing Choice Vision: Finally, we have a Vision to address the lack of affordable housing choices in our area. Specifically, we plan to increase development of new housing opportunities by purchasing and renovating apartments. In addition, we seek to develop and build brand new residences. For example, we intend to collaborate with an agency called “Haven”, an area support agency for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. The collaboration will provide permanent housing and support services for Survivors who are receiving support services from Haven.

#### Fair Housing and Civil Rights Statements

The Dover Housing Authority pledges to abide by all Fair Housing and Civil Rights laws and regulations and to engage in sufficient training for all staff to achieve compliance with all State and Federal requirements.

#### ***Plan for Future Community/Resident Engagement***

The lifeblood of MTW is engagement with residents, voucher holders and community members. Our Engagement Plan involves consistent and clear communication with stakeholders taking into consideration the needs and circumstances of the person(s) with whom we seek to communicate.

Staff training is important to facilitate communication with stakeholders. Staff training will address the techniques and communication challenges likely to be encountered with each population with whom we seek to communicate.

For residents in the family neighborhood and voucher holders, we intend to establish an Advisory Council. The Advisory Council will consist of Resident volunteers who live in the family neighborhood and Participants who are voucher holders. We will provide a meeting space and funding to support monthly meetings with a staff liaison in order to continue to identify needs and to solicit suggestions for solutions.

For Senior Residents and Residents who are individuals with disabilities, we intend to engage in Listening Sessions to invite Residents to voice concerns and solutions about issues involved when living at the Dover Housing Authority.

Monthly newsletters, electronic and hardcopy, will be published and distributed to all Residents and Participants. Website enhancements will occur to follow the progress of MTW activities.

The Dover Housing Authority is experiencing an increase in diversity in conjunction with a general increase in population in the Seacoast area of New Hampshire. The diversity includes racial diversity, ethnic diversity and diversity in religious preferences. Staff trainings will include information to gain increased awareness of communication with and about people from diverse racial, ethnic and religious circumstances and backgrounds.

An increasing population of Residents who individuals with disabilities are now living at the Dover Housing Authority. Staff training will focus on the needs of these individuals.

The residents of the Dover community are our neighbors. Some know our Mission, many do not. We will continue to meet with Community leaders from the City of Dover, local businesses, community members, our collaborators, and our skeptics to articulate and communicate our Mission and our efforts at cost effectiveness, self-sufficiency and increasing choices for affordable housing.

### ***Operating and Inventory Information***

#### **Current Housing Stock.**

The housing portfolio of the Dover Housing Authority is separated into one of three (3) Accounting Management Properties (AMP's). We serve 880 households. We serve families, senior citizens and individuals with disabilities.

AMP 1 is housing for families. AMP 2 consists of low-rise apartments for senior/disabled residents. AMP 3 consists of high-rise apartments for senior citizens.

All households qualify for federal rent subsidies based on household income. All households are classified as low income, very low income or extremely low income based on the area median income in the Dover area.

AMP 1, the family neighborhood consisting of 184 apartments, is located on Whittier Street, Hampshire Circle, Mineral Park Drive and Pleasant View Circle in the City of Dover. The family neighborhood consists of 49 buildings with 184 apartments. The apartments in the family neighborhood were constructed in the 1950's and 1960's.

AMP 1 residences experienced a significant change in 2017. This family neighborhood was converted from public housing to Project Based Voucher (PBV) housing using the provisions of the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. RAD is a program developed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to allow qualifying housing authorities to access private financing sources to renovate housing stock in need of updating.

In conjunction with the RAD conversion in 2017, rehabilitation of the apartments in the family neighborhood occurred in 2017-2019. The renovations consisted of new roofs, new siding, new windows, new bathrooms, new kitchens, new flooring, partial plumbing and electrical work, new insulation and new heating/ hot water systems. Financing for the \$10M needed for the rehab work was obtained with Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) and bond financing through the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority. The units are now subsidized with Project Based Vouchers (PBV) based on a federal contract. The property is owned by "1623 Settlement Dover Limited Partnership LLC". The property is managed by the Dover Housing Authority. It is important to note that significant upgrades to the physical condition of the family apartments did not affect the Mission of the Dover Housing Authority. The family neighborhood of the DHA continues to house low income families today just as we have served low income families for the

past 65+ years. The motto for the conversion under RAD and the rehabilitation was: “Same Mission, Same Rents, Same Good People”.

The Dover Housing Authority also owns administrative and maintenance buildings and the Seymour Osman Community Center. These buildings are located on Whittier Street, Hampshire Circle and Tolend Road. AMP 1 is comprised solely with these administrative and maintenance buildings.

Senior citizens and individuals with disabilities are housed in AMP 2 and AMP 3 consisting of 274 apartments.

Amp 2 consists of low-rise housing including apartments in Niles Park, Union Court and Edgar Bois Terrace. These developments were constructed in the 1960’s and 1970’s.

AMP 3 consists of high-rise housing apartments in Waldron Towers (6 stories), Central Towers (6 stories) and St. John’s apartments (4 stories). These were built and rehabilitated in the 1960’s-1980’s.

#### Tenant Based Vouchers

The Dover Housing issues and administers three hundred forty-seven (347) tenant-based vouchers including thirty (30) Main Stream vouchers. Participants in this program are housed in privately owned apartments owned by local landlords. Each month the Participants pay a portion of the rent and in addition the remaining portion of the rent is paid by the Dover Housing Authority with federal funding.

#### Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) apartments

The Dover Housing Authority manages forty-five (45) LIHTC apartments in a complex called “Addison Place”. LIHTC is an affordable housing program under the auspices of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Addison Place is located on Whittier Street. The property is owned by Whittier Falls, Inc., a subsidiary of the Dover Housing Authority. The property was constructed in the late 1990’s and is subject to regulation by the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority as well as the IRS. Approximately one-half (½) of the households are vouchers holders with vouchers issued by the Dover Housing Authority and other agencies.

#### Other properties with affordable housing

- 29 Union Street: The Dover Housing Authority owns a small apartment building at 29 Union Street. The property is rented to Community Partners, a local mental health agency. Community Partners maintains a residential supportive housing program.
- Avon street residences: The Dover Housing Authority owns three (3) apartment buildings, two of which are rented to tenant-based voucher households and the remaining is a single-family home rented at an affordable, below market rent.

### ***Plan for Local MTW Program***

The MTW Plan for the Dover Housing Authority is to increase the cost effectiveness of our operations by streamlining the administrative efforts. In addition, the DHA plans to expand supportive services for residents and voucher holders with an expansion of the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program. The FSS program is a 5-year self-improvement program staffed with professional staff to assist participants with achieving their goals and to improve their lives. The goal is to increase the number of participants involved in self-sufficiency efforts. Finally, the DHA plans to expand the available options for affordable housing with the purchase and construction of additional rental units.

### ***How does MTW benefit Residents and Participants?***

Residents and Participants will benefit from MTW in the following ways:

1. Formation of an Advisory Council. Residents and Participants will have the opportunity to voice suggestions and opinions about the operations of the Dover Housing Authority.
2. Expansion of transportation services for Senior Residents and Residents who are individuals with disabilities
3. Expansion of self-sufficiency support services
4. Expansion of internet access
5. Reduction of administrative requirements for Residents and Participants
6. Expansion of housing choices

### ***Proposed Use of MTW Funds + Initiatives to Meet Community Needs***

The Dover Housing Authority requests the authority to use public housing and Housing Choice Voucher funding in a flexible manner under the MTW program. The DHA is requesting the use of funds in the Section 8 and Section 9 programs in a fungible manner.

- **MTW flexibility will allow reduction of administration costs and an increase in efficiency using Waivers as follows:**
  - Alternatives for income deductions/deductions
  - Alternatives for Utility allowances
  - Increase the minimum rent
  - Elimination of utility reimbursements when greater than the Total Tenant Payment (TTP)
  - Self-certification of assets
  - Alternatives to reexamination schedules
- **Local Needs**
  - Transportation
  - Internet access
  - Self Sufficiency support services
  - Education
  - Training
- **Proposed Uses of MTW funds:**

- Transportation for senior citizens and individuals with disabilities
- Internet access for senior citizens and individuals with disabilities
- Internet access for students living in the family neighborhood
- Increased Family Self Sufficiency support services for Participants and clients of the Housing Choice Voucher program
- Increased Family Self Sufficiency support services for family neighborhood residents including students
- Expand the Family Self Sufficiency Home Ownership program
- **Additional waivers to create housing choices**
  - Eliminate PBV Selection Process for PHA-owned properties
  - Rent reforms for families who engage in Family Self-Sufficiency support services
  - Supportive Services up to 10% of budget
  - Housing Development Program up to 10% of budget

### *Evidence of Significant Partnerships*

- **Significant Partnerships**
  - **Wentworth Douglass Hospital (WDH) and affiliated medical practices.** The DHA and WDH collaborated for over 15 years with medical transport of DHA seniors to medical appointments and hospital services. The service was discontinued when WDH consolidated with the Mass General Hospital in Boston MA. MTW funding will restore the needed service of medical transport for seniors and individual with disabilities.
  - **Dover School System.** The DHA operates the Afterschool program at the Woodman Park Elementary School attended by students from the DHA family neighborhood. Funding is provided by a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Educational Grant, of which the DHA has been the grant holder for over 15 years. MTW funds will enhance the program which serves 150 students during the school year. Summer camp activities are also provided.
  - **Habitat for Humanity.** Eight (8) DHA residents have been selected to receive Habitat for Humanity homes over the past several years. MTW funds will enhance the program.
  - **Dover Police Department.** Community Policing principles have been used in the family neighborhood for over 20 years. MTW will allow continuation of the program which provides a full-time certified Dover police for not only residents of the family neighborhood but also residents of other properties owned and managed by the DHA.
  - **City of Dover.** The DHA collaborates with the City of Dover in a variety of ways. For the past 10+ years, the Board of Commissioners have provided, pursuant to a State statute, a city-wide advisory community committee seeking to develop the Waterfront area of the downtown area.

- **Community Partners.** Since 2013, the DHA and Community Partners, a local mental health agency, have collaborated with operating a group home for clients. MTW funds will enhance the collaboration.
- **Genuity Networking.** The DHA and Genuity are involved in establishing wireless internet access network for students living in the family neighborhood for use to attend school remotely in the Covid 19 environment.
- **University of New Hampshire.** Students at UNH assist as paid staff for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Afterschool program at the Woodman Park Elementary School.
- **Haven.** The DHA plans to construct new housing for survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence.
- **Vision of continuing partnerships.** MTW funds will enable continuation and expansion of current partnerships
- **Leveraging of funds.** Leveraging of funds will occur with the use of project based vouchers to support loan applications for borrowing of funds in the private sector in order to purchase and rehab additional affordable housing.

### ***Significant Dates and Milestones for Local MTW Program***

The Milestones for the first two (2) years of the MTW Program at the Dover Housing Authority are:

#### June 2021

- Establish internet access for students living in the family neighborhood
- Purchase a handicap van for residents living in AMP 2 and Amp 3 for medical appointments; hire a part-time driver for the medical van
- Establish a home ownership program for residents and voucher holders

#### January 2022

- Establish a “Get out of the house” program for residents of AMP 2 + Amp 3
- Expand the participation in the FSS program to 100 participants
- Expand housing choice with collaboration with Haven

#### June 2022

- Achieve administrative efficiencies to reduce costs in Section 8 and Section 9 program areas

#### January 2023

- Expand FSS participation to 120 households
- Establish internet access in AMP 2 + 3
- Expand housing choice with additional housing purchased/constructed/rehabilitation

## **Part II—Appendices**

### **Appendix 1: Moving to Work Certifications of Compliance**

*(See Attachment 2 of Notice; 25 certifications)*

### **Appendix 2: Public Process Documentation**

- *Notice*
- *2 resident meetings*
- *public notice of public hearing*
- *evidence public hearing was held*
- *Board resolution*

### **Appendix 3: Required Standard Forms**

- **Certification of Compliance with Consolidated Plan**
- **Certification of Payments (form HUD-50071)**
- **Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)**

### **Appendix 4: Other Supporting Documentation**