

Robeson County Housing Authority

*Moving To Work Supplemental Plan FY
2024, Capital Fund Project Plan 2023 &
Annual Plan 2024*



DRAFT

INTRODUCTION

This document contains the proposed strategies that Robeson County Housing Authority (RCHA) plan to implement in the fiscal year 2024-2025. RCHA conducted focus groups November 20th & 21st 2023 at its four communities: McCall Page Plaza, Westgate Terrace, Benton Court and Morgan Britt. During the focus groups the residents were presented with RCHA proposed plans for Moving to Work, Capital Funds and the Annual plan. The participants were given the opportunity to present their ideas and give feed back on the agency's plans. This document is a summary of both agency and resident input. It will be placed on the agency's website at Robesonha.org and at the main office located 100 Oxendine Circle, Lumberton, NC 28306 for review for 45 days. A hearing for residents and the community to discuss the proposed plan will be held at the main office on January 16, 2024 at 4:00 pm. The hearing notice is placed on the agency's website and in Robesonian Newspaper.

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I. ROBESON COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY 2024/2025 MOVING TO WORK SUPPLEMENTAL PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Robeson County Housing Authority (RCHA) is an approved Moving to Work (MTW) agency and as such has broad authority to propose regulatory waivers designed to incentivize family self-sufficiency, promote housing choice, and improve cost-effectiveness through regulatory simplification.

In 2024, the RCHA will continue the majority of the MTW activities proposed in its approved 2023 MTW Supplement. The following are modifications in the 2024 MTW Supplement: 1) RCHA will reduce the frequency of tenant reexaminations to Triennially for **working and fixed income families**, not all families. 2) Robeson County will set a minimum rent that is higher than allowed under current statute and regulation 3) RCHA will modify the terms of or eliminate the FSS Contract of Participation (HUD-52650), in lieu of a local *form (The MTW 2023 Plan was amended to include this Waiver but it will also be included in the 2024 Plan)* 4) RCHA will also create an alternative structure for securing local resources to support an MTW Self-Sufficiency Program.

MTW GOAL 1: REDUCE COST AND ACHIEVE GREATER COST-EFFECTIVENESS IN FEDERAL EXPENDITURES

1. Alternative Reexamination Schedule

RCHA will reduce the frequency of tenant reexaminations to Triennially for **working and fixed income families** allowing one interim adjustment per year at the request of the household if the household's gross income has decreased by 10% or more.

Triennial Reexaminations are a potentially strong incentive to encourage increased work and earnings. It would allow more years to pass before families are required to have their eligibility for their “total tenant payment” (TTP) redetermined—a process commonly referred to as “recertification.”

A change in the recertification timeframe from an annual recertification schedule to a longer recertification period means that no matter how much families earned during that period, none of the increased earnings would go toward higher contributions for rent and utilities (as would be true under traditional rules).

An extended recertification period could also reduce the administrative burden: Public Housing Authority (PHA) staff would spend less time conducting recertifications, and families would spend less time having to document and report their incomes to the PHA.

Robeson County will continue to implement the amended the Public Housing Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP) that was gained by board approval in June 30, 2023. The Triennial Reexaminations will begin with families that have annual recertification due in July 2023. Additional families will be phased in at the time of their annual recertification. RCHA will continue this process until all current and new families are phased in. This process will take approximately a year (July 1, 2023 -June 30, 2024) to implement.

2. Utility Reimbursements (PH)

Robeson County Housing Authority will eliminate utility reimbursement payments in the public housing program when the utility allowance is greater than the total tenant payment.

3. Minimum Rent (PH)

Robeson County will set a minimum rent that is higher than allowed under current statute and regulation. RCHA will increase its rent from \$50.00 to \$100.00. Starting July 1, 2024 new residents will pay \$100.00. Current resident will be phased in over a 3-year period (See Chart 1 below). By March 30, 2024 RCHA will amend the Public Housing Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP) and gain board approval. RCHA will exclude elderly and disabled families from rent policy. RCHA will conduct an impact analysis and implement a hardship policy.

Chart1: Rent Increase Chart for Current Residents	
Date	Amount
July 1, 2024	\$50.00
July 1, 2025	\$75.00
July 1, 2026	\$100.00

MTW GOAL 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.

1. Family Self-Sufficiency Program with MTW Flexibility: Modify or Eliminate the Contract of Participation (PH) *(The MTW 2023 Plan was amended to include this Waiver but it will also be included in the 2024 Plan)*

The Robeson County Housing Authority will modify the terms of the FSS Contract of Participation (HUD-52650), in lieu of a local form. The RCHA will modify the terms of the Contract of Participation to align with adjustments made to its MTW FSS Program using MTW flexibility.

The RCHA will disburse a portion of the FSS escrow account funds before completion of the Contract of Participation (CoP) when the family has met certain interim goals, which means the family has met all its obligations under the CoP to date, including completion of the Individual Training and Service Plans (ITSP) interim goals and tasks to date, and: Requested funds are needed to complete an interim goal or task within the CoP and are not ongoing expenses.

The RCHA may also use unrestricted net position funding for reasonable and eligible FSS supportive services costs, in amounts approved by the Board of Commissioners in its annual budget process. The PHA may also use its funding flexibility as an MTW agency to utilize Capital Funds for these purposes.

RCHA will also create an alternative structure for securing local resources to support an MTW Self-Sufficiency Program.

2. MTW Self-Sufficiency Program: Alternative Family Selection Procedures (PH)

BRIDGE Program

RCHA will develop a MTW basic skill set program called BRIDGE for youth and adult residents. RCHA will use incentives to motivate children and teens to become interested in out-of-school time programs that they might not have been interested in initially. Using incentives can help attract and retain children and youth by promoting program attendance and making young people feel invested in programs.

Some programs that RCHA will implement with youth are Report Card Rewards, A Clean and Green Community Program, Summer Youth Work Program, Tool Time with Teens, Sports Participation Programs, homework center, and other programs deemed appropriate for youth development.

For adults, the program will include skills assessment/job readiness training; health assessment and services referrals; identified transportation needs, and child care needs; training in basic financial literacy and credit education; and ready ready-to-rent training. RCHA will make participation in the MTW Self-Sufficiency program mandatory for any household member that is non-working, non-elderly, or non-disabled.

RCHA will also conduct community engagement events with partners to gain support for resources and services for the agency.

RCHA will not use income increases during participation in the MTW program to change a family's eligibility status for purposes of participation in the MTW Self-Sufficiency Program or for the receipt of public housing or HCV assistance.

TIDY (Techniques to Improve & Discipline Yourself)

RCHA will Reduce Costs and Achieve Greater Cost-Effectiveness in Federal Expenditures by Streamlining unit inspections for Public Housing residents and offering an incentive for good housekeeping as a way to preserve the housing stock and reduce maintenance costs. In 2022 RCHA moved from conducting annual inspections to biannual inspections and in 2023 will implement the incentive program, a \$50.00 incentive for good housekeeping. We will also assist families with becoming more self-sufficient by implementing a program called TIDY. TIDY will teach residents techniques that will help them save money in the home instead of allotting funds to pay maintenance charges for damages and excess utilities. They will also receive tips on how to clean on a budget. The ultimate goal of TIDY is to teach residents how to take care of their homes so they will be self-sufficient once they transition out of public housing.

MTW GOAL 3: INCREASE HOUSING CHOICES FOR ELIGIBLE LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

1. Seek Non-Profit status and increase housing portfolio.

In the 2022 Supplement, RCHA used its flexibility to develop a nonprofit affiliate. In 2023, RCHA will continue to use its flexibility to support the administrative and functional costs of the nonprofit. The nonprofit affiliate will enable the Robeson County housing authority to act more like a private housing developer in addressing local needs, provide flexibility to acquire property on the private market, and give the agency the ability to attract more funding through its nonprofit 501 c3 status.

2. Acquisition without prior HUD approval.

RCHA will be authorized to acquire public housing sites without prior HUD approval. This activity allows flexibility around the timing of HUDs approval, but the not content of the approval. When acquiring the sites, the RCHA will have all submission materials in place as if HUD were approving the acquisition proposal prior to acquisition. The RCHA will provide the materials to the field office for approval within 30 days of acquisition.

3. Housing Development Program

RCHA will use MTW funding to acquire, renovate and/or build affordable units for low-income families that are not public housing units. Eligible activities may include gap financing for non-PHA development of affordable housing, development of project-based voucher units, or tax credit partnerships. The RCHA will incorporate predevelopment costs in its 5-year capital funds plans and utilize these funds for costs associated with the development of non-PHA affordable housing. The following are work items that require funding: site control, appraisals, market analysis, survey, subsurface soil analysis, environmental review, site, and utility engineering, schematic landscape planning, schematic architectural drawings, schematic permits and fees, legal, accounting, development management and feasibility consulting.

II. ROBESON COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY CAPITAL FUNDS PROJECT 2023 PLAN SIGNIFICANT AMENDMENT

1. Funds to expand the Maintenance office, warehouse and parking at the main office located 100 Oxendine Circle Lumberton, NC 28306
2. Funds to purchase Bar Cloud, an inventory tracking system.

III. ROBESON COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY ANNUAL PLAN 2024

1. There are no significant Amendments