

Metropolitan Council Housing and Redevelopment Authority

Housing Choice Voucher Mobility Demonstration Program

July 19, 2021

Community Development Committee



Mobility Program History and Background

- Families may face barriers in placing their voucher in a neighborhood of their choice
 - Financial barriers
 - Landlord unwillingness to rent to a voucher holder
 - Limited awareness or exposure to neighborhoods and amenities
- Agencies across the country have implemented housing mobility programs to help reduce barriers of families with vouchers to live in neighborhoods of their choice including areas with:
 - High performing schools
 - Access to jobs
 - Low crime
 - Parks and other amenities



Mobility Demonstration Program

- Research by Chetty and Hendren, 2015, Harvard University
 - *Impacts of Neighborhoods and Intergenerational Mobility: Childhood Exposure Effects*
 - Do neighborhoods matter for economic mobility?
 - Shows that exposure to better neighborhood during *childhood* matters
- Seattle and King County Housing Authorities recently conducted a randomized control trial
 - Offered a set of housing mobility related services to some voucher holders
 - Report indicates provision of mobility-related services helped create strong gains in the number of families that moved to resource-rich areas
 - The evidence makes a strong case that mobility programs are worth federal investment
- Mobility programs are one strategy to assist families with upward mobility



Mobility Demonstration Award

- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development offered \$50 million for the Housing Choice Voucher Mobility Demonstration Program
 - Metro HRA and the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority (MPHA) submitted a joint application
- Award
 - 6-year term; first year is planning year
 - 74 Vouchers
 - \$5.2 Million
- Roles
 - Metro HRA will serve as program administrator
 - MPHA will serve as fiscal agent

Agency Responsibilities

Fiscal Agent MPHA

- Main grant contact to HUD
- Monitor funding and distribute grant funds
- Complete HUD required reporting
- Collaborate on program design and implementation

Program Administrator Metro HRA

- Operate program
- Enroll program participants
- Hire and manage staff
- Collaborate on program design and implementation

How will the program work?

- 6-Year program – ends October 2028
- Includes a rigorous evaluation to determine which mobility supports are most effective in helping families achieve success
- Voucher holders will be randomly selected for participation in one of the groups
- Program participants will be required to use their voucher in identified mobility areas of the region
- The program will follow 1,950 voucher holders

Control Group

- Housing voucher services as they exist today without services

Treatment Group A

- Will receive a comprehensive set of mobility related services

Treatment Group B

- Will receive a subset of the mobility related services

Community Choice Program

- The program will build on the Metro HRA's existing mobility program, Community Choice
 - Implemented in December 2015
- Success! We have had an opportunity to test the program components that helped shape the Demonstration program.
- Mobility related services include:
 - Pre-Move Counseling (and financial assistance)
 - Landlord Recruitment
 - Housing Search Assistance
 - Post-Move Counseling

Pre-Move Services

- Create customized plans to address individual barriers to renting
- Personalized action plans and goal development
 - Intake assessment
 - Use person-centered approaches and trauma informed care techniques
- Budgeting and Financial Empowerment
- Tenant Education
- Barrier reduction assistance
 - Debt reduction and resolution
 - Rental history coaching
- Financial assistance
 - Security deposits, application fees



Landlord Recruitment

- Conduct landlord briefings and focus groups
- Streamline inspections
- Marketing Ready Renters
 - Tenant Education
 - Financial Empowerment
- Provide Security Deposits
- Guaranteed Rent Payment
- Support to landlords and families
 - Mediation
 - Assist families with securing resources
- Regular visits to assisted units

A special opportunity
FOR LANDLORDS & PROPERTY OWNERS
Want to **BOOST YOUR OCCUPANCY** without increasing your marketing costs?



**You have units to fill -
We have the qualified tenants to fill them!**

Community Choice, a mobility counseling program, administered by Metropolitan Council's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (Metro HRA) works with both tenants and landlords to ensure the success of the program.

Landlords and property owners pay nothing to participate in the program, yet they benefit from a host of services that Community Choice provides, including:

- Tenants ready for occupancy
- Good neighbor training and tenant workshops
- Financial literacy workshops
- Marketing your property to prospective tenants; conduct neighborhood tours
- Less time consuming paperwork—exchange of paperwork through electronic portal
- Damage deposit assistance for Community Choice participants
- Timely rent payments each month through direct deposit
- Access to outreach coordinators to ensure program and tenant compliance

INTERESTED LANDLORDS AND PROPERTY OWNERS, PLEASE CONTACT OUR MOBILITY COUNSELORS FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Housing Search Assistance

- Help individual families identify and tour available units
- Search for housing
 - Based on landlord relationships – new and existing
- Tour neighborhoods
- Identify neighborhood amenities
- Map neighborhood services and schools
- Attend unit showings
- Assist with application
- Help expedite the leasing process



Post-Move Services

- This component was unique to Metro HRA's program
- Conduct home visits
- Help families network within their community
- Locate services and resources toward achieving success
- School and activity enrollment
- Goal check-in
 - Educational or Employment related goals
 - Financial Empowerment
- Landlord mediation



Current Status and Next Steps

- Year One: Program Design
 - HUD provides technical assistance
 - Hire new staff
 - Define 6-year budget
 - Identify 2022 budget and potential need for 2021 budget amendment.
- The Metro HRA will engage in regular dialogue with Council Members, the Community Development Committee and program participants as this program develops to provide exciting updates

Mobility Demonstration Program

Questions?

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