

A Program of the Department of Housing and Urban Development

Keene Housing Authority

Moving to Work Demonstration Program

Annual Plan



2010

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Governing Board and Staff

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Keene Housing Authority Moving to Work Annual Plan 2010

Message from the CEO, P. Curtis Hiebert

The Keene Housing Authority is pleased to present its plan for the year beginning January 1, 2010. Under the flexibility granted under the HUD Moving to Work Demonstration, the SPECTRUM Housing Program of the Keene Housing Authority has been in operation for 11 years, since 1999, and has resulted in great improvements for our housing and our residents and program participants. During the past year, the KHA made a great stride to improving our properties and stability of our programs.

- The KHA transferred its Public Housing units to its not-for-profit affiliate, and has leveraged a considerable amount of funds to accomplish major renovations to our units. During 2010, the majority of the properties will be receiving an extensive amount of rehabilitation, while residents will still have the benefits of the Spectrum Housing Program and the incentives and simplifications it contains.
- Our goal is to have the Public Housing operated by the KHA be the equivalent of market based units, and to have them funded adequately to allow them to assist the low income residents that are our mission to serve.

As a result of this change, the KHA does not have a Public Housing program, but will have a MTW program consisting of a greatly enlarged Section 8 subsidy program, which provides subsidies for our residents to maintain the affordability of the apartments. Our commitment to services for all of our residents will continue, and the condition of our properties and our ability to assist our customers will be greater than ever.

The MTW program allows us to deal with a lot of issues, and we will continue to utilize its flexibility to make our housing and housing programs the best ones possible for our participants and for the KHA.

Sincerely,

P. Curtis Hiebert, CEO

Section I. Introduction

A. The Keene Housing Authority

The Keene Housing Authority was created by resolution of the City Council for the city of Keene on July 15, 1965 in accordance with Section 4 of Chapter 203, New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated. The stated mission of the authority was filling the need for “safe, sanitary dwelling accommodations for the elderly and persons of low-income in Keene.” Pursuant to this resolution the Mayor of Keene, in accordance with NHRSA 203:5, appointed five persons as Commissioners of the Keene Housing Authority, and these appointments have been made regularly in accordance with the law, through and including the present time. The Authority, as a duly created municipal agency of the city, derives extensive powers from RSA 203.8. Among these powers is the authority to:

- Acquire, lease, manage, maintain or operate housing projects.
- Provide for the construction, reconstruction, improvement, and extension of housing projects or any part thereof.
- Lease or rent any dwellings, houses, land, or buildings in any housing project.
- Establish and revise the rents and other charges for use of the property.
- Own, hold, and improve real or personal property.
- Purchase, lease, obtain options upon, and acquire by gift any real or personal property.
- Sell, lease, exchange, transfer or dispose of any real or personal property.

The mission of the Keene Housing Authority is, directly or in collaboration with others, to provide and/or advocate for:

- *Decent, safe and affordable housing for individuals, families, elderly and disabled persons of low to moderate income within the Monadnock region;*

And; to provide and/or advocate for

- *Any and all services and programs that will assist in improving the social and economic welfare of such individuals and families.*

The Authority is governed by a five person Board of Commissioners appointed by the Mayor of the city of Keene. The Board is responsible for the hiring and supervision of the Chief Executive Officer, who is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the agency. The Keene Housing Authority has a staff of approximately 35.

Organization

Keene Housing Authority is a small agency that operates a full diversity of housing programs including HUD Multifamily programs, Low Income Housing Tax Credit programs, Rural Development, HOME and Community Development Block Grant program. The diverse portfolio of housing and services enables the agency to fulfill its goal of providing affordable and quality housing to the Keene and surrounding communities now and into the future. As a small agency, it is challenging to administer the complexity of these programs. Keene does not have staff

resources to create positions or departments that specialize in compliance, data management, policy development, etc. The flexibilities granted under MTW help alleviate some, not all, of the administrative requirements so staff can focus their time working directly with clients to address housing and service needs of families.

Keene's organizational structure consists of three major departments as well as several administrative positions. The three major departments include Housing and Services, Facilities and Asset Management and Finance. Administrative positions include the Community Development and Block Grant Administrator and the Manager of Policy and Program Development.

Keene Facts

Keene, New Hampshire is located in Cheshire County in the southwest corner of the state and is the busy hub for several local and interstate roads and highways. At an elevation of 486 feet above sea level, it covers a land area of 37.3 square miles. Population in the year 2000 was 22,563. Industries providing employment include educational, health and social services (24%), retail trade (16.3%) and manufacturing (15.9%). The nearest cities with large populations include Nashua (57 miles), Boston (93 miles) and New York (191 miles). In addition to typical municipal services provided by the city the area is served by the Cheshire Medical Center, Keene State College, Antioch New England Graduate School, Franklin Pierce College and the Keene Public Library and the Dillant Hopkins Airport. Keene is also well known in the region for the quality of service programs available to families with low incomes.

B. Moving to Work Program (MTW) Demonstration Summary

Keene Housing Authority was selected as a Moving to Work participant after responding to HUD's initial request for proposals in 1996. The MTW agreement was executed in 1999 and included all of the agency's Public Housing portfolio and Section 8 allocation with the exception of the Mainstream Voucher program. KHA began implementing the program on October 1, 1999 for all Public Housing residents. The Section 8 program was implemented in 2000.

The three statutory objectives of the Moving to Work demonstration program are to:

1. Reduce cost and achieve greater cost effectiveness in Federal expenditures;
2. Give incentives to families with children where the head of household is working, seeking work, or is preparing for work by participating in on the 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.

In accordance with those objectives, the primary goals of **Keene Housing Authority's Spectrum MTW Demonstration Program** include:

- Increase share of residents making progress toward self-sufficiency.
- Improve the quality of assisted housing stock.

- Provide a full SPECTRUM of housing options for applicants.
- Increase self-sufficiency among families.
- Enhance Keene Housing Authority's capacity to plan and deliver effective programs.
- Increase resident satisfaction with their housing and with Keene Housing Authority programs.

Summary of Keene Housing Authority's MTW Activities and Initiatives

KHA's plans and activities for 2010 are to continue with its successful MTW initiatives while rehabilitation continues on the Keene Affordable Housing properties (KHA's former Public Housing inventory that completed the Disposition process in September 2009). New and ongoing strategies include the following:

- Utilize MTW flexibility to **increase housing options and services** through collaborative projects, partnerships and development with local, regional and national institutions.
- Continue the **Keene Affordable Housing Project** to **rehabilitate and preserve** the majority of KHA's housing inventory.
- Provide subsidy reform initiatives, through the **Section 8 Housing Assistance Coupon program**, to provide incentives for working families to achieve and maintain employment.
- Operate the **Safety Net Program** to provide temporary relief for people who experience an increase in rent burden due to a qualified decrease in income or increase in rent.
- Provide supportive services such as the **Resident Self-Reliance Program, Congregate Housing Program and Youth Services to increase success rates of tenants and participants.**
- **Diversify funding sources** to ensure the long term financial viability of all housing and service programs, including MTW initiatives, operated by the Keene Housing Authority.
- **Maximize efficiency** of operations and **streamline service delivery** through MTW initiatives such as self-certifications and standard deductions.
- Develop plans to implement **energy efficiency programs** at properties owned or managed by KHA.
- Engage in regular **organizational and staff development initiatives** to accommodate the shifting paradigm of how we serve residents and the community.

C. 2010 Operating Goals

Spectrum Housing Choices

It is a goal of KHA's, beyond the MTW demonstration, to expand housing options. Combining the flexibility of the MTW demonstration with KHA's various housing programs, have dramatically expanded housing choices for Monadnock region residents in the past 10 years. Housing opportunities that have been expanded under the MTW program due to the following strategies:

- Rent reasonableness exemption allows for increased housing options for participants in the Section 8 program.
- Income eligibility up to 80% in the Section 8 program achieves a greater income mix of families.
- Collaborations with local shelter programs and the creation of the Heading for Home Homeownership program increase the spectrum of housing options.
- Development of LIHTC programs has provided additional housing choices since 2006 for applicants on Keene Housing Authority Section 8 waiting lists.
- Site based waiting list system for all KHA Project-Based Voucher programs.

The number of affordable housing units in KHA's general portfolio has increased by 131 over the past six years due to development and acquisition of 5 developments. After several years of developing and acquiring affordable housing, KHA's focus is on preserving its older existing housing stock and their financial viability. The majority of these efforts over the next two years will be concentrated on the Keene Affordable Housing Project (KAHP). This projects involves rehabilitating the 213 KAHP units using conventional financing.

Extensive rehabilitation is also required at Wedgewood Duplexes, Central Square Terrace, and Chamberlain Block properties, none of which are part of the KAHP or the Moving to Work portfolio. Some of these properties are over 100 years old and are located in historic downtown Keene, NH.

In the summer of 2009, KHA conducted focus groups inviting local social service agencies, non-profits, residents and the community at large to gather information for its agency wide strategic planning process and MTW Annual Plan. Topics discussed included public perceptions of the KHA, ease of access and comprehension of KHA's services, future goals for KHA, services for residents and housing needs of the community. A wide representation of people attended the focus group including community leaders, KHA Commissioners and staff, KHA residents, representatives from local hospitals, Chamber of Commerce and City Welfare to name a few. Themes that emerged from the focus groups are reflected in the KHA's strategic goals for 2010.

Keene Housing Authority Operating Goals

-  Develop comprehensive public relations and marketing campaign to expand awareness of services provided by KHA and affordable housing issues.
-  Enhance access to KHA's programs incorporating new technology and social media.
-  Improve quality, maintenance and financial viability of KHA's entire housing portfolio.
-  Explore housing needs for special populations in Keene and Cheshire county.
-  Provide supportive services for residents to help them maintain housing and achieve economic self-sufficiency.
-  Incorporate green building techniques into property rehabilitation.
-  Convert all of KHA's residential portfolio into tobacco free communities.

Section II. General Housing Authority Operating Information

A. Housing Portfolio

The Keene Housing Authority owns and manages 479 units of housing. 228 of these units were Public Housing. Fifteen of the Public Housing scattered sites units were sold in June 2009 in accordance with KHA’s approved Disposition plan. Ownership of the remaining units, called Keene Affordable Housing, transferred to the Monadnock Affordable Housing Corporation (MAHC) when the Disposition was concluded in September of 2009. KHA has expended all capital funds from 2008. As a result of the Disposition, KHA did not receive capital funds in 2009, and will not be eligible for capital funds in the future. Prior to the Disposition, KHA did receive stimulus funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. These funds were used to make improvements in the Public Housing stock and all funds have been expended.



A building at Harper Acres, one of the Keene Affordable Housing Developments scheduled for extensive rehabilitation in 2010.

Other KHA Owned or Managed Housing Inventory

The remaining properties owned by Keene Housing Authority are governed by the IRS’s Low Income Housing Tax Credit program (LIHTC), HUD’s Multi-family program, Community



The Mill Buildings, one of several community buildings with office space for local non-profits located at Harper Acres. The buildings were moved to their location to be saved from demolition and rehabbed to serve as a community space for residents at Harper Acres. This is the backside view from the Ashuelot River Bike Trail.

Development and Block Grant program, Rural Development and Home programs. Keene also owns and manages approximately 28 commercial spaces disbursed among several different properties in Keene. Most of these spaces are rented to local non-profit agencies providing essential services to residents of the KHA.

Keene Housing Authority also provides technical assistance and support to other local non-profit housing agencies. Such

agencies include Cheshire Homes and Cheshire Housing Trust also operating in Keene and the Monadnock region.

Keene Housing Authority Residential Housing Portfolio

Property	Number of Units	Housing Type	Description
Program: Multi-family Section 8 New Construction			
Meadow Road	18	Family	2 and 3 BDR Townhouse Style units
Wedgewood Duplexes	30	Family	2 and 3 BDR Duplex units
Central Square Terrace	90	Senior and Disabled	Efficiencies and 1 BDR units in High Rise w/ Elevator
Program: Low Income Housing Tax Credit			
Riverbend (Includes HOME units)	24	Family	2 and 3 BDR Townhouse Style units
Evergreen Knoll (Includes HOME units and RD Subsidy)	32	Family	2 and 3 BDR Townhouse Style units
Stone Arch Village Senior Housing (Includes HOME units)	33	Senior	Senior High Rise w/ Elevator 1 and 2 bedrooms
Stone Arch Village Family Housing	24	Family	2 and 3 BDR Townhouse Style units
Special Programs: Conventional, CDBG, State Financed, etc.			
Keene Affordable Housing	213	Family	Range of units and building styles from efficiencies to 4 bedrooms
Chamberlain Block	12	Family	1 and 2 BDR units in High Rise
Cottage St.	3	Family	2 and 3 BDR units
Total Units in KHA Residential Portfolio	479		

Moving to Work Housing Choice Vouchers

As part of the Moving to Work Demonstration program, Keene created the Housing Assistance Coupon program (HAC) in 2000 as an alternative to HUD's Housing Choice Voucher program (HCV). All of KHA's Section 8 assistance, with the exception of the 50 Mainstream Vouchers, is administered under the MTW program. KHA's Section 8 MTW Voucher allocation includes 359 Section 8 Vouchers. Some of the assistance is still issued as HCVs rather than HACs for two reasons. KHA continues to honor HCV contracts with landlords signed before the implementation of the HAC program. Existing families are offered the option to convert their HCV to a HAC each year at their annual recertification. KHA also administered HCVs to Section 8 recipients opting to

move into KHA’s LIHTC properties to avoid confusion in regulatory compliance between the two programs.

In June of 2008, Keene applied for and was awarded 228 replacement vouchers to be used for the Public Housing units in conjunction with the Disposition increasing Keene’s MTW Section 8 Voucher allocation to 587.

Project-Based Section 8

Out of Keene’s 587 allocated vouchers, up to 50% will be project based. The process started in September of 2009 in the Keene Affordable Housing units. All of these units are currently occupied by former Public Housing tenants who received the option to remain in their units and receive the Section 8 Project-Based assistance or move with a voucher in March of 2009. These vouchers are administered as part of the MTW Section 8 allocation called the Housing Assistance Coupon program. The plan to project base up to 50% of KHA’s total voucher allocation in the KHA owned and managed properties was included and approved as part of the 2008 MTW Annual Plan.

Properties with Project-Based Vouchers

Property	Number of Units/Vouchers	Housing Type	Description
Harper Acres	112	Family	Studio, 1 and 2 bedroom units in walk-up garden style buildings.
Bennett Block	14	Family	Studio, 1 and 2 bedroom units with elevator access in a 3 story building.
Harmony Lane	38	Family	2 and 3 bedroom Townhouse style units
North/Gilsum	29	Family	3 and 4 bedroom townhouse style units
Scattered Sites	20	Family	1, 2 and 3 bedroom units available in 2 family homes scattered throughout Keene.
Total	213		

B. Occupancy and Lease-up Information

The Moving to Work lease-up projection includes the additional 228 replacement vouchers, which will be fully utilized in the Keene Affordable Housing units. KHA has a Section 8 waiting list that is approximately 6 years long. We expect the length to increase throughout 2010 due to increased demand for assistance, higher rents and utility costs and full utilization of voucher funds with little projected turnover. KHA’s voucher participants are successful in finding housing in the Keene community as well as within LIHTC units owned and managed by the Keene Housing Authority.

Projected Section 8 Lease-ups for 2010

Moving to Work: 587
Mainstream: 50

C. Waiting List Information

KHA operates a Mainstream HCV waiting list and a MTW HAC waiting list plus five Project-Based Voucher (PBV) waiting lists. Applicants have the option of being placed on any or all of the programs waiting lists. KHA converted the existing site-based Public Housing waiting list to Section 8 Project-Based waiting lists for each of the Keene Affordable Housing developments. Applicants converted to the PBV waiting lists retained their original date and time of application and also have the option of being on the Section HAC and/ or Mainstream waiting list. The developments include:

- Harper Acres
- Harmony Lane
- Damon Court
- Bennett Block
- Scattered Sites

Waiting List	Current Households	Current Length	Projected Length
Mainstream	151	4 yrs	2 yrs
MTW HAC Vouchers	451	6 yrs	6.5 yrs
Project-Based Vouchers	335	8 months to 2 yrs based on BRM size	1.5 to 2.5 yrs

KHA is not considering closing any of the waiting lists at this time. Closing the waiting lists might prevent applicants from accessing resource and referral services Intake staff provide to applicants while they are on our waiting lists. Waiting lists will continue to be purged at least annually. The next purge is scheduled for March 2010. The waiting lists were last purged in March of 2009.

Section III. Non-MTW Related Housing Authority Information

Reporting in this section is optional.

Homeownership

The Heading for Home Program (H4H) offers eligible participants the option of buying a home with mortgage payment assistance through the Section 8 Housing Assistance Coupon (HAC). Eligible applicants for H4H must be eligible for a HAC. H4H participants are required to participate in the Homeownership Seminars facilitated by Cheshire Housing Trust, a HUD approved homeownership counseling agency. Cheshire Housing Trust also administers Individual Development Accounts (IDA), which serves as an additional resource for those who want to save money for homeownership. Participants are required to participate in counseling sessions and financial management workshops. Participants receive a match from the IDA program up to certain limits for contributions they make to their savings accounts. The money can then be used for eligible homeownership expenses.

Keene used its' MTW authority to permit households who graduated from the Resident Self-Reliance program to remain eligible for a flat rate of assistance if they were over the income limits but below 140% of the AMI. The purpose was to provide an incentive and reward for RSR families who were successful in the program. Keene didn't want to penalize families who were able to increase their income during the program by denying them homeownership vouchers.

Youth Services

The BUILDING BRIDGES program uses several strategies to influence youth development, family and community to prevent juvenile delinquency. On average about 25 youth are served by the program annually. The program is offered to all family residents living in public housing operated by the Keene Housing Authority at both Harmony Lane and North Street housing communities. It is funded by a local grant through the Division of Children Youth and Families. There is a Family Activity Center at each community from which the program operates. The center has been the hub of the community, attracting and encouraging positive interaction with all youth, adults and staff. Program components include:

- Case management services for youth and their families
- Daily after-school and summer program for youth ages 5 through 10 (open to all youth up to age 18)
- Life skill workshops for teens and adults
- Community events and improvement projects

All families that move to either Harmony Lane or North Street are automatically referred to the Building Bridges Youth Services programs by Keene Housing Authority staff. The Building Bridges program is integrated with the Resident Self-Reliance program for adults so all members of the family are served. After a family has signed the lease, they are required to participate in the RSR

assessment that identifies the family's assets and risk factors associated with the following categories:

- Employment
- Financial management
- Parenting and Family Planning
- Education
- Wellness
- Household management
- Interpersonal skills

The family then creates a plan to develop their skills to achieve competency in each of these areas for a five year period. The plans outline specific steps they must take within a given quarter to make progress in achieving the competencies. The plan includes required skill development activities they must complete in order to achieve a competency. Adults participate in group quarterly goal meetings to discuss and problem-solve ways to overcome obstacles in meeting their goals. Participants benefit from not only the facilitation and knowledge of the Resident Service Coordinator but they also benefit from their peers. Participants are likely to listen to others who are experiencing similar situations, offer advice and support and gain self-confidence when they have the opportunity to share an idea, offer advice or help someone problem solve and find themselves in an 'expert' role.

Youth participate in a similar process. They are interviewed by staff and a youth development plan is formulated with their parents that list activities the parents, youth and children can do to support the plan. The assessment reviews risk and protective factors and a plan is created to reduce high risk factors associated with the individual youth and increase their protective factors. Progress on the plan is reviewed and revised quarterly with youth, parents and staff.

Homework Lab runs daily for 1 ½ hours providing youth with tutoring assistance and academic enrichment programs. As a result, there has been an overall improvement in the grades of youth attending the program in the past three years. Keene Housing Authority Youth Service Coordinators have developed strong partnerships with the local schools including Franklin, Fuller and Keene Middle School. Staff attends lunches with students at school and as needed meetings with teachers and guidance counselors. Schools provide copies of youth report cards and share weekly homework assignments with staff. Teachers have visited the sites to tutor individual students and provide staff with tools to assist youth with their academics.

Daily activities reflect current risks and needs of the youth in the program. The program's main focus is to serve youth ages 5 through 10, but youth up to age 18 may participate. Many teens are able to participate as volunteers, in the program. Middle school age youth are referred to the local MANY Options program by staff; all fees are paid by Keene Housing Authority.

Workshops are offered for all teens and adults in all of the competency areas. They are offered throughout the year as resources permit and demand requires and include GED classes, computer training, employment retention, household management, financial management and parenting. Parenting workshops are required for parents with high family risk factors such as inconsistent rules at home, abuse, or violence. Workshops offered encourage parent teacher conferences and build the ability of parents to communicate effectively with schools on behalf of their children. Teachers and KHA staff facilitate the workshop at the Family Activity Centers.

BUILDING BRIDGES Youth Services Program seeks to build community connections by offering events that encourage positive interactions and build a sense of ownership and responsibility. Youth coordinate community service events focusing on their neighborhood such as community beautification projects, cooking and delivering meals for families, participating in Kick Butts Day or hosting games for nearby elderly residents. The Family Activity Center hosts family events, and meals at the activity center are cooked and prepared by youth and parent volunteers.



Daily homework labs facilitate academic assistance and encourage youth to complete their school assignments in an organized and efficient fashion; thereby developing positive and productive attitudes towards education. Volunteers from Keene State College help facilitate daily homework labs.

Family Planning Collaborative

KHA and other social service and health care providers recognized that unintended pregnancies (which result in about half of the births in the United States) are a major threat to the health and financial well being of children and families. They are also responsible for enormous social service and health costs. These agencies formed the FPC to coordinate their education and case management efforts.

With limited funding, the FPC:

- Keeps records of pregnancy intentions and other characteristics of women giving birth at Cheshire Medical Center (CMC)
- Provides education and support to social service providers to help them discuss family planning and birth control. Also provides educational materials.
- Coordinates efforts with Dartmouth Hitchcock and Planned Parenthood to provide birth control education.
- Provides free condoms in some social service restrooms.
- Provides birth control education at Keene's transitional housing programs and other sites.

Section IV. Long Term Vision for KHA's Moving to Work Program

After completing the Disposition of all of its' Public Housing inventory in 2009, KHA's focus will switch exclusively to the Section 8 Housing Assistance Coupon program. Major challenges in 2010 include administration of Section 8 assistance and funding the Resident Self-Reliance and Congregate Programs. The need for Section 8 assistance is far beyond the funds allocated to the Keene Housing Authority. The waiting list could easily reach over 7 years in 2010. KHA will continue to analyze utilization and funding in the Section 8 program to determine if policy changes are warranted such as changes in payment standards, rent reform, preferences and other initiatives.

Keene's Moving to Work Vision

-  Affordability for residents
-  Permanency and availability of housing
-  Flexibility to meet local and changing needs
-  Easily accessed and efficiently delivered services
-  Emphasis on resident self-sufficiency and independent living
-  Collaborative service delivery
-  Green and energy efficient housing

The Disposition of the Public Housing has affected KHA's eligibility for services grants through HUD. Keene will need to determine the level and types of services it wants to provide for its residents in 2010 and beyond. Staff are working on developing a sustainability plan to preserve service coordination for residents and expand it to other properties in Keene Housing Authority owned properties. Keene's mission supports the integration of services, as a critical component, in the successful management of housing operations.

Section V. Proposed MTW Activities

While KHA is not proposing any major new initiatives in 2010, it is seeking to make modifications to existing activities to support the Keene Affordable Housing Project. This section provides information on the proposed changes to two existing initiatives as well a general description of the initiative.

A. Proposed Change to Existing Initiative: Alternative Recertification Schedule

Statutory Objective(s): Increase cost effectiveness/efficiency

Baseline: Estimated baseline of 350 certifications conducted annually. Additional baseline information will be provided in 2009 Annual Report.

Benchmarks: 30% reduction in required annual certifications; 15% reduction in voucher administrative costs

Measures: Number of certification required under traditional HUD rules vs. MTW rules; Decrease in administrative costs of vouchers; Changes in monthly HAP

Proposed Change

KHA conducts certifications every 3 years for families in the income-based subsidy program. In the two interim years, KHA recalculates subsidy based on information families provide in self-certifications. This has posed a problem, with mostly elderly and disabled families who are confused about their sources of income and how to report it. KHA is proposing to recalculate subsidy during the interim years by using EIV data to verify available income information in addition to self-certifications. Information not available through EIV would be provided by the tenant using the self-certifications. Most tenants in the income based program receive Social Security benefits. Social Security income benefits would be calculated by applying the COLA to the previously verified Social Security benefit. Any income derived from assets would be self-certified by the residents. KHA continues to reserve the right to verify information if tenant reporting of income is inconsistent or accuracy of information is in question.

Families in the step subsidy program are required to participate in a recertification with every step change and then every 3 years once they reach the final step. During the interim years, families are required to complete self-certifications. Since their rent is not based on income, there is no need to use EIV or supplement the self-certification with other forms of verification, as they have no bearing on the subsidy calculation.

The intended impact will remove confusion and frustration for income-based families during the recertification process and assure that KHA is not utilizing more subsidy than necessary while continuing to provide sufficient subsidy levels for the family. It will also allow a higher percentage of funding to be allocated for voucher subsidy rather than program administration.

The proposed change is incorporating HUD regulation for the use of EIV and is not a rent reform activity. Additionally, there is not a proposed change in how we calculate subsidy, rather, it is a change in how we verify income information, KHA did not conduct an impact analysis.

Initiative Summary

Annually Keene Housing Authority reexamines the family characteristics to ensure the family has the correct size voucher. KHA conducts a full recertification of income during the years a family is moving from one Step subsidy level to the next. Once the family has reached the final step, a full recertification of their income occurs every three years. During the interim years, households report their income through the self-certification process. Households still execute a HUD consent form every year. Full certifications are held every three years for income-based households who are not in the Step Rent or Subsidy program. During the interim years, they will complete a self-certification form.

Keene also removed the interim requirement for reporting increases in income.

Obtaining verification, a large part of the certification process, consumes a tremendous amount of staff time. There is no need to conduct a full recertification for families if their rent is based on a step subsidy system and not their income. Continuing the process creates excess administrative work and defeats the purpose of the demonstration. Families with income-based rents in the

MTW program are mostly on fixed incomes. Keene, as mentioned in the proposed MTW Initiatives section of this report, will be incorporating EIV and hand delivered documentation into the self-certification process for families in the income-based program. The standard deduction, discussed in the next section, further removes the need to conduct a full recertification.

This activity was originally authorized as an amendment to Keene's original MTW Plan approved by HUD on October 6, 2004.

Plan Year Implemented: Amendment No.3 to the MTW original Agreement signed 10/6/2004

Data Collection: Keene Housing Authority will track the changes in HAP subsidy administered during the first year of implementation. KHA will also consider other factors that affect changes in subsidy such as rent increases, changes in the VPS and utility allowances etc. It would not be necessary to evaluate the proposed change to this initiative on an ongoing basis one we determine it does result in a cost savings and 2) KHA is simply incorporating already HUD mandated use of the EIV system into its self-certification process for income-based vouchers. If a cost savings is not realized, KHA will re-evaluate EIV and the self-certification process for income-based vouchers.

Authorization(s): Attachment C. Section D.2 Rent Policies and Term Limits.

The Agency is authorized to adopt and implement any reasonable policy to establish payment standards, rents or subsidy levels for tenant-based assistance that differ from the currently mandated program requirements in the 1937 Act and its implementing regulations. The Agency is authorized to adopt and implement any reasonable policies to calculate the tenant portion of the rent that differ from the currently mandated program requirements in the 1937 Act and its implementing regulations. This authorization waives certain provisions of Sections 8(o)(1), 8(o)(2), 8(o)(3), 8(o)(10) and 8(o)(13)(H)-(I) of the 1937 Act and 24 C.F.R. 982.508, 982.503 and 982.518, as necessary to implement the Agency's Annual MTW Plan.

Data Collection: See Initiative Ongoing Eligibility.

Authorization(s): Attachment C. Section D.2 Rent Policies and Term Limits.

The Agency is authorized to adopt and implement any reasonable policy to establish payment standards, rents or subsidy levels for tenant-based assistance that differ from the currently mandated program requirements in the 1937 Act and its implementing regulations. The Agency is authorized to adopt and implement any reasonable policies to calculate the tenant portion of the rent that differ from the currently mandated program requirements in the 1937 Act and its implementing regulations. This authorization waives certain provisions of Sections 8(o)(1), 8(o)(2), 8(o)(3), 8(o)(10) and 8(o)(13)(H)-(I) of the 1937 Act and 24 C.F.R. 982.508, 982.503 and 982.518, as necessary to implement the Agency's Annual MTW Plan.

B. Proposed Change to Existing Initiative: Resident Self-Reliance Program

Statutory Objective(s): Give incentives to families with children where the head of household is working, seeking work, or is preparing for work by participating in on the job training, educational programs, or programs that assist people to obtain employment and become economically self-sufficient.

Baseline: 47% households employed FT in 1999; 56 out of 110 households increased earned income in 2008; 39% households exiting the program in 2005 left because they achieved self-sufficiency

Benchmarks: 15% increase in number of households employed; 75% increase in earned income among households reporting no income

Measures: Percentage of households employed; Earned income of households

Proposed Change

KHA is proposing to reduce the Resident Self-Reliance Program participation requirement for non-elderly and disabled families from 5 years to 3 years. KHA is proposing this change to allow limited staff resources to focus on working with families in their first 3 years of the program before they reach the lowest subsidy level. Families wanting to continue after 3 years may do so but on a voluntary basis. Families may be required to participate in RSR activities after 3 years if they enter the Safety Net program. The required RSR activities will be listed as a condition on their Safety Net Contract Amendment.

KHA has reduced the number of Resident Services Coordinators from one to 2 as a result of losing eligibility for the PH FSS grant. As a result, KHA is concentrating staff time and resources on the first 3 years of participation in the RSR. The first 3 years are most crucial to helping a family address factors affecting their employment and financial stability. This change isn't a new initiative but rather a modification to an existing initiative. The anticipated impact on family's ability to achieve self-sufficiency as a result of the reduction in participation requirements and staff is minimal, if any. Keene implemented a waiver program in 2005 permitting households to waive out of the program if they met certain requirements. KHA found that after 3 years most households in the program were stable and doing well. Those that continue to have problems paying their rent will likely apply for Safety Net and therefore be required to re-enter the program so those who are having difficulty still will receive services. This change focuses resources on the households that need most need assistance. Keene will monitor the number of households who, after 3 years, are still not meeting important self-sufficiency benchmarks such as maintaining employment, paying their rent on time as well as their rent burdens.

Initiative Summary

All families participating in the Step Subsidy programs are required to participate in the RSR program. An expansion of Keene Housing Authority's former Family Self-Sufficiency program, RSR provides service coordination and case management to help families become economically self-sufficient, recognizing that self-sufficiency will vary widely based on individual participant's

abilities. Every family in the program is assigned a Resident Service Coordinator who is responsible for coaching the participant's progress.

The RSR program defines competencies for self sufficiency. These competencies outline the skills necessary to achieve economic self-sufficiency. Each family's needs are identified during an initial assessment. The competencies families must work on are identified by the RSC and participant working together. In order to be exempt from required activities, families must demonstrate they have developed the skills associated with each competency. Competency categories include the core skill groups of financial management, employment, education, and family planning in addition to the self-development groups of interpersonal skills, wellness, healthy relationships and household management. The program is uniquely tailored to the family's skills, resources and goals. Each family works to achieve competencies specific to their circumstances, since the abilities and backgrounds of participants are diverse and one plan would not be suitable for all families.

There are four main program requirements participants must engage in to remain active in the Spectrum program and maintain their housing assistance:

- Develop a financial plan
- Participate in quarterly goal setting meetings
- Participate in required skill development activities
- Make reasonable progress toward ISTP goals

Develop a Financial Plan

Each family receives extensive counseling in financial management from the moment they lease-up in the program. They are taught how to track their income and expenses, develop a financial plan, calculate their net worth, read and interpret their credit score and manage debt.

Quarterly Goal Meetings

Families meet on a quarterly basis to review progress on their goals in small groups of up to 20 people. The intention of these meetings is to provide an opportunity for program participants to network, problem solve, share successful strategies and learn about new resources, programs, and financial management and employment strategies. Topics may include tax filing, job search strategies, saving for a financial goal, etc. At the end of every meeting, participants update their Individual Service and Training Plan (ISTP). An ISTP outlines the family's goals and the steps and resources required to meet them.

Skill Development Activities

Families who need to achieve competencies are required to accomplish take home activities or workshops that will assist them in developing the associated skills. There are numerous workshops facilitated by Keene Housing Authority staff, as well as programs run by outside agencies.

Goal Setting

Every person is required to develop and update his or her ISTP every quarter. The ISTP helps families identify a goal and break it down into simple steps. Participants are taught how to write SMART goals (Specific, measurable, achievable, resources, and time lines). They are required to document and track their progress on these forms and revise them as their goals change or new goals are added once significant milestones have been achieved.

The RSC acts as a coach and mentor guiding their participants to self-sufficiency. All RSCs are trained in financial management programs and are available to meet one on one to provide additional assistance to participants.

RSR Waiver

In 2005, the RSR waiver was implemented for those who have achieved all of their required competencies. The waiver removes certain RSR required activities with the exception of an annual meeting with their RSC to review progress toward their goals. KHA anticipates a majority of families who qualify for this waiver will move into the Homeownership program but not all.

In order to receive the waiver, the family must present a portfolio that demonstrates how they have achieved the required competencies and the progress they have made on their goals. This process provides recognition for families for their accomplishments in the program. The skills they learn in creating and presenting the portfolio also helps them gain valuable public speaking and presentation skills valuable in the workplace.

Quarterly Goal Meetings

Two Tracks, employment and Finance, are offered every quarter. Within each Track, there are three groups from beginner to advance skill level from which participants can elect to attend. Each of the groups is offered twice every quarter for a total of 12 meetings every quarter. Agendas are based on need identified from data collected from families in the program and their ideas.

Employment Track Meetings

- Track A Career and Life Planning
- Track B Surviving the Job
- Track C Management and Advancement

Financial Track Meetings

- Track A Financial Management
- Track B Credit and Debt Management
- Track C Homeownership and Long Term Financial Planning

First year families must participate in Goal Setting at a Glance and Developing Your Financial Plan which serve as the foundation for developing skills they will build upon as they move through the different tracks throughout their participation in the program.

The purpose of the program is to provide families with the knowledge, skills and resources they need to achieve economic self-reliance. This task has become more difficult for families over the past several years with dramatic increase in costs of basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter and transportation. In addition to affordable housing and livable wages, families will continue to need the support of the program to navigate the turbulent economy. Participants receive free employment and financial counseling to help them achieve their goals.

Plan Year Implemented: Original MTW Agreement executed in 1999

Data Collection: Data is collected from families during quarterly goal meetings reported on a case management form. The information is then entered into an access database that has tracked all program participants since 1999. While primitive, the database has served its purpose. Keene has tracked since the inception of the demonstration, a wide variety of data on families in the program including public benefits, income, employment and job benefits, education level, service needs, child care, savings, assets and credit issues to name a few. This information is used by the RSC to evaluate the ability of participants to achieve self-reliance and the obstacles they may face in reaching the goal. Self-sufficiency is defined as moving to non-subsidized rental on the private market or homeownership, employed and rent burden at 40% or below of the household's income.

Authorization(s): *Attachment C Section E. Authorizations Related to Family Self-Sufficiency. The Agency is authorized to operate any of its self-sufficiency and training programs, including its Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program and any successor programs exempt from certain HUD program requirements. These may include those requirements governing program size or participation, including whether to establish escrow accounts and other rent incentives and whether to establish mandatory self-sufficiency participation requirements. If the agency receives dedicated funding for an FSS coordinator, such funds must be used to employ a self-sufficiency coordinator. In developing and operating such programs, the Agency is authorized to establish strategic relationships and partnerships with local private and public agencies and service providers to leverage expertise and funding. However, notwithstanding the above, any funds granted pursuant to a competition must be used in accordance with the NOFA and the approved application and work plan. This authorization waives certain provisions of Section 23 of the 1937 Act and 24 C.F.R. 984 as necessary to implement the Agency's Annual MT Plan.*

Section VI. Ongoing MTW Activities

This section of the reports provides an updated description of ongoing MTW initiatives. Progress on the initiatives is provided in the MTW Annual report. Keene Housing Authority is not using an outside evaluator for any of its Moving to Work activities. All evaluation and data collection is conducted by program staff. In some instances, baseline data is not available and will be collected where possible when completing the 2009 MTW Annual Report based on the initiative. KHA implemented its MTW program in 1999 and baseline data was not collected on individual initiatives. The Urban Institute did collect baseline data but Keene does not have access to the data they collected and it was specific to Keene's initiatives. Therefore, it is not accurate to evaluate an initiative based on a baseline collected 11 years into the demonstration program when numerous changes have already occurred. Establishing baselines as of 2005, 2007 or even 2009 are not providing accurate information or a true picture of the changes or impact of an initiative. It is much easier for new programs to establish baselines and comply with the new reporting requirements.

A. Initiative: Project-Based Vouchers

Statutory Objective(s): Increase housing options

Baseline: Zero PBV units as of 1/2009.

Benchmarks: 213 units of PBV's by 12/2010

Measures: Number of housing units added to PBV inventory; Supplemental measures: Income distribution of Section 8 tenants; Average time spent on the waiting list; Number of vouchers issued vs. utilized

The ability to determine the policy to select owners and percentage of project-base vouchers created an important opportunity for housing authorities in the MTW program to increase the number of affordable housing units in their communities. KHA has designated properties managed by partnerships of which KHA is a part to receive a portion of the project-based vouchers. A majority of the Project-Based Vouchers have been placed with the Keene Affordable Housing Project. The remaining 14% will be project-based in other LIHTC properties owned and managed by partnerships of which KHA is a part. Without vouchers, there is a narrow window of applicants who are income eligible for LIHTC programs AND can afford the rent. The ability to project-base vouchers provides long-term affordability to a wider range of applicants who qualify for and can afford the housing.

Data Collection: Data will be maintained in the Tracker Systems Software which is used to administer all of KHA Section 8 Voucher programs.

Plan Year Implemented: 2008 Annual Plan

Authorization (s): Attachment C. Section D.7 Establishment of an Agency MTW Section 8 Project-Based Program. The Agency is authorized to Project-Base Section 8 assistance at properties owned directly or indirectly by the Agency that are not public housing, subject to HUD's subsidy layering. If the Agency chooses to project-base Section 8 assistance at such properties, the Agency recognizes and accepts that such units would no longer be eligible for operating subsidy provided under Section 9(e) of the 1937 Housing Act or for future capital funds provided under section 9(d) for those units if it chooses to use this authorization. Project-based assistance for such owned units does not need to be competitively bid, nor are they owned units subject to any required assessments for voluntary conversion. This authorization waives certain provisions of Section 8(o)(13)(B and D0 of the 1937 Act and 24 C.F.R. 982.1, 982.102 and 24 C.F.R. Part 983 as necessary to implement the Agency's Annual MTW Plan.

B. Initiative: Housing Assistance Coupon Program (HAC) Stepped Subsidies

Statutory Objective(s): Incentive for self-sufficiency; Increase cost effectiveness/efficiency

Baseline: 100% voucher utilization or 359 vouchers in 2001. 47% of MTW households employed in 1999; 29% MTW households exiting program in 2004 evicted for non-payment of rent.

Benchmarks: 20% Reduction in administration costs; Increase of 15% in share of households working; 10% or less of households exiting the program due to program termination for non-payment of rent

Measures: Increase in number of households served and vouchers utilized; Increase share of households working; Number of households leaving program due to eviction for non-payment of rent or rent burden;

The Keene Housing Authority provides Section 8 Voucher assistance, paid on behalf or directly to the household, in the form of a Housing Assistance Coupon. The HAC can be used to pay for rent in units operated by private landlords. KHA calculates subsidy based on one of two methods; (1) Step subsidy method and (2) Income-based subsidy method. Elderly and disabled households are allowed to choose between participating in the step subsidy method of calculation, which includes required participation in the Resident Self-Reliance Program, or the income-based method of subsidy calculation. All families that do not have an elderly or disabled head of household are required to participate in the Step subsidy method and Resident Self-Reliance Program.

The Step subsidy method provides a flat rate subsidy that is based on unit size and the number of years in the program. The subsidy is gradually reduced over a five year period. The first year's tenant portion of rent is determined by subtracting 20% of gross income (or welfare rent) from the VPS. If, when calculating the first year subsidy, a family's subsidy would be less than the 2nd step but more than the 3rd step, the subsidy would begin at the 2nd step (65% of the VPS) and remain at that step for three years. After 3 years, the subsidy would then drop down to the 3rd step (45% of the VPS) for the remaining two years. If the family's subsidy would be less than the 3rd step, the subsidy would begin at the 3rd step and remain at that step for the full five years. There is a minimum rent of \$50. The second and third step subsidies are based on a percentage of the local Fair Market Rents. Utility rebates are not paid as part of the program as a minimum rent has been established.

Housing Assistance Coupon Program Subsidies Effective 1/1/2009

1st Step (1st year)	2nd Step at 65% of FMR (2nd year)	3rd Step at 45% of FMR (4th year)	Bedroom Size
Lower of Welfare rent or VPS - 20% of Gross Income	\$555	\$380	1 Bedroom
Lower of Welfare rent or VPS - 20% of Gross Income	\$690	\$470	2 Bedroom
Lower of Welfare rent or VPS - 20% of Gross Income	\$830	\$570	3 Bedroom

The subsidy is directly deposited into the family's bank account on the 1st of the month. The family is then responsible for paying their rent in full and on time. In the case of elderly and disabled households, they may choose to receive the subsidy directly or have it paid to the landlord as in traditional Section 8 HCV programs.

The payment process is explained to landlords in the Landlord Handbook and upon entry into the program. Landlords are sent letters detailing the family's obligation for paying their rent. In addition, the letter states that if the family does not pay the contract rent in full by the fifth of month, then the landlord should contact Keene Housing Authority who will work with the family to address issues preventing timely payment.

Keene Housing Authority works with families to resolve issues of late payments or non-payment of rent. Initially, some families do not have bank accounts and are required to come into the office to pick up their subsidy checks on the first of the month. The option of providing the rental assistance subsidy to the family is also given to the elderly and individuals with disabilities.

Keene has been operating the HAC Step Rent program for almost 10 years. As previous reports and data have demonstrated, it has provided incentives for families to move to work. Families who are not working receive a strong incentive to gain employment and take advantage of the employment programs. Since the family portion of rent does not increase in the step subsidy program when their income increases, the family may use it to finance other costs of living necessities, reduce debt or build savings. The RSR program is designed to help tenants gain the personal financial management skills and knowledge to make decisions that best help them achieve their goals. These strategies help the family stabilize and advance their financial and employment base over the next two years before their subsidy is reduced at years two and four of the program.

Last year the percentages of the Fair Market Rents upon which the subsidies were based were increased to help residents afford increases in rents and utilities costs by Landlords on the private

market in Keene's jurisdiction. When Project-Based Vouchers were issued to Public Housing tenants in September 2009 in conjunction with the Disposition of Public Housing, all tenants subsidies were calculated as if they were new admissions to the program. This gave families an additional break and almost all families tenant portion of rent was decreased. As a result, families rent burdens are all at 20% of their gross income.

Cases of hardship are referred to the Safety Net program. The ability to adjust the percentages of the VPS on which the step subsidies are based allows KHA to adapt the program to changing economic circumstances and maximize the use of subsidy while maintaining rent affordability for participants. In 2009, KHA increased the percentage of the FMR on which the step subsidies were based to help offset a rise in rents on the local level. The deeper level of subsidy means fewer families would be served but those being served would remain stable in their housing. KHA still has over 359 vouchers allocated, serving more families than at the start of the demonstration.

Plan Year Implemented: Original MTW Agreement executed in 1999

Data Collection: The information is tracked in an access database. Information on rents and housing subsidy are tracked in the Section 8 database. The Section 8 database, Housing Assistant Manager (HAM) uses an antiquated DOS platform with limited reporting capabilities. In January 2010, Keene will be converting to new Section 8 software, Tracker Systems, which will hopefully provide better reporting capabilities. Keene has traditionally monitored rent burdens of active participants over the years to evaluate this initiative. Keene will continue to monitor rent burdens, employment status, and local economic factors such as rents, utility costs, unemployment rates and costs of living as they impact rent affordability.

Authorizations: Attachment C. Section D.2 Rent Policies and Term Limits.

The Agency is authorized to adopt and implement any reasonable policy to establish payment standards, rents or subsidy levels for tenant-based assistance that differ from the currently mandated program requirements in the 1937 Act and its implementing regulations. The Agency is authorized to adopt and implement any reasonable policies to calculate the tenant portion of the rent that differ from the currently mandated program requirements in the 1937 Act and its implementing regulations. This authorization waives certain provisions of Sections 8(o)(1), 8(o)(2), 8(o)(3), 8(o)(10) and 8(o)(13)(H)-(I) of the 1937 Act and 24 C.F.R. 982.508, 982.503 and 982.518, as necessary to implement the Agency's Annual MTW Plan.

C. Safety Net: Keene's Hardship Policy for the Section 8 Housing Assistance Coupon Program (HAC)

The Safety Net program provides temporary relief to households experiencing a financial hardship. The Safety Net program allows participants to work off a portion of their rent by completing jobs for the Keene Housing Authority, following a payment arrangement, or requesting Keene Housing Authority allow a reduction in the rent/increase subsidy for a specified period of time by conducting an interim adjustment.

Participants who work to pay rent receive an hourly rental credit toward their rent balance. Safety Net is not meant to take the place of full-time employment for the participants who are able to work. Participants are encouraged to find employment rather than use the Safety Net program. It is meant to be temporary assistance during times of economic hardship.

Information on the Safety Net program is distributed during lease-up and/or issuance and during annual certifications and self-certifications to remind housing recipients that they are entitled to apply for assistance.

Safety Net Eligibility Guidelines

Anyone who receives assistance under the MTW program may apply for assistance through the Safety Net program. Applicants must meet all three of the following criteria to be eligible for Safety Net:

- In good standing with the Keene Housing Authority
- In compliance with the RSR program
- Income eligible: resident pays more than 30% of their monthly income toward rent

Once an applicant meets the basic eligibility criteria, the Safety Net Committee will consider additional criteria such as:

1. Applicant presents a valid, verifiable reduction in income by job loss, change in household composition of income earners or other extraordinary circumstances
2. Applicant has lost their job for good cause or is unable to work
3. Flat, Minimum or Step Rent Level is not affordable (more than 30% of the Resident's monthly income)
4. Extraordinary circumstances (such as an increase in qualified expenses)
5. Applicant applies by the 20th of the month prior to the month for which they are requesting assistance or within ten days of the effective date of their income or expense change (with exception of unexpected occurrences such as loss of job or illness).

Once an applicant has been accepted into the Safety Net program, they must sign an amendment to the Family Obligations Contract that adjusts their rent/subsidy for a specified period.

The intention of the Safety Net program is to provide a temporary hardship policy for participants who cannot afford to pay rent due to circumstances beyond their control. KHA understands that circumstances such as loss of job, death of a partner or other factors can create hardships that require additional assistance. Safety Net has also served as an opportunity for participants to develop job skills. Many of the participants who have been given a work assignment in exchange for rental credits have achieved employment through the Keene Housing Authority and other local businesses as a result of the skills and experience gained while participating in a Safety Net job assignment.

Safety Net is an indicator of the health of the rent reform initiatives. If Keene witnesses a large percentage of HAC Step Subsidy participants requesting or receiving Safety Net assistance, the agency would need to reevaluate its initiatives and external factors to determine if changes are

necessary in its policies. The number of participants has been steady over the years with five to ten households, at most, participating in the program at a given time. This will continue to serve as the benchmark as Keene monitors the number of Safety Net cases over the next year, especially as utility costs are shifted from landlords to the tenants.

Data Collection: Safety Net cases are tracked in an Access database. They are recorded as applications are received. The number of participants who request Safety Net, the reasons for their requests and the type of assistance received in Safety Net are monitored to track the impact of external factors and its MTW policies.

Authorization(s): Attachment C. Section D.2 Rent Policies and Term Limits.

The Agency is authorized to adopt and implement any reasonable policy to establish payment standards, rents or subsidy levels for tenant-based assistance that differ from the currently mandated program requirements in the 1937 Act and its implementing regulations. The Agency is authorized to adopt and implement any reasonable policies to calculate the tenant portion of the rent that differ from the currently mandated program requirements in the 1937 Act and its implementing regulations. This authorization waives certain provisions of Sections 8(o)(1), 8(o)(2), 8(o)(3), 8(o)(10) and 8(o)(13)(H)-(I) of the 1937 Act and 24 C.F.R. 982.508, 982.503 and 982.518, as necessary to implement the Agency's Annual MTW Plan.

D. Initiative: Eligibility Administration

Statutory Objective(s): Increase housing options

Baseline: 1 household achieved homeownership in 1999. See previous reports for baseline of income for new admissions

Benchmarks: 10 households achieving and maintaining homeownership; Maintain 75% of new admissions with incomes at or below the VLI

Measures: Number of households achieving homeownership; Number of households in KHA's Section 8 homeownership program; Income distribution of new admissions.

Keene Housing Authority increased program eligibility from 50% to 80% of the AMI in the Section 8 program at the start of its MTW program. Previously, the only program households in the 80% income bracket were eligible for was the Public Housing program. This change in program eligibility expanded the number of programs available for households. When the Section 8 Homeownership program was created in 2006, KHA realized that residents who progressed in the Resident Self-Reliance program and increased their incomes over 80% would be penalized by losing eligibility for the homeownership program. As a result, KHA changed eligibility requirements for this program to permit RSR households who were over 80% to be subsidized at a flat rate for homeownership. Later on, when the economy and housing market become unstable, KHA needed to address foreclosure potential among this population of participants. A policy change was added permitting households who entered the program at the flat rate subsidy to request an interim if their income changed. This policy change prevented two households from going into foreclosure.

Plan Year Implemented: Original MTW Agreement executed in 1999 for Section 8; 2008 Plan Year for Homeownership program changes

Data Collection: Data on new admissions is tracked in the Section 8 database. Data can be tracked separately for homeownership and Section 8 participants.

Authorization(s): Attachment C Section D.3. Eligibility of Participants. The agency is authorized to determine income qualifications for participation in the rental assistance program that differ from the currently mandated program requirements in the 1937 Act and its implementing regulations, as long as the requirements that i) at least 75 percent of those assisted under the demonstration are “very low-income” as defined in section 3(b)(2) of the 1937 Act, ii) substantially the same the same number of low-income persons are assisted under the demonstration as would be without the MTW authorizations contained herein, and iii) a comparable mix of families are assisted under the Agreement as would have otherwise in Section C.I. of the MTW Agreement are met. This authorization waives certain provisions of Sections 16(b) and 8(o) (40 of the 1937 Act and 24 C.F.R. 5.603, 5.609, 5.611, 5.628, and 982.201 as necessary to implement the Agency’s Annual MTW plan.

E. Initiative: HQS Inspections

Statutory Objective(s): Increase cost effectiveness/efficiency

Baseline: 100 % HQS inspections conducted by KHA in 2001. 0% conducted by Landlords in 2001

Benchmarks: 75% Reduction in HQS inspections conducted by KHA staff

Measures: Number of inspections conducted annually by KHA; Number of units failing HQS QC

Keene Housing Authority conducts initial inspections for all units and encourages new landlords to participate in the initial inspection. Landlords are encouraged to conduct annual inspections on the units. However, 64% of the landlords view inspections as a service and have requested Keene Housing Authority to conduct their annual inspection. In the HAC Program, Keene Housing Authority conducts the initial inspections (as well as educating the landlords with HQS inspections). Interim inspections are conducted by KHA if requested by the participant, landlord or staff.

Landlord Education and Participation

Landlords are encouraged to contact KHA with any questions they may have about the HQS. The owner is not responsible for a breach of the HQS that is not caused by the owner, and for which the family is responsible. Furthermore, the KHA may terminate assistance to a family because of the HQS breach caused by the family.

Family Education and Participation in HQS

KHA staff work on a regular basis to educate program participants about HQS, providing them with increased ownership over the leasing process while making sure they are not living in a sub-standard apartment. The program is designed to educate the residents so they are empowered to make informed decisions when searching for or living in an apartment. Due to this education, they are able to determine first hand if there are issues that need to be addressed to make sure the unit continuously meets HQS.

The education process starts with an intensive orientation before a HAC is issued. The participant’s responsibility for ensuring that their rental unit meets the HQS is explained during this process. During the issuance of Housing Assistance Coupons, a Keene Housing Authority staff member

provides a detailed explanation of Housing Quality Standards (HQS) utilizing the following materials:

- A Good Place to Live
- Inspection Form for the Housing Choice Voucher Program
- Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home
- KHA checklist

KHA employees inquire about and discuss HQS during quarterly meetings and monthly contacts. Participants are asked during the Annual Review, about HQS and staff briefly reviews the HQS. Participants are asked to complete an inspection form demonstrating that they have assessed the condition of their apartment and determined whether it meets HQS.

During quarterly Resident Self-Reliance program meetings, families complete and update family information including information on HQS in their units. During the Annual Recertification process, participants are asked about the HQS and a brief review of HQS is conducted.

KHA is increasing the number of quality control inspections from 5% to 20% to ensure Landlords are fully complying with HQS. The KHA employs several types of inspection strategies to ensure all subsidized apartments meet HQS in addition to extensive education programs for both the participant and the landlord.

HCV Planned Inspections Completed	Target Percentage Completed	Actual Percentage Completed
Annual HQS Inspections	100%	100%
Pre-Contract HQS Inspections	100%	100%
HQS Quality Control Inspections	100%	100%

Every three months, 20% of all units self-inspected by landlords receive a quality control inspection conducted by KHA. If the owner fails to maintain the dwelling unit in accordance with HQS, the Keene Housing Authority will take prompt and vigorous action to enforce the owner obligations. The Keene Housing Authority's remedies for such breach of the HQS include termination, suspension, or reduction of housing assistance payments and termination of the HAP contract.

The Keene Housing Authority will not make any housing assistance payments for a dwelling unit that fails to meet the HQS, unless the owner corrects the defect within the specified period and KHA verifies the correction. If a defect is life threatening, the owner must correct the defect within no more than 24 hours. For other defects, the owner must correct the defect within no more than 30 calendar days (or any KHA approved extension).

Again, the intended impact is to reduce the administration required to execute the program while shifting some of the program responsibility to the tenants in an effort to integrate self-sufficiency

activities into the housing component. It may also indirectly have an impact on the quality of tenant-based housing units as tenants become more educated about HQS standards and local code requirements.

Plan Year Implemented: Original MTW Agreement executed in 1999.

Data Collection: Results of quality control inspections are tracked in spreadsheets. Quality control inspections are conducted each quarter.

Authorization(s): *Attachment C. Section D.5. Ability to Certify Housing Quality Standards. The Agency is authorized to certify that housing assisted under MTW will meet housing quality standards established or approved by HUD. The certification form will be approved or provided by HUD. This authorization waives certain provisions of Section 8(o)(8) of the 1937 Act and 24 C.F.R. 982, Subpart I as necessary to implement the Agency's Annual MTW Plan.*

F. Initiative: Standard Deductions

Statutory Objective(s): Increase cost effectiveness/efficiency

Baseline: 100% of eligible households reporting medical or disability expenses require verification. Data on staff time will be provided in 2009 Annual Report. Baseline on new measure won't be available until 2010 report.

Benchmarks: 75% Reduction in number of households claiming medical expense deduction higher than standard deduction; 25% Reduction in staff time to process annual certifications

Measures: Number of households claiming medical/disability expenses: Reported decrease in processing annual certifications; Difference btw. reported expenses and expenses provided by the standard deduction.

In its 2006 Annual Plan, Keene Housing Authority created a standard deduction for elderly and disabled households. A standard deduction of \$1718 is provided for all elderly and disabled households effective 1/1/2009. This deduction includes any qualifying medical, disability assistance expenses, childcare expenses and the elderly household deduction of \$400. It does not include the \$480 deduction per household dependent. Households with qualifying dependents receive \$480 per qualifying dependent in the household in addition to the standard deduction of \$1718. It is still assumed that residents can pay 3% of the medical expenses, which is subtracted from the standard deduction. Households that would experience a rent burden of 30% or higher of their adjusted income would be eligible to receive a full deduction based on their actual qualifying expenses plus the standard \$400 deduction. In these cases, staff follows the standard procedures for calculating adjusted income, including verification procedures.

In an amendment to the 2007 Annual Plan, KHA included a clause that allows the standard deduction to be adjusted on a yearly basis according to the Medicare increase.

The verification process consumes a tremendous amount of staff time. By implementing a standard deduction, a large portion of administrative costs is reduced without removing the benefit for a family. If a family has extraordinary medical costs not covered by the standard deduction, they may request their deduction be based on actual expenses through our Safety Net

hardship policy. It is a win-win situation for both parties. It also limits the intrusiveness in tenant's lives. The requirement for a family to track their individual expenses causes a tremendous amount of anxiety on a yearly basis for elderly and disabled families.

Plan Year Implemented: 2006 Annual Plan

Data Collection: This information is collected annually during the tenant's certification, whether it is a self-certification or full certification. Keene will monitor the impact of the deduction on subsidy funds expended and number of participants requesting Safety Net because their medical expenses are higher than the standard deduction. This information will help us evaluate whether or not the standard deduction is high enough to cover the median medical expenses of households yet not so high that the program is using more funds for subsidy than necessary.

Authorization(s): *Attachment C. Section C.11. Rent Policies and Term Limits. The agency is authorized to determine family payment, including the total tenant payment, the minimum rent, utility reimbursements and tenant rent. The agency is authorized to adopt and implement any reasonable policies for setting rents in public housing including but not limited to establishing definitions of income and adjusted income, or earned income disallowance that differ from those in current statutes or regulations. The Agency is authorized to adopt and implement term limits for its public housing assistance. Such policies include provisions for addressing hardship cases. This authorization waives certain provisions of Section 3(a)(2), 3(a)(3)(A) and Section 6(1) of the 1937 Act and 24 C.F.R. 5.603, 5.611, 5.6238, 5.630, 5.632, 5.634 and 960.255 and 966 Subpart A as necessary to implement the Agency's Annual MTW Plan.*
Section D.2 (a) Rent Policies and Term Limits. The Agency is authorized to adopt and implement any reasonable policy to establish payment standards, rents or subsidy levels for tenant-based assistance that differ from the currently mandated program requirements in the 1937 Act and its implementing regulations. The Agency is authorized to adopt and implement any reasonable policies to calculate the tenant portion of the rent that differ from the currently mandated program requirements in the 1937 Act and its implementing regulations. This authorization waives certain provisions of Section 8(o)(1), 8(o)(2), 8(o)(3), 8(o)(10) and 8(o)(13)(H)-(I) of the 1937 Act and 24C.F.R. 982.508, 982.503 and 982.518, as necessary to implement the Agency's Annual MTW Plan.

G. Initiative: Resident Self-Reliance Program (RSR)

Statutory Objective(s): Incentive for self-sufficiency

Baseline: Number of households employed; Earned income of households

Benchmarks: 10% Increase in earned income; 30% increase in employment; 20% increase in number of families who exit program moving to non-subsidized housing

Measures: Same as baseline

Please refer to *Section V. Propose MTW Activities* because changes have been proposed to this activity and it has been moved to Section V. for HUD approval.

H. Initiative: Alternative Recertification Schedule

Statutory Objective(s): Increase cost effectiveness/efficiency

Baseline: Number of full certifications required under HUD rules vs. MTW rules

Benchmarks: 50% reduction in staff time conducting annual certifications

Measures: Same as baseline

Please refer to *Section V. Propose MTW Activities* because changes have been proposed to this activity and it has been moved to Section V. for HUD approval.

I. Initiative: Rent Reasonableness

Statutory Objective(s): Increase housing options; Increase cost effectiveness/efficiency

Baseline: Data not available – will establish baseline with 2009 report.

Benchmarks: 100% reduction in staff time conducting RR

Measures: Number of vouchers utilized vs. vouchers issued; Number households with high rent burdens and rents over the VPS; Range of rents and apartment types in Section 8 software.

Keene Housing Authority removed rent reasonableness as a requirement in the MTW Section 8 program. When approving a unit, potential voucher holders do not have to meet the 40% rule. The responsibility of determining affordability is left to the participant. The program assumes participants are capable of making these decisions and provides education to every household member. Participants are trained to consider factors such as location, quality, size, number of bedrooms, age, amenities, housing services, maintenance and utilities. These factors are a better gauge of determining rent affordability than the 40% rule, as they are adjustable to individual circumstances and local market conditions. Additionally, participants are trained to negotiate rents with landlords.

Families also receive the document “Can I Afford the Unit I Have Found?” with a detailed explanation of how to calculate affordability. The family must fill out and sign an Income and Expense Report with the program manager detailing their ability to afford the apartment. The Income and Expense Form is updated and reviewed at each examination.

Affordability Factors

- Age of the Head of Household
- Disability
- Currently in place
- Length of time family has lived at that address
- Actual dollar amount the family share exceeds 40% of their adjusted monthly income
- Location- near work or medical services
- Transportation
- Amount of assets a family has at its disposal
- Employment
- Contract Rent-does it include utilities?
- Fuel Assistance and/or Electrical Assistance
- Food Stamps and/or Community Kitchen

Keene has a high success rate of households finding housing after they have been issued a voucher. As of the third quarter in 2008, all households who were issued vouchers found housing.

Keene will continue to track its success rates in future reports. Removal of rent reasonableness and restriction of tenant rent to 40% of income increase housing options for families.

Data Collection: Keene does not conduct rent reasonableness, once of the exceptions granted as part of its original MTW agreement. Therefore, Keene does not tabulate the rental data on an annual basis nor does KHA determine if the rents in Keene are appropriate for the Section 8 MTW program. It is up to the household to determine rent reasonableness and select their unit. Keene tracks utilization rate, success rates of tenants issued vouchers, reasons tenants do not find housing and rent burdens.

Plan Year Implemented: Original MTW Agreement executed in 1999.

Authorization(s): Attachment C Section D.2.(c) Rent Policies and Term Limits. The agency is authorized to develop a local process to determine rent reasonableness that differs from the currently mandated program requirements in the 1937 Act and its implementing regulations. This authorization waives certain provisions of Section 8(o)(10) of the 1937 Act and 24 C.F.R. 982.507 as necessary to implement the Agency's Annual MTW Plan

J. Initiative: Restrictions on Section 8 Portability

Statutory Objective(s): Increase cost effectiveness/efficiency

Baseline: 3 ports as of 12/2009

Benchmarks: Less than 5% of funds spent on ports.

Measures: Number and dollar amount of vouchers utilized locally vs. administered through ports.

In 2009 KHA stopped absorbing ports from other PHA's. As part of MTWKHA has always had a restrictions on ports but no baseline data is available on the numbers of ports administered before the initiative was implemented. Keene has submitted data on ports to VMS for 2009 and included it as its baseline number. In order to measure this initiative, Keene would need to know the number of ports it would have administered if they were permitted. Since households are aware of this policy, and may not request portability as a result of the policy, it is unlikely KHA could estimate the number of ports it would administer if they were permitted. Therefore, KHA will track the value of dollars lost for the ports it does administer. Keene's main reason for restricting ports with the exception of those requested by reasonable accommodation or due to domestic violence, is to keep voucher funding in the Keene community for use by those who intend to live in the Monadnock region.

Data Collection: Ports are tracked in the Section 8 software. To date there have only been 3 reasonable accommodation requests to port and all have been approved.

Plan Year Implemented: 2008 Annual Plan

Authorization(s): Attachment C Section D.1.(g) Operational Policies and Procedures. The Agency is authorized to establish its own portability policies with other MTW and non-MTW housing authorities. This authorization waives certain provisions of Section 8(r) of the 1937 Act and 24 C.F.R. 982 subpart H as necessary to implement the Agency's Annual

Section VII. Sources and Uses of Funding

A. Planned Sources for Section 8

The Keene Housing Authority receives funding for 587 Section 8 vouchers under its MTW plan. These vouchers are comprised of the original allocation of 359 plus 228 vouchers issued in conjunction with the HUD approved Disposition Plan for Public Housing. KHA also receives funding for 50 Mainstream vouchers.

Revenues	MTW Vouchers	Mainstream Vouchers	Total Budget 2010
Section 8 Funds	\$4,895,580	\$370,360	\$5,265,940
Interest Income	5,000	200	5,200
TOTAL SOURCES	\$4,900,580	\$370,560	\$5,271,140
Expenditures			
Audit Fees	8,000	1,000	9,000
Office Expenses	196,478	2,560	199,038
Salaries - Admin	354,034	6,000	360,034
Salaries - Programs & Services	418,239	19,600	437,839
Tenant Services	50,000	1,000	51,000
Total Administrative Expense	1,026,751	30,160	1,056,911
HAPs Disbursed	3,873,829	340,400	4,214,229
TOTAL USES	\$4,900,580	\$370,560	\$5,271,140

B. Changes in Sources & Uses from Previous Plan

The previously approved plan assumed a Public Housing Disposition date of July 1, 2009. Based on changing market conditions, the Special Applications Center of HUD approved a funding modification request. Securing a new funding source delayed the transfer date from July 2009 to September 2009. As a result of the disposition of public housing, KHA will no longer have state or local funds in 2010. KHA will not be eligible to apply for new public housing grants such as FSS grants, Youth Service grants, and Congregate Housing grants for the elderly.

C. Single Fund Flexibility

In April 2008, KHA entered into an Amended and Restated MTW Agreement by and between HUD and KHA. The agreement authorizes KHA to combine funding awarded to it annually pursuant to Section 8(o), 9(d) and 9(e) of the 1937 Act. Within the scope of permissible eligible activities, KHA can carry out the purposes of the MTW Demonstration Program to provide flexibility in the design and administration of housing assistance to eligible families, to reduce

costs and achieve greater cost effectiveness in Federal expenditures, to give incentives to families with children where the head of household is working, 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 to increase housing choices for low- income families, through activities that would otherwise be eligible under Sections 8 and 9 of the 1937 Act. KHA is authorized to project base Section 8 assistance at properties owned directly or indirectly that are not public housing, subject to HUD's requirements regarding subsidy layering. All funding for Section 8 is considered completely fungible according to the terms and conditions of the Amended and Restated MTW Agreement.

In the past, funding fungibility was an important component of the KHA MTW program. It allowed KHA to combine public housing operating funds, capital funds, and Section 8 funds. Historically, public housing has been underfunded, but by combining funds, KHA was able to operate and maintain the properties and to provide services for residents.

In 2010, funding fungibility will not be pertinent because KHA will no longer receive operating funds or capital funds. The disposition of public housing and the transfer to Keene Affordable Housing included approximately \$5,000,000 in funding from various sources to rehabilitate and preserve the former public housing stock. The loss of operating funds and capital funds will be offset by the addition of 228 project base vouchers. The new 228 vouchers combined with the original 359 vouchers will allow KHA to continue with MTW activities and initiatives including our efforts to provide supportive services for residents, to increase success rates of tenants and participants, to help them maintain housing and achieve economic self-sufficiency.

Section VIII. Administrative

Public Hearing Documentation

The following staff were present at the September 22nd hearing:

- Julie Davenson

The following public participants and tenants included:

- No one attend the public hearing

The required Board Resolution is included as an attachment to this plan.

Agency Directed Evaluation of the Demonstration

Keene has not engaged any outside evaluators to review the program. The agency will be continuing to evaluate the impact of its proposed and ongoing activities in 2010.

Keene will be working on identifying new measures for its initiatives and tools to collect and evaluate the data. New Section 8 software will hopefully aide in KHA's ability to extract and evaluate data relative to the demonstration. Policy discussions will be scheduled with key staff as well as regular strategic planning sessions to help monitor and redirect demonstration activities as needed.

Keene values the opportunity to participate in the demonstration and the benefits it affords not only the recipients of its services but the organization. The perception of MTW staff and their roles has changed with the flexibility granted under the demonstration prompting more inquiry into the impact of its policy and activities on the community. Keene continues to nurture and cherish this growth as it tries to address the impact of a national housing crisis on the local community.