

## **Appendix B. Interview Guide for MTW PHAs**

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*Interview respondent is the PHA Executive Director, MTW Coordinator, and/or one or more designated staff. The interviewer will prepopulate information from the Baseline Interview and MTW Supplement. The prepopulated information is highlighted in yellow.*

### **Introduction and Verbal Consent**

HUD has hired Abt Associates to study the MTW Expansion Flexibility Cohort. The purpose of the study is to understand how PHAs in the cohort use their MTW flexibility and how MTW affects outcomes for the PHA and its tenants. We are interviewing all the PHAs that received MTW Flexibility Cohort designation.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary and you are free to skip any questions you do not wish to answer. The questions in the interview have been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. We expect the interview to take about an hour. The OMB control number is 2528-0328, expiring 02/29/2024.

The study team will use the information you provide for research purposes only, not for any audit or compliance purposes. We will be taking notes but will not be recording this call. Only members of the study team will see your individual responses. Our reports to HUD will summarize the results from the interviews but will not name individuals. If we would like to highlight information that is not publicly available about your PHA by name in one of our reports, we will give you the opportunity to review the text in advance.

There may be some questions you are not able to answer or that are more appropriate for other staff. If you are unable to answer a question or would prefer not to answer, just let me know. You are free to skip any question you do not wish to answer.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

### **Introduction - For all PHAs**

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*Interviewer start with a summary of where the PHA was when we last spoke [e.g., When we last spoke with you in [month] 2023, you had an approved MTW supplement/your first MTW Supplement was still under HUD review/were working on your first MTW Supplement. Jump to question 1]*

1. How have things been going with your program since we spoke around this time last year?
  - a. What were the highlights of the last year?
  - b. Did you experience challenges in implementing your program?
2. Have there been any changes at the PHA, such as leadership or Board changes, which affect the MTW program?
3. Have there been any changes in the community that could affect the MTW program?

## Funding Flexibility – For all PHAs

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4. When we last spoke, your agency (was using/was planning to use/was not using) MTW funding flexibility. Has the agency made any changes to its use of funding flexibility? If so, describe the change and the reason for the change.
5. **If currently using funding flexibility:** How did you use funding flexibility in the last year? What were your main objectives for using it?
  - a. Which funding streams did it affect, this is, where did you take the money from and what did you use it for?
6. **If not currently using funding flexibility:** How does your agency plan to use its funding flexibility in the future, if at all?

## Status of MTW Supplement – For all PHAs

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7. I see you [have/do not have] an approved MTW Supplement as of [date]. Is there any update on that? *[Depending on the date of last approval, probe for whether they're working on their upcoming submission.]*
8. **For PHAs without an approved supplement only:** Have you experienced challenges developing the MTW Supplement? If so, describe.
  - a. When do you expect to have the Supplement finalized and approved?

## Changes in Program Goals and Activities—For PHAs with two or more approved MTW Supplements

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Now I would like to review the changes that your agency made to your MTW program in your latest MTW Supplement.

9. **For PHAs that appear to have added new activities in our review of MTW Supplement:** It looks like the PHA has identified new activities to implement, X and Y? Do I have that right? Can you tell me why added those activities?
10. **For PHAs that appear to have discontinued some activities:** It looks like the PHA has decided to discontinue activities X and Y? Do I have that right? Can you tell me why you decided not to pursue those activities?
11. Are there any other changes to how your agency plans to use its MTW authority that we haven't mentioned? If so, what are they?

## Plans for MTW Waivers and Activities – **For PHAs with one or more approved MTW Supplements**

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12. **If form pre-filled by Abt from MTW Supplements is not confirmed or missing info:** For each of your approved waivers, when did you start implementing them? Were there any gaps in implementation?

a. [insert list of waivers from most recent approved MTW Supplement]

13. **If the PHA confirmed form pre-filled by Abt from MTW Supplements:** Thank you for confirming the table with information about when you started implementing your waivers. *Ask any clarification questions needed.*

14. **For PHAs using agency-specific waiver(s):** How did you determine that you wanted to pursue an agency-specific waiver(s) versus the existing set of waivers covered by the Operations Notice?

**Ask for each approved MTW activity** (for PHAs with lots of waivers, will need to group or focus on potentially high-impact ones to be determined advance of interview):

15. **If new activity from last year’s interview:** What problem or issue are you trying to solve by implementing this activity?

a. Can you explain the connection between the activity and the primary statutory objective(s) [cost effectiveness/self-sufficiency/housing choice]?<sup>1</sup>

16. **If new activity from last year’s interview:** How does this activity differ from how your PHA operated before obtaining the waiver?

17. Can you describe what steps you have taken to implement this activity in the past year?

a. What share of tenants/public housing residents does/will it affect?

b. **If the PHA has special purpose vouchers:** Does this activity apply to any residents in your special purpose voucher program(s)? If so, how many residents do you have in these programs that will be affected?

18. What challenges, if any, have you had in implementing this activity?

19. Have there been any changes to how you are implementing this activity compared to when you started? If so, why?

20. Has implementation of this activity been delayed in any way? If so, why?

21. Has this activity changed how you interact with tenants or other aspects of your work as a PHA? If so, how? (For activities not yet implemented, ask about future expected effects.)

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<sup>1</sup> It may not be necessary to go through this in all cases. Some activities will be associated with one objective only and the connection will be obvious.

22. How have tenants responded to the changes imposed by this activity? What are their perceptions of the change? (*Probe: has this activity made residents more or less willing to participate in the program?*)
23. **(If applicable)** How have landlords responded to the changes imposed by this activity? What are their perceptions of the change?
- a. **For landlord incentive and other housing choice related activities:**
- i. Has the activity resulted in more landlords engaging with the PHA? If so, how many more landlords are you working with?
  - ii. What have you done to promote the change to landlords?
24. Has this activity had any effect on PHA staffing? If so, when did these changes happen? How are you measuring changes in PHA staffing?
25. Has the PHA met its milestones or goals for implementing this activity in the past year?
- a. **If the PHA has experienced delays:** What are the reasons for the delays?
26. Has the activity begun to show results related to the statutory objective(s)? If not, when do you expect to see results?
- a. What are the specific results you would expect to see?
  - b. How are you measuring and tracking the results? If not measuring, how do you know the activity is having the intended results?

**Ask in general for MTW activities:** *[have a table of waivers ready, and be prepared to show your screen with a separate table of waivers if the PHA has a lot]*

27. Have any activities implemented so far resulted in cost savings? If so, which ones and how?
28. Have any activities implemented so far increased your costs? If so, which ones and how?
29. **For PHAs that have activities with a hardship policy:** It appears that the following activities have a hardship policy: *(prefill from the MTW Supplement)*.
- a. Have you received any hardship requests in the past year regarding any of these activities?
  - b. If so, which ones?
  - c. How many requests have been approved? Denied?
  - d. What are the main reasons requests are denied?

Plans for MTW Waivers and **Activities- For PHAs without an approved MTW Supplement**

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30. What waivers are you planning to request approval for in your MTW Supplement this year?
31. What problem or issue are you trying to solve by implementing these activities?
32. How did your agency prioritize the activities to seek approval for in the coming fiscal year?
33. When do you expect to submit your MTW Supplement? *(Note to interviewers, some may have submitted it and HUD sent back for revision and others may have submitted, but waiting for HUD approval.)*

**Ask for each planned MTW activity:**

34. Which of the three statutory objectives is this activity for? (i.e., cost savings, self-sufficiency, expanded housing choice)?
  - a. What are the specific results you would expect to see?
  - b. How soon would you expect the results to occur?
  - c. How do you plan to measure and track the results?
35. What is the timeframe for implementing the activity?
  - a. How confident are you that your agency will meet your schedule for implementation for this activity?
  - b. What factors could affect your ability to meet the schedule or planned results for this activity?
36. Can you describe what steps you have taken to plan for this activity in the past year?
  - a. What share of tenants does/will it affect? PH, HCV, or both? New admittances, or all residents (current and future)?
  - b. **If the PHA has special purpose vouchers:** Does this activity apply to any residents in your special purpose voucher program(s)? If so, how many residents do you have in these programs that will be affected?
  - c. Will the activity target any specific populations (e.g., non-elderly, disabled, families, etc.)?
37. How will this activity differ from how your PHA operated before obtaining the waiver?

## HUD 50058 - **For PHAs with one or more approved MTW Supplements**

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38. Thinking about the MTW activities for which you have approval, are there any MTW activities that you are unable to submit data on in IMS/PIC the via the HUD-50058? (*Note: if they are confused/unsure about which activities are involved, mention changes to calculation of TTP, recertification schedule*) If yes:
- a. Which activities being implementing are impacting your ability to submit 50058s to IMS/PIC?
    - i. What about these activities is affecting your ability to submit 50058s? (*e.g., PHA software not ready to capture this information, current IMS/PIC cannot accept upload of the updated fields for MTW waivers*)?
    - ii. How are you handling record keeping for these activities? (*e.g., not submitting records, leaving fields blank in the 50058, using separate record keeping systems*)?
  - b. What percentage of households are impacted by this activity?
    - i. What/which type of households will not be included in 50058 reporting? In what month did they stop reporting on those households?
    - ii. Will you still submit data for households not affected by an MTW activity?
39. What, if any, changes have you made to your PHA's software or record keeping processes to be able to track these households that you cannot submit in the current IMS/PIC?
- a. How many households are affected by this (inability to track them in PIC/HIP)?
40. **If not already answered:** Are there any MTW activities for which you have HUD approval that you are opting *not* to implement until HIP is fully rolled out? If so, which activities?
41. **If not already answered:** Are there any MTW activities for which you are waiting for HIP to be fully rolled out before applying for the MTW waiver? If so, which activities?

## Lessons Learned and Wrap Up -**For all PHAs**

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42. Thinking back over your experiences with MTW thus far, which MTW flexibilities do you view as most critical to achieving the program's three statutory objectives? Why?
43. Which waivers have been the most difficult to implement? What about them is hard to implement?
44. Are there waivers available to you that you'd like to pursue that you have chosen not to? If so, why did you choose not to pursue them?
45. Can you identify any lessons that you have learned in implementing your MTW activities in the past year?
46. Based on what you've done so far, do you think receiving MTW designation has been beneficial for your PHA or residents?

47. What is main advice you would give new smaller PHA that receives MTW designation?

48. Do you have any recommendations for how the MTW program could be changed to facilitate meeting its statutory objectives or your objectives as a PHA (*if different*)?

Thanks very much for your time today. We will speak again around this time next year. Do you have any questions for me?