



**Moving to Work (MTW)  
Supplement**

**Fiscal Year 2023  
January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023**

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Contents

PHA INFORMATION..... 3

    Narrative..... 3

    Strategic Planning & MTW..... 3

    Move to Work Statutory Objectives..... 4

SHA MTW PROPOSED WAIVERS AND ASSOCIATED STATUTORY OBJECTIVES ..... 5

    Rent Simplification..... 5

    Landlord Leasing Incentives ..... 5

    Housing Quality Standards ..... 5

    Moving On Policy..... 5

MTW WAIVERS AND ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES..... 6

    Self-Certification of Assets..... 6

    Other Landlord Incentives..... 6

    Pre-Qualifying Unit Inspections..... 7

    Alternative Inspection Schedule..... 7

    Cohort Specific Waiver of Mandatory Initial Inspection ..... 7

## **PHA INFORMATION**

PHA Name: Spokane Housing Authority  
PHA Code: WA055  
MTW Supplement for PHA Fiscal Year Beginning: 1/1/2023  
PHA Program Type: HCV Only  
MTW Cohort Number: 3  
MTW Supplement Submission Type: Annual Statement

## **Narrative**

The Spokane Housing Authority (SHA) is pleased to start its Moving To Work (MTW) demonstration program in 2023. Creating vibrant communities where people thrive is SHA's vision for MTW. With the flexibility and new tools provided by MTW, SHA will be able to assist our participants in reaching for what is possible and improve their quality of life.

This marks the beginning of a five-year project on Landlord Incentives for an overall MTW term of 20 years. All MTW initiatives will be combined with a commitment to seek and end racial and other demographic characteristics as determinates of success. SHA will continue to develop additional local strategies during our participation in MTW, learning from our experiences and other MTW agencies.

This Supplement outlines the MTW waivers SHA will implement and the proposed benefits to the Authority or participants for the period from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023.

SHA creates and adopts a Public Housing Authority Annual Plan (PHA Annual Plan) to describe new and ongoing activities with our awarded federal resources. The Annual Plan is subject to public review and comment and board approval before submission to HUD. This supplement is submitted with the SHA Annual PHA Plan. Then, HUD approves the Annual Plan and supplement so SHA can move forward with those new activities.

In this inaugural year, SHA plans to implement five MTW activities, which will reduce administrative barriers and expand landlord participation. Of SHA's five total MTW activities for 2023, one of the MTW activities is centered on efficiency of program staff and cost effectiveness. The other four will focus on improving our relationships, participation, and coordination with landlords to increase housing choice for low-income program participants in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program.

## **Strategic Planning & MTW**

In 2022, SHA completed a comprehensive strategic planning effort to revisit the agency's guiding values and chart a path for the next five years. We incorporated extensive staff, participant, and community partners' feedback to help guide the agency for the next several years. SHA's resulting strategic plan includes five priorities that closely align with MTW goals, and reflect a commitment to making meaningful change in our area:

- Affordable Impact
- Customer Service
- Housing Stability and Client Success
- Housing Supply

- Relationships

## **Move to Work Statutory Objectives**

SHA will braid the identified priorities with the three statutory objectives of MTW:

### **1. Cost Reduction and Effectiveness**

SHA will adopt policies to streamline annual reviews, adopt relevant waivers, and assist in building new or existing programs to reduce both tenant rent and SHA costs, and creatively increase units in a resource-scarce housing market. Participant, resident, and community partnerships will be vital in this process and SHA will ensure full engagement of various stakeholders. These policy and procedural changes will also assist SHA in furthering our Affordable Impact and Housing Supply strategic priority. All cost savings efforts will allow us to reallocate additional funds to increase housing supply and affordability for participants.

### **2. Incentivizing Educational and Job Opportunities**

Spokane boasts a large number of local Universities and Continuing Education Learning Centers. SHA will work with these partners to incorporate pathways for families seeking educational opportunities, thereby increasing their overall income potential and housing stability.

The landlord and inspection waivers through MTW will allow families to move to High Opportunity Areas, where increased educational and job opportunities exist.

As the housing market begins to cool down, we will also look at ways to better enhance our Homebuyer Program for existing voucher holders. We will leverage existing partnerships with organizations assisting first-time homebuyers (Habitat for Humanity, Spokane Neighborhood Action Partners, Spokane Low Income Housing Consortium, etc.). While home buying may not be desirable for all families, it is a critical one for long-term stability.

### **3. Housing Choice and Mobility Initiatives**

SHA will focus on increasing voucher participation in High Opportunity Areas by way of new landlord incentives offered through MTW. In addition, our Landlord Liaison will assist our voucher holders in identifying areas that have historically been unattainable to households on a fixed-income, underemployed, or unemployed. SHA will incorporate our Housing Supply objectives outlined in our Strategic Plan as a foundation to identify sites located in opportunity areas for future buildouts.

The first MTW year will focus on implementing practical short-term initiatives like first-time landlord bonuses, additional updates to SHA technology, and new data systems. We will establish more robust reporting and client relationship management systems that will enable future MTW initiatives like client portal and electronic lease-up processes. SHA will continue to work collaboratively with participants and community stakeholders to achieve MTW goals and our vision.

## SHA MTW PROPOSED WAIVERS AND ASSOCIATED STATUTORY OBJECTIVES

This is a summary listing of SHA’s proposed plans to implement in 2023, by category, along with the MTW statutory objectives, cost implications, and specific needs for each waiver.

### Rent Simplification

#### 3d. HCV Self-Certification of Assets

Statutory Objective	Cost Implication	Different Versions	Safe Harbor	Hardship Policy	Impact Analysis
Cost effectiveness	Neutral	No	No	No	No

### Landlord Leasing Incentives

#### 4.c. Other Landlord Incentives

Statutory Objective	Cost Implication	Different Versions	Safe Harbor	Hardship Policy	Impact Analysis
Housing Choice and Mobility Initiatives	Increased expenditures	Yes	No	No	No

### Housing Quality Standards

#### 5.a Pre-Qualifying Unit Inspections (HCV)

Statutory Objective	Cost Implication	Different Versions	Safe Harbor	Hardship Policy	Impact Analysis
Cost effectiveness Self-sufficiency Housing choice	Neutral	No	No	No	No

#### 5.d Alternative Inspection Schedule (HCV)

Statutory Objective	Cost Implication	Different Versions	Safe Harbor	Hardship Policy	Impact Analysis
Cost effectiveness	Increased revenue Decreased expenditures	No	No	No	No

### Moving On Policy

#### 14.a – Waive Initial HQS Inspection Requirement (HCV)

Statutory Objective	Cost Implication	Different Versions	Safe Harbor	Hardship Policy	Impact Analysis
Cost effectiveness	Increased revenue Decreased expenditures	No	No	No	No

## MTW WAIVERS AND ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES

SHA is a HUD approved Cohort 3 MTW agency. Cohort 3 authorities seek to incentivize and attract landlords to participate in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program. At this time, SHA is not seeking any agency-specific waivers and is opting for existing ones. SHA's five new proposed activities in the FY 2023 Plan are:

### Self-Certification of Assets

At reexamination, SHA will allow participants to self-certify their assets in an amount up to \$50,000. This activity reflects an administrative streamlining objective to save staff time and resources, speed the process of reexaminations, and reduce the time and personal cost to participants on retrieving asset documentation.

### Other Landlord Incentives

SHA will provide qualifying landlords a "bonus" payment of up to one month's contract rent as an incentive to participating in SHA's Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV). SHA plans to implement a range of bonus payment types to increase the number of participating landlords, increase the number of units in high opportunity areas, and increase the longevity of landlord participation with SHA.

The following landlord incentive payments are proposed for this plan year, subject to availability of SHA funding, program reserves and Board approved annual budget authority:

- New Landlord Bonus:  
A one-time bonus of one-month contract rent for a landlord or property owner who has never participated as a landlord in HCV.
- Welcome Back Bonus:  
A one-time bonus of one-month contract rent to a landlord or property owner who left the HCV program for at least 24 months and is now returning.
- Opportunity Area Bonus:  
A one-time bonus of one-month of contract rent for owners who submit a RFTA and lease a new unit to an HCV participant in an opportunity area (must have poverty rate of <20%).

SHA will continue to work with its MTW Advisory Committee, staff, and other community stakeholders to finalize incentive payment eligibility criteria and guidelines, and to ensure responsible stewardship of funds.

This MTW activity applies to specific tenant-based units and/or properties with project-based vouchers. SHA will provide the landlord bonus incentives for all HCV tenant-based units with the exception of SHA owned properties that accept HCV's. It does not apply to Project Based Voucher units.

Incentive payments are limited to a one-time payment that cannot exceed the cost of one month's rent per the established HAP contract. Recipients of one bonus incentive type may not receive an additional payment under another category of incentive. All landlord incentive payments provided under this activity are subject to the availability of SHA funding, program reserves and Board approved annual budget authority and are subject to change. SHA will communicate any such changes in the availability of landlord incentive payments or impact to this program through its website, social media, and any other method necessary to notify the public.

### **Pre-Qualifying Unit Inspections**

The PHA may allow units to be pre-inspected for Housing Quality Standard (HQS) approval, to accelerate the lease-up process and minimize the landlord's lost revenue during a period of vacancy. The pre-inspection must happen within 90 days before the HCV participant begins occupancy of the unit.

### **Alternative Inspection Schedule**

SHA will implement an alternative HQS inspection schedule. Typically, HCV units must be inspected bi-annually. Under this MTW activity, units can be inspected less frequently but must be inspected at least once every three years.

### **Cohort Specific Waiver of Mandatory Initial Inspection**

A unit must pass HQS inspection before an HCV participant can move into the unit. This MTW waiver and associated activity eliminates that requirement for an initial inspection under certain circumstances.

Under this activity, SHA will not require initial HQS inspections for approved partners. SHA will conduct a risk assessment of site-based projects, including LIHTC and PBV's, to evaluate inspections and performance data to determine eligible sites. SHA will work with our MTW Advisory Committee and relevant stakeholders to structure the risk assessment and evaluate its ongoing efficacy. Specific considerations will also include conditions for ongoing use of the waiver and pre-identified remedial measures.