

Since becoming an MTW agency BHP has worked tirelessly to implement the waivers we have already requested during our first two years. We started with small changes and feel that that was a wise choice and has allowed us to develop programs that positively impact those we serve and our community.

The changes we made so far are: moving our recertification process for tenant rent calculations to every third year rather than annually; allowing self certification for family assets under \$50,000; and creating our LEAP (Learning Employment Academic Program) for those we serve. All of these changes are being implemented and will help improve the lives of those we serve as well as being more efficient with our staff resources.

SHORT TERM GOALS

Using the flexibility allowed to us as a MTW agency we will continue to work to reduce administrative inefficiencies. We will continue to look for ways to improve the lives of those we serve by working with them to help us truly understand barriers to their success.

LONG TERM GOALS

Our long term goal is to create systems that better address the needs of those we serve and the larger community. This includes better opportunities for those we serve, optimal use of BHP staff and resources, and partnerships with those who also serve our community. We are committed to working with community partners and other resources to create more housing options in this community. The changes we hope to make during 2024 will continue to serve our community and those we serve directly.

2024 SUPPLEMENTAL PLAN

Administrative Changes

HAP payments: (HAP payments are the contract rent amounts that BHP is responsible for and makes to the landlord to help subsidize the voucher holders.) Require all HAP contract payments to landlords be done by direct deposit thus creating staff efficiency, lack of delay for landlords and no fears of payments being lost or delayed. Currently paper checks are processed, a Board member needs to come in to sign, they are mailed and often delayed in getting to the landlord. Direct deposit would result in administrative cost efficiencies.

Administrative changes to Project Based Vouchers .

- Change the program cap to 50% to allow BHP to use more vouchers for Project based. – this would allow us to use more vouchers for Project based.
- Change the project cap to 100% to allow an entire project (site) to be project based
- Extend PBVs to shared housing and manufactured homes
- Extend the contract length to 50 years – the contract is with the owner of the property.

Incentives to Landlords

- BHP is fortunate to work with landlords who participate in housing residents with a section 8 voucher. One of the ways they do this is by keeping rents affordable and being willing to take a chance renting to low-income households. We propose offering an additional amount to those who continually renew leases for HCV holders.
- Vacancy loss – We feel it is important to make it easier for those landlords who are willing to keep their rents affordable for those with Housing Choice Vouchers. Landlords can lose monthly rents for a variety of reasons. We will offer vacancy loss payments in the following situations:
 - A one-month full contract rent for a vacancy resulting from a delay in making repairs that is beyond the control of the landlord.
 - Up to one months' full contract rent, or the actual cost of repairs beyond that covered by the security deposit.
 - Up to one months' full contract rent amount for vacancies resulting from those transitioning from a residential treatment program, incarceration, or homelessness.
 - Up to one months' full contract rent resulting from a court ordered eviction.
 - The ability to accept other requests for vacancy losses on a case-by-case basis due to unforeseen circumstances.

Changes having a direct impact on residents

Exclusion from income for all student financial aid: Currently any amount of student aid that is not used for direct student expenses (books, tuition, housing) is considered income for the family for rent calculation purposes. We understand that being a college student, and the family of a student, is stressful and there are many unanticipated expenses. We propose to exclude all financial aid (work study, grants, scholarships, loans, etc.) from the family's income for rent calculations. Costs are particularly high in Vermont - tuition is high, as are living expenses. Many of our students in college might be first generation (this is true of both traditional age students and adult students) and they are in particular need of additional support that may not be direct student costs. Their families are also already experiencing poverty. In addition to all the regular support and expenses to the family as a whole, they are also giving additional support to a family member who is trying to get an education – either a child or an adult family member. We believe this should be rewarded and given as much support from BHP as possible. One of the things we can do is not count any financial aid that comes to the student as income for rent calculation purposes.