Visit PD&R's Web Site

www.huduser.org

to find this report and others sponsored by
HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R).
Other services of HUD USER, PD&R's Research Information Service, include listservs;
special interest, bimonthly publications (best practices, significant studies from other sources);
access to public use databases; hotline 1-800-245-2691 for help accessing the information you need.

Welfare to Work Housing Voucher Program: Early Implementation Assessment

Final Report

Prepared for:
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Policy Development and Research

Prepared by:
Robin Smith
Jennifer E.H. Johnson

The Urban Institute
Washington, DC

March 2001

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In preparing this report on early implementation of the Welfare to Work Voucher Program: Robin Smith served as Project Director; Jennifer Johnson acted as Deputy Director; and Susan Popkin offered guidance as Task Order Leader. Robin Smith and Jennifer Johnson are the primary authors of the final report.

A particularly important role was played by Jennifer Stoloff who served as HUD Government Technical Representative. The authors would like to thank her for insightful comments and helpful direction throughout the field work and report writing portions of this project.

This report builds on information collected during site visits to WtW Voucher Programs throughout the country. The authors gratefully thank the field team, Mary Cunningham, Laura Harris, Robin Koralek, Kathy Pettit, Susan Popkin, and Robin Redford for conducting site visits and writing the summaries for their respective sites with skill, patience, and good humor.

Special thanks are due to four reviewers who greatly shaped the form and content of the final report: Marty Abravanel, Susan Popkin, Mary Cunningham, and Stefan Freiberg. Thanks also to Marge Turner for her advice and counsel.

And finally, this report would not have been possible without the help and cooperation of staff in multiple organizations in the study sites. We hope this report accurately reflects the experiences and decisions made by these individuals and their organizations. To them we extend our deepest appreciation and thanks. They represent the WtW Voucher Programs of:

Housing Authority of Walker County
San Bernardino Housing Authority
San Joaquin County Housing Authority
Tampa Housing Authority
Grand Rapids Housing Commission
Albany Housing Authority
Aiken Housing Authority
Chattanooga Housing Authority
Austin Housing Authority
Texoma Council of Governments
Virginia Housing Development Authority
Housing Services of Loudoun County
Prince William County Office of Housing and Community Development
Everett City and Snohomish County Housing Authorities

Responsibility for errors of commission or omission, of course, resides with the authors.

FOREWORD

Welfare to Work (WtW) Housing Vouchers are a bold and creative initiative designed to help welfare recipients tackle the barriers they face when trying to move from welfare to work. WtW vouchers increase the supply of housing subsidies to those in our country who need assistance the most, as well as targeting this assistance to a population that can use that help as a way to make the transition from welfare to work.

In January 1998, President Clinton unveiled a proposal to establish 50,000 new housing vouchers for families moving from welfare to work. The President and the Department of Housing and Urban Development worked with Congress to secure these vouchers in the FY 1999 budget. WtW vouchers enable Housing Agencies across the nation to offer incentives to families to pursue work. This presents a unique challenge to Housing Agencies that have traditionally provided one distinct service—housing. This program calls on Housing Agencies to expand the way they usually do business, to work with other service providers to build partnerships and find a way to best serve the families who are eligible to receive welfare assistance.

WtW vouchers were awarded to 121 Housing Agencies in 35 states in October 1999 on a competitive basis. This study is part of a two-stage effort. The current report is a preliminary look at the early phase of the study. Programs that were getting underway quickly were purposively sampled in order to get the most complete picture of the program in action. An in-depth study, already underway, involving a random assignment strategy will compare outcomes for people who receive the WtW voucher and those who receive a normal housing choice voucher. The next study will be a longer term and will give more definitive answers about the success of the program.

The results of this early study are encouraging. Several of the sites included in this report are engaging in creative and true partnerships with other agencies. The jointly administered program in Everett City and Snohomish County, Washington has an innovative approach to partnerships. More than ten community-based social service agencies provide services to the WtW clients and monitor them regularly, reporting back to the Housing Authority. In Loudoun County, Virginia the development of a priority ranking system of clients was developed cooperatively by Loudoun County Housing Services and the Loudoun County Department of Social Services. Finally, in Tampa, Florida, WtW clients are connected to a local public-private coalition that provides employment and training to all TANF recipients through the contracted services of Goodwill Industries. All case management is provided by Goodwill. All of the Housing Agencies that were part of this study had made initial contacts with other service providers and, eventually, may develop those contacts into useful collaborations.

Susan M. Wachter
Assistant Secretary for Policy
Development and Research
December 1999-January 2001

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary

I. **INTRODUCTION** **1**
The Urban Institute's Early Assessment 1
Field Site Characteristics 3

II. **ELIGIBILITY** **5**
Implementation of the TANF Status Guidelines 5
Implementation of the Definition of Need 7
Factors Influencing Eligibility Criteria 8

III. **PROGRAM DESIGN** **11**
WtW Program Steps 11
WtW Program Models 13
Factors Influencing Program Design 17

IV. **PARTNERSHIPS** **20**
Key WtW Partner Organizations 20
Welfare Reform and Workforce Consolidation 22
Types of Partner Activities 23
Types of Partnerships 27
Factors Influencing Partnerships 29

V. **EARLY OUTCOMES** **32**
Factors Influencing Early Outcomes 33

VI. **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS** **35**
Influence of WtW in Study Sites 35
Participation Benefits for Housing Agencies 36
Challenges 37
Program Recommendations 37
Conclusion 38

Appendix A: Site Summaries

Appendix B: Discussion Guide

Welfare to Work Housing Voucher Program: Early Implementation Assessment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Welfare to Work Housing Voucher Program

In October 1999, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) competitively awarded $280 million in tenant-based rental assistance through the Welfare to Work (WtW) Voucher Program. These awards funded 121 applications from housing agencies in 35 states and targeted the assistance to 50,000 families making the transition from welfare to work. Under WtW, housing agencies are required to coordinate their program with local welfare and workforce development agencies. By connecting local welfare and workforce development systems with a federal housing assistance system, this program is the first to attempt to coordinate housing assistance with welfare reform efforts.

The WtW Voucher Program differs from the Fair Share Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program in several ways. Unlike Fair Share vouchers, WtW vouchers are awarded competitively to local housing agencies that are required to coordinate with the local agency providing Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and the Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work grantee. Whereas Fair Share Vouchers can serve low-income families in general, WtW vouchers are intended to support low-income families moving from welfare to work. In both Fair Share and WtW, most vouchers are meant to be used by families with extremely low incomes who only lose their assistance when they commit lease violations or other related program prohibitions. However, housing agencies operating a WtW Voucher Program may request exceptions from income targeting requirements and may terminate assistance for violation of obligations under the WtW voucher program including work requirements.

Comparison between Fair Share and Welfare to Work Vouchers

	Fair Share	Welfare to Work
Program	Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program	Welfare to Work Housing Voucher Program
Allocation method	Formula	Competitive
Local partner participation	Not required	Required
Eligibility	All very low-income families	Very low-income families who are eligible to receive, receiving, or who have received in past 2 years assistance or services funded under the TANF program, and for whom housing assistance is critical to the family's ability to successfully obtain or retain employment
Targeting	75% of vouchers to extremely low income families	Same, but exception possible
Termination of assistance	Mainly for housing-related reasons and program noncompliance. May also terminate for fraud, eviction, drug dealing, and deliberate and persistent program abuse	Same, plus additional locally defined termination policies possible (including work requirements)

The Urban Institute's Early Implementation Study

HUD contracted with the Urban Institute to document early activity in a small group of WtW Voucher Program sites. HUD was particularly interested in learning about the eligibility criteria that were being established, the nature of the partnerships that were being formed, and the types of program structures that were evolving.

This report is based on information collected during field visits to 13 administering housing agencies in ten states, conducted approximately two to three months after the start of local WtW Programs. In selecting the sample, emphasis was placed on identifying sites that began issuing their WtW vouchers very soon after they had been awarded. Within this category, a diverse group of agency types, program sizes, and geographic regions was chosen. Although neither randomly selected nor necessarily representative of the full range of WtW Voucher Program sites, the formative experiences of these early starters provide valuable information about program progress and likely direction.

The Field Visit Sites

The sampled sites include both public housing authorities and other types of housing agencies, as detailed below. Included are six city agencies, four county agencies, three regional consortia, and one state program. Programs with large and small numbers of vouchers are equally represented.

Field Visit Sites for Urban Institute Early Implementation Study

State	Agency Administering Local WtW Voucher Program
Alabama	Housing Authority of Walker County
California	San Bernardino Housing Authority San Joaquin County Housing Authority
Florida	Tampa Housing Authority
Michigan	Grand Rapids Housing Council
New York	Albany NY Housing Authority
South Carolina	Aiken Housing Authority
Tennessee	Chattanooga Housing Authority
Texas	Austin Housing Authority Texoma Council of Governments
Virginia	Virginia Housing Development Authority (State Program) Housing Services of Loudoun County Prince William County Housing Agency
Washington	Everett City and Snohomish County Housing Authorities

Early Implementation Findings

Eligibility. In addition to standard Section 8 criteria, WtW eligible families must either currently receive assistance or services funded under TANF, have received TANF assistance or services in the past two years, or be eligible for, but not receiving TANF assistance or services. Housing assistance must also be seen as critical to the family's ability to obtain or retain employment. Some study sites took the opportunity provided by WtW to develop more targeted eligibility criteria within the framework of the TANF categories. Several included a work requirement in addition to TANF status, or targeted hard-to-serve populations of interest to local service providers. Beyond eligibility verification, few of the WtW study sites are involved in defined WtW assessment activities specifically related to identifying employment barriers and using housing assistance to address those barriers. There are several notable

exceptions to this trend, particularly in sites which rely on partner agencies to identify and assess a significant portion of their WtW participants.

Program Design. Most sites developed a WtW system where core program activities are conducted by the housing agency and partners perform discrete tasks such as eligibility verification or referrals. However, the study sites include three programs that substantially integrated their existing systems with partners' programs in order to create a new program for WtW. The remaining ten are either modeled on the Section 8 program (three sites) or follow a Section 8 with Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) model (seven sites).

Partnerships. All of the study sites have a working partnership with their welfare agency and/or organizations in the local workforce development system. Eight of the thirteen have partners that are highly involved in their WtW programs through either program integration or significant influence on program design.

WtW in Study Sites

Partnerships. Although most of the study sites had relationships with their partners prior to WtW, they were confident that their local WtW Program had a positive influence on their partnerships with local service providers. This view is supported by the eight local programs who either developed an integrated service system or jointly designed a major feature of their WtW program (such as eligibility criteria or termination policies). Depending on the depth of prior partnerships, the WtW Voucher Program encouraged sites to 1) contact their welfare office and develop a method to verify TANF status, 2) work with local consortia on eligibility and other WtW Voucher Program policies, and/or 3) incorporate local services and resources into the day-to-day operations of WtW. WtW partnerships were encouraged by the flexibility of the program, the provision of additional housing assistance, and the ability of local agencies to jointly craft a program incorporating welfare and workforce development objectives with housing assistance.

Local Approaches. Local WtW sites reviewed for this report developed various policies and structures, reflecting the flexibility in WtW design guidelines. Housing agencies connected with different local actors, developed an array of site-specific program policies, and incorporated a range of local resources. As a result, policies, such as eligibility criteria, reflect different philosophies about the importance of work, participation in local programs, and areas of need.

Comprehensive Service Delivery. WtW supported steps toward comprehensive service delivery in some of the study sites. Three of the 13 sites developed WtW Voucher Programs that are intimately integrated with other area service systems. The influx of vouchers plus the freedom to target the assistance to a specific population allowed these housing agencies to

offer immediate assistance to local partners and fill a gap in service. For sites that are not attempting an integrated approach to program design, it is too early to tell whether their case management and service provision will meaningfully incorporate other local providers.

Housing Agency Role in Local Innovation Efforts. In many of the study sites, housing agency staff participated in local reform coalitions of service providers along with staff from the welfare and workforce development agencies prior to WtW. However, receipt of WtW vouchers enabled housing agency staff to bring a valuable, immediately available commodity to serve local needs. By bringing targeted housing assistance to the welfare and workforce development agencies, some housing agencies reported increased legitimacy and leverage in local service delivery systems and a stronger position in coordinated efforts to help low-income families move from welfare to work.

Coordination with Welfare Reform Goals. By coordinating the WtW voucher program with local welfare and workforce development efforts, housing assistance is more likely to be integrated into the employment goals of welfare reform. This coordination is furthered in some of the WtW sites visited, which include work requirements in their housing contracts with participants.

Housing Need. Staff at both WtW housing agencies and partner organizations believed that low-income families needed stable, affordable housing in order to get and keep jobs. While some sites established mechanisms to target those families for whom such assistance was necessary, these criteria were usually based on traditional housing need measures, such as rent burden. There was little evidence from the early site activities that WtW vouchers were being used explicitly to address locational barriers to employment, such as proximity to jobs, child care, or transportation. However, it is also the case that very few recipients had leased-up at the time of the field visits.

Challenges to Implementation

Lease-up Schedule. For most study sites to meet a 12 month lease-up schedule, local activities had to start soon after receiving the WtW award. Activities such as participant identification and voucher issuance seemed to take precedence over developing new program models. Schedule pressure discourages time-intensive activities, such as overcoming institutional hurdles to cost sharing, staff exchange, or joint policy development.

Assessment of Need. WtW sites use eligibility criteria, such as TANF status, to determine a person's need for housing assistance to get or keep a job. In most sites, individual assessments of need are not defined beyond traditional indicators of rent burden or other economic constraints. We found little evidence of sites conducting assessments of employment barriers and then using WtW vouchers to help participants move to areas with

greater employment opportunity. However, field visits were conducted early in program operations and some evidence exists that sites may make program changes, such as staff additions and case management practices, to more fully address this issue.

Local Housing Markets. Staff at several housing agencies expressed concern about their ability to lease all WtW vouchers within a 12 month period because of the pressures of their local rental market. In these sites, eligible families in need of assistance were plentiful, but affordable housing units that meet their needs were not. It was unclear as of the time of the site visits whether outreach efforts to landlords would overcome such market constraints.

Program Recommendations

Policy Development. Additional guidance from HUD in the areas of client eligibility, portability, reporting, and termination enforcement would be helpful to sites and would address current confusion.

Reporting and Tracking. The development of a consistent reporting system that encourages sites to record relevant program and client data could provide a framework for future program analysis as well as provide administrative agencies with a valuable management tool. Such a system is best implemented at the beginning of a program in order to consistently gather information for all clients and avoid both missing data and the effort involved in collecting information on completed activities. The window of opportunity to establish such a system in WtW is closing fast.

Future Research. This study is an early implementation assessment and cannot report on activities that have yet to occur, such as social service provision and case management or the ultimate coordination between the housing agency and the welfare and employment systems. In addition, it does not address the core question of the relationship between housing assistance and the ability of a low-income person to get or keep a job. Such questions can only be answered as the program evolves.[1]

Conclusion

Although the study sites are early implementers and not representative of all WtW grantees, their stories are relevant to policymakers and program administrators who seek to understand how the WtW program is implemented. The flexibility in the program regulations encouraged local housing agencies and their partners to design locally relevant programs by allowing a variety of unique eligibility criteria, referral and intake procedures, and termination policies. Housing agencies built on local strengths, philosophies, and service systems to

---

[1] HUD has contracted with Abt Associates for an ongoing evaluation of the WtW Voucher Program.

design programs that deliver tenant-based housing assistance which encourages work. While it is too early in the implementation process to determine if the WtW Voucher Program will meet legislative objectives, such as supporting the employment efforts of low-income families and linking housing assistance more closely with welfare reform, early activities in the study sites suggest that WtW is influencing partner formation and encouraging some sites to develop housing programs integrated with other local service providers.

I. INTRODUCTION

In October 1999, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) competitively awarded $280 million in tenant-based rental assistance through the Welfare to Work (WtW) Voucher Program. These awards funded 121 applications that targeted the assistance to 50,000 families making a transition from public assistance to self sufficiency. The first significant new rental assistance in five years, these vouchers were directly tied to low-income families' employment efforts that were being encouraged by welfare reform. Policymakers envisioned low-income families using the vouchers to stabilize their housing situations in order to obtain or retain employment, as well as to assist them in moving closer to jobs, daycare, and public transportation.

The WtW Voucher Program allows housing agencies flexibility in designing local programs to respond to local situations, but they must adhere to certain federal regulations. WtW guidelines direct housing agencies to coordinate with their local welfare offices and Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work grantees to develop programs that suit local needs, resources, and objectives. By connecting with local welfare and workforce development systems, the program is the first to attempt to coordinate federal housing assistance with the goals of state welfare reform efforts.

Under the WtW Voucher Program, housing agencies are directed to target assistance to families who are eligible to receive, are currently receiving, or have recently received assistance or services funded under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. In addition to receipt of TANF funded assistance or services, eligible families must demonstrate a "critical need" for housing to be able to get or keep a job. Housing agencies must lease-up all WtW vouchers within one year of the local WtW program start date.[1] Program start dates differ across local programs, ranging from November 1999 to January 2000.[2]

The Urban Institute's Early Assessment

---

[1] In the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) applicants were directed to provide "a discussion of how [the] application lays out a fully developed plan...to ensure that all Welfare-to-Work vouchers are under lease within a year of award." If this 12 month deadline is not reached, HUD states that any unspent funds will be recaptured according to HUD's recapture formula as detailed in each housing agency's ACC agreement.

[2] HUD provided housing agencies with three possible start dates to choose from: November 1, 1999; December 1, 1999; and January 1, 2000.

HUD contracted with the Urban Institute to document early program activities in a select number of WtW sites. This report provides early information on how a small group of housing agencies are tackling the welfare to work challenge. It is based on a process assessment conducted in housing agencies at thirteen sites and presents a systematic description of the changes, decisions, and relationships that participating housing agencies made to fulfill the objectives of their local WtW Voucher Programs.

This report includes chapters on three major components of the WtW Voucher Program—eligibility, program design, and partnerships—as well as a review of early outcomes including WtW voucher issuance and lease-up. It concludes with a summary of challenges faced by local housing agencies and specific policy recommendations and areas for development.

The Urban Institute implementation report is based on information collected during field visits to thirteen local WtW Voucher Program sites in ten states. To gather the most detailed information on decision-making and program design during the field visits, HUD staff asked the Urban Institute to target those sites that were most likely to have accomplished some of their objectives (such as WtW voucher lease-ups) by the time of the field visit—approximately two to three months after the local program start date. Thus, the sites visited for this assessment are early implementers of the WtW Voucher Program.

Sites that implement WtW Voucher Programs early may not reflect the general experience of all WtW housing agencies. For example, many of the sites visited for this assessment had established relationships with their local TANF and/or workforce agency prior to receiving Welfare to Work vouchers. Therefore, fast starters may be those with the ability to build on an existing relationship.

While the implications and inherent biases of being an early implementer may influence the information gathered across the field visits, the sites included in this assessment represent a diverse group of agency types, program sizes, and geographic regions.[3] The resulting group that participated in field data collection loosely follows the characteristics of the universe of WtW housing agencies but is not representative of all Welfare to Work Voucher Program sites.

---

[3] In order to select sites, the research team reviewed applications, gathered recommendations, and contacted housing agency staff. Based on the 121 applications and expert recommendations, 29 sites were selected for further review. Research staff attempted to contact each of the 29 sites to verify their start date, approximate date they expected to begin issuing vouchers, and willingness to participate in this assessment. The 25 remaining sites were categorized as either recommended and alternate sites. Those thirteen sites that were recommended were those planning the earliest issuance and loosely representing the diversity of WtW grantees.

The range of sites provides a fertile group from which to learn about the differences in implementation and how those differences may be influenced by program or regional characteristics. However, results from this group are not generalizable to the Welfare to Work Voucher Program at large.

Field Site Characteristics

The WtW sites visited for this study include six city agencies, four county agencies, three regional or joint consortia, and one state program.[4] Sites also reflect a wide range of WtW program sizes, ranging from 25 to 700 vouchers. Study sites are evenly distributed between programs with a relatively large or small number of vouchers. Sites were also selected from across the country and include locations in ten states. The following WtW Housing Voucher Programs were visited for this study:

State	Administering Agency	WtW Voucher Award
Alabama	Housing Authority of Walker County	69
California	San Bernardino Housing Authority	700
California	San Joaquin County Housing Authority	700
Florida	Tampa Housing Authority	450
Michigan	Grand Rapids Housing Council	250
New York	Albany NY Housing Authority	497
South Carolina	Aiken Housing Authority	165
Tennessee	Chattanooga Housing Authority	650
Texas	Austin Housing Authority	700
Texas	Texoma Council of Governments	150
Virginia	Virginia Housing Development Authority	
	Housing Services of Loudoun County	25
	Prince William County Housing Agency	450
Washington	Everett City & Snohomish County Housing Authorities	475

Urban Institute staff made field visits to WtW study sites that lasted an average of two days each. While on site, staff conducted interviews with housing agency executive directors and program coordinators for Welfare to Work, Section 8, and Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) as well as staff involved in issuance, lease-up, and case management. In addition, we

[4] Thirteen local sites were visited for this study. Two of the local sites are part of a state program. While staff at the state-level program were interviewed, they are not considered one of the thirteen local programs.

interviewed key staff at the local TANF agency, workforce development office, and/or key subcontractors at each site.

This early assessment of the WtW Voucher Program provides an opportunity to document local implementation approaches and identify challenges faced by local housing agencies as they attempt to use housing assistance to support broader welfare reform and family self-sufficiency goals. Accordingly, this report describes the important steps housing agencies took as they made decisions on eligibility and program design. It also details partnership activities and levels of involvement with partner agencies. Although the findings are not generalizable to the overall WtW program, they suggest possible trends and themes. Such information is provided early in the WtW Voucher Program to be of use to both policymakers, and federal and local program administrators.

II. ELIGIBILITY

The WtW Voucher Program requires families to meet certain eligibility guidelines in order to receive a voucher. Although WtW housing agencies may develop more specific criteria within the boundaries of these federal guidelines, all families must, at a minimum, meet certain eligibility rules. They cannot currently be receiving tenant-based Section 8, must meet the standard Section 8 eligibility requirements, and must be drawn from the Section 8 waiting list. In addition, the family must meet one of three TANF-related requirements developed for the WtW Voucher Program. They must:

- be currently receiving assistance or services funded by the TANF program;
- have received assistance or services funded by the TANF program in the past two years; or
- be eligible for, but not receiving assistance or services funded by the TANF program.[5]

For the sake of simplicity throughout this report, these three TANF-related requirements will be referred to as the family's 'TANF status' and will refer to their eligibility to receive TANF funded assistance and services.[6]

In addition to TANF status, the WtW voucher must be seen as critical to the family to obtain or retain employment. Each WtW housing agency and its partner organizations are responsible for defining what constitutes a critical need.

This section describes how the study sites interpreted these eligibility guidelines when implementing their local WtW Voucher Programs. It reviews typical TANF status-related eligibility rules, discusses implementation criteria used to determine housing need, and describes factors that influenced these decisions in the study sites.

Implementation of the TANF Status Guidelines

Many of the study sites developed their eligibility criteria to reflect the guidelines listed above. At these sites, families falling into all three TANF status groups—receiving, recently

---

[5] *Funding Availability for the Welfare-to-Work Section 8 Tenant-based Assistance Program for Fiscal Year 1999; Notice.* Federal Register. vol. 64, no. 16, January 28, 1999. p 4497.

[6] This refers to persons who are eligible to receive *any* TANF funded benefits or services. Most persons who receive TANF funded services also receive, or previously received, TANF funded cash assistance. However, in some states, persons who are income eligible for TANF may receive one time services as part of a diversionary or emergency assistance program rather than opening their cash grant.

received, or eligible to receive assistance or services funded by the TANF program—can theoretically receive WtW voucher assistance. However, some local WtW programs apply more targeted criteria than HUD's eligibility guidelines that deal with TANF status. Program systems may be designed to identify possible participants through referral from the TANF agency and, in effect, can only serve families who have worked with a TANF program (i.e., they are receiving or have received TANF funded assistance or services). Other local WtW systems have more specific eligibility criteria designed to target special populations. We describe these different models below.

Strict Interpretation of the NOFA Guidelines. The majority of the programs included in this study are designed to serve all three TANF status groups. In practice however, these programs serve only the first two categories: those currently receiving assistance or services funded under TANF or those who have received assistance or services funded under TANF in the past two years. Staff at these sites maintain that these families can be readily identified, since they are part of the TANF agency's database, and that their eligibility can be confirmed using the local TANF agency's rolls. WtW staff often noted that, given the local need for housing, all WtW vouchers would be used by the first two groups. Complicated outreach efforts to identify the third, more elusive group of persons who are eligible for but not receiving TANF funded assistance and services, therefore would not be necessary.[7] If a family that was eligible for but not receiving TANF funded assistance or services approached the housing agency, they would be eligible for WtW housing assistance and could be served in the program.

Current or Former Recipients of TANF Funded Assistance or Services Only. Some WtW housing agencies developed their program systems to admit all WtW voucher families through their local TANF agency. For these sites, WtW voucher participants are identified through their connection to the TANF agency, and therefore must be currently receiving TANF assistance or services or have done so sometime in the past two years. Because families must come through the partner agency, families that are not connected to the TANF agency, although they may be eligible to receive TANF funded assistance or services, do not have access to the WtW voucher.[8]

---

[7] Partner agency staff in one WtW Voucher Program did offer a possible method for identifying persons eligible for but not receiving TANF funded assistance or services. They suggested by identifying Medicaid recipients who were not and had not been receiving TANF funded assistance or services because they may have characteristics that make them eligible for TANF. However, staff have not implemented this method of identifying families that are eligible for but not receiving TANF. Housing staff felt lease-up could be accomplished by concentrating efforts on the first two TANF-defined groups.

[8] One of the sites that made this decision was the Aiken Housing Authority. They operate a local Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work program called Work to Win to which the local TANF agency refers clients. All WtW

Additional Regulations. Some study sites developed eligibility requirements to target a subset of the federally-defined WtW population. Most frequently, these additional requirements included a work component. However, they could also include a requirement designed to meet a specialized local need. For example, the WtW Voucher Program in San Joaquin includes both criteria that require work and that address local needs for non-traditional hour childcare. San Joaquin's WtW eligibility priorities are:

1) Persons who work for at least six continuous months and receive supplemental TANF cash assistance;
2) Persons who complete an approved CalWORKs activity and maintain a job for four or more continuous months; or
3) Persons who complete the in-home child care licensing process, demonstrate that adequate housing is essential to the operation of their business, and contract to provide licensed in-home child care during non-traditional work hours for individuals transitioning from welfare to work.

The joint WtW Voucher Program of Washington's Everett City and Snohomish County also established local eligibility criteria to serve working families that left welfare for work. Like San Joaquin, the program has an additional third category to further target a locally important population.[9] Eligibility priorities include the following:

1) TANF eligible families working at least 20 hours per week;
2) Families currently enrolled in Work First or a similar training program but not yet employed or working less than 20 hours; or
3) Homeless and transitional housing residents; limited English proficiency; and disabled persons.

Implementation of the Definition of Need

One eligibility guideline set forth by HUD—that the voucher be critical to getting and keeping employment—was left to each grantee to further define and operationalize. Staff at most study sites presumed that stable housing was a necessary first step on the road to

---

Voucher Program participants come through the Work to Win system. Local policymakers made this decision in order to target WtW vouchers to their "hard-to-serve" population.

[9] Both the nontraditional hour childcare component in San Joaquin and the targeting of homeless and transitional persons in Everett/Snohomish were developed in response to local needs articulated in group meetings between the housing agencies and local WtW partners.

obtaining and retaining employment and that, without the stability of a secure home, success in the workplace would be rare. Thus, most study site staff asserted that low-income persons, by definition, have a critical need for stable, affordable housing in order to obtain or retain employment. In these sites, this need is not evaluated on a case-by-case basis; instead, the need for housing to obtain and retain employment is assumed for all applicants.

In the few sites that did detail a method to measure critical need, they most often used traditional housing-related criteria, such as inadequate housing, overcrowding, rent burden, or other measures of economic strain. For instance, in Everett City/Snohomish County, the referring agency is asked to certify that the family has rent in excess of 40 percent of the family's income or is otherwise inadequately housed. Some of these sites combined traditional measures of housing need with an attempt to understand how housing may be a barrier to employment. For example, Loudoun County Housing Services in Virginia has its partner TANF agency certify need according to the following criteria:

- 50 percent or more of the family's gross income is dedicated to shelter, day care, and transportation;
- residing in overcrowded housing situations causes the family to be unprepared for employment requirements and/or risk of eviction;
- the family resides in homeless shelters; or
- case-by-case review for other employment-related extenuating factors.

Factors Influencing Eligibility Criteria

Leadership at the study sites looked not only to federal regulations when designing their eligibility criteria: they also were influenced by 1) their current waiting list; 2) local partnerships; and 3) assessment of need.

Current Waiting List. Some sites looked to their existing waiting list policies and the characteristics of the families on the waiting list when designing eligibility criteria. WtW staff in Chattanooga decided to use the three broad TANF status guidelines when formulating their eligibility requirements, because of their current waiting list preference system. Chattanooga already had waiting list preferences in place for families it considered 'in need' (involuntarily displaced, in substandard housing, or working family). Because of these preferences, families in need are at the top of the waiting list. As the Housing Authority moved down the waiting list to determine which families are eligible for the WtW Voucher Program, they consequently encountered families most in need first, due to preexisting waiting list preferences.

Other WtW housing agencies, such as Tampa Housing Authority, reviewed their current waiting list and found no eligible families were currently on it, given federal guidelines. As a response, they used referrals from the local workforce agency as an outreach tool for the WtW Voucher Program. The local workforce agency had the capacity to refer only its clients, which are current or former TANF families participating in the mandatory TANF employment program. Thus, this referral process created *a de facto* eligibility standard that included only former or current TANF recipients.

Local Partnerships. Partnerships played an important role in the development of some site's eligibility standards. Many study sites used, in varying degrees, partners and participation in partners' programs to determine or verify eligibility. Without the cooperation of these partners, eligibility determinations could not occur.

For example, some sites incorporated eligibility standards of partner organizations to target specific populations served by the partner. For example, Aiken's WtW Voucher Program serves families that are participating in the local Work to Win program. Work to Win is a Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work funded program, and participating families are currently receiving or have recently received TANF funded assistance or services. In addition to TANF receipt, Work to Win eligibility guidelines include poor work history, substance abuse problems, or lack of high school diploma. Staff at the Housing Authority believe that by targeting WtW vouchers to Work to Win participants, they identify those persons in their community with significant barriers to employment and for whom housing assistance is a critical need.

Partners in several sites assisted housing agencies in developing eligibility standards. San Joaquin provides an interesting example. The San Joaquin Housing Agency developed eligibility criteria to support families that had already made an early step from welfare to work and had been working between four and six months. This decision to support such families grew out of conversations with local partners, where it was determined that, due to local welfare reform initiatives, significant numbers of previous recipients of TANF funded assistance or services had already entered the workforce. A preference for working families supported and rewarded these families' efforts, and offered an incentive for future recipients. In addition, local service providers saw a serious need for nontraditional hour child care and hoped to use the WtW voucher to expand available services and encourage persons leaving services and assistance funded by TANF to form their own child care businesses.

Assessment of Need. Study sites also looked to the needs of their population when developing criteria to assess need for housing to obtain or retain employment. Leadership at

almost all sites maintain that lack of housing is a major barrier to employment, and that anyone who qualifies for assistance needs it in order to get and keep a job. Most housing agency staff clearly viewed the group of people eligible for WtW vouchers as "troubled" in addition to financially constrained. Staff made these assumptions about the eligible population in general.

It was typical for housing agency staff when asked about the relationship between housing and employment to assert that stable housing is a fundamental pre-requisite for low-income persons to be able to get or keep a job. The rationale accompanying such statements was usually based on anecdotal situations and the respondent's experience serving low-income families. For example, specific examples would be offered such as "How can you keep a job if you live in a car?" General statements also would be made about the variety of pressures on low-income families. In particular, comments were made on how overcrowding, doubling-up and rent burden can increase the chaos and instability in the lives of low-income families and consequently hinder efforts to get a job (such as not having an address or telephone number from which messages can be reliably retrieved) or keep a job (such as contributing to poor work habits like absenteeism).

Given the prevailing assumption among the study sites that low-income persons need stable housing to get or keep a job, it is not surprising that most of the study sites did not conduct an intensive case-by-case review for employment-related housing needs during the initial eligibility screening. This decision was reinforced in some sites by the requirement to lease all WtW vouchers within 12 months. Intensive individual assessments consume staff time and resources and seem overwhelming to local program staff worried about timely lease-up.

Granting a WtW voucher to a family as a way of overcoming locational barriers to employment, such as distance to jobs or child care, was much less common than providing the voucher to everyone who qualified for access to decent, affordable, stable housing. Some WtW program coordinators said that if a participant had an employment related housing need that could be satisfied by moving, it could be identified and dealt with during housing search. Housing search activities were not observed or discussed in detail in many study sites because the field visits occurred early in program implementation and such activities were not yet operating or were in early development stages.

III. PROGRAM DESIGN

The WtW Voucher Program is intended to support the progress of families transitioning from welfare to work. While HUD mandates that WtW housing agencies follow general guidelines, federal regulations are broad and allow housing agencies to develop programs that fit their jurisdictions' strengths, needs, and resources. Differences across these characteristics are reflected in the variety of program systems observed in the thirteen study sites, each of which developed a unique and different program.

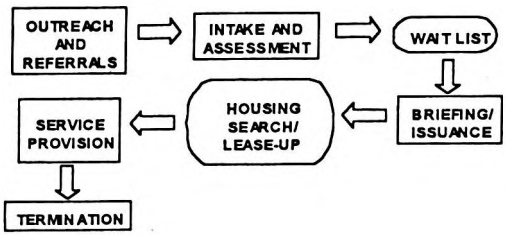
One of the main differences in local program design is the role of partner agencies. Although regulation requires that housing agencies coordinate with the local welfare and workforce development systems, there is tremendous flexibility in what this coordination looks like at the local level. Housing agency staff may choose to rely on their current structures and programs (like Section 8 and FSS) as a foundation for the WtW Voucher Program and ask their local welfare and workforce agencies to perform discrete tasks related to WtW. Other housing agencies integrate partners' programs in the day-to-day operations of WtW and develop a system quite different from their current housing programs.

This section reviews how the study sites have responded to the design flexibility offered under the WtW Voucher Program. It describes the typical activities undertaken in most WtW Voucher Programs and offers three program models as illustrations of the methods used to deliver these activities. In addition, factors are reviewed that influence how housing agency staff and their partners design local WtW programs.

WtW Program Steps

After examining local factors, each study site developed an individualized WtW Voucher Program. These designs cover identifying eligible families, awarding the vouchers, and providing services. Varied as they may be, all program systems generally contain seven typical steps, as illustrated in Exhibit 3.1.

Exhibit 3.1: Typical WtW Program Design



1) *Client Outreach and Referrals.* In the early stage of program development observed in the field visits, sites generally had minimal outreach efforts. Many agencies simply used their existing waiting lists to draw eligible families for the WtW Voucher Program and anticipate no need for intensive outreach activities. Those without eligible families on their waiting lists had more immediate outreach efforts, such as utilizing partner referrals. Other WtW housing agencies issued vouchers only to families from the waiting list to date, but anticipated they would not be able to lease up all available WtW vouchers without recruiting more applicants. These sites had begun to debate outreach strategies, including possible partner referrals or posting of public notices, but no firm plans had been established.

2) *Intake and Eligibility Assessment.* Families who want a WtW voucher must first go through an intake process that includes the completion of an application and the certification of eligibility. At the time of the site visits, most sites had concentrated their efforts on this step in the process to ensure that the vouchers are issued as quickly as possible to certified, eligible clients.[10]

3) *Waiting list.* After the application is complete and submitted to the housing agency, the family is placed on a Section 8 waiting list. For some of these housing agencies, the WtW program changed the waiting list preferences to include WtW eligibility criteria, particularly preferences for working families. Typically, however, the WtW Voucher Program draws persons from the waiting list who meet WtW eligibility criteria, without altering existing waiting list preferences.

4) *Briefing.* Next, families attend a briefing. Most study sites incorporated the WtW briefing into their standard Section 8 briefing, although a number of them initiated WtW-only briefings. As in Section 8, WtW vouchers are generally issued to potential participants at the briefing.

5) *Housing Search and Lease-up.* Housing search and lease-up occurs as it does in the standard Section 8 program: most sites visited did not provide additional services for WtW clients at this stage in the program's implementation. A housing search

---

[10] Sites chose a range of methods to conduct intake and eligibility assessment activities ranging from group to one-on-one interviews. While the method of conducting these activities could reflect the housing agencies' focus on lease-up or overcoming client barriers, the choice of different intake methods did not correspond to consistent program models in the study sites. The majority of study sites conducted one-on-one interviews (with exceptions such as the large group leasing fair in San Joaquin) which may be more reflective of their small to medium size housing operation rather than their overall goals for the WtW Voucher Program.

assistance component may be added to some programs as they become more developed.[11] For instance, Tampa's TANF office is considering funding a housing counselor and a landlord outreach specialist.

6) *Service Provision.* Most study sites have created a plan for service provision, but few had fully concentrated their efforts on this step by the time of the field visit. In most but not all sites, non-housing services are provided by other local entities (such as the TANF or workforce system or community based organizations) and are given to any family that qualifies for the service. The family's WtW status does not motivate new or different services from local agencies.

7) *Termination.* By the time of the site visits, no local programs had terminated anyone from the WtW Voucher Program. Most sites plan to use standard Section 8 termination policies[12] but others incorporated participant contracts requiring work in order to retain WtW vouchers.

WtW Program Models

Although local WtW programs included each of the steps detailed above, each of the thirteen WtW programs reviewed implemented a WtW Voucher Program that was unique, as allowed by the flexible federal regulations. These programs differ on how each program step is executed, and by whom, but can be categorized into three general design models. WtW programs either:

- are structured like the grantee's existing Section 8 program (Model 1);
- are structured like the grantee's existing Section 8 program with an FSS or FSS-like component (Model 2); or
- integrate the grantee's existing Section 8 system with partners' program systems (Model 3).

---

[11] Likewise, few sites have engaged in extensive landlord outreach efforts to date. Again, as the program matures and clients begin to encounter problems leasing up, some WtW grantees state they will undertake more concerted landlord outreach efforts. A notable exception is San Joaquin, which conducted significant landlord outreach activities as part of a large "leasing fair." San Joaquin staff contacted current landlords, potential landlords, and local management companies and encouraged them to participate in the fair for voucher recipients. Landlords could have their units inspected by housing agency staff, prior to the fair, in order to expedite the lease-up process.

[12] Section 8 termination policies include prohibitions against fraud, eviction, drug dealing, and deliberate and persistent program abuse.

Exhibit 3.2 identifies typical management elements of each site's WtW Voucher Program, and illustrates how these elements vary according to model type. By looking at these management components, one can see how the models differ from one another in some respects, such as partner management of a portion of the WtW program. One can also review how some management factors, such as the hiring of new staff, is a strategy many sites have employed, regardless of the model type. In the following discussion of each model type, these management elements will be reviewed and interesting trends within each model type noted.

Exhibit 3.2:
WtW Management Elements by Program Model

WtW Management	Model 1			Model 2							Model 3		
	Chattanooga HA	Grand Rapids HC	Walker County HA	Albany HA	Austin HA	Loudoun County HS	Prince William OHCS	San Bernardino HA	San Joaquin HA	Texoma COG	Aiken HA	Everett/Snohomish HAs	Tampa HA
Hire new staff	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓					✓	✓
Dedicate housing staff for WtW	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓					
Work-related termination			✓*		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	
In-house case management for WtW				✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			
Non-housing services provided by HA				✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	
Partner manages portion of program											✓	✓	✓
Partner referral required											✓	✓	✓
Requires FSS for WtW								✓				✓	

*Although clients are informed they have 2 years in which to retain employment, Walker County Housing Authority did not, as of the date of the site visit, have a formal procedure in place to enforce this work-related termination policy.

Model 1: Section 8. One WtW Voucher Program model follows the grantee's existing Section 8 program. Three study sites adopted this program model. All such sites had recently hired new staff at least partially in response to receipt of the WtW vouchers, as illustrated in Exhibit 3.2. New staff hires ranged from additional housing counselors, to intake personnel, FSS caseworkers, and housing inspectors, not necessarily dedicated to the WtW Voucher Program. In general, the housing agency manages the program in these sites. Any difference between the WtW program and the Section 8 program generally is invisible to the participant and occurs mainly in the outreach process, eligibility determination, or the grantee's record keeping. Termination policy is generally aligned with the termination guidelines for the Section 8 program.

For example, Grand Rapids Housing Commission modified its outreach procedures for identifying potential voucher recipients, in response to the addition of the WtW vouchers to its voucher pool. In addition to contacting families on the housing agency's current waiting list, families are added to the waiting list through referrals from the local workforce development agency. Case managers at the workforce agency give families who need housing assistance an application and tell them to go to the housing agency. These referrals do not certify WtW eligibility and are not required for participation. But, they do provide a source of new applicants who have a strong chance of being WtW eligible, given their connection to the workforce agency.

Any remaining differences between WtW and Section 8 in Grand Rapids Housing Commission's WtW Voucher Program are generally administrative. A potential WtW family enters the same process as a family who will receive Section 8. All intake, assessment, briefing, issuance, and housing search activities are identical to Section 8. The family is classified as WtW only at the point of lease-up when their TANF status is checked. Those persons who are receiving or have recently received TANF assistance or services, are classified as WtW. The housing agency presumes a family connected to the TANF system is receiving case management and does not offer additional case management services specifically to WtW participants. Those WtW families who elect to participate in FSS receive case management and a variety of supportive service form local service providers.

Model 2: Section 8 with FSS. Another program model adopted by seven of the study sites evolves from the housing agency's basic Section 8 program, along with an FSS or FSS-like component. In one of these sites, FSS participation is a requirement, while in most others it is only encouraged. These sites may have developed their programs in close coordination with their partner agencies and have partner involvement in WtW policy development, eligibility

verification, referrals, and service provision. However, much of the traditional housing activity (intake, briefing, lease-up) is conducted by the housing agency, often by staff dedicated to the WtW Voucher Program.

In order to be classified as a Model 2 site, local WtW Voucher Programs must either 1) offer WtW participants FSS-like in-house case management or non-housing related services, or 2) have an enforceable work-related termination policy beyond regular Section 8 guidelines, that is similar to FSS employment goals. In general, the non-housing services and case management provided by these sites for WtW were based on housing agency activities prior to the WtW Voucher Program and were not developed solely for WtW voucher holders. For example, Albany Housing Authority runs a DSS-approved employment and training service program for its public housing residents and neighbors. This program can now provide case management and services to WtW clients, but was in existence prior to the WtW Voucher Program. Similar to FSS, most of these programs require WtW voucher holders to sign a contractual agreement stating they will meet certain goals, or can be terminated from the program. These goals often include work requirements.

Texoma Council of Governments is an example of a housing agency that has designed a program that can be categorized as Model 2. This housing agency does not require that all WtW Voucher Program participants enroll in FSS. However, if a WtW voucher holder does not enroll in FSS, they still receive FSS-like case management. This includes one-on-one meetings with an FSS case worker and the development of an action plan contract with work requirements. If services are needed to assist WtW voucher holders in meeting self-sufficiency goals, then the FSS case manager refers the voucher holder to local service partners. In fact, the only difference between WtW FSS clients and non-FSS clients is that non-FSS clients do not have the FSS escrow account option.[13]

Model 3: Integrated Program Design. A third program model involves the integration of a significant portion of the WtW system into a local partner's program and applies to three programs assessed in this study. In this model, housing agency staff are responsible for providing traditional housing-related services, but a large portion of the WtW Voucher Program

---

[13] Since WtW families were not interviewed as a part of this assessment, no information is available regarding why a family would choose to enroll in the WtW Voucher Program and not the FSS program, even when the only difference between the two programs is that the FSS program includes an escrow account. Staff at one housing agency that strongly recommends WtW voucher holders enroll in the FSS program, stated that the few WtW voucher holders not enrolled in FSS have not done so because they are "afraid of the goals." Although the WtW and FSS programs have similar contractual agreements, work requirements, and tracking procedures, FSS's perceived emphasis on setting and reaching goals intimidated some WtW voucher holders at this one housing agency, according to agency staff.

system lies outside of the housing agency. Consequently, although two of the housing agencies have hired new staff, these additions have not been specifically for the WtW Voucher Program and instead represent more general staff hires.

In most cases, the housing agency is still responsible for many WtW-related functions, such as the briefing and voucher issuance. However, partners undertake core WtW program activities, which in these three study sites are intake and assessment. Housing agencies in integrated systems rely on the partner agencies for assessing client need for the voucher to obtain and retain employment and obtain the majority, if not all, of their clients from partner referrals. Only one Model 3 site has a work-related termination policy.

The WtW Voucher Program operated by the Everett City and Snohomish County Housing Authorities is an example of an integrated program design. In a sense, the WtW program has become a new service tool embedded in the partner agency programs. Outreach, intake, and eligibility certification are taken care of by the partner agencies, who 'nominate' clients. Each partner agency has discretion over how it identifies potential nominees. Consistency is enforced by the common action plan and application forms partner agencies must use to nominate clients.

Briefing, issuance, and lease-up in Everett and Snohomish remain the housing agencies' responsibilities. However, once the voucher is issued, that client's case returns to the partner agency. The client's service provision and case management are then the responsibility of the nominating partner agency that reports back to the housing agency on the progress of WtW participants.

Factors Influencing Program Design

Of the thirteen study sites, three follow Model 1, seven favor Model 2, and three resemble Model 3 (see Exhibit 3.2).[14] Most sites chose to keep WtW a housing agency intensive program and rely on partners to perform discrete tasks such as eligibility verification or limited referrals. However, some study sites include programs that substantially integrated their existing systems with partners' programs in order to create a new program. Our analysis indicates that the decisions surrounding program design and whether or not to incorporate with other local organizations are based on the interaction of several factors, including 1)

[14] It is unknown whether the distribution of the program models across the study sites is indicative of the distribution across the WtW grantee population at large.

preexisting partnerships with local service providers; 2) local services and needs; 3) leadership; 4) resource constraints; and 5) local philosophies.

Partnerships. The strength of pre-existing partnerships between the housing agencies and their partners can influence whether a program is operated independently of local service providers or as an integrated system. All three integrated models had strong previous relationships with local partners. The Aiken Housing Authority is a Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work grantee and operates a local employment and training program. The Tampa Housing Authority is closely aligned with the workforce contractor, Goodwill, as evidenced by an on-site career center near the public housing and a plan to locate a workforce case manager in the Tampa Housing Authority Resident Services' offices. Likewise, the Housing Authorities in Everett City and Snohomish County have along standing history of close involvement with other area agencies.

Local Services and Need. Families' needs and the availability of local services to meet those needs affects the grantee's choice of program design. Across sites, housing agency staff observed that the TANF program had moved a considerable amount of people from welfare to work. Those families that remained eligible for the WtW Voucher Program were harder to serve, with multiple barriers to self-sufficiency. Some localities have strong local services that target these individuals. In cases like Grand Rapids, the Housing Commission chose to focus their efforts on traditional housing-related services and leave case management and supportive service provision to a sophisticated network of local service providers. Staff at other agencies maintain that clients participate in programs at many agencies and are subsequently over-managed, since case management is provided by multiple service providers. Programs operating in these localities refrained from designing a program with an in-house case management component.

Resources. In most sites, resources—including staff time and funding for non-housing services—are constrained. Housing agency staff assess their constraints when designing the WtW Voucher Program locally. Some housing agencies may be able to integrate their WtW programs into their existing Section 8 programs with little or no additional staff, such as Aiken. Others may have resources that allow them to provide in-house services or add more FSS clients to the case load, as in San Bernardino. Still others, such as San Joaquin, are able to incorporate into WtW preexisting non-housing services provided by the Housing Authority at Supportive Service Centers. The motivation behind service integration stems in part from a desire to incorporate additional community resources into WtW.

Philosophy. The philosophical approach of a housing agency's leadership and the environment this leadership creates affected the design of the WtW Voucher Program. Everett City and Snohomish County Housing Authorities are led by executive directors that speak of their activities as "the community's program." It is not surprising, that when these leaders and their staffs thought about WtW, they reached out to the community and its local service providers. These housing authorities developed a program that relies heavily on their partners' programs and provides a housing-assistance tool for partners to use to assist their clients obtain self-sufficiency.

Most of the study sites do not have clearly defined written goals for their local WtW Voucher Program. Instead, WtW housing agencies have a general philosophy of what they hope the program, and its recipients, will achieve. The WtW philosophy in a given locality is driven by the agency's overarching philosophy of their role as housing providers. Housing agencies range from those that see themselves as providers and managers of housing, to those agencies that envision themselves empowering participants towards self-sufficiency. Housing agency staff who see themselves as providers of housing may stress lease-up as their WtW Voucher Program goal and orient the program around this focus point, such as the programs in Chattanooga and Walker County. Those agencies that have a primary goal of resident self-sufficiency speak of a program designed to use housing as a means to achieve that goal. These sites may stress FSS-like case management and require all WtW voucher holders be enrolled in FSS or they may have active partner program integration with staff in multiple agencies coordinating cases and services, as in Everett City and Snohomish County.

IV. PARTNERSHIPS

Under the WtW Voucher Program, housing assistance is intended to be coordinated with local welfare reform goals and program systems. Indeed, according to HUD's NOFA, applications for WtW needed to include written support by both the local welfare agency (provider of TANF funded assistance and services) and the local workforce development system (as designated by the Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work program). In addition, applications were to detail how housing agencies would collaborate with these local agencies in the development and operation of their WtW program.

This chapter describes typical partner organizations for both welfare and workforce systems and reviews the major activities of partners in the study sites. While the previous chapter described program models as either "Section 8," "Section 8 with FSS," or "integrated program design," these classifications do not reflect the full range of partner involvement in local WtW Voucher Programs. Therefore, in this section partnership types are further classified and described by level of partner involvement in the WtW Voucher Program. The chapter concludes with a review of the factors contributing to partnership development in the WtW field visit sites.

Key WtW Partner Organizations

TANF Agency. Currently, the term "welfare" refers to a broad array of safety net programs that support the needy, and may refer more specifically to cash assistance for families. Prior to 1996, welfare referred to cash assistance and benefits provided under the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 replaced AFDC, the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training Program (JOBS), and federal emergency assistance with the TANF Block Grant. Under TANF, states have considerable discretion in designing cash assistance programs for families with children, including establishing eligibility criteria, benefit levels, and time limits within a federally established framework. The legislation intended to emphasize work over cash assistance.

Typically, TANF funding is provided to recipients through local offices of a state health and human services agency. The services provided, and how they are delivered, vary locally. These services typically include individual client assessments, case management, and an array of supportive services. In some localities, many activities are not carried out by the local office but are contracted to other area providers, such as community based organizations.

This is often the case for employment and training services. For example, Florida has a consolidated employment and training effort for TANF recipients, called WAGES. In Tampa, the TANF agency contracts with Goodwill Industries to perform intake, assessment, and case management activities as well as offer employment and training services for WAGES participants. In this local system, Goodwill, not the local welfare office, is the entity that makes referrals to the housing agency for possible participation in the WtW Voucher Program.

To coordinate with the welfare system, WtW Voucher Program sites may connect with the local welfare office or their contracted service providers. The flexibility of the WtW Voucher Program allows sites to evaluate their local system and develop appropriate partnerships. Reflecting the differences in local TANF systems, the study sites connect with a variety of TANF partners using a variety of methods and means, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Workforce Development System. The term "workforce development system" refers to a broad range of employment and training services and programs designed to meet the needs of all job seekers. One such program is the Department of Labor's Welfare-to-Work Program. Following welfare reform legislation, the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 authorized the Department of Labor to allocate Welfare-to-Work formula and competitive grants to states and local communities to support efforts to help the least employable welfare recipients and non-custodial parents of recipient children move into work with the potential for upward mobility. These grants fund employment and training services such as job search, job readiness training, and basic skills training.

Formula Welfare-to-Work moneys are directed to local Private Industry Councils or Workforce Investment Boards[15] that coordinate the employment and training system in their service delivery areas. Private Industry Councils and Workforce Investment Boards typically contract with other local organizations to provide services, or may both provide services in-house *and* contract with others for additional service provision. In addition, the Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work grant program awards funds competitively to local communities for similar activities. Therefore, in a given community there may be several organizations providing employment and training services as part of the local workforce development system.

For the WtW Voucher Program, the workforce partner is identified as an organization that is a designated formula or competitive Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work grantee.

---

[15] Under the Workforce Investment Act, Private Industry Councils were replaced with Workforce Investment Boards. However, local systems are still in transition and Private Industry Councils can be found operating in different localities.

Which workforce development organization is involved in the WtW Voucher Program depends on how the local workforce development system is organized and who is conducting activities such as client assessments, case management, and provision of employment and training services. A housing agency may work with an organizing entity like the Private Industry Council or an active subcontractor with responsibility for employment and training services. In two of the study sites, Aiken and Austin, the housing agency is a Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work grantee.

Welfare Reform and Workforce Consolidation

The many changes in the welfare and workforce development systems that have taken place since 1996 pose both an opportunity and a challenge for housing agencies seeking to implement a WtW Voucher Program. The opportunity derives from the dynamism in local systems that may foster an environment where innovation is desirable and potential partners are looking for a new ways of doing business. Moreover, local coordination efforts may have prompted coalitions of service providers, laying the groundwork for partnerships. With the rise in collaboration in some areas, housing agencies may already be connected to coalitions of service providers or serving on the local Workforce Investment Board.

However, recent changes in welfare and workforce development may have increased the strain on local agencies as they struggle to meet new requirements and implement new programs. Key actors may be in transition as employment and training service contracts are granted to different agencies and power shifts from a Private Industry Council to a Workforce Investment Board. Given the changes in local systems, there may well be confusion at local housing agencies over who are appropriate, long term partners for the WtW Voucher Program. For example, Walker County, Alabama, did not have an official workforce entity to partner with at the time of the WtW application.

Coordination between the local welfare and workforce development agencies can contribute to the ability of the WtW housing agency to connect with the broader social service system. For example, in some communities, an organization or agency that provides employment and training services does so under the auspices of a variety of different programs; by connecting to them, a housing agency gains access to a wide array of services and funding streams. In San Bernardino, the TANF employment and training effort (CalWORKs) and the Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work program both are operated by the Jobs and Employment Services Department. By establishing a connection to the Jobs and Employment Services Department, San Bernardino Housing Authority can benefit from both

TANF and Department of Labor programs and services, without having to link to multiple agencies.

Types of Partner Activities

Across the study sites, there are six general types of activities in which welfare and workforce partners engage: 1) program design; 2) client identification and referral; 3) eligibility verification; 4) client assessment; 5) case management; and 6) service provision. The types of activities undertaken by partners speak directly to the nature of the partnerships formed for the WtW Voucher Program. Much of the activity observed during the site visits related to administrative tasks such as client identification, referral, and eligibility verification. This is not surprising given the timing of the field visits during the start-up phase of local programs. However, partnerships in some sites already extended beyond administrative tasks to include program management (particularly in sites with an integrated program design model) and may include coordinated case management and service provision.[16]

To better understand the level of partner involvement, it is helpful to review the types of activities that partners undertook.

Program Design. In approximately two-thirds of the study sites, partner agencies were involved in some aspect of program design and policy development for the WtW Voucher Program by the time site visits were conducted. Contributions influenced the design of eligibility criteria, referral procedures, verification mechanisms, and termination policies. The typical forum for partner involvement in policy development was group meetings. In different sites, these exchanges were called "focus groups", "board meetings", and "panel discussions", but they all involved staff from the housing agency and other local service providers (most notably the welfare and workforce development systems) meeting to discuss the WtW Voucher Program.

Some of the most striking examples of such involvement have direct program results, such as the development of specific policies in response to partner agency experience or goals. The eligibility guidelines in San Joaquin (which require work and encourage nontraditional hour child care providers), for example, grew out of partner concerns. Similarly, group meetings in Albany between the Housing Authority and the TANF agency resulted in eligibility criteria that favored participants in TANF's work programs. In San Bernardino, the WtW termination policy reflects the desire of the Housing Authority and its partners to jointly

[16] When field visits were conducted, few sites had yet implemented case management or supportive services.

and consistently promote employment. Toward this end, the termination and sanctions policies of local agencies link successful WtW voucher performance with TANF and workforce compliance, and vice versa.

Client Identification and Referral. In half of the study sites, partner agencies were involved in identifying and referring clients to the WtW Housing Voucher Program at the time the site visits were conducted. Identification of potential participants included a TANF office reviewing the housing agency waiting list and identifying those persons who currently receive or recently received TANF benefits or services. Identification activities also involved a partner agency proactively contacting their clients (in person, by mail, or by telephone) to tell them about the availability of WtW vouchers.

An example of partner engagement in identification activities is Walker County, Alabama. There, TANF staff sent letters about the WtW Voucher Program to current and former TANF recipients and discussed the program with their clients during one-on-one visits with TANF case workers.

Referral activities are similar to identification but include a mechanism to direct potential participants to the office able to provide them with WtW Voucher assistance. Partner referral activities span a wide spectrum of involvement in the WtW Voucher Programs study sites. Several sites have mechanisms (usually referral forms) for partner referrals but expect many of their WtW participants will be identified initially through their position on the pre-WtW housing waiting list.

However, in sites with an integrated program design, partner referral activities are a primary vehicle for identifying potential WtW participants. For example, in Aiken all WtW voucher clients are participants in Work to Win (the Housing Authority's Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work program) and referred by Work to Win case managers to the Section 8 program. In Tampa, case managers from Goodwill-WAGES (the employment and training system for TANF recipients) are not the only referring entities but they must certify housing need and TANF status for all persons and submit all WtW referrals to the Housing Authority. In Everett/Snohomish, a variety of local service providers (including organizations in the TANF and workforce systems) refer clients to the housing authorities for consideration under WtW and local staff expect a significant portion of participants in the program will be referred from partner agencies.

Eligibility Verification. The federal guidelines for the WtW Voucher Program tie a family's eligibility for WtW Housing Vouchers to their TANF status. As a result, housing

agencies with a WtW Voucher Program must develop a way of verifying the TANF status of potential WtW voucher recipients. This need then prompts interaction and coordination between the two agencies.

Procedures for verifying TANF receipt include some that intentionally integrate TANF agencies into the process and others that do not. For example, in Prince William County, the housing agency coordinates with the TANF office to verify each applicant's TANF status. The Housing Agency capitalized on being located in the same building with the welfare office and established a practice of having TANF staff review a list from the Housing Agency to verify who is currently receiving TANF or has received it in the past two years. In other locations, the potential client gets a form from the Housing Agency, takes it to the TANF office for verification of assistance, and then returns it to the Housing Agency.

Client Assessment. Beyond eligibility verification, few of the WtW partners in the study sites are involved in defined assessment activities specifically related to the WtW Voucher Program but there are notable exceptions particularly among those programs with an integrated program model. For example, partner agencies working with Everett City and Snohomish County are responsible for assessing client need including housing related barriers to employment. In other sites, partner agencies may conduct assessment activities for other program purposes and use or share such information with WtW. Both TANF agencies and organizations involved in the Department of Labor's Welfare-to-Work program are engaged in formal assessment activities apart from WtW. In some sites, such as Texoma and San Bernardino, the housing agencies have access to individual responsibility plans and/or workforce assessments conducted by partner agencies and may incorporate portions of those plans into a performance contract between the WtW voucher participant and the housing agency.

Case Management. At the time of the visits, most sites were concentrating on identifying eligible families and conducting intake and issuance activities. On average, seven percent of the WtW vouchers had been awarded (units put under lease). Given that most WtW programs offer case management and social services to families *after* lease-up, there had been little direct experience with case management and service provision at the time of the site visits. While sites were often building on previous partnerships and WtW staff had a general sense of how services would be delivered, these plans were not in operation. Therefore, our discussion of case management and service provision is based on the plans of WtW providers rather than actual experiences.

Five of the seven Section 8 with FSS program model sites will provide in-house case management for the WtW Voucher Program, often drawing on their experience and resources in the FSS Program. The remaining housing agencies provide minimal in-house case management for the WtW Voucher Program and rely on case management services their WtW clients receive from partner agencies. However, this second group can be divided into two distinct categories: Housing agencies that actively connect their WtW clients to other agencies for case management (integrated program design models and two Section 8 with FSS model sites) and those that do not (Section 8 models). Integrated models in particular strategically plug the voucher into a partner's service system.[17] While they may not conduct case management activities with all or many of their clients, they have designed their systems so that each participant receives case management at a partner agency and the housing agency receives follow-up information on progress toward employment goals. On the other hand, Section 8 models assume WtW participants receive case management from other service providers (primarily TANF) and do not formalize connections to ensure these services or monitor client progress.

Service Provision. While some housing agencies provide some non-housing services to WtW participants (listed in Exhibit 3.2), most of the WtW study sites rely on partner organizations to provide the majority of support services to WtW voucher clients within the existing local service delivery framework. WtW applications and program plans include an impressive array of service providers, and many housing agencies have become familiar with such providers through activities in the FSS Program.

For the most part, services available to WtW participants are provided to any family that qualifies for them, and a family's WtW status does not open doors to new or different services from local agencies. However, given the welfare status of most WtW participants, they will likely be eligible for many of the supportive services offered by area providers. What is yet to be determined in many sites is how the WtW program will connect participants with the surrounding social service network.

Some study sites plan to access the service systems of their TANF and workforce partners. Of those visited, different service hubs exist where users (WtW voucher holders and others) can access services. TANF-sponsored employment and training programs—such as CalWorks in California, WAGES in Florida, and VIEW in Virginia—try to coordinate local TANF

---

[17] For example, all the integrated sites (Aiken, Everett/Snohomish, and Tampa) significantly incorporate WtW into other local programs that have considerable responsibility for, and ownership of WtW.

and workforce services ,and many are moving to "one stop shops" where clients can satisfy multiple service needs in one place.

Other WtW sites plan to use in-house service delivery systems, such as their own version of one-stop shops. The San Joaquin Housing Authority has Supportive Services Centers in their public housing developments with a number of different service providers on-site. The Housing Authority hopes to coordinate the service needs of some of their WtW Voucher Program participants with these existing centers.

While most of the services in WtW will be provided through existing programs, there is one example of a partner agency developing a new service specifically for WtW voucher holders. In Chattanooga, the Housing Authority worked closely with the TANF service provider (Signal Centers) to develop a Renter Certification Program. The course includes modules on financial management and how to be a good tenant. The program is intended to improve the skills of WtW voucher holders and provide a certification that will encourage landlords to rent their units to WtW voucher holders.

Types of Partnerships[18]

The previous chapter grouped the assessed WtW Programs by program system type with three programs following a Section 8 model, seven following a Section 8 plus FSS model, and three that had a highly integrated program design. While the discussion of program design provides a helpful basis for understanding partner participation in the day-to-day activities of local WtW Voucher Programs, it does not fully capture and characterize the involvement of partners in various WtW Programs. Particularly, some sites characterized as a Section 8 with FSS program model had significant partner involvement in the development of their program. For example, policies about eligibility and terminations may be developed in direct collaboration with partner agencies and respond to their concerns and goals.

To understand better the level of partnerships, it is helpful to focus specifically on the involvement of partners in the overall development of local WtW programs. We have divided the study sites into three categories based on the involvement of partners in WtW Voucher Program development and operations. These are characterized as low, moderate, or high. Program features corresponding to levels of partner involvement are presented in Exhibit 4.1.

---

[18] It is important to note that this is an early assessment of the WtW Voucher Program and partner relationships may change over time. The distinctions used here (low, moderate, and high) rely heavily on program policy and design features because these activities were undertaken by the time of the field visits.

Exhibit 4.1:
Characteristics of Partner Involvement Levels

Low Involvement
No or limited communication
WtW program decisions made by housing agency
No partner participation in WtW activities
Moderate Involvement
Frequent communication that may include WtW-related topics
Partner involved in client identification and referral
Partner involved in eligibility verification
High Involvement*
Jointly designed major feature of WtW
Partner manages significant portion of WtW
Partner referrals mandatory for WtW participation

*If a local partnership includes any of these elements it is considered high involvement.

Low Involvement. While several sites have weak relationships with either their local welfare or workforce agency, none of the study sites have a low level of partner involvement from *both* the welfare and workforce partners in their WtW Program.[19] To be classified as having low involvement, a site would need to have limited communication with the partner and little to no conversation specific to the WtW Voucher Program. In addition, partner agencies would not play a substantial role in decisions about WtW program design, policy, or procedures. In sites where the previous relationship was tenuous, the need to verify TANF status for eligibility purposes often prompted initial conversations that lead to a connection with the WtW Voucher Program.

Moderate Involvement. Of the study sites, five have a WtW partnership characterized by moderate involvement with either the welfare and/or workforce development agency. These sites include the three programs with Section 8 models (Chattanooga, Grand Rapids, and Walker County) as well as two Section 8 with FSS programs (Prince William County and Texoma). These partnerships are characterized by frequent communication between multiple levels of housing and partner agency staff (such as with both the executive directors *and* line staff). Communication tends to be both unrelated to the WtW Program (such as contact during meetings convened among area service providers) as well as generated by the WtW Voucher Program (such as informational briefings about WtW vouchers). Partner agencies may be involved in identifying potential and verifying eligibility (TANF status), but most WtW

[19] Sites which had high involvement partnerships with one or both partners are discussed below.

activities take place at the housing agency. And, while, partners often categorize the relationships between agencies as "good," "cooperative," and "cordial" there is no element of the WtW Voucher Program that was crafted specifically because of partner involvement in the program.

High Involvement. Eight of the study sites have high involvement from local partners. In these cases, WtW Programs have a program system or policy feature that was significantly influenced by a local partner, such as jointly developed eligibility criteria or termination policies. High involvement partnerships include the three integrated service delivery systems discussed previously (Aiken, Everett/Snohomish, and Tampa) and five Section 8 with FSS sites (Albany, Austin, Loudoun, San Bernardino, San Joaquin). In addition to activities like eligibility verification and referrals, partners in the five Section 8 with FSS sites were strategically involved in the local vision for the WtW Voucher Program. This involvement had tangible results. For example:

- *Loudoun County*: Loudoun County Housing Services worked with the Loudoun County Department of Social Services to jointly develop a priority ranking system for the receipt of WtW vouchers.

- *San Bernardino*: To receive a voucher and maintain housing assistance, applicants must cooperate with three agencies: the Transitional Assistance Department (the TANF agency); the Jobs and Employment Services Department (the local workforce development entity); and the Housing Authority. Noncompliance with either Section 8, the TANF agency programs, or the employment and training agency programs can lead to termination from WtW.

- *San Joaquin*: The Housing Authority collectively established eligibility criteria with the County Human Services Agency, the Private Industry Council, and a range of community based organizations. These criteria target a more narrow clientele than those made eligible in NOFA guidelines and reflect local needs and goals. This group continues to meet to discuss WtW Voucher Program progress and service needs.

Factors Influencing Partnerships

The WtW Voucher Program required housing agencies to have the support of organizations in both their local TANF and workforce systems. Across the study sites, the level of involvement differs between sites and between partners, but all sites have a relationship

with the local TANF and/or workforce entity and in eight study sites local partners were highly involved in the operation and/or design of local WtW Voucher Programs.

The majority of sites had relationships with their local partners prior to the WtW Voucher Program. Moreover, in all of the high involvement partnerships, the housing agency had a meaningful preexisting relationship with partner agencies, including experience with shared staff, co-location, or funded programs. The preponderance of preexisting partnerships in the study sites may not extend to the wider universe of WtW sites and may be influenced by the site selection method of favoring sites who were able to quickly implement their WtW Voucher Program.[20] However, two factors that influenced partnerships at these sites, (1) the dynamism of working collaboratively in a flexible program and (2) the philosophy of the housing agency, may speak more broadly to how partnerships are formed across sites.

Additional Vouchers in a New Program. Housing agency representatives in several study sites said their position in the local service system was strengthened by both the receipt of new vouchers and the ability to target those vouchers to a specific eligibility group. With the creation of Workforce Investment Boards and other local collaboration groups, housing agencies in many of the study sites had a "seat at the table" in meetings of local service providers prior to the WtW Voucher Program. However, the WtW vouchers allowed them to come to the table with additional housing assistance. While housing agencies previously brought valuable commodities in their public housing and Section 8 programs, some also brought long waiting lists and little immediate assistance for populations not currently housed.

Furthermore, with WtW the housing agency had additional assistance and the ability to direct it to the population of interest to TANF and workforce development offices: persons moving from welfare to work. In addition, the WtW Program gave local partner organizations the opportunity to become involved in decisions about the allocation of local housing assistance by participating in program design, decisions about eligibility criteria, and referral mechanisms. This combination of additional assistance and program design opportunities proved an effective lure to partners in some of the study sites. Even in high partner involvement sites, WtW housing staff believed their partnerships were strengthened and deepened by activities undertaken for the WtW Voucher Program.

Philosophy. Housing agencies may involve partner organizations in the WtW Voucher Program for a variety of reasons. Some sites may want to coordinate housing with the "work

---

[20] This study does not discuss how relationships which pre-date WtW were forged. However, the site summaries in Appendix A often detail the types of interaction partners had before WtW.

first" message of other public assistance programs and thus develop coordinated enforcement mechanisms such as those seen in San Bernardino. Others may enlist partner resources as part of an effort to meet a mission that goes beyond housing, such as Austin who state that their primary goal is to "break the poverty cycle by serving as a catalyst for residents to become economically self-sufficient." Still others may operate in a highly participatory service environment that historically values the input of multiple actors, such as in Everett City and Snohomish County.

Conversely, sites with similar philosophies do not necessarily have the same types of partnerships. A housing agency may view their role as one of resident empowerment. Such a view could mean they directly provide non-housing services (such as in Austin and Aiken who sought Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work grants to fund employment and training programs) *or* it could mean they broker services from other providers (as seen in the Supportive Service Centers established by San Joaquin in public housing developments) *or* it could result in reliance on local service providers to provide support services (as promoted by the local board of service providers in Texoma who are convened to promote service linkage in the FSS program).

V. EARLY OUTCOMES

As of May 1, 2000 (approximately four to five months after local program start dates), the study sites had issued an average of 36 percent of their WtW vouchers and leased-up approximately 11 percent (Exhibit 5.1 illustrates the range). The percentage of vouchers issued ranges from five percent to 100 percent of a site's vouchers, while percent leased ranges from one percent to almost half.

Exhibit 5.1:
Issuance and Lease Up Figures as of May 1, 2000

Grantee	Number of Vouchers Awarded	Vouchers Issued		Vouchers Leased-Up	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Aiken Housing Authority	165	50	30%	24	15%
Albany Housing Authority	497	27	5%	10	2%
Austin Housing Authority	700	286	41%	54	8%
Chattanooga Housing Authority	650	60	9%	5	1%
Everett/Snohomish Housing Authorities	1275	384	30%	181	14%
Grand Rapids Housing Commission	250	250	100%	119	48%
San Bernardino Housing Authority	700	331	47%	83	12%
San Joaquin Housing Authority	700	128	18%	44	6%
Tampa Housing Authority	450	98	22%	11	2%
Texoma Council of Governments	150	45	30%	21	14%
Virginia-Loudoun County	25	25	100%	5	20%
Virginia-Prince William	450	114	25%	20	4%
Walker County	69	4	6%	2	3%

Factors Influencing Early Outcomes[21]

When the site visits were conducted, WtW housing agencies were in the very early stages of implementing the WtW Voucher Program.[22] The primary focus of many sites, at the time of the site visit, was voucher issuance and lease-up. One site that achieved relatively high issuance and lease-up rates was Grand Rapids Housing Commission; the WtW leadership attributes part of their success to the high proportion of voucher holders who leased in place. In contrast, Chattanooga Housing Authority has fewer vouchers leased-up than other programs that may be influenced by their program design. All Chattanooga's WtW voucher holders must first complete a Renter Certification Program before lease-up.

The leadership at many of the WtW study sites is encouraged by the early lease-up figures, but remains cautious about their ability to lease all available WtW vouchers within a one-year time frame.[23] Sites that are concerned about timely lease-up maintain that the current state of the housing market in their jurisdictions is one of the potential barriers to lease-up. Local conditions include rising rental housing prices driven by an increase in demand for, and a shortage of, quality, affordable housing.

Rental Demand. In some of the study jurisdictions, the strong economy has boosted demand for housing. In the San Joaquin area, for example, housing prices have increased due to the surge of demand for housing in the San Francisco Bay Area. Although an hour away, the booming computer industry has drawn many people to the region and is having spillover effects on San Joaquin County, a more rural area. Not all of the study sites are experiencing such increases in rental demand, but similar experiences were mentioned by staff in Loudoun County, Prince William County, and Austin.

---

[21] It is interesting to note that staff at the study sites did not cite new income targeting guidelines in the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act (QWRA) as influencing early lease-up outcomes. The targeting requirements in QWRA state that 75 percent of new vouchers issued within a fiscal year must be made available for families earning at, or below 30 percent of the median income. When asked directly about the QWRA guidelines, housing agency staff had varying reactions ranging from those who had not yet considered the effect of QWRA, those who speculated that such guidelines could be a hindrance to lease-up in the future, to those who felt the guidelines would not be an issue because their WtW program already focused on persons at or below 30 percent of the median income. The early date of the field visits could have contributed to the lack of in-depth responses from housing agency staff concerning QWRA and opinions may change once WtW programs are beyond the start-up phase and have more experience with lease-up.

[22] These averages have increased considerably from the time the site visits were conducted. Looking at issuance and lease-up figures according to the date each site was visited, an average of 21 percent of the vouchers had been issued and seven percent leased up. At that time, some sites had not yet begun issuing WtW vouchers.

[23] Site visits were conducted during the start-up of WtW and initial unease may significantly increase or decrease as the program gets underway.

Rental Supply. Some local areas have a small supply of rental housing units for low-income families. Walker County, Alabama, for example, has few affordable rental housing units in the area, and those that are affordable have difficulty passing housing quality inspections. In addition, San Joaquin's rental supply is decreasing as demand increases for single family homes for purchase, which contributes to landlords selling former rental units.

As demand increases and supply remains constant or shrinks, rents invariably increase. In some local markets (particularly those mentioned above) housing agency staff see local housing prices exceeding Fair Market Rents.[24] In some communities this will slow lease-up efforts and could jeopardize a site's ability to meet the 12 month lease-up schedule. In an attempt to prevent such circumstances, the Notice of Funding Availability directed applicants to discuss "how [the] application lays out a fully developed plan...to ensure that all Welfare-to-Work vouchers are under lease within a year of award" and directed field offices to determine if the number of WtW vouchers the housing agency applied for could be leased-up within 12 months. However, sites like San Joaquin reported that their rents increased and supply decreased more severely than they had anticipated.

In other communities, market changes are not expected to jeopardize the lease-up schedule. Although housing staff in Loudoun County report that prices have increased thirteen percent in the last year and that quality housing that used to be within the price range of lower- and middle-income families is now priced for, and rented by, higher income renters, they only requested 25 vouchers and anticipate lease-up within 12 months. Similarly, staff from the Everett City and Snohomish County program assert that their rental market is perpetually competitive but their efforts to monitor housing search and increase landlord outreach will allow them to lease-up the 475 WtW vouchers within 12 months.

---

[24] Including exception rents in some jurisdictions. This study did not gather systematic information on Fair Market Rents (FMR) and cannot offer information on how agency staff in all study sites view FMR levels.

VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study provides information on decision-making and early activity in thirteen WtW Programs. While the study sites are not representative of the universe of WtW housing agencies, their experience is suggestive of the early accomplishments and challenges found in the broader program. This chapter summarizes the influence of WtW in the study sites, discusses the major benefits housing agencies found in program participation, and presents early challenges sites experienced in program implementation. It concludes with program recommendations for the WtW Voucher Program.

Influence of WtW in Study Sites

Partnerships. Although most of the study sites had relationships with their partners prior to WtW, they were confident that their local WtW Program had a positive influence on their partnerships with local service providers. This view is supported by the seven local programs who either developed an integrated service system or jointly designed a major feature of their WtW program (such as eligibility criteria or termination policies). Depending on the depth of prior partnerships, the WtW Voucher Program encouraged sites to (1) contact their welfare office and develop a method to verify TANF status, (2) work with local consortia on eligibility and other WtW Voucher Program policies, and/or (3) incorporate area services and resources into the day-to-day operations of WtW. WtW partnerships were encouraged by the flexibility of the program, the provision of additional housing assistance, and the ability of local agencies to jointly craft a program incorporating welfare and workforce development objectives with housing assistance.

Intent of Housing Assistance. By connecting with local welfare and workforce development systems, WtW coordinates federal housing assistance with the goals of state welfare reform efforts and embraces work as an expectation for recipients. The program does this by connecting with TANF, a program transitioning families from public assistance to employment. Some local sites go beyond general program connections and add work requirements to WtW eligibility criteria and termination policies.

Local Approaches. Local WtW sites reviewed for this report developed various policies and structures that reflect the flexibility in WtW design guidelines. Housing agencies connected with different local actors, developed an array of site-specific program policies, and incorporated a range of local resources. As a result, policies, such as eligibility criteria, reflect

different philosophies about the importance of work, participation in local programs, and areas of need.

Comprehensive Service Delivery. WtW encouraged steps toward comprehensive service delivery in some of the study sites. Three of the thirteen sites developed WtW Voucher Programs that are intimately integrated with other area service systems. The influx of vouchers plus the freedom to target the assistance to a specific population allowed these housing agencies to offer immediate assistance to local partners and fill a gap in service. For sites that are not attempting an integrated approach to program design, it is too early to tell whether their case management and service provision will meaningfully incorporate other local providers.

Participation Benefits for Housing Agencies

Additional Housing Assistance. For all of the study sites, WtW vouchers were the first new tenant-based housing vouchers received in five years. Given that many of them have waiting lists with wait times of several years, they viewed the provision of new assistance as a tremendous benefit of the WtW Voucher Program.

Enhances Housing Agency Legitimacy. In many of the sites visited, housing agency staff participate in local coalitions of service providers along with staff from the welfare and workforce development agencies. The receipt of WtW vouchers enabled housing agency staff to bring a valuable, and immediately available, commodity to serve local needs. By bringing housing assistance that could be targeted to the populations of interest to the welfare and workforce development agencies, housing agencies gained legitimacy and leverage in some local service delivery systems.

Assist Participants Toward Self Sufficiency. Some housing agencies were already thinking about ways in that they could assist more of their public housing residents (particularly those on welfare) to move toward self sufficiency. WtW vouchers enabled these agencies to develop programs that use the availability of tenant based housing assistance as an incentive to continue efforts toward work.

Flexibility. Housing agencies often cited the flexibility to develop local programs that fit their strengths and service system structure as a positive component of the WtW Voucher Program. In some sites, flexibility allowed housing agencies to jointly develop the WtW Program with local partners to incorporate the services and staff of other agencies.

Raises Visibility of Housing Issues. By designing and operating the WtW Voucher Program with other local agencies, some sites reported a greater awareness of housing issues by staff at partner agencies. These issues include the difficulty of housing search and lack of affordable housing opportunity in neighborhoods.

Challenges

Lease-up Schedules. In most study sites, housing agencies tended to design systems that replicated housing programs already in operation (Section 8 and Family Self Sufficiency). Housing agencies were encouraged in this tendency by the 12 month lease-up deadline that staff in some sites said pressured local programs to start quickly in order to meet the required lease-up schedule.

Local Rental Markets. Several housing agencies expressed concern about their ability to lease all WtW vouchers within the 12 month deadline because of pressures of their local rental market. In these sites, eligible families needing assistance are plentiful but affordable housing units that meet their needs are not. In addition to a long standing lack of affordable housing in some areas, this pressure is extending to markets that once had an adequate supply of low-income housing but are experiencing an increase in rents and a decrease in rental stock.

Assessing Critical Need. WtW sites visited for this study are using eligibility criteria such as TANF status to determine a person's need for housing assistance to get or keep a job. In most sites, individual assessments of need are not defined beyond traditional indicators of rent burden or other economic constraints, such as overcrowded housing conditions or residency in a homeless shelter.

Program Recommendations

Policy Development. Several of the study sites hoped further clarification was forthcoming on program regulations dealing with eligibility, mobility, terminations, and reporting. In the absence of such guidance, sites developed programs geared toward local specifications or delayed implementation of some program elements. Key areas where sites requested guidance from HUD on possible federal limitations or regulations include:

- Eligibility and Targeting: Concerns stem from site decisions to target populations that are a subset of those identified in the NOFA.

- Portability: Some sites hope to restrict portability of the WtW vouchers in order to maintain a close proximity to participants and the ability to deliver case management and other supportive services. Other sites need information on how to port WtW vouchers to non-WtW jurisdictions and what such activity does to lease-up rates in the WtW agency.

- Termination Enforcement: Some of the study sites would like guidance on their ability to tie continued receipt of WtW to employment. Similarly, some sites would like to develop FSS-like contracts with WtW participants, who could lose assistance if they were not meeting stated goals, including goals agreed to in contracts with partner agencies.

- Reporting: Study sites were anxious about the kind of information they should collect for federal reporting purposes. Staff at the only state program reviewed in this study, Virginia, were particularly interested in knowing what kinds of information they should be monitoring for their local programs.

Reporting and Tracking. The development of a consistent reporting system that encourages sites to record relevant program and client data could provide a framework for future program analysis as well as provide administrative agencies with a valuable management tool. Such a system is best implemented at the beginning of a program in order to consistently gather information for all clients and avoid both missing data and the effort involved in collecting information on completed activities. The window of opportunity to establish such a system in WtW is closing fast.

Future Research. This study is an early implementation assessment and cannot report on activities that have yet to occur, such as social service provision and case management or the ultimate coordination between the housing agency and the welfare and employment systems. In addition, it does not address the core question of the relationship between housing assistance and the ability of a low-income person to get or keep a job. Such questions can only be answered as the program evolves.[25]

Conclusion

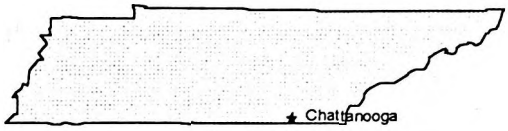
[25] HUD has contracted for a further study of the Welfare to Work program to include an experimental design with control groups to address questions related to the relationship between WtW vouchers and employment.

Although the study sites are early implementers and not representative of all WtW housing agencies, their stories are relevant to policymakers and program administrators who seek to understand how agencies implement the WtW program. The design flexibility in the program regulations promoted local systems with a variety of unique eligibility criteria, referral and intake procedures, and termination policies. Housing agencies built on local strengths, philosophies, and service systems to design programs that deliver tenant-based housing assistance that encourages work. While it is too early in the implementation process to determine if the WtW Voucher Program will meet legislative objectives, such as supporting the employment efforts of low-income families and linking housing assistance more closely with welfare reform, early activities in the study sites suggest that WtW is influencing partner formation and encouraging some sites to develop housing programs integrated with other local service providers.

APPENDIX A:
SITE SUMMARIES

WtW Housing Voucher Program
Early Implementation Assessment

Model 1 Site Summary:
Chattanooga, Tennessee



WtW Voucher Program System

The Chattanooga Housing Authority received 650 Welfare to Work (WtW) housing vouchers. It administers an additional 1,262 Section 8 vouchers and certificates. The WtW Voucher Program in Chattanooga differs little from the regular Section 8 voucher program. Clients come to the Housing Authority for an eligibility screening (based on the criteria in the Notice of Funding Availability, or NOFA) and assessment for its newly developed *Renter Certification Program.* Clients are issued a voucher after they attend the required classes at the program. This program has two goals: (1) to help the recipients become better prepared to be successful renters; and (2) to make accepting Section 8 more amenable to potential landlords by preparing voucher recipients to be good tenants. WtW families are subject to Section 8 termination guidelines.

Partnerships

The Chattanooga Housing Authority does not rely heavily on the TANF agency (Tennessee Department of Human Services) and the Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work agency (the Southeast Tennessee Private Industry Council) for the operation of the WtW Voucher Program. However, they do work with a subcontractor of the Department of Human Services (Signal Centers). Most of the support services of the TANF agency, except case management, are subcontracted to Signal Centers, which offer life skills classes and referrals for job training services. The Chattanooga Housing Authority and Signal Centers have worked very closely to develop and implement the *Renter Certification Program*, which is the cornerstone of their WtW voucher program.

Eligibility

The WtW program differs from the Section 8 program in two ways. First, the Chattanooga Housing Authority targets the three groups suggested in the NOFA: TANF recipients, recent recipients, and those eligible for TANF but not currently receiving it. Second, as part of the WtW program, the Chattanooga Housing Authority mandates attendance in a newly developed *Renter Certification Program.*

In order to find eligible families, the Chattanooga Housing Authority pulls families from the top of its Section 8 waiting list, then sends those families letters briefly explaining the program and the eligibility criteria (regarding the three TANF groups). In these letters, the Chattanooga Housing Authority invites them to come in for a more thorough eligibility assessment on a given day and time. When the families come to the Housing Authority, the Chattanooga Housing Authority or Signal Center staff check their eligibility.

The housing authority believes that all of the families that are eligible will benefit from relocation, and its eligibility criteria are quite broad: "In order to establish the need for Section 8 vouchers in order to obtain or retain employment, the family must show that transportation, child care or decent housing is not available where they are living" (Chattanooga Housing Authority memorandum, March 2000). However, the HA is not utilizing any employment criteria in order for eligible families to receive a WtW voucher.

The majority of the clients are African-American women with children. Most of the families that have come in for assessment so far have been TANF recipients, though there have been a few that are eligible but not receiving. Almost all of the families that are currently joining the WtW program are working families, partly because of the current condition of their Section 8 waiting list, which is ordered by preference groups. The Chattanooga Housing Authority believes that these families will likely move to improve proximity to their current jobs or to be near a new job. As the Chattanooga Housing Authority moves down the waiting list, it anticipates that it will have to reconsider whether the need for a voucher to obtain or retain employment should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Issuance and Lease-up

As of March 2000, about 15 people had come in for their eligibility screening and were assessed for the mandatory participation in the *Renter Certification Program.* The Chattanooga Housing Authority and Signal Centers were scheduled to hold the first *Renter Certification Program* classes during the last week of March. Vouchers are issued only after participants have attended the classes that were assigned at their initial assessment. Consequently, no households have been issued vouchers or have leased up as of March 2000.[1]

---

[1] As of May 1, 2000, 60 vouchers had been issued and five families had leased up.

Welfare to Work Housing Voucher
Early Implementation Assessment

Model 1 Site Summary:
Grand Rapids, Michigan

WtW Voucher Program System

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission administers the local WtW Voucher Program, serving the population of Kent County, Michigan. The Commission received 250 WtW vouchers and currently administers 1,581 Section 8 vouchers. The local rental market consists mostly of single family rental housing. Most voucher recipients lease in place, easing the housing search process.

In essence, the Commission has rolled the administration of the WtW Voucher Program into the existing Section 8 program. Both Section 8 and WtW voucher holders receive similar housing-related services from the Commission. The difference between the two programs lies in the eligibility criteria for the WtW Voucher Program.

In October, the Commission began using the WtW Vouchers to serve its existing waiting list. After the waiting list was depleted using WtW and regular Section 8 vouchers, the Commission reopened the waiting list in February, 2000. It instructed partner agencies to refer clients in need of housing assistance to the Housing Commission. These referrals are not required for WtW Voucher Program participation— clients may also enter the program as walk-ins without a referral. Section 8-eligible families are placed on the Housing Commission's open waiting list for housing assistance. This waiting list includes a preference for the families that have received or are currently receiving TANF funded services or assistance, which is the eligibility requirement of the local WtW Voucher Program.[2] However, the recipient's WtW status is not verified until time of lease-up. After lease-up, if a client can provide proof of WtW eligibility, they are classified as a WtW voucher holder; if not, they receive a Section 8 voucher. WtW voucher holders receive case management services from the local TANF and workforce agencies, independent of the WtW Voucher Program. WtW families are subject to Section 8 termination guidelines.

---

[2] Staff at the Housing Commission reported that they added this local waiting list preference as a result of the WtW Voucher Program.

Partnerships

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission has partnered with Michigan's Family Independence Agency, the local TANF agency, and Area Community Services Employment and Training, the local workforce agency. Staff of both agencies participate with Commission staff and other supportive service agencies on the Commission's FSS Council, an emergency shelter council, and a collaborative board addressing continuum of care for homelessness issues. The Family Independence Agency subsidizes security deposits for Section 8 and WtW voucher participants, an arrangement made possible by the rapport of the partners.

These collaborative efforts paved the way for the WtW Voucher Program relationships and the informal planning meetings required for the implementation of the WtW Voucher Program—relationships recently made formal through Memorandums of Understanding with partner agencies. The Family Independence Agency and the Area Community Services Employment and Training staff refer clients to the Housing Commission for housing assistance. As of the time of the site visit, the Housing Commission had plans to coordinate with the Family Independence Agency to allow line staff members to verify eligibility directly. The agencies provide case management and supportive services to any WtW voucher holder that is eligible to receive services (independent of their WtW status).

Eligibility

Clients are eligible for the WtW voucher if they currently receive services from the Family Independence Agency, or have so in the past two years. Housing vouchers are classified by the Commission as WtW vouchers if, at the time of lease-up, clients are able to provide proof of eligibility. The Commission has plans to set up a system in the future with the Family Independence Agency to verify the client's status. If at the time of lease-up the client is found ineligible for a WtW voucher, the voucher used for lease-up is classified as a regular Section 8 voucher instead.

Issuance and Lease-up

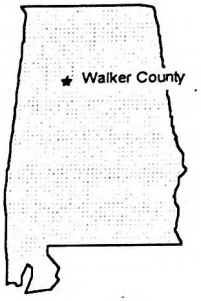
As of the site visit, the Commission had not determined the number of WtW vouchers issued, since the voucher type is not decided until the time of lease-up. As of March 2000, approximately 100 WtW voucher holders had leased up.[3] The majority of these clients are currently receiving TANF and are employed, as per TANF requirements.

---

[3] As of May 1, 2000, all 250 WtW vouchers had been issued and 119 families had leased up.

Welfare to Work Housing Voucher
Early Implementation Assessment

Model 1 Site Summary:
Walker County, Alabama



WtW Voucher Program System

The Housing Authority of Walker County received 69 vouchers to administer under the Welfare to Work Voucher Program. Including these vouchers, it administers a total of 287 housing vouchers. At about the same time of the WtW voucher award, it received funding to begin a FSS Program, which will be an additional service offered to the first 35 WtW voucher holders who wish to enroll. WtW voucher recipients are offered the same services that regular Section 8 voucher holders are eligible to receive: they are different only because of the eligibility criteria that they must meet. WtW families are told at the time of voucher issuance that they must adhere to Section 8 guidelines and be employed within two years of voucher receipt or face termination. However, the Housing Authority did not provide the WtW voucher holder a binding, written agreement explaining the work requirement at the time of the site visit.

Partnerships

The Housing Authority is working with the Department of Human Services in Walker County for assistance in recruiting and verifying eligibility for the WtW Voucher Program. Caseworkers tell their clients about the program, and refer them to the Housing Authority if they are interested. Additionally, after clients initially talk to housing authority staff, they are given a form that must be signed by staff from the Department of Human Services to verify that they fall into one of the three eligibility groups. Apart from these activities, the Housing Authority runs the Welfare to Work Program itself, with little involvement by other local agencies on a daily basis.

Eligibility

The Housing Authority of Walker County is using the broad eligibility guidelines set forth in the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), targeting three groups: (1) households currently receiving TANF; (2) households not currently receiving TANF, but who have received TANF in the past two years; and (3) those eligible for TANF but who not currently receiving it.

The Department of Human Services has made an effort to recruit eligible participants from the first two groups by sending informational letters to everyone in these groups, using information from their records. The Housing Authority has placed notices in area newspapers and placed flyers around town in an effort to recruit people who are eligible but do not receive TANF currently. None of these efforts has been very successful in terms of the number of people who have called or come to the Housing Authority to inquire about the program. The Housing Authority plans to continue recruiting efforts through newspaper advertising.

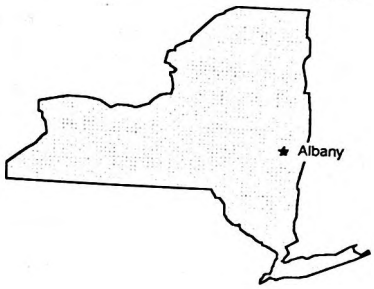
Issuance and Lease-up

As of March 2000, the Housing Authority of Walker County had issued a total of four WtW vouchers, and one had leased up[4]. The first voucher was issued January 19, 2000.

[4] As of May 1, 2000, four vouchers had been issued and two families had leased-up.

Welfare to Work Housing Voucher Early Implementation Assessment

Model 2 Site Summary: Albany, New York



WtW Voucher Program System

The Albany Housing Authority administers the WtW Voucher Program in-house. The 497 WtW vouchers represent a 44 percent increase in the Housing Authority's Section 8 program. Families can apply for the WtW vouchers at the Housing Authority or through the Department of Social Services' employment and training service providers. At the intake interview at the Housing Authority, the applicants complete a declaration of their TANF and employment status in addition to the standard documentation required for Section 8 applicants. The applicants self-certify the need for housing to obtain or retain employment. A Department of Social Services staff member in the Division for Economic Security certifies the current or past TANF receipt and the participation in an approved work program. The applicant's employment can be verified by the Department of Social Services or independently. The Section 8 coordinators verify the standard Section 8 requirements.

Once the application is approved, the Housing Authority invites the family to a briefing for WtW voucher recipients. These briefings contain the same content as regular Section 8 briefings. The briefing coordinator issues the vouchers at the meetings and instructs the voucher holders to search independently for a rental unit.[5] Once they are leased up, WtW voucher holders have standard access to the Department of Social Services and the Housing Authority's WAGE Center employment and training services. Case management for WtW families is provided through the WAGE Center operated by the Housing Authority, or through the local Department of Social Services. WtW families are subject to Section 8 termination guidelines.

Partnerships

The Housing Authority and Department of Social Services have a long-standing tradition of partnering to provide on-site services for Housing Authority residents. For example,

---

[5] In May 2000, the Albany Housing Authority and the Department of Social Services negotiated to establish a Housing Counselor position to serve WtW voucher participants funded by the Department of Social Services. The Housing Authority expects to have the position filled by July.

the Housing Authority runs a Department of Social Services–approved employment and training program for residents and neighbors at the Working to Achieve Gainful Employment (WAGE) center in the Steamboat Square public housing complex. The Housing Authority has also collaborated with the Private Industry Council on various grant proposals for both agencies. The Housing Authority has a reserved seat on the newly created Workforce Investment Board, which is managing the transition of the workforce system from the Private Industry Council. The Housing Authority also has strong ties with community-based service organizations, more than a dozen of which have offices in the public housing complexes.

Eligibility

The Housing Authority requires that WtW voucher applicants be employed for a minimum of two months or enrolled in a Department of Social Services–approved employment and training program. Although all three populations — those receiving TANF currently or within the last two years and those qualifying for, but not receiving, TANF — are eligible, there is no process in place yet for identifying or certifying people who are eligible but have never received assistance. WtW Voucher Program participants will be required to make a "good faith" effort to obtain or maintain employment, but the WtW coordinators are still developing the mechanism for defining and enforcing this requirement.

Issuance and Lease-up

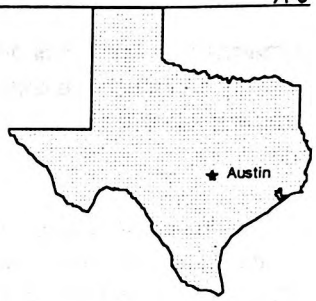
In March 2000, there were 1,500 people on the general Section 8 waiting list, about a three-year wait. The Housing Authority is focusing first on inviting potentially eligible families from this list to apply for the WtW vouchers. As of March 15, 2000, the Housing Authority had invited the first 90 potentially qualified families from the waiting list to apply for the program. It had issued 24 WtW vouchers, and four households had succeeded in leasing up.[6] Eight of the 24 voucher holders are currently receiving TANF, and 16 received TANF in the past two years.

---

[6] As of May 1, 2000, 27 vouchers had been issued and ten families had leased-up.

Welfare to Work Housing Voucher
Early Implementation Assessment

Model 2 Site Summary:
Austin, Texas



WtW Voucher Program System

The Housing Authority of the City of Austin's primary goal is to "break the poverty cycle by serving as a catalyst for residents to become economically self-sufficient."[7] The Housing Authority has already taken many innovative steps toward meeting this end, especially in the area of welfare-to-work. Currently, the Housing Authority is a Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work grantee and administers funds in the amount of $1.7 million toward welfare-to-work activities. The program —The Austin Works Together Project— employs a "work first" emphasis that helps TANF recipients and other eligible individuals find jobs. To continue and expand on the Housing Authority's accomplishments, the Authority applied for, and was awarded, 700 WtW vouchers to assist low-income families in Austin transition from welfare to work.

Housing Authority staff members sent notices to all families on the Section 8 waiting list notifying them of the new program. Interested applicants then visited the Housing Authority for an eligibility interview. At this meeting, case-workers verified eligibility and informed them of program requirements.

The basic design of the WtW Voucher Program centers around work requirements for participants, who have 12 months to become fully employed. The Housing Authority has defined full employment as working 30 hours per week, being in a full-time training program, or some combination of work and training that amounts to 30 hours per week. If participants lose their employment at any time while on the program, they have 30 days to find a new job or they will be terminated and will lose their Section 8 subsidy. WtW participants receive case management, assistance preparing and searching for employment, and access to other social services while participating in the program.

Partnerships

The WtW Voucher Program builds on already existing community partnerships established through the *Welfare-to-Work Coalition*, a consortium of over 80 community-based

[7] Housing Authority of the City of Austin's Mission Statement.

organizations that focus on employment and housing issues for low-income families in Travis County. Although the consortium is still in its early stages, its goals are ambitious and include tracking all TANF recipients and the services they receive through one comprehensive database.

Instead of hiring additional staff or creating new roles for case managers, the Housing Authority established a working partnership with the Capital Area Workforce Board. The Capital Area Workforce Board administers formula Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work grants to a local subcontractor to provide a mandated "work first" employment program to TANF recipients who have been receiving assistance for more than two years. This program, called CHOICES, is currently run by Lockheed Martin. The Housing Authority works with staff from Lockheed Martin to identify WtW voucher participants who are eligible for the CHOICES program. Eligible participants are referred to program staff, who ensure that WtW voucher holders receive case management and job readiness training.

WtW voucher recipients who are not eligible for CHOICES are referred to either the Housing Authority's Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work Program—the Austin Work Together Project, or to the Housing Authority's FSS Program for case management. The Housing Authority has also forged an administrative relationship with the local TANF Agency, which verifies TANF eligibility for all WtW Voucher Program applicants.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the WtW Voucher Program, applicants must be currently receiving TANF or have received TANF in the last two years and already be on the Section 8 waiting list. Once the applicant is deemed eligible, a voucher is issued and the recipient searches for housing. Additionally, the Housing Authority identifies those individuals "in need of housing to obtain and retain employment" as those with a high proportion of housing costs to income, meaning that they are paying a large percentage of their income toward housing costs. The Housing Authority has not set any particular percentage of housing costs to income as a baseline for need, but instead maintains that the determination of need is a subjective criterion based on this ratio.

Issuance and Lease-up

At the time of the site visit (March 2000), 617 families on the Housing Authority Section 8 waiting list had been certified by the TANF agency as eligible for the WtW Voucher Program. The Housing Authority had issued 286 vouchers and 54 families have identified units and leased-up, as of May 1, 2000.

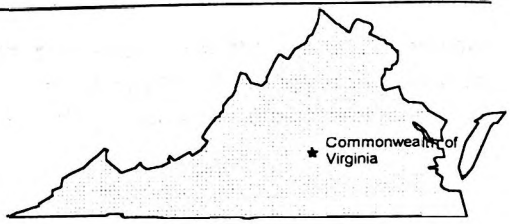
The Housing Authority's goal is to fill all WtW slots using applicants on the Section 8

waiting list, in order to avoid reopening the waiting list. The Housing Authority did outreach to applicants on the Section 8 waiting list in three waves with a good response. If the Housing Authority is not able to lease-up all 700 WtW vouchers, they anticipate reopening the waiting list in May.

Landlord outreach for the new program is underway. Landlords currently participating in the Section 8 program have been sent a flyer announcing the new WtW vouchers, and Housing Authority staff have been "getting out into the community" in order to increase the number of landlords willing to lease to voucher holders in what is already a tight market for affordable housing.

Welfare To Work Housing Voucher
Early Implementation Assessment

Model 2 Site Summary:
Commonwealth of Virginia



WtW Voucher Program System

The Virginia Housing Development Authority administers the 860 WtW vouchers awarded by HUD, using ten local housing agencies as its administrative agents. The Authority allows each local housing agency to develop its own WtW Voucher Program, partnerships, and eligibility guidelines, in response to its local housing market, employment market, and population. These local agencies are responsible for issuing a fixed number of WtW vouchers, as per their initial application request. Local agencies manage their own waiting lists, voucher disbursement, and compliance monitoring. The Authority acts as the financial receiver for the vouchers, issues the monthly checks to participating landlords, and monitors the functions of the localities. Virginia Housing Development Authority, in exchange for these services, retains a portion of the administrative fee HUD pays each voucher administrator.

State TANF Program

The state of Virginia mandates that all able bodied TANF recipients participate in a workforce program run by the local Department of Social Service offices, called VIEW. This program provides case management to assist with job search; the services provided vary with each local office. After a participant either reaches their two-year time limit (five years lifetime) or leaves TANF due to an increase in income, the participant receives transitional benefits for two years. These benefits can include transportation subsidies, day care, mental health services, and so on.

In order to better understand Virginia Housing Development Authority's WtW Voucher Program, it is important to examine the local program specifications. We provide two examples of local programs operated by Loudoun County Housing Services and the County of Prince William Office of Housing and Community Development.

Loudoun, Virginia

WtW Program System

The Loudoun County Housing Services WtW Voucher Program was awarded 25 WtW vouchers to be administered throughout Loudoun County, as per its request. The goal of Loudoun County Housing Services' program is to assist families in becoming self-sufficient, and the program is similar to the county's existing FSS program. Program participants who meet the housing agency's eligibility standards and criteria for determination of need are taken off the housing agency's waiting list in order of date of application, and brought to the Loudoun County Housing Services for a brief overview of the program's requirements and a background check. The participant signs a WtW contract that states the client will remain employed and will adhere to all other program requirements. After all certifications are returned, the client is brought in for a briefing and to receive the WtW voucher. Enrollment in the FSS program is stressed, although not required. Each client must either remain employed full-time, or engage in some combination of full time training and work; noncompliance will result in termination at the end of a 12-month period.

If a client enrolls in the FSS program, the FSS case manager becomes their primary case manager. The FSS work plan mirrors the plan developed by TANF agency workers. The FSS case manager and TANF case manager coordinate client management. If a client does not enroll in FSS, the FSS case manager engages in only standard Section 8 rental assistance functions, such as the family briefing, lease-up preparation, and Housing Quality Standards inspection. The case management, in this case, is provided by the TANF case worker.

Partnerships

Loudoun County Housing Services has partnered with the local TANF agency, the Loudoun County Department of Social Services, as its primary partner in the administration of this program. In general, the Department of Social Services provides TANF funded assistance and services and VIEW-related services such as job search and training assistance. The Department of Social Services also administers subsidized day care, food stamps, health care assistance, and emergency supportive services.

The Loudoun County Department of Social Services has assisted Loudoun County Housing Services in developing eligibility guidelines and priorities, as well as helping to confirm the eligibility of families on the housing agency's waiting list. As clients lease up, Department of Social Services and Loudoun County Housing Services anticipate they will conduct further meetings to develop a plan for client case management.

The Department of Social Services has previously worked with the housing agency in developing Loudoun County Housing Services' Homeless Intervention Program, a cash assistance loan program provided on a need basis. A representative from Department of Social Services also sits on the housing agency's FSS council and the county's Coalition of Community Service Providers. This coalition has assisted Loudoun County Housing Services in developing partnerships with many local agencies, including the Department of Social Services, which in turn has facilitated WtW partnerships.

Eligibility

Prior to application, Loudoun County Housing Services established eligibility criteria, analyzed its waiting list to determine how many families were eligible, and subsequently requested a quantity of vouchers that directly corresponded to the number of eligible families on the housing waiting list. Loudoun County Housing Services developed a ranked preference order for its eligibility determination:

- TANF transitional, no longer receiving TANF but are receiving transitional services;
- currently on TANF and participating in VIEW, the mandatory work component of TANF;
- currently on TANF and not in VIEW;
- TANF within the preceding 2 years; or
- TANF eligible but not receiving.

Those that met one of these criteria also had to meet one of four criteria that showed need for housing. For example, 50 percent of more of income dedicated to shelter, day care, and transportation costs. The Department of Social Services determines if the client meets one of these criteria for need, based on its experience with the client and its case files.

Issuance and Lease-up

As of March 29, 2000, 19 families had been issued WtW vouchers. Seventeen of these families had signed up for the agency's FSS program. Two families have leased up by this date, only about a week after their briefing.[8] Most of these families are currently working and are on TANF.

[8] As of May 1, 2000, 25 vouchers had been issued and 5 families had leased-up.

Prince William , Virginia

WtW Voucher Program System

The County of Prince William Office of Housing and Community Development administers 450 WtW vouchers in the county of Prince William, the largest allocation of vouchers among the ten Virginia localities. Eligible families are identified from the Office of Housing and Community Development's waiting list and a list of names is sent to the local Department of Social Services to verify the client's eligibility. Letters are sent to those families to inform them they are eligible to receive the voucher and invite them to schedule a briefing. At the briefing, Office of Housing and Community Development staff again verify eligibility for the program, inform the families of the work requirement, have each family sign an Action Plan, and issue the voucher. The Action Plan stipulates that the family must be employed within one year from the date of voucher issuance, or face termination from the program. Case management services are provided by the Department of Social Services and Cooperative Extension Services, while the Office of Housing and Community Development provides all housing-related services, including referrals to a mobility program.

Partnerships

Office of Housing and Community Development has partnered with the Prince William Department of Social Services and Cooperative Extension Services in the development and administration of the WtW program. Department of Social Services and Office of Housing and Community Development have a strong working relationship, are located in the same building, and have a signed Memorandum of Understanding. Two housing counselors on staff have been dedicated to work with the WtW clients, and they share information with Department of Social Services line staff to increase service provision to the client.

For the WtW Voucher Program, Prince William Department of Social Services provides eligibility certification and provides services for its clients that include a car referral program, mental health referrals, and donated clothing. As in the rest of Virginia, all able-bodied TANF recipients are required to participate in VIEW. Prince William Department of Social Services has contracted with Cooperative Extension Services to provide job readiness classes and job search assistance for a number of VIEW participants, including those participating in the WtW Voucher Program. Case management is provided by Cooperative Extension, as well as courses such as food and nutrition, financial planning, and homeowner responsibilities.

Eligibility

Office of Housing and Community Development has defined eligibility, with the input of its partner agencies, as any family that is a Prince William County Department of Social

Services VIEW or TANF transitional program participant. Past TANF recipients are also eligible. Any family selected must be drawn from Office of Housing and Community Development's waiting list and must live and work in the state of Virginia. Office of Housing and Community Development plans on later targeting the third NOFA group, eligible but not receiving TANF, if program participation is low.

Issuance and Lease-up

As of March 17, 100 families were invited to a briefing and 42 vouchers were issued.[9] Four clients have leased-up: two have leased in place, and two have ported out of Prince William county.

[9] As of May 1, 2000, 114 vouchers had been issued and 20 families had leased-up.

Welfare to Work Housing Voucher Early Implementation Assessment

Model 2 Site Summary: San Bernardino, California

WtW Voucher Program System

The Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino received 700 set-aside WtW vouchers. The Housing Authority administers nearly 6,350 Section 8 vouchers and has a closed waiting list of 8,400 families. Housing agency staff report that there is a tremendous lack of affordable housing in San Bernardino County.

The WtW Voucher Program in San Bernardino County is based on two existing programs—Section 8 and FSS. WtW vouchers are administered in the same manner as Section 8 vouchers. Upon lease-up, WtW voucher recipients are required to participate in the Housing Authority's FSS Program. To receive a voucher and maintain housing assistance, applicants must cooperate with three agencies: the Transitional Assistance Department (the TANF agency); the Jobs and Employment Services Department (the local workforce development entity); and the Housing Authority. Voucher recipients continue to receive TANF services and benefits and employment and training services from the other agencies. Noncompliance with either Section 8, the TANF agency programs, or the employment and training agency programs will lead to termination from WtW.

Partnerships

The partnership between the Housing Authority and the local employment and training provider and the TANF agency is based on previously developed relationships. The Jobs and Employment Services Department has traditionally provided all employment and training services for TANF recipients in the county. Due to this relationship, they have access to the TANF data system and can easily verify applicants' TANF status for Housing Authority staff. The Jobs and Employment Services Department and the housing authority have been coordinating on another project to provide employment and training opportunities for public housing residents in the county.

Eligibility

To be eligible to receive a WtW voucher, applicants must already be on the Section 8 waiting list. In addition, applicants must be either: (1) working and receiving TANF cash assistance; (2) not working and receiving cash assistance; or (3) working and received TANF cash assistance in the previous two years. All must be in good standing with the TANF agency and the employment and training agency (i.e., must not be in a sanctioned status).

The Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino is culling its Section 8 waiting list for applicants that meet HUD WtW vouchers eligibility criteria. It sent a letter to everybody on its Section 8 waiting list and asked them to return a form self-certifying their TANF status.

After receiving these forms, Housing Authority staff asked the county employment and training provider—the Jobs and Employment Services Department—to verify TANF participation for applicants the Housing Authority believes meet their voucher criteria. Upon verification, the Housing Authority sent a letter to eligible applicants inviting them to a voucher briefing.

Issuance and Lease-Up

The first vouchers were issued in December 1999. As of March 8, 2000, the housing authority had issued 203 vouchers, and leased-up 26 households[10]. Of the households who had leased up, the majority are working. This high rate of employment is due, in part, to the fact that the housing authority issued vouchers to individuals who were receiving TANF and were working prior to issuing them to those who were receiving TANF and were not working. Thus, as they issue more vouchers, the share of WtW participants who are working will likely decrease. The Housing Authority plans to have all 700 vouchers leased-up by January 1, 2001.

[10] As of May 1, 2000, 331 vouchers have been issued and 83 families had leased-up.

Welfare to Work Housing Voucher
Early Implementation Assessment

Model 2 Site Summary:
San Joaquin County, California

WtW Voucher Program System

The San Joaquin Housing Authority has primary responsibility for operating the County's WtW Voucher Program with its 700 vouchers. Housing authority staff contact persons on the waiting list, distribute eligibility packages, perform outreach to landlords, evaluate eligibility documentation, perform intake activities, brief potential participants, issue vouchers, inspect units, and lease-up participants. Many of these activities are being conducted through large scale "leasing fairs" that bring potential participants, landlords, housing staff, and inspectors together. The Housing Authority also expects to offer case management services to most WtW participants through their FSS Program and coordinate needed services for clients through Supportive Services Centers located in its public housing developments.

In addition to design and planning activities, partners participate in the operation of the WtW Voucher Program at three points: 1) eligibility verification; 2) client assessment; and 3) service provision. Potential participants present verification forms from the Housing Authority to staff at the County Human Services Agency, who document their participation in Human Services and CalWORKs programs (the employment program for TANF participants). When a participant is enrolled in the WtW Voucher Program, their FSS case manager receives a copy of the client needs assessment conducted by subcontractors to the Human Services Agency as part of the CalWORKs program. The plan developed by the FSS case manager for the WtW Voucher Program is based on the Human Services assessment. Participants can access a wide variety of supportive services to meet the self-sufficiency goals set forth in the WtW plan. The Housing Authority operates Supportive Services Centers where the Human Services Agency (and its subcontractors), the Private Industry Council, and an array of other providers offer services and referrals. WtW families are subject to Section 8 termination policies. The Housing Authority has told families that assistance under the WtW Voucher Program will be provided for five years. If a family is not self-sufficient after five years, Housing Authority staff state they may roll that family into the standard Section 8 program and reissue that WtW

voucher to another eligible family.

Partnerships

The San Joaquin Housing Authority relied on established partnerships with the County Human Services Agency, the Private Industry Council, and a range of community based organizations to collectively establish the eligibility criteria and goals for the WtW Voucher Program in San Joaquin County. Much of this planning and design work was done by the Coordinating Council of the Housing Authority's Supportive Services Centers which meets monthly and includes representatives from many local agencies and service providers.

In addition to this organizational body and informal connections between staff, local partnerships are based on previous collaborations such as those forged during the development of a Resident Construction Training Program in public housing. This program brought together the Housing Authority, Human Services Agency, and Private Industry Council and resulted in the Housing Authority receiving a grant of $100,000 from Human Services and their Supportive Services Centers' upcoming designation as one-stop centers for the CalWORKs program.

Eligibility

Along with traditional Section 8 income standards, the San Joaquin Housing Authority's WtW Voucher Program is designed to reward work. Individuals eligible for WtW vouchers in San Joaquin County are listed below in order of priority:

(1) Persons who work for at least six continuous months and receive supplemental TANF cash assistance;

(2) Persons who complete an approved CalWORKs activity and maintain a job for four or more continuous months; and

(3) Persons who complete the in-home child care licensing process, demonstrate that adequate housing is essential to the operation of their business, and contract to provide licensed in-home child care during non-traditional work hours for individuals transitioning from welfare to work.

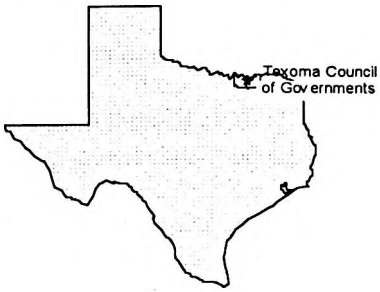
Issuance and Lease-up

As of April 4, 2000, the San Joaquin Housing Authority had issued 114 WtW housing vouchers and leased-up 18 units.[11]

[11] As of May 1, 2000, 128 vouchers had been issued and 44 families had leased-up.

Welfare to Work Housing Voucher
Early Implementation Assessment

Model 2 Site Summary:
Sherman, Texas



WtW Voucher Program System

The Texoma Council of Governments in Sherman, Texas was awarded 150 WtW vouchers to serve Fannin and Grayson counties. The program grows out of its current Section 8 and FSS Programs and was developed through a series of focus groups held by the Council with area service providers, including staff from Workforce Texoma and the local offices of the Texas Department of Human Services.

In consultation with its partners, the Texoma Council of Governments developed a WtW referral form that area agencies and service providers can use to refer eligible clients to the Council of Governments for consideration for the WtW Voucher Program. Clients referred to the Council complete a Section 8 application and, if accepted into the program, participate in briefing, issuance, and lease-up activities. Council staff expect most WtW Voucher holders to receive case management through FSS Program but for those who do not participate in FSS, case management will be offered by the Texoma Council of Governments staff and modeled on FSS (without the option of an escrow account). These case management services are in addition to case management services clients receive as participants in programs run by Workforce Texoma. Supportive services are provided by area nonprofits and service agencies, with referrals made by the Texoma Council of Governments and Workforce Texoma case managers. All clients will be connected to Workforce Texoma for employment-related services. The Council of Governments staff informs families that, like FSS, three to five years should be an adequate time horizon to self-sufficiency. If a family is not self-sufficient within this time frame, the Council of Governments will most likely move that family to standard Section 8 or public housing, although this policy was not fully defined at the time of the site visit.

Partnerships

The Texoma Council of Governments was the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) service provider prior to the federal reorganization of the employment and training system under the Workforce Investment Act. In the new system, Workforce Texoma is the designated Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work formula grant recipient and employs several former Council staff persons who operated its JTPA program. Given their previous link to the Council of Governments, the Workforce Texoma staff are very familiar with the Council's programs and seek opportunities to work together. For example, they partnered to bring employment and training opportunities to participants in the Council's FSS Program by creating a self sufficiency board and coordinating services.

TCOG has an established relationship with the local offices of the Texas Department of Human Services (TANF agency). Representatives from the Department of Human Services serve on the local self sufficiency board and participate in Texoma Council of Governments activities.

Eligibility

To be eligible to receive a WtW voucher, applicants must not currently receive Section 8 assistance and must be on the Section 8 waiting list. They can be placed on the waiting list via the WtW referral form and subsequent intake process. In addition, applicants must: 1) be eligible to receive, currently receiving, or received TANF benefits in the last two years benefits; and 2) have a critical need for housing assistance to obtain/retain employment. There is currently no written definition of critical need for housing assistance.

Issuance and Lease-up

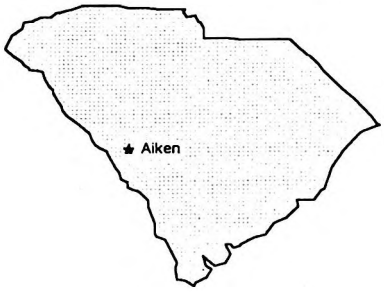
As of March 1, the Texoma Council of Governments WtW Voucher Program had issued 29 vouchers and leased-up 15 families.[12] Of these 15, nine were single mothers, one was a single male head of household, and one was a married couple. Four of the fifteen were employed when they were issued the voucher.

---

[12] As of May 1, 2000, 45 vouchers had been issued and 21 families had leased-up.

Welfare to Work Housing Voucher
Early Implementation Assessment

Model 3 Site Summary:
Aiken, South Carolina



WtW Voucher Program System

The Aiken Housing Authority received 165 WtW vouchers and currently administers 330 Section 8 vouchers with an open waiting list that has between 600 and 1000 families at any one time. Although housing staff report that the Aiken community is receptive to Section 8 housing, they also assert that access to clean, safe, affordable housing is a barrier to work for many Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients in Aiken County.

The Housing Authority operates the Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work Program under contract to the local Council of Governments. The local TANF agency (the Department of Social Services) refers clients to the Housing Authority's Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work program (known locally as "Work to Win"). Work to Win staff refer their clients to Section 8 staff to be put on the Section 8 waiting list. Housing assistance is offered to Work to Win clients in tandem with job readiness and placement services. All activities are monitored by Work to Win case managers. Voucher issuance is done by Section 8 staff during Section 8 briefings. Housing search is facilitated by Work to Win case managers. WtW families are subject to Section 8 termination guidelines.

Partnerships

WtW Housing Vouchers are only given to participants in Work to Win. The Aiken Housing Authority operates the Work to Win Program in Aiken, so coordination between the Department of Labor workforce effort and the WtW Voucher Program is virtually seamless. Work to Win participants are referred by the Department of Social Services through an existing referral system. Work to Win case managers go to the Department of Social Services office once a week to discuss the program with new participants. The Department of Social Services and Work to Win case managers have regular informal contact and formal meetings once a month. The Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work and TANF funds pay for child care, transportation, and supportive services for Work to Win clients. Case management is provided

through Work to Win. WtW housing vouchers are used to pay for the housing assistance provided to Work to Win clients (except where clients already have Section 8 assistance).

Eligibility

Only Work to Win participants are eligible for WtW housing vouchers (if they also meet Section 8 criteria such as passing a criminal background check). Work to Win participants meet the WtW housing voucher eligibility criteria because all are either on TANF or recently off of TANF. However, participation in Work to Win means they have further barriers to employment that meet the standard Department of Labor Welfare-to-Work eligibility criteria (such as no high school diploma, poor work history, etc.). Local leaders feel this targets their hard-to-serve population for strategic and comprehensive assistance.

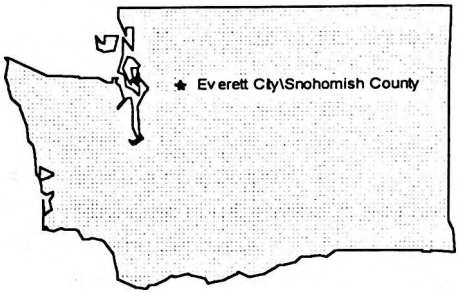
Issuance and Lease-up

The first WtW housing vouchers were issued on December 3, 1999. As of March 1, 2000, the Aiken Housing Authority had issued 30 vouchers, and 13 households had leased up.[13] More than half of the first lease-ups were already employed. However, the recipients who comprise the lease-ups had all been participating in the Work to Win program for a period of time prior to the start of the WtW Housing Voucher Program. The high employment rate at the time of lease-up is expected to drop as people are issued housing assistance at the same time they start job readiness and attachment activities.

[13] As of May 1, 2000, 50 vouchers had been issued and 24 families had leased-up.

Welfare To Work Housing Voucher Early Implementation Assessment

Model 3 Site Summary: Everett City and Snohomish County, Washington



WtW Voucher Program System

The local WtW Voucher Program is administered jointly by the Everett Housing Authority and the Housing Authority of Snohomish County. The goal of the program is to help families move from welfare-to-work by providing case management and access to supportive services. The Everett Housing Authority received 475 vouchers; the Housing Authority of Snohomish County received 700. The new program will serve residents of Snohomish County.

The WtW Voucher Program is designed to aggressively encourage participants to move from welfare-to-work. During the application process, each participant fills out an action plan for self-sufficiency with their caseworker from the nominating partner agency. This plan outlines the participant's goals for self-sufficiency. In addition to the participant's personal goals, the program requires the following:

- All participants must be working at least 20 hours a week by month six of the program;
- All participants must be working at least 35 hours per week by month 12 of the program; and
- If there are two adults living in the household, combined they must be working at least 55 hours per week at one year.

Participants must maintain employment or will be terminated from the WtW voucher Program.

Partnerships

Over ten community-based organizations, including the local TANF and workforce offices, provide services through the WtW Voucher Program. Each agency has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with both Housing Authorities specifically outlining the services they will provide to WtW voucher holders. Although each partner agency works under a different service delivery model with differences in client/case manager ratio and intensity of services provided, as a partner agency all agree to develop an action plan for all participants for whom they are providing case management. Further, they agree to monitor their progress toward self-sufficiency at month three, month six, and month 12. This information is reported to the Housing Authority.

Eligibility

The WtW Voucher Program in Snohomish County moves beyond the three eligible groups outlined in the NOFA (eligible for TANF, receiving TANF, or received TANF in the last two years). Both Housing Authorities are committed to moving their Section 8 families toward self-sufficiency. In addition, the Housing Authorities are interested in targeting homeless and transitional residents, residents with limited English proficiency, and disabled persons, because they believe these particular populations are increasing in size and are currently under served.

Three major groups are eligible for WtW vouchers. These are:

- TANF-eligible families working at least 20 hours weekly;
- Families currently enrolled in Work First or a similar training program but not yet employed or working less than 20 hours; and
- Homeless and transitional housing residents; residents with limited English proficiency; and disabled persons.

To ensure that the housing assistance is necessary for obtaining or retaining employment for eligible participants, the Housing Authorities developed a systematic set of criteria, which each recipient must meet. These criteria include: (1) the family is paying more than 40 percent of its income for rent; (2) the family is without housing or is otherwise inadequately housed; or (3) some other condition that is up to the nominating agency. The nominating agency must determine that the family meets one of these conditions. These

eligibility requirements are noted on the WtW Voucher application, which is turned in to the appropriate Housing Authority.

Issuance and Lease-Up

Applicants are identified in two ways: either the Housing Authority identifies an eligible participant through the waiting list and refers them to a partner agency or a partner agency may identify an eligible participant who is currently in its program or eligible for its program (this includes Work First and TANF agency related programs). The process for identifying potential participants differs across partner agencies. Most partner agencies hold group briefings to introduce the program to potential participants; however, some also meet with potential participants one-on-one.

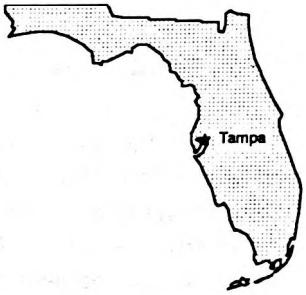
Everett Housing Authority. At the time of the site visit (March 2000) approximately 105 applicants had been referred by partner agencies to the Everett Housing Authority. Of that pool, 54 applicants were deemed eligible, 50 were issued vouchers, and 18 participants have found housing and leased up.[14]

Housing Authority of Snohomish County. The Housing Authority of Snohomish County had received 253 applicants from nominating partner agencies, as of March, 2000. Approximately 119 of those applicants have been issued vouchers and 65 have leased up.[15]

[14] As of May 1, 2000, 154 vouchers had been issued and 89 families had leased-up.
[15] As of May 1, 2000, 230 vouchers had been issued and 92 families had leased-up.

Welfare to Work Housing Voucher Early Implementation Assessment

Model 3 Site Summary: Tampa, Florida



WtW Voucher Program System

The WtW Voucher Program adds 450 vouchers to the 2,600 Section 8 vouchers managed by the Tampa Housing Authority. The Housing Authority administers the WtW Voucher Program as an extension of its Section 8 program by tapping into Florida's existing comprehensive employment and training system for TANF recipients. This education and training system is managed by the local WAGES coalition (Work and Gain Economic Self-Sufficiency), a public-private board established by the state of Florida. The local (Hillsborough County) WAGES Coalition in Tampa contracts with Goodwill Industries to act as the primary local service provider and Lutheran Services to serve the special needs of refugees. Florida's Department of Children and Families, which determines eligibility for cash assistance, refers all TANF applicants to the WAGES contractors for skills assessment and case management.

If a Goodwill-WAGES case manager determines that housing is a significant barrier to a client's maintaining or obtaining employment, the manager completes a WtW voucher referral form certifying the client's housing need and TANF status. Other agencies in the city can refer families to the WtW Voucher Program, but Goodwill-WAGES providers must certify all applications. A Goodwill-WAGES "point person" collects the referrals and transfers them to the Section 8 Housing Specialist at the Tampa Housing Authority. Eligible applicants attend a general Section 8 briefing, where the vouchers are issued and caseworkers (for housing search) are assigned. Although there is a three percent vacancy rate in Tampa, the Assisted Housing Director does not foresee that finding housing will be a barrier for WtW voucher holders because recent landlord outreach efforts and expansion of the service area have increased the availability of affordable housing.

The Housing Authority does not impose any additional requirements on WtW families beyond those for all Section 8 participants for retaining the WtW voucher. WtW voucher holders can receive the same services from the Housing Authority, the Department of Children and Families, and WAGES as any person eligible for WAGES assistance. WtW families are subject to Section 8 termination guidelines.

Partnerships

The Housing Authority had previous relationships with the Department of Children and Families through the Family Unification Program and with Goodwill-WAGES through a career center located at a public housing complex. At the time of the WtW Voucher Program application, the Housing Authority had been working with Goodwill-WAGES to ensure that their public housing residents had access to Goodwill's services. As noted above, Goodwill-WAGES case managers must complete a WtW voucher referral form certifying the client's housing need and TANF status before a family can receive a WtW Voucher. Goodwill-WAGES providers must certify all applications (even those from other area service providers) and transfer them to the Tampa Housing Authority. Goodwill-WAGES has a staff person designated as the WtW point of contact with the housing authority. The partners communicate about the WtW Voucher Program through contact between this point person and the Section 8 office as well as informal communication and meetings on an as-needed basis as issues arise.

Eligibility

Families that are eligible for TANF benefits and services, that are currently receiving TANF benefits or services, or that have received benefits in the past two years all qualify for the WtW Voucher Program. However, there is no established system for the Tampa Housing Authority or its partners to identify families that may qualify for TANF but have never had contact with the public assistance system. Local preferences for displaced families and those who are rent-burdened or in substandard housing will be applied if applications exceed the number of vouchers.

There are 600 to 800 people on the Housing Authority's Section 8 waiting list—mostly elderly and single people. A review of the waiting list revealed that no one on the list was eligible for the WtW Voucher Program. The partners expect that WAGES case managers will identify most of the WtW voucher applicants during initial WAGES assessment/intake interviews. Based on clients' responses to intake and assessment questions, WAGES case managers will ascertain whether housing is a critical need for the clients to obtain or maintain employment.

Issuance and Lease-up

As of March 7, 2000, Goodwill and Lutheran Social Services had referred 220 families to the Tampa Housing Authority for the WtW Voucher Program. Almost half of the referrals were current TANF recipients. Another 13 percent were in the one-year period following the termination of cash assistance and receiving transitional services from WAGES. The remaining third were families that had received TANF benefits in the past two years but had not received any WAGES services. WAGES representatives we interviewed believed the majority of the people referred were employed, since WAGES focuses on getting clients into the workforce immediately.

As of the date of the site visit (March 7, 2000)The Housing Authority had issued 46 vouchers. Seven referred clients were denied vouchers due to criminal history, and 68 families were denied vouchers because they never returned the Section 8 application and the required documentation. Housing Authority intake personnel were still processing the remaining referrals. Only one person had leased up.[16]

[16] As of May 1, 2000, 98 vouchers had been issued and 11 families had leased-up.

APPENDIX B:
DISCUSSION GUIDE

Welfare to Work Housing Voucher Program
Early Implementation Assessment

Discussion Guide

[Note: This guide serves as a foundation for drafting more specific and applicable guides for each WtW site in our sample.]

Introduction

First, I want to thank you for agreeing to participate in our study. We realize your time is valuable and we really appreciate it!

As I mentioned previously, my name is [enter name] and I work for the Urban Institute. The Urban Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, which conducts public policy research for government agencies and private foundations. I will leave you a copy of our annual report and you can also see some of the work we do on our website, the address is listed in the report.

Currently, we're conducting a WtW voucher program implementation study with staff at the public housing agencies who were awarded the WtW voucher program funding. This study is sponsored by HUD and has the goal of better understanding the early implementation process voucher agencies are going through, and to inform the policy debate in Washington DC this spring. This study will also help HUD and Congress understand the process of implementation, the different program designs, and the partnerships voucher agencies have established. Today we would like to focus on your program. We'll be asking a series of questions including background information on your PHA, key program characteristics, eligibility guidelines, and other implementation topics. The interview should take approximately [*enter time].*

We'll be taking notes during our discussion. Your name will not be used in our report but we may quote something you say and attribute it to someone with your position. If you would like to say something but do not want it to be directly quoted, please let me know. I appreciate your willingness to speak openly and honestly and would like to foster that dialogue. Do you have any questions before we start?

I. Background Information
[Executive Director, Section 8 Director, WtW Coordinator]

I'd like to start by confirming background information I have about the PHA

[use information from the application to pre-code and ask for verification]

The interviewer may need to probe after the initial question. *Helpful probes are listed in italics.* Directions for the interviewer and the appropriate potential respondents for groups of questions are noted in [brackets].

1. I understand you manage [INSERT UNIT NUMBERS] units of public housing. Is this correct? Is your housing stock both conventional and scattered site housing? How is it divided?

2. How many Section 8 certificates and vouchers does the PHA administer?

3. How many people does the PHA employ? (*number of full time equivalent staff positions or FTE's*)

I would like to talk briefly about the supportive service programs your agency offers. We could spend quite a bit of time discussing your general programs but I'll try to keep this brief. I just need enough information to understand the larger context of which your welfare to work housing voucher program is a part?

4. Generally, what types of supportive service programs does the PHA offer to public housing residents and Section 8 tenants? Who funds these services?

5. Does the PHA have a waiting list for Section 8 vouchers? *(or does the PHA use a lottery system?)* If so, how many people are on the waiting list?
   - Do you know how many of the people on the waiting list are on TANF?
   - When was the waiting list last updated?
   - Is the waiting list currently open or closed?

To further my knowledge about the general context of your operations, I have three questions about broad influences and initiatives outside of your agency.

6. What should we know about conditions in local housing and employment markets to understand your WtW voucher program? (for example, high/low vacancy rates, high/low unemployment)

7. What elements of state and local welfare reform initiatives are most important for your WtW program? (*for example, time limits, work requirements*)

8. Which organizations are the key local actors and institutions in welfare and employment programs? (*Use information from telephone conversations and application to refer directly to partner organizations and ask them to confirm these are the major players. Determine if other major players exist.)*

9. Before we talk about the specifics of your WtW housing voucher program, I want to get a better understanding of how this program was conceived and developed in your jurisdiction. Could you please tell me about how you went about putting your WtW voucher program together from the time someone found out about the possibility of funding, through the application process, and the start-up of the program?

The interviewer may need to probe after the initial question. *Helpful probes are listed in italics.* Directions for the interviewer and the appropriate potential respondents for groups of questions are noted in [brackets].

- What Agency first saw the NOFA and started the process?
- What other organizations were contacted? When? Why? How?
- What Agency (or consultant) had lead responsibility for the application?
- Did other agencies have responsibilities for application? What?
- When were decisions made about eligibility and target populations? By whom?
- How were decisions made?

II. WtW Voucher Program Characteristics

[WtW Coordinator, Section 8 Director, TANF agency staff, Workforce staff]

1. How many WtW vouchers did the PHA receive? (offer the number listed in the application and ask to verify) Did the PHA receive the number they applied for? If not, is the PHA aware why not?

2. How many PHA staff members work on the WtW voucher program? How many only work on the WtW voucher program?

*I want to understand how a WtW voucher program participant moves through the program. I am going to ask you several questions and use your answers to diagram the flow of clients through your system. At this point I just want to touch briefly on each major activity and we will discuss each in depth afterward. (**NOTE:** for those sites who have a client flow diagram in their applications, produce diagram and ask for it to be verified during the conversation)*

- Can you walk me through how WtW voucher holders move through your WtW voucher program?
- For example, how are clients identified for the program?
- Who assesses the client for participation in the WtW voucher program?
- Who notifies client they are accepted into the WtW voucher program?
- Who briefs and issues voucher to client? (intake)
- Who provides any available supportive services supporting work activities?
- Who monitors lease-up?
- Who manages client case?

3. How are potential clients assessed for participation in the WtW voucher program? Is this assessment part of a larger assessment for supportive services or is it specific to the WtW voucher program?

4. Do staff from multiple agencies participate in this assessment? *(NOTE: Clearly distinguish between different stages and organizations in the screening process.)*

5. Who makes the decision that housing assistance is needed for a person to find or keep a job? How is this decision made?

The interviewer may need to probe after the initial question. *Helpful probes are listed in italics.* Directions for the interviewer and the appropriate potential respondents for groups of questions are noted in [brackets].

6. If more than one organization is involved in the assessment process, what organization is responsible for assessing client needs at the time the voucher is issued as part of the WtW voucher program? *(NOTE: is this process specific to or noted as connected to the WtW voucher program or is it part of the Section 8 program in general?)*

7. What does the initial WtW voucher program intake assessment include? Is there a form for intake assessment? *(If so, please ask for a copy)*

I would like to shift the conversation to talk about supportive services.

8. What kinds of local programs and services do residents of the assisted housing you administer ordinarily use when preparing for work? (*life skills, job training*)

9. Are these services provided in-house by the PHA or by other agencies?

10. Who funds these services?

11. Are these services different from the types of services used by WtW voucher program participants?

12. Do you have formal relationships with any agencies to offer services specifically to WtW voucher participants?

13. Do WtW voucher program participants receive case management? If so, who is responsible for providing this service? What does case management include? What are the case manager/client ratios? Which agency is responsible for providing these services?

I want to make sure I understand the employment activities we've discussed. (NOTE: reiterate main points above or probe for more with following two questions)

14. What types of employment activities do WtW voucher program participants participate in? Are these mandatory for participation in WtW? Which agency is responsible for providing these services?

15. Do WtW voucher program participants participate in any job training, or educational programs? If so, please describe these in detail. Which agency is responsible for providing these services?

16. Are there any requirements that the WtW voucher participants must fulfill to remain in the program? Are there time limits for participation in the WtW program? What happens if participants do not fulfill program requirements? *(Are they terminated from the WtW housing voucher program? Are they terminated from the Section 8 program?)*

17. What role does the PHA play in the provision of non-housing services? *(case management, employment services, etc.)*

The interviewer may need to probe after the initial question. *Helpful probes are listed in italics.* Directions for the interviewer and the appropriate potential respondents for groups of questions are noted in [brackets].

18. What are the goals and objectives of the program? *(If the goals are written down, it would be very helpful for our report to have a copy, could we have one?)*

19. Are WtW voucher program participants tracked while they move through the program? If so, how are they tracked *(computer, hard copy files)?* Who is responsible for performing this task?

20. How does the PHA plan to measure the success of WtW voucher participants? How does the PHA plan to measure the success of their WtW voucher program?

21. What would your organization consider a successful outcome of the WtW voucher program?

III. WtW Voucher Eligibility Guidelines

[WtW Coordinator, Section 8 Director, TANF]

I would like to talk more about the eligibility guidelines for your local WtW voucher program. We spoke about this briefly before, let me see if I've missed any key points.

1. Which agencies were involved in designing the eligibility guidelines for the WtW voucher program? When did this process take place?

2. What are the eligibility criteria used by your agency's WtW voucher program? Are these written down? If so, can I get a copy?

3. Are there any specific groups that are given priority under the WtW voucher program eligibility guidelines? *(For example, homeless people or people who have jobs already?)*

4. The NOFA for the WtW voucher program lists three different groups that can be eligible for WtW voucher assistance. As you know these are "currently receiving TANF," "TANF eligible," and "people who have received TANF in the last two years." Does your WtW voucher program seek to serve all three of these groups? Why or why not? How is each group targeted?

5. How does the PHA determine that housing assistance is "necessary" for obtaining or retaining employment? *(Is this part of the eligibility criteria for the WtW voucher program? Does the eligibility criteria cast a broad assumption about the need for housing assistance and it's connection to employment?)*

6. Does the WtW voucher program necessitate any waiting list changes *(income guideline waivers, priority preferences, etc.)*. Do you plan to open or expand the waiting list?

The interviewer may need to probe after the initial question. *Helpful probes are listed in italics.* Directions for the interviewer and the appropriate potential respondents for groups of questions are noted in [brackets].

7. Are the WtW voucher program eligibility guidelines significantly different from the eligibility guidelines for regular Section 8 vouchers? If so, how are they different? Did the PHA have to get a waiver for implementing any of the WtW voucher program eligibility criteria?

8. Does the PHA, the TANF agency, or the workforce agency identify eligible participants? How does this work?

9. How are eligible WtW voucher participants identified *(waiting list, referrals, local advertisements)?*

IV. Partnerships

[WtW Coordinator, Partner Agencies]

Let's shift the discussion to talking about some of the key partner agencies that participate and provide services for the WtW voucher program.

1. Which agencies are the key local partners involved in the PHA's WtW voucher program?

2. What services do local partners provide to WtW voucher participants? Are any of these dedicated services meaning that the services are reserved for WtW voucher program participants?

3. Did the PHA have previous partnerships with [name TANF organization]? If so, describe the nature and extent of the relationship?

4. Did the PHA have a previous partnership with [name of Workforce organization]? If so, describe the nature and extent of the relationship?

5. Did the PHA have previous partnerships with [name of other major players]? If so, describe the nature and extent of the relationship. If not, how did the PHA choose the partner organizations? After the organizations were selected, how did the PHA approach them?

6. When did the partners get involved with the WtW voucher program? Were the partners involved in the design of the program? If so, how were the partners involved in the design of the WtW voucher program?

7. Which agencies does the PHA have a contractual relationship with for the WtW program? *(Probe for strength of relationship: Does the PHA have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or a contract with partner agencies? Again, do the partner agencies provide services reserved for WtW or general services?)*

8. Does the PHA monitor the performance of partner agencies? If so, how are the partner agencies monitored?

The interviewer may need to probe after the initial question. *Helpful probes are listed in italics.* Directions for the interviewer and the appropriate potential respondents for groups of questions are noted in [brackets].

9. How do the partners communicate with each other? *(Do the partners have regular meetings? Is there a central staff person responsible for coordination?)*

The interviewer may need to probe after the initial question. *Helpful probes are listed in italics.* Directions for the interviewer and the appropriate potential respondents for groups of questions are noted in [brackets].

V. Implementation

[WtW Coordinator, Section 8 Director, Partner Agencies]

We recognize in many cases, program start-up has just begun, however, we would like to get a sense of where sites are in the process. Over the next few minutes we have some questions about early implementation of the WtW voucher program.

1. Did the PHA or partner agencies have to hire new staff for the WtW voucher program? If so, how many?

2. What do you consider the start date of your local WtW voucher program? Please define what you mean by start date.

3. When did the PHA start (or expect to start) issuing WtW vouchers? How many WtW vouchers have been issued?

4. Have any WtW voucher holders leased up? If so, how many? What is the average time for lease-up? Has anyone used their voucher to move outside your jurisdiction? If so, how far did they move?

5. How do you plan to handle portability in the WtW voucher program?

6. In practice, how is the PHA's proposed lease-up schedule working for the WtW program?

7. Do you know how many WtW voucher holders are currently employed? If so, how many?

8. How many WtW voucher holders are receiving TANF assistance? How many are not receiving TANF? Of those not receiving TANF, how many have received TANF in the last two years? How many are eligible but not receiving TANF?

9. In what ways does your WtW voucher program differ from how you expected it to work in your original proposal?

10. Have the relationships between the PHA and the partner agencies changed from what they were prior to the WtW program? If so, in what ways?

11. Were you able to implement your eligibility criteria as planned? If not, why not?

12. How do the recent income targeting changes in the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act (QWRA) affect your program? (*targeting requirements state that 75 percent of new vouchers issued within a fiscal year must be made available for families earning at, or below 30 percent of the median income.)*

13. If you were to write your application today, would you make any changes? (probe for goals, eligibility, partnerships)

The interviewer may need to probe after the initial question. *Helpful probes are listed in italics.* Directions for the interviewer and the appropriate potential respondents for groups of questions are noted in [brackets].

VI. Wrap-Up [should be asked of all respondents]

1. What helped your design and implementation process for WtW move forward?
2. What were/are the major challenges during implementation?
3. What do you think is your organization's greatest accomplishment in the early implementation of this program?
4. Do you have any advice for other PHA's implementing WtW voucher programs?
5. Are there aspects of your WtW program you might do differently in the future?
6. Do you have any specific advice for HUD regarding the WtW voucher program? Are there things HUD should do differently in 2001?
7. Is there anything you would like to add?

The interviewer may need to probe after the initial question. *Helpful probes are listed in italics.* Directions for the interviewer and the appropriate potential respondents for groups of questions are noted in [brackets].

Questions Tailored to Specialized Respondents

[These questions are in addition to those in the core guide. Respondents may be asked relevant questions found in the core guide including queries about implementation and wrap-up.]

TANF Staff Module
[TANF Agency Staff]

A. TANF Assistance

1. What is the jurisdiction of the local TANF agency?

2. Could you briefly describe local policies regarding time limits and work requirements (hours per week) for receipt of cash assistance (TANF)? What is the state's time limit on receipt of assistance? [Pull information from background materials prior to interview and ask interviewee to verify]

3. When was TANF implemented or when did the clock start ticking for those people on public assistance in your jurisdiction?

4. How would you describe the need for affordable housing in your community?

5. How is housing assistance an important part of TANF recipients' finding or retaining employment?

B. Partnership with the PHA

1. How would you describe your agency's involvement in the WtW housing voucher program?

- *I want to understand how the WtW voucher program took shape in this jurisdiction. What agency first started the process of putting the WtW voucher program application together?*
- *What Agency (or consultant) had lead responsibility for the application?*
- *Did this agency have a role in putting together the application?*

2. Was the TANF agency involved in the design of the local WtW voucher program? How? When?

3. Does the TANF agency have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or contract with the PHA for services provided under the WtW housing voucher program?

The interviewer may need to probe after the initial question. *Helpful probes are listed in italics.* Directions for the interviewer and the appropriate potential respondents for groups of questions are noted in [brackets].

4. For the WtW program, are there regular meetings between your agency and the housing agency? Who participates in these meetings? What is the purpose of these meetings?

5. What type of staff in your agency are regularly in contact with staff at the housing agency about the WtW program? How are they involved?

6. Is there a location where staff from the housing agency and your staff are co-located? Where? What is the purpose of these staff persons? Do they participate in WtW activities?

7. Does the TANF agency partner with the PHA for other programs? If so, what are the programs?

C. Services Provided for the WtW Voucher Program

1. What is this organization's role in the WtW housing voucher program? What activities are you engaged in? *(for example, do they provide the list of eligibles or other data)*

2. Do you provide any services to WtW housing voucher participants? If so, what are these services and how provided? *(for example, case management, referrals to job training, etc.)*

3. Do WtW voucher program participants receive the same services as other TANF recipients not in the voucher program?

4. *If TANF agency provides case management to WtW voucher participants*, Are the case management services provided to WtW housing program participants different from those provided for TANF recipients?

5. Are the WtW voucher program participants tracked separately from other TANF recipients?

D. Implementation of the WtW Housing Voucher Program

1. What do you see as your early accomplishments in the WtW voucher program?

2. What aspects of your existing local TANF system made implementing the WtW housing voucher program easier? More difficult?

Employment/Workforce Development Module

[PIC, SDA/ WIB, Employment Service non-profit]*

*There may be multiple E&T providers serving the TANF population in a single community.

A. Employment and Training (E&T)

The interviewer may need to probe after the initial question. *Helpful probes are listed in italics.* Directions for the interviewer and the appropriate potential respondents for groups of questions are noted in [brackets].

1. Who are the major local service providers in your employment and training system?

2. What are the major funding sources for these services? (Probe for services provided by WtW grants, TANF employment, JTPA)

3. How are TANF recipients served by the local employment and training system?

4. Are WtW voucher participants served by the local employment and training system? If so, how? Where?

5. Do WtW voucher program participants receive the same employment and training services as other TANF recipients not in the voucher program? If different, how?

6. How would you describe the need for affordable housing in your community?

7. Is receiving housing assistance an important part of a low income person finding or retaining employment? Why?

B. Partnership with the Local Workforce Agency

1. How would you describe your agency's involvement in the WtW housing voucher program?

2. Was the [NAME OF LOCAL WORKFORCE AGENCY] involved in the design of the WtW housing voucher program?

3. Was this agency involved in putting together the application for the WtW voucher program? How?

4. Does this agency have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or contract with the PHA for services provided under the WtW housing voucher program?

5. For the WtW program, are there regular meetings between your agency and the housing agency? Who participates in these meetings? What is the purpose of these meetings?

6. What type of staff in your agency are regularly in contact with staff at the housing agency about the WtW program? How are they involved?

7. Is there a location where staff from the housing agency and your staff are co-located? Where? What is the purpose of these staff persons? Do they participate in WtW activities?

8. Does this agency partner with the PHA for other programs? If so, what are the programs?

C. Implementation of the WtW Housing Voucher Program

The interviewer may need to probe after the initial question. *Helpful probes are listed in italics.* Directions for the interviewer and the appropriate potential respondents for groups of questions are noted in [brackets].

1. What do you see as your early accomplishments in the WtW voucher program?

2. What aspects of your existing employment and training system made implementing the WtW voucher program easier? More difficult?

Other WtW Housing Program Partners

A. Agency Background

1. What is the mission of your organization?

2. What are your organization's major activities?

3. How are WtW housing voucher program participants served by your organization?

4. How would you describe the need for affordable housing in your community?

5. Is receiving housing assistance an important part of a low income person finding or retaining employment? Why?

B. Partnership with the Housing Agency

1. Was your organization involved in the design of the WtW housing voucher program?

2. Does your organization have an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or contract with the PHA for services provided under the WtW housing voucher program?

3. How would you describe your agency's involvement in the WtW housing voucher program?

4. For the WtW program, are there regular meetings between your agency and the housing agency? Who participates in these meetings? What is the purpose of these meetings?

5. What type of staff in your agency are regularly in contact with staff at the housing agency about the WtW program? How are they involved?

6. Is there a location where staff from the housing agency and your staff are co-located? Where? What is the purpose of these staff persons? Do they participate in WtW activities?

7. Does your organization partner with the PHA for other programs? If so, what are the programs?

C. Implementation of the WtW Housing Voucher Program

The interviewer may need to probe after the initial question. *Helpful probes are listed in italics.* Directions for the interviewer and the appropriate potential respondents for groups of questions are noted in [brackets].

1. What do you see as your early accomplishments in the WtW voucher program?

2. What aspects of your existing organizational structure or relationships made implementing the WtW voucher program easier? More difficult?

FSS Program Staff Module
[FSS Coordinator, WtW Coordinator]

1. Does the PHA have an FSS program? [verify from application] Is the FSS program for Section 8 tenants, public housing residents, or both?

2. Could you estimate what portion of your Section 8 holders participate in the PHA's FSS program?

3. What types of services do FSS clients receive or participate in? *(are these services offered in-house or by referral other organizations?)*

4. Is the FSS program part of the WtW voucher program design? If so, describe how FSS is part of the design for WtW?

5. Do FSS and the WtW voucher program work together to provide services to WtW voucher participants? If so, how?

6. Do clients for both the FSS program, and the WtW voucher program, participate in similar activities? How are they different?

Mobility Program Staff Module
[Mobility Coordinator, WtW Coordinator]

1. Does the PHA have a mobility program? If so, please describe. [This description tells you how the PHA defines what a mobility program is]

2. What types of services do participants in the mobility program receive *(probe for definitions of housing search, counseling, and landlord outreach)?*

3. Is the mobility program part of the WtW voucher program design? If so, describe how mobility is part of the design for WtW?

4. Do clients for both the regular mobility program, and the WtW voucher program, participate in similar activities? How are they different?

The interviewer may need to probe after the initial question. *Helpful probes are listed in italics.* Directions for the interviewer and the appropriate potential respondents for groups of questions are noted in [brackets].

5. What are the goals of the mobility program? Are these goals the same for the WtW voucher program? (*For example, does the mobility program encourage certain types of moves such as those to low-poverty areas, low minority areas, or areas closer to work?)*

6. Are WtW voucher holders encouraged to make moves to certain areas? If so, why, how, and what areas? Are these different from those recommended to other mobility program participants?

7. Do mobility services assist WtW voucher holders in making housing choice decisions that help them find or retain jobs? If so, how?

8. What portion of your Section 8 families participate in some aspect of the PHA's mobility program? Do you expect a similar portion of WtW voucher holders to participate in the mobility program? Why?

9. If some WtW participants have leased-up:
   Do you have early results on the locations chosen by WtW voucher participants?

The interviewer may need to probe after the initial question. *Helpful probes are listed in italics.* Directions for the interviewer and the appropriate potential respondents for groups of questions are noted in [brackets].