



Summary of FY 2026 proposed MTW activities:

1. *Direct Rental Assistance*
Proposed in FY 2026.

Partnering with the Housing Solutions Lab at the NYU Furman Center, RHA proposes to design and evaluate a Direct Rental Assistance (DRA) pilot that will study the impacts of paying cash rental assistance directly to individuals and families for housing costs rather than the landlord. RHA's proposed DRA pilot program will emphasize eliminating or streamlining the identified administrative processes that make it hard to use vouchers as these processes oftentimes create challenges for housing authorities, landlords, and households alike. As such, RHA proposes to put the following key design elements in place:

- Subsidy amounts will be determined based on RHA's current payment standards for the HCV program minus 30% of the household's monthly adjusted income. Once the subsidy amount is finalized based on the household's executed lease agreement, the subsidy amount will not change for 12 months.
- To closely mirror what unassisted tenants experience in the private rental market, RHA proposes a shift in how landlords of DRA participants set rents by foregoing rent reasonableness requirements.
- RHA proposes to waive the usual housing quality inspection required by HUD. Instead, RHA will provide DRA participants with the education they need to select an appropriate unit. Once a unit is selected, DRA participants will be required to self-certify that the unit chosen meets the safe, decent, sanitary, and in good repair requirement protocol with RHA reserving the option to require photographs, if deemed necessary.

By implementing DRA in the form of a randomized trial paired with a rigorous, mixed-methods evaluation, researchers from the Housing Solutions Lab at the NYU Furman Center propose to measure whether the intervention can increase lease-up, households' mobility to high-opportunity neighborhoods, and landlord participation, and reduce administrative burdens for all parties in ways that translate to cost savings. Each DRA assisted household will participate in the study for two years from the date that they receive their first subsidy payment. Based on this timeline, RHA expects to have a final evaluation of the study in late 2029 or early 2030.

2. *Alternative inspection policy for newly constructed or substantially rehabilitated properties*
Proposed in FY 2026.

RHA proposes to reduce the number of inspections required at newly constructed or substantially rehabilitated properties by foregoing an initial inspection on every unit

prior to allowing HCV participants to move-in. To accommodate larger complexes and allow HCV participants to secure units quicker and easier, RHA proposes to reduce the number of inspections required at newly constructed or substantially rehabilitated properties by foregoing the initial inspection on every unit prior to allowing an HCV participant to move-in, if the following conditions have been met:

- RHA staff conduct an inspection on 10% of the units at the complex, or at a minimum, two inspections per bedroom size.
- Each of the units inspected pass during RHA's first inspection of the complex or, if there are failed items, the landlord certifies that those failed items noted during the inspection will be addressed in all uninspected units.
- The property must certify that the units have not been occupied since receiving the certificate of occupancy or upon completion of the substantial rehabilitation.

3. *Basic Payment Standard for LIHTC assisted units*
Proposed in FY 2026.

To avoid additional rent burdens being placed on HCV participants and reduce the amount of HAP being paid, RHA proposes to limit all Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) properties to RHA's Basic Payment Standard when determining affordability and subsidy amount to be paid for a household regardless of the zip code the property is located in.

4. *Direct Referral to Waiting List*
Proposed in FY 2026.

RHA proposes to allow individuals and families currently living in temporary or short-term tenant-based housing to be placed on the waiting list even during times that the waiting list is closed to other applicants. To be eligible for a direct referral, each household must be referred directly from a community partner participating in the Continuum of Care (CoC) and each partner must be actively reporting eligible household data in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

Summary of FY 2026 amended MTW activity

1. *Simplify rent calculations and increase the minimum rent*

Current regulations require RHA to verify income for all assisted households based on HUD's hierarchy of verification, including family members who provide financial support to assisted household. This support can vary greatly from cash assistance, childcare or simply paying for monthly utility bills such as cell phones. To streamline this process, RHA will now require full verification of income during the Admissions process only. Once housed, clients receiving financial support from a family member will be allowed to provide self-certification of the amount of income received rather than going through HUD's hierarchy of verification.