

Section I. Introduction – Cover

The Rockford Housing Authority (RHA) has been working for the community for over 65 years. We have gotten to know and experience the community and its needs. As a landlord, property manager, voucher administrator, and real estate developer, RHA is a key player in the provision, preservation, and production of affordable housing in the Rockford Community.

As with each community, the Rockford community has a unique set of challenges. After decades of robust industrial and manufacturing output, the city has seen a large decline in jobs, a decay in infrastructure, and a rise in unemployment and poverty. The 2008 crisis dealt a devastating blow to Rockford's working class. The official unemployment rate in 2010 reached a peak of 19 percent, and nearly 30 percent of the city's population fell below the poverty line at one point. Poverty rates for African Americans ran as high as 43.3 percent. Unfortunately, today, not much has changed. With the percentage of poverty among African Americans within our community at 16.1 percent higher than the national average of 25.2 percent, we realize a 41.3 percent poverty rate. In a demographic that only serves as 18.71% of the overall population within our community, this number is startling and unacceptable.

*Within this percentage, 74% of the overall head of household population within RHA are African/American's, of which, 89% are considered extremely low income, 8% very low, and 3% low. Thus, making the services provided through the Housing Authority more critical than ever.

Rockford Housing Authority
Moving To Work

A holistic approach to affordability is needed. Although deed restricted properties are the most tangible elements of affordable housing, the lack of funding to maintain these properties has simply exacerbated the negative stereotypical connotation that is associated with poverty.

In cooperation with our external partners and stakeholders, RHA provides high quality, caring, effective, and efficient services for all residents according to need and eligibility. Our priorities include treating everyone with dignity and respect, enhancing self-reliance, protecting the vulnerable, and promoting healthy families, relationships, and lifestyles. Our programming and community are committed to excellence in education on preparing our residents with the awareness, knowledge, and skills necessary to become self-sufficient.

Combined with the flexibility allowed through a MTW designation, RHA can be the driving force of holistic change for the Rockford community. Creating additional decent, safe, and affordable housing, while also creating opportunities for education, job training, employment, and home ownership.

Mission Statement: *RHA partner with community and responsible resident to transform houses into homes while guiding families to self-sufficiency”*

Table of Contents

Rockford Housing Authority
Moving To Work

Part I. MTW Plan

A. Overall Vision.....	4
B. Vision Objectives/Plan.....	6
“Expanding Opportunities to Maximize Life Outcomes”.....	6
<i>Increase the number and quality of affordable housing</i>	7
<i>Increase the number of families moving toward self-sufficiency</i>	8
<i>Utilizing our LDI platform</i>	9
Increase and strengthen the number of community partnerships.....	9
Reduce the agency’s administrative costs	10
Housing Choice Voucher Inspections.....	12
Public Housing Inspections.....	13
Triennial Recertifications.....	14
Proposed Use of MTW	14
Alternative Rent Policy and Rationale.....	15
Fair Housing Statement.....	17
Rent Table.....	19
Supporting Documentation.....	20

Overall Vision

The Rockford Housing Authority (RHA) was established in 1951 to provide safe, decent, and affordable housing to low and moderate-income individuals and families. While partnering with community agencies to promote increased self-sufficiency and a higher quality of life for its residents. Today, RHA manages 1284 public housing units and 1716 housing choice vouchers (HCV), serving nearly 10,000 residents in total.

The authority is governed by a Board of Commissioners, a group of dedicated citizens and local officials appointed in accordance with state housing law, who establish and monitor agency policies and are responsible for preserving and expanding the Authority's resources and ensuring the Authority's ongoing success.

With an Executive leadership team comprised of more than 50 years of combined experience in public and human health services, and finance, our Executive team, working with our local partners, has devised an overall MTW plan that is mutually beneficial to our residents and staff while enhancing our community.

The following plan will outline how RHA will transform from a real estate management agency, into an agency that provides quality affordable housing to those wanting to utilize a robust array of human services to transform their lives. Working with agencies throughout our community to ensure that each family is provided with the tools necessary to ensure a successful transition into self-sufficiency. While continuing to support and promote a safe and decent environment for seniors and disabled persons to age in place.

Rockford Housing Authority
Moving To Work

Throughout this plan, and if awarded MTW designation, RHA will continue to review and develop practices and processes that encourage individuals and families to seek opportunities in education, job training, and employment. While adjusting our policies to ensure incentives for success and lessening the administrative burden for our staff.

RHA is committed to actively exploring and aggressively seizing opportunities that move the agency forward in the fulfillment of its mission and strategic goals in ways that are reflective of local housing needs, while implementing activities designed to meet one or more of the MTW statutory objectives.

Through the partnerships that we have established and our community's commitment to excellence, residents participating in the "Rent Reform Study" will be provided individual case management services that cater to the individual or family needs.

RHA acknowledges that the flexibility provided by a MTW designation will lessen the impact of reductions in federal funding on the provision of core services; however, funding remains a significant challenge. It is creating and accessing opportunities that continues to be key in meeting this challenge, whether it be implementing increased program efficiencies, leveraging resources to preserve/increase affordable housing or encouraging the improved well-being of the individuals and families that we serve.

In 2019, RHA completed a comprehensive market analysis of the Rockford region and the housing opportunities within this region. This analysis provided a clear indication that the Rockford region is in need of an additional 4800 affordable housing units to meet the needs of residents within the Rockford area, as there is a clear shift from home ownership to rental.

“An analysis of the housing stock in Rockford indicates that between 2010 and 2017 the number of housing units with zero bedrooms increased by more than 1,400 while over 4,800 units with one, two, or three bedrooms were removed from housing supply, and 948 four or five bedroom units were added to supply. Over the same period, households with three, four or five persons decreased only slightly, and households with six or more persons increased substantially. If this trend continues, there will soon be a shortage of two- and three-bedroom housing units in Rockford”. “Most low-income renter households--those earning \$15,000 or less--can’t find affordable rentals (defined as 30% of gross income). The shortage represents 22.6 percent of all renters.”

RHA’s MTW Plan is guided by the principals set forth by the Agency’s Mission Statement and Strategic Goals. In addition, the MTW activities will advance at least one of the three MTW Statutory Objectives.

Vision Objectives/ Plan: Expanding Opportunities to Maximize Outcomes

The mission of the Rockford Housing Authority is to provide safe and desirable affordable housing to low and moderate-income individuals and families while partnering with community agencies to promote increased self-sufficiency and a higher quality of life for its residents. RHA’s long-term vision for its participation in the MTW demonstration program integrates this local mission with the federal statutory objectives of the MTW program. The result is a carefully crafted list of local goals, which tailor the federal objectives to the specific needs of the Rockford community.

1. Increase the number and quality of affordable housing choices throughout the Rockford community.
2. Increase the number of families moving toward self-sufficiency.
3. Increase and strengthen the number of community partnerships benefitting residents
4. Reduce the Agency's administrative costs while limiting the administrative burdens placed on staff and residents.

Goal 1: Increase the number and quality of affordable housing choices throughout the Rockford community.

RHA is continuing to identify opportunities to improve the quality of housing inventory available to low-income families and to provide opportunities for homeownership to Public Housing residents. RHA continues to update its long-range plan to address the redevelopment and modernization needs of its Public Housing sites. During FY2021 and moving forward, RHA will continue to review and study various funding alternatives and redevelopment opportunities.

The ability to move forward on these plans depends on a variety of factors including economic conditions and the availability of financing. Funding will be sought through a number of sources including, but not limited to, Choice Neighborhood Initiatives (CNI) or similar federal grants designed to revitalize obsolete public housing sites, Low Income Housing Tax Credits, Historic Tax Credits, New Market Tax Credits, Tax-Exempt Bonds, FHA Financing, and private financing.

Based on a thoughtful process of assessing viable planning projects, RHA is considering disposition/demolition applications for various sites, and it is anticipated that we will be ready to submit an application for our Fairgrounds Valley development in January of 2021.

However, demolition timetables and the list of disposition/demolition candidate properties will be determined as planning and development evolve. Efforts will be led by our Construction Manager, who is equipped with 35 years of experience in maintenance and construction.

The agency may submit applications for CNI Planning Grants for sites in the future. Federal grants, such as CNI Grants, would be valuable tools in helping RHA address the redevelopment needs at its distressed public housing sites that are slated for redevelopment; consequently, the Agency may pursue planning and/or implementation grants that are available in FY2021.

2. Increase the number of families moving toward self-sufficiency.

RHA has embarked on a re-branding of its self-sufficiency efforts, with a focus on workforce development. The new approach will result in a more comprehensive and coordinated focus on facilitating access to services/resources that meet the individual needs of residents and providing incentives for residents to work toward attaining self-sufficiency. With a curriculum that focus' on overall empowerment, composed, and initiated by our Director of Human Services, Mrs. Odessa Walker. RHA's Life Force Development Institute (LDI), is recognized in our community as a cornerstone to self-development and is accepted by many employers as a certified training course for continued education/training.

Rockford Housing Authority
Moving To Work

Mrs. Walker's team is led by Mr. Marcus Hill, former city of Rockford Alderman of the 6th ward. Odessa, Marcus, and the entire human services team participate in "Bridges Out of Poverty" initiative and have a true understanding of the economic, cultural, and societal hurdles faced by those in poverty. Each member is trained in the LDI curriculum and is an active instructor for classroom sessions.

Utilizing our LDI platform RHA intends to:

- Increase the number of families achieving homeownership and renting in the private market—enhanced by the approval of modifications to the MTW Homeownership Assistance Program (HOAP) allowing families paying 100% of their contract rent to access the program;
- Increase the number of families receiving self-sufficiency services through more focused and expanded service coordination efforts, inclusive of:
 1. Implementation of a new "on the ground" service coordination model with the establishment of Empowerment Coordinator's in the Office of Human Services;
 2. Provision of space in Public Housing developments for service providers/self-sufficiency activities;
 3. Enhanced programming at RHA's Empowerment center (created and funded through MTW single budget flexibility). Opportunities available to residents at the Empowerment center will continue to grow with the resources provided through the possible designation of the site as a "Job's Plus Initiative", (application pending)
 4. Upgrading computer labs in public housing communities.

- Increase the number of families experiencing increases in earned income as a result of rent reform efforts (i.e. removal of the earned income reporting requirement between scheduled biennial recertifications);
- Operationalize RHA’s newly revamped Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program—creating a simplified and more goal-oriented incentive structure; and
- Create an income exclusion for participants in the RHA Section III Training Program.

3. Increase and strengthen the number of community partnerships benefitting residents

RHA is eager to use available MTW flexibilities to both strengthen its current partnerships with local social service agencies and to forge new affiliations to help underserved populations with education, job training, and employment opportunities, in the Rockford community. The Authority currently has 16 such partners, with an additional 3 being pursued. These agencies serve victims of domestic violence; individuals with mental illness and/or substance abuse issues; individuals recently released from prison or jail; families in need of financial literacy, credit management, and homeownership resources; individuals enrolled in higher education; seeking job training skills, and homeless individuals and families.

These partnerships will provide service-enriched housing to households while they participate in a program offered. RHA is looking to allocate a set number of Housing Choice Vouchers to these initiatives each year, through the creation of additional project-based voucher units, working in collaboration with our non-profit, Bridge Rockford. Voucher recipients will be required to reside in designated housing as long as they are participating in the RHA/ non-

profit's program. With an overall goal of providing homeownership opportunities to those who may not otherwise achieve homeownership.

RHA looks forward to pursuing additional partnerships in upcoming years and will continuously seek input from its resident advisory panels, the MTW Stakeholders Committee, and the community at large regarding the best practices to pursue this type of focused programming.

Current Partnerships:

Rockford Township

Habitat for Humanity

One Body Collaboratives

Life Force Development Institute

Comcast

Awaken

Home Start

Renewal Turning Point

Youth Services Network

Boys and Girls Club

YMCA of Rock River Valley

100 Strong

Family Credit Management

Goal 4: Reduce the Agency’s administrative costs while limiting the administrative burdens placed on staff and residents.

MTW is in part a deregulation demonstration, designed to relieve public housing authorities from excessive regulatory burden. This means housing authorities have the opportunity – with prior HUD approval – to streamline their processes by waiving onerous regulations that do not serve their local needs.

RHA has decided to focus its efforts in this area on the *inspections* processes used in the *Housing Choice Voucher and public housing programs*. Coupled with the *triennial recertification* process, these activities will result in significant administrative relief for both residents and housing authority staff.

Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Inspections

Under the leadership of Mrs. Sybil Mueller, HCV Manager, and employee of RHA since 2009, the HCV program has been the receipt of a High Performer SEMAP score for the past six years.

In collaboration with Ms. Christine Manley, Housing Policy Manager, our HCV team manages and supports more than 1700 voucher holders and 700 landlords.

HUD regulations currently mandate that housing authorities inspect every HCV unit at least bi-annually to ensure it meets Housing Quality Standards (HQS). While RHA intends to uphold HUD’s high standards of decent, safe, and sanitary housing maintained in good repair for all HCV households, the Authority believes it can achieve this outcome more cost-effectively through a new Star Rating System for HCV property owners. Over the course of

Rockford Housing Authority
Moving To Work

the MTW demonstration, RHA will develop a risk-based inspection process that evaluates owners on multiple factors including:

- Past inspection scores;
- Age of units, age of mechanical systems and/or date of last major renovation;
- Severity of past HQS violations; and
- Past complaints reported by voucher holders and their general satisfaction with their housing unit.

Points will be assigned to each of these factors and tallied to result in a Star Rating from one star through four stars, which will be used to determine the quantity and frequency of future inspections. During Year 1 of its participation in the MTW Demonstration, RHA will begin overhauling its existing inspection process into a streamlined, cost-effective approach that aggressively enforces HQS at the most at-risk/problematic properties, while reducing inspection frequency at high quality properties.

Initial steps planned for FY 2021 for all privately owned and partner-based HCV units include:

- A randomly selected inspection of 25% of dwellings for units owned by service provider partners or owners with an excellent inspection track record who have 10 or more HCV units;
- A written self-certification process for the correction of minor fail items for owners with excellent HQS performance; and

- An inspection schedule based on geographic clustering of units within specified locations in Rockford, instead of the current method of automatically scheduling annual inspections on the move-in anniversary date for each individual unit.

These strategies will result in considerable cost and time savings, while reducing travel time.

Public Housing Inspections

Mr. Owen Carter, Director of Housing Operations, joined the RHA team in September of 2018. Formally an employee of the City of Rockford Human Services department, Mr. Carter has bridged the gap between Human Services and Property Management. Working with our Director of Human Services, Mrs. Odessa Walker, residents have seen a more holistic utilitarian approach to resident engagement.

Utilizing this tactic, RHA will also develop a streamlined approach to its public housing inspection process during its participation in the MTW Demonstration. During FY 2021, the Authority will begin conducting public housing housekeeping/repair inspections biennially for households that maintain an excellent rating. RHA staff will review past inspection records, and anyone with two prior consecutive excellent ratings will automatically have their next inspection scheduled for FY 2023. Other households will be switched to the biennial inspection schedule once they achieve two consecutive excellent ratings. Subsequent housekeeping/repairs inspections will remain on a biennial schedule, as long as the household maintains an excellent rating.

Triennials Recertifications

Our HCV and LIPH staff continue to be over burden with recertifications and interims, and therefore does not have the sufficient time to interact with residents, landlords, or contractors in a meaningful and effective manner. Multi-year certification will benefit both; saving staff valuable time that can be allocated where they will bring greater benefit to the resident and the agency and provides for greater convenience for the resident.

Proposed Use of MTW Funds

As part of ongoing efforts to address the redevelopment and modernization needs of the agency's public housing portfolio, RHA will continue to review and study of various funding alternatives and redevelopment opportunities.

With the successful Section 18 application and TPV award for our Brewington Oaks facility, RHA quickly learned that a major barrier for our residents entering the HCV program, was the ability to pay a security deposit. With the flexibility MTW allows, RHA will create an incentive program for landlord participation by offering unit repairs, not to exceed contract rent, in exchange for a security deposit. Thus, removing the burden of a security deposit from the tenant.

In partnership with our non-profit, Bridge-Rockford, RHA capital funding will assist in the acquisition and Rehab affordable housing units under the PBV program. Our goal will be that each unit will become part of a homeownership program. Offering a tenant, the opportunity to purchase the home that they have successfully maintained, for the balance of the acquisition loan. Each tenant will be presented with this offer at the onset of their participation in the

program and the time frame for achieving homeownership will be defined by each participant's individual transition plan.

Alternative Rent Policy and Rationale

Utilizing Test Rent #1; Tiered Rent. Provides dual benefit. For staff, the removal of reporting for increases in income will reduce the mandate for interim certification, and extend the duration between recertification, allowing staff to focus on more critical administrative and resident engagement activities.

For resident participant's, tiered rent acts as an incentive for continued employment, yet gradually prepares them for market rent. Participants randomly chosen to participate in the test group will be assigned an "empowerment coordinator" for one on one case management to individualize a plan for transition and continued growth. In combination with our community partners, each head of household and age appropriate member, will receive wrap around supportive services including basic life skills. Each participant will be encouraged to participate in RHA's LDI class as the launching pad for their plan.

Enrollment into the MTW "Rent Reform Study" will begin within six months of award, if RHA is selected to participate in the demonstration. Using our current tenant management system, Yardi, non-elderly *(under the age of 56) or disabled head of households, will be selected on a random basis and notified immediately of their selection.

RHA intends to continue the random selection of non-elderly or disabled participants, as noted above, for all residents entering the authority's LIPH or HCV programs.

Rockford Housing Authority
Moving To Work

For any households that may experience a hardship during participation, RHA will provide a hardship exemption for a period of three-months. During this three-month time frame, the participant will meet with their assigned Empowerment Coordinator to review individual status and determine the best path to move forward. Assistance with job search, education, or training will be heightened to aggressively develop growth, if reasoning for the hardship is due to loss of wages. Upon the expiration of the three-month time frame, if the Empowerment Coordinator determines that an extension to the hardship is needed, an additional three-months exemption will be granted. The number of extensions granted will be based on a case by case scenario.

During a hardship period, the participants rent will be reduced to the minimum rent payment.

If at any time it is determined that a participant cannot maintain or achieve progress toward rent increases, the Empowerment Coordinator will work directly with the participant to understand what challenges are being experienced and how to best align services to meet those challenges.

Once identified, a plan for wrap around services will be designed and implemented to ensure success. During transition, the participants increase in rent will be delayed by three-months. Upon expiration of the three-month time frame, the Empowerment Coordinator determines that an extension is needed, an additional three-month delay in increase will be granted. The number of extensions granted will be based on a case by case scenario.

RHA uses Yardi Voyager as its internal system of record and contracts with a third-party vendor to manage its information technology department. Yardi is widely used in the Public

Rockford Housing Authority
Moving To Work

Housing agencies and the system can be easily modified to integrate MTW initiatives and the MTW HUD50058. Yardi Voyager is a web-based, fully integrated end-to-end platform with mobile access for larger portfolios to manage operations, execute leasing, run analytics, and provide innovative resident and tenant services.

RHA is compliant with all Fair Housing and Civil Rights requirements. Collaborating with our local non-profit legal services team, Prairie State Legal, RHA has hosted several Fair Housing training sessions for our community partners and landlords. Pre Covid-19, RHA scheduled no less than two sessions per year, and will continue to do so, to ensure those seeking affordable housing have equal opportunity and access to affordable homes, and to ensure landlords understand their responsibility as a recipient of HUD funds.

If selected to participate in the MTW demonstration program, to continually monitor and provide oversight on the effects of its MTW initiatives, a stakeholder committee will be formed and asked to meet no less than quarterly to review outcomes. For each MTW initiative implemented by the Authority, the evaluation team will help determine appropriate baselines, benchmarks, and metrics to assess outcomes affecting residents and RHA staff.

Tiered Rent

Tier	Tier Income Minimum	Tier Income Maximum	Tiered rent
1	\$ 0	\$2,499	\$50
2	\$ 2,500	\$4,999	\$94
3	\$5,000	\$7,499	\$156
4	\$7,500	\$9,999	\$219
5	\$10,000	\$12,499	\$281
6	\$12,500	\$14,999	\$344
7	\$15,000	\$17,4999	\$406

Rockford Housing Authority
Moving To Work

8	\$17,5000	\$19,999	\$469
9	\$20,000	\$22,499	\$531
10	\$22,500	\$24,999	\$594
11	\$25,000	\$27,499	\$656
12	\$27,500	\$29,999	\$719
13	\$30,000	\$32,499	\$781

Skills and Experience of RHA Personnel

Laura Snyder, Director of Housing Operations – Mrs. Snyder is responsible for the financial and operational success of RHA. With over 22 years of experience with Public Housing, Laura has assisted in the development of our safety and security programs and, currently holds certifications as a Housing Choice Voucher specialist, Public Housing Manager, Tax Credit specialist, and is a graduate of the PHDEP program.

Laura has been a valued member of the RHA Directors and Leadership team. Formerly the Director of Housing Operations, and Chief Operations Officer for the RHA she was responsible for leading the Housing Choice Voucher, Public Housing, and Maintenance teams to peak performance and to develop and implement initiatives to improve program integrity within Section 8 and Public Housing programs.

Owen Carter, Director of Housing Operations – Mr. Carter was born and raised in Rockford, IL and served in the U.S. Navy for 10 years in several theaters of operation including Kosovo and Iraq. While serving his country, Owen was able to receive his Associates degree from Rock Valley College and a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science: Public Law from Northern Illinois University.

Owen returned to Rockford and began working on several political campaigns and networking with those employed in and served by the social service field. In 2000, Owen began employment with Icon Property Management and Development Group where he oversaw the rehabilitation and management of numerous historical homes and properties within our fair city.

Shortly after, Owen began employment with the Rockford Housing Authority serving as the Property Manager at several sites throughout Rockford. In November 2008, he accepted the position at the City of Rockford Human Services Department – A Community Action Agency, as

Rockford Housing Authority
Moving To Work

the Community Action Coordinator, later as the Energy Programs Manager serving Boone and Winnebago Counties, where he received his Certified Community Action Professional. Owen also received his Certified Public Manager certification from University of Illinois at Springfield. Working within the Community Action Agency, Owen and his staff were able to use various state and federal grant funds to assist those in need at various stages in life, through maximum participation, to move toward self-sufficiency.

Odessa Walker, Director of Human Services – Odessa Walker is Director of Human Services for Rockford Housing Authority. She has been in the Public Housing industry 10 years where she served as Resident Social Services Coordinator for 2 years, Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator for 3 years and Director of Education and Training for 2 years. Odessa was responsible for overseeing all resident programs to ensure their success by providing classroom educational training, implementing programs that addressed employment readiness, financial literacy, self-empowerment, goal setting, and preparation for homeownership.

Odessa holds certifications as a Family Self-Sufficiency Specialist, Public Housing Specialist and assisted in the development of the nationally recognized Workforce Development Institute which was launched in 2013. She also serves as the Youth Pastor for Mt. Calvary Church of God in Christ and Youth Department Chairlady for Fifth West Illinois Jurisdiction. Odessa believes in creating pathways that allow the families she serves to thrive, be successful on all levels and become self-sufficient.

Taip Asani, Director of Finance – Taip Asani, returns at Rockford Housing Authority to serve as the Director of Finance. He oversees all aspects of Accounting including forecasting, budgeting, preparation of financial statements and reporting to RHA's board and HUD.

Taip is a graduate of Northern Illinois University with a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting. Prior to assuming this role, he worked as an Accountant for the Rockford Housing Authority from December 2013 to September 2017.

Mr. Asani is currently attending, NAHRO's CFO program.

Marcus Hill, Resident Services Manager – Mr. Hill is a graduate of Rockford University with a Bachelor Degree in Psychology and Physical Education.

He was previously employed by the Illinois Department of Human Services as a Case Worker/Job Specialist after spending much of the past five years helping people with criminal records find housing, education, and work through Chicago based Safer Foundation jail re-entry program. He was also a member of the Rockford City Council from January 2014 through April 2015 and represented the 6th ward as a Democrat.

Rockford Housing Authority
Moving To Work

Hill spends his spare time as a coach for Rockford Christian school freshman basketball team and also coaches and trains for AAU level basketball. He has 15 years of coaching experience; has coached for the RPS 205 school district, Boylan High School, and is a member of the RAVE Authority Board.

DRAFT

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Rebuilding Lives, Transforming Our Community
One Body Collaboratives

BOARD OF
DIRECTORS
Allan Barsema
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Director of
Technology
Brent Scott,
Board Member
Lou Setter
Co-Founder,
Board Treasurer
Brian Wynn,
Board Member

November 24, 2020

Job Plus Program Grant Program Manager
Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street
Washington DC 20021

Dear Sir or Madam,
One Body Collaboratives will commit to supports the Rockford Housing Authority and the proposed 2020 Job Plus Program Grant Application. One Body Collaboratives knows that as a community partner our support, along with a successful Jobs Plus Program, will encourage residents to achieve new occupational and educational levels that are currently not common in the community.

One Body Collaboratives will support the Rockford Housing Authority with commitment of supportive services listed below. These services will be provided to the residents participating in the Jobs Plus Program for the grant period of 6/1/2021 to 12/1/2025.

Services to be Provided by One Body Collaboratives for the Rockford Housing Authority Jobs Plus Program:

- 1) Family counseling workshops:
\$300 per slot x 40 slots per year x 4 years = \$48,000
- 2) Food and utilities assistance:
\$250 per slot x 40 slots per year x 4 years = \$40,000

Total Value of Contribution - \$88,000

**These service contributions are IN-KIND contribution, not a cash or financial obligation. These services are not funded by Federal sources.

One Body Collaboratives commits to providing a helping hand to the Jobs Plus residents so that they can overcome their dependence on public assistance.

Regards,
Mary Cacioppi
Executive Director

P.O. Box 1633, Rockford, IL 61110: (815) 282-4384
info@OneBodyCollaboratives.org : www.OneBodyCollaboratives.org

To mobilize, further develop, and coordinate church and community resources to rebuild lives and transform communities.

Rockford Housing Authority
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November 21, 2020

Job Plus Program Grant Program Manager
Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street
Washington DC 20021

Dear Sir or Madam,

Rockford Area Habitat for Humanity will commit to support the Rockford Housing Authority and the proposed 2020 Job Plus Program Grant Application. Rockford Area Habitat for Humanity knows that as a community partner our support, along with a successful Jobs Plus Program, will encourage residents to achieve new occupational and educational levels that are currently not common in the community.

Rockford Area Habitat for Humanity will support the Rockford Housing Authority with commitment of supportive services listed below. These services will be provided to the residents participating in the Jobs Plus Program for the grant period of 6/1/2021 to 12/1/2025.

Services to be Provided by Rockford Area Habitat for Humanity for the Rockford Housing Authority Jobs Plus Program:

- 1) Construction skills training
 - 25 slots x \$2000 per slot per year x 4 years \$200,000
- 2) Community outreach and workforce development
 - \$25 per hour x 4 hours per week x 52 weeks per year x 4 years = \$20,800
- 3) Credit, finance and housing counseling
 - \$25 per hour x 4 hours per week x 52 weeks per year x 4 years = \$20,800

Total Value of Contribution - \$241,600

***These service contributions are **IN-KIND** contribution, not a cash or financial obligation. These services are not funded by Federal sources.*

Rockford Area Habitat for Humanity commits to providing a helping hand to the Jobs Plus residents so that they can overcome their dependence on public assistance.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Keri Asevedo".

Keri Asevedo, 11/21/20
Executive Director

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YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK, INC.

"Serving youth and families in Winnebago and Boone counties with strength-based care"



107 N. 3rd St., Rockford, IL 61107

Phone: 815/986-1947

Fax: 815/986-1954

E-Mail: officeadmin@ysnkids.com

November 25, 2020

Job Plus Program Grant Program Manager
Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street
Washington DC 20021

Dear Grant Program Manager,

Youth Services Network will commit to support the Rockford Housing Authority and the proposed 2020 Job Plus Program Grant Application. Youth Services Network knows that as a community partner our support, along with a successful Jobs Plus Program, will encourage residents to achieve new occupational and educational levels that are currently not common in the community.

Youth Services Network will support the Rockford Housing Authority with a commitment of supportive services. These services will be provided to the residents participating in the Jobs Plus Program for the grant period of 6/1/2021 to 12/1/2025. Youth Services Network will accept referrals from the Rockford Housing Authority Jobs Plus Program to provide services that include:

- 1) Life/Social skill building, Character and Career Development
\$25 per hour x 10 hours per week x 52 weeks per year x 4 years = \$52,000
- 2) Mental Health Counseling
\$50 per hour x 10 hours per week x 52 weeks per year x 4 years = \$104,000
- 3) Crisis Intervention & Violence Prevention
\$50 per hour x 5 hours per week x 52 weeks per year x 4 years = \$52,000

Total= \$208,000

These service contributions are **IN-KIND** contribution, not a cash or financial obligation. **Youth Services Network** commits to providing a helping hand to the Jobs Plus residents so that they can overcome their dependence on public assistance.

Sincerely,

Raegan Garas, LCSW
Executive Director

*Funded by Illinois Department of Human Services, Illinois Department of Children & Family Services,
U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, United Way of Rock River Valley, FEMA, City of Rockford,
Rockford School District 205, Winnebago County, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority,
Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice and Illinois State Board of Education.*

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between the

Rockford Housing Authority
223 S Winnebago St, Rockford, IL 61102

And

The Workforce Connection (Rockford)
303 N Main Street, Rockford, IL 61101

November 13, 2020

Our Purpose:

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to create a working relationship between both parties for the Jobs Plus Initiative Grant.

We acknowledge that any relationship prospers if both parties work together in good faith for the greater good of the community and the people living in the community. It is understood that each party obligates itself to the following responsibilities to serve the purpose of operating a successful Jobs Plus Initiative program.

Rockford Housing Authority Mission Statement:

A quality home is the foundation of society & community: quality home life provides hope and the pathway to our goals.

Responsible and respectful people deserve the opportunity to contribute to attaining a comfortable quality home and neighborhood all can have pride in.

The Workforce Connection Mission Statement:

The Workforce Connection is committed to providing a workforce that meets the needs of the business community now and in the future.

Program Description:

The Jobs Plus program develops locally-based, job-driven approaches that increase earnings and advance employment outcomes through work readiness, employer linkages, job placement, educational advancement, technology skills, and financial literacy for residents of public housing. The place-based Jobs Plus program addresses poverty among public housing residents by incentivizing and enabling employment through earned income disregards for working residents and a set of services designed to support work including employer linkages, job placement and counseling, educational advancement, and financial counseling. Ideally, these incentives will saturate the target public housing projects (referred to as "projects" hereafter), building a culture of work and making working residents the norm. The Jobs Plus program comprises these three core components:

- Employment-Related Services
- Financial/Rent Incentive – Jobs Plus Earned Income Disregard (JPEID)

Rockford Housing Authority
Moving To Work

- **Community Supports for Work**

Responsibilities of the The Workforce Connection:

Program services to be provided will include but need not be limited to the following list.

- Career exploration/job readiness workshops
- Job search and job placement assistance
- Entrepreneurship workshops
- Work experience including on-the-job training, internships, pre-apprenticeships and Registered Apprenticeships. Work-Based Learning and on-the-job training opportunities are paid training opportunities.
- Facilitated connections to education and training opportunities
- Access to rapid re-employment/dislocated worker services if job loss occurs due to no fault of the participant
- post-placement job retention support and career advancement coaching
- Access to computers, phones, fax, and copy machines and other supplies for participants' employment-related uses and adequate training on how to use these technologies
- The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds will be used to support the Jobs Plus program for participants who are enrolled in services provided by the Workforce Connection.
- Provide Ongoing Local Labor Market Information (LMI) to be used both for initial planning and analysis of which employment opportunities are most available locally, and for monitoring ongoing trends. Description of the local employment market with information related to skills and training for in-demand jobs.
- Business Services Representatives will work directly with the business community to identify and create employment opportunities and act as liaisons with local employment agencies.
- Career Planners will work one-on-one with participants to guide them through the employment process and help them achieve employment-related goals.

Top 3 In Demand Industries in Illinois

- **Manufacturing Skills Required:** GED/HS Equivalence, Technological Literacy,
- **Transportation/Logistics, Skills Required:** Driver's License Requirements (commercial), Technological Literacy
- **Sales and Related Occupations, # of Jobs 560,360, Skills Required:** GED/HS Equivalence, Technological Literacy, Customer Service

Responsibilities of the Rockford Housing Authority:

- Operate a place-based "**Development Name**" Jobs Plus program that addresses poverty among the public housing residents by incentivizing and enabling employment through earned income disregards for working families and a set of services designed to support work including employer linkages, job placement and counseling, educational advancement,

Rockford Housing Authority
Moving To Work

and financial counseling. Ideally, these incentives will saturate the target developments, building a culture of work and making working families the norm.

- Engage and keep partners and residents informed about program activities.
- Hire and training sufficient staff, partners, and Community Coaches to successfully operate the Jobs Plus Initiative Grant.

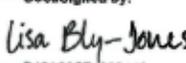
This MOU shall be in effect from June 1st, 2021 to December 1st, 2025 and the terms of this agreement are based on RHA receiving the grant award.

This MOU is dated November 13, 2020

This Memorandum of Understanding shall become binding with the signature of both authorized representatives.



Laura Snyder, 11/13/20
Chief Executive Officer
Rockford Housing Authority

DocuSigned by:

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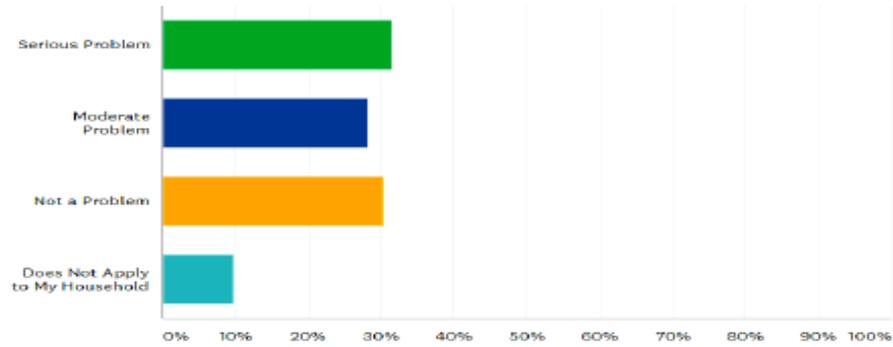
Dr. Lisa M. Bly-Jones, 11/13/20
Executive Director
The Workforce Connection



Rockford Housing Authority
Moving To Work

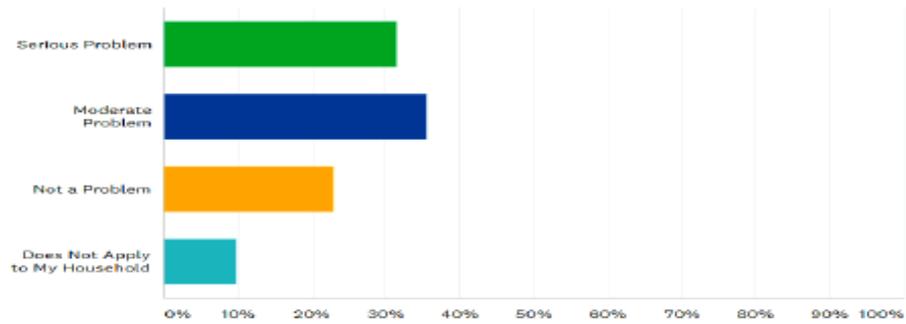
How would you rate the following issues in your household regarding the availability of job training opportunities?

Answered: 152 Skipped: 0



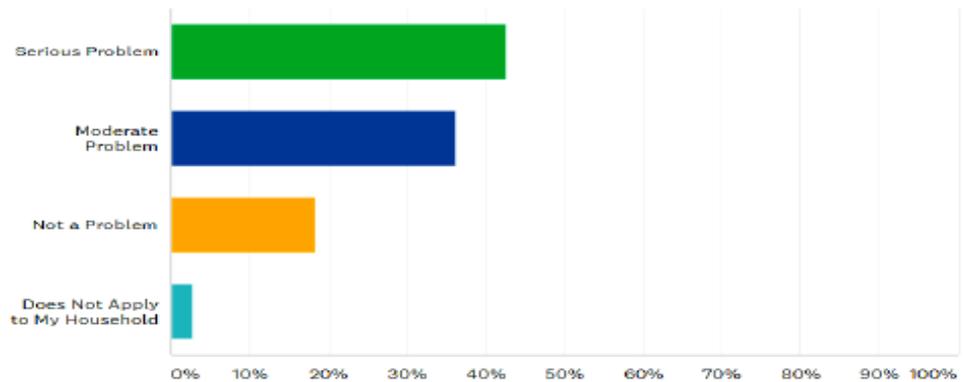
How would you rate the following issue regarding the availability of jobs for adults in your household?

Answered: 152 Skipped: 0



How would you rate the following issue regarding the cost of living?

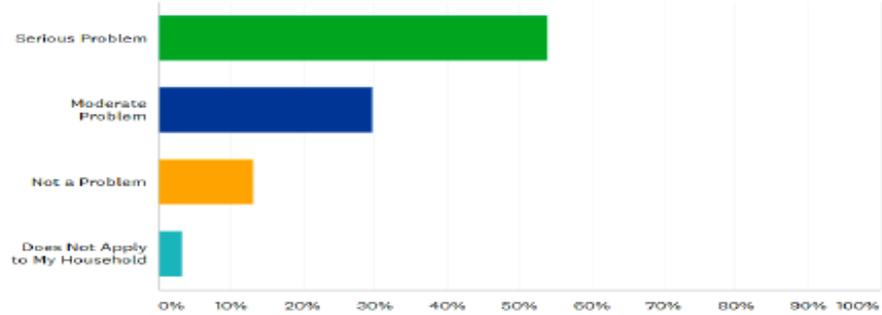
Answered: 152 Skipped: 0



Rockford Housing Authority Moving To Work

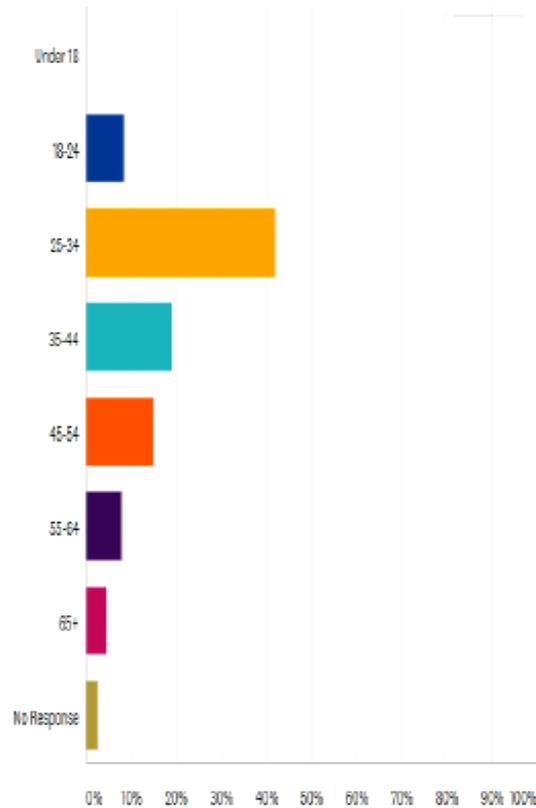
How would you rate the following issue regarding Income/Wages?

Answered: 152 Skipped: 0



What is your age range?

Answered: 152 Skipped: 0



INTEREST: Do you or others in your household have an interest in the following? check all that apply

Answered: 148 Skipped: 3

