

# GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-15-747T](#), a testimony before the Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance, Committee on Financial Services, House of Representatives

## Why GAO Did This Study

HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH) administers programs that help some of the nation's most vulnerable households—including low-income families and members of Native Americans tribes—obtain safe, decent, and affordable housing. PIH also operates complementary programs, such as FSS, that are designed to help assisted households become more self-sufficient. PIH programs accounted for about 60 percent of HUD's budget authority for fiscal year 2015, or about \$26 billion.

GAO has issued four reports since March 2012 on PIH programs, including the MTW, FSS, voucher, and IHBG programs, that contained recommendations to HUD (see [GAO-12-300](#), [GAO-12-490](#), [GAO-13-581](#), and [GAO-14-255](#)). This testimony is based on these four reports. It discusses, among other things, HUD's progress in addressing prior GAO recommendations on the MTW and FSS programs, the voucher program, and the IHBG program.

To update the status of prior recommendations, GAO reviewed new or revised HUD policies, procedures, and reports and interviewed officials.

View [GAO-15-747T](#). For more information, contact Daniel Garcia-Diaz at 202-512-8678 or [garcia Diaz@gao.gov](mailto:garcia Diaz@gao.gov).

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## HUD PUBLIC AND INDIAN HOUSING PROGRAMS

### Progress on Prior GAO Recommendations to Enhance Accountability and Efficiency

## What GAO Found

As of June 2015, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) had addressed some of GAO's 16 prior recommendations for four programs: Moving to Work (MTW), Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS), Housing Choice Voucher (voucher), and Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG). But other recommendations require further attention. Specifically:

- HUD has addressed seven of eight recommendations GAO made in April 2012 to improve assessment of MTW, capture lessons learned, and enhance program oversight. The MTW program is intended, among other things, to give state and local housing agencies flexibility to design and test innovative strategies for providing housing assistance. HUD agreed or partially agreed with most of GAO's recommendations. However, it has yet to fully implement a process for systematically identifying lessons learned.
- HUD has taken initial steps to address GAO's two recommendations from a July 2013 report to develop and implement (1) a process to better ensure that data on FSS grants were complete and (2) a strategy for regularly analyzing FSS participation and outcome data. The FSS program is designed to help families receiving HUD housing assistance become self-sufficient through case management and referrals to supportive services such as education and training. HUD agreed with the recommendations and has revised its data collection and analysis procedures. But it has not yet provided full documentation of these efforts so that GAO can assess its actions.
- HUD has implemented one of three recommendations GAO made in a 2012 report on the voucher program. The voucher program subsidizes private market rents for about 2 million low-income households. HUD neither agreed nor disagreed with these recommendations. But HUD has addressed one that is aimed at streamlining the program's administration by, among other things, publishing a proposed rule that includes measures to simplify administrative processes. HUD has not yet provided GAO evidence that it has implemented the two other recommendations, one on informing Congress about excess state and local housing agency reserves and one on informing Congress about HUD's criteria for redistributing these reserves.
- HUD has implemented two of three GAO recommendations from a March 2014 report on the IHBG program. IHBG annually provides more than \$600 million in housing assistance to about 570 federally and state-recognized Indian tribes. Consistent with GAO's recommendations, HUD has broadened its solicitation of input from block grant recipients and developed a location on its website to collect and disseminate best practices on housing development. HUD has also taken steps to address a third recommendation to collaborate with other agencies that work with Indian tribes to improve interagency coordination on environmental reviews for tribal housing development. The agencies' efforts to develop a coordinated environmental review process are ongoing.