

PROGRAM: HUD Housing Choice Voucher Family Self-Sufficiency

AGENCY: Housing and Urban Development and local Public Housing Authorities

DESCRIPTION: Family self-sufficiency (FSS) is a HUD program that encourages communities to develop local strategies to help voucher families obtain employment that will lead to economic independence and self-sufficiency.

ELIGIBILITY: Families that are selected to receive a voucher or who currently receive assistance through the housing choice voucher programs should discuss participation in the FSS program with the [local PHA](#).

STRUCTURE:

- FSS program services may include, but are not limited to: child care, transportation, education, job training and employment counseling, substance/alcohol abuse, treatment or counseling, household skill training, homeownership counseling
- PHAs can give a selection preference--for up to 50 percent of its FSS slots--to eligible families with one or more family member enrolled in, or on the waiting list for, an FSS-related service or job placement program. For all other selections, the PHA must use an objective system, such as a lottery. PHAs may screen applicants for interest and motivation to participate in FSS, but may not screen for education, job history, credit rating, marital status, or number of children.
- An interest-bearing FSS escrow account is established by the PHA for each participating family. An escrow credit, based on increases in earned income of the family, is credited to this account by the PHA during the term of the FSS contract. The PHA may make a portion of this escrow account available to the family during the term of the contract to enable the family to complete an interim goal such as education.
- If the family completes the contract and no member of the family is receiving cash welfare assistance, the amount of the FSS account is paid to the head of the family. If the PHA terminates the FSS contract, or if the family fails to complete the contract before its expiration, the family's FSS escrow funds are forfeited.

QUALIFICATIONS/CRITERIA:

- The PHA and the head of each participating family execute an FSS contract of participation that specifies the rights and responsibilities of both parties. The 5-year FSS contract specifies goals and services for each family. Family members must fulfill all requirements in order to obtain full benefits. The FSS contract requires that the family comply with the lease, that all family members become independent of welfare, and that the head of the family seek and maintain suitable employment. Possible sanctions for noncompliance with the FSS contract are termination from the FSS program, forfeiture of the FSS escrow account, withholding or termination of supportive services, and termination of housing choice voucher assistance.
- The law provides that a family may complete its FSS contract and receive its escrow while continuing to receive housing assistance under the voucher program.
- Regulations are found at 24 CFR 984.
- For additional information, visit <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/hcv/fss.cfm> .
- Visit the homepage at www.hud.gov or call the federal office (202) 708-1112