

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Action Plan

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I. INTRODUCTION:

This document constitutes the Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) Program Action Plan for the FSS program operated by the Housing Authority of the County of Armstrong (HACA). It was submitted to HUD on 9/30/2022.

The purpose of the FSS Program is to promote the development of local strategies to coordinate the use of HUD assistance with public and private resources in-order to enable eligible families to make progress toward economic security.

The purpose of the FSS Action Plan is to establish policies and procedures for carrying out the FSS program in a manner consistent with HUD requirements and local objectives.

This FSS Action Plan describes the HACA’s local policies for operation of the FSS program in the context of federal laws and regulations. The FSS program will be operated in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, notices and HUD handbooks. The policies in this FSS Action Plan have been designed to ensure compliance with all approved applications for HUD FSS funding.

The FSS program and the functions and responsibilities of PHA staff are consistent with the HACA’s personnel policy and Agency Plan.

II. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

HACA’s FSS program seeks to help families make progress toward economic security by supporting the family’s efforts to:

- Increase their earned income
- Build financial capability
- Achieve their financial goals

III. PROGRAM SIZE AND CHARACTERISTICS

A. Family Demographics

These tables describe the demographics of the population expected to be served by the HACA’s Action Plan.

The FSS program will serve the following housing assistance programs:

- Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV): Tenant -Based Vouchers
- Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV): Other special purpose vouchers (FUP, FUP-Y and VASH)

Ages of Head of Household and Other Adults

Head of Household is age 24 years or younger	6%
Head of Household is age 25 to 54	35%
Head of Household is 55 to 61	16%
Head of Household is 62 or greater	43%

Presence and Ages of Children

Households that only include adults over age 18	58%
Households that include one or more child age 14-17	9%
Households that include children who are all 13 or younger	33%

Annual Earned Income of Population to be Served

Annual household earnings less than \$5,000 per year	8%
Annual household earnings between \$5,000 and \$9,999	10%
Annual household earnings between \$10,000 and \$15,999	58%
Annual household earnings between \$16,000 and \$19,999	10%
Annual household earnings between \$20,000 and \$27,999	11%
Annual household earnings between \$28,000 and \$31,999	2%
Annual household earnings between \$32,000 and \$35,999	0%
Annual household earnings of \$36,000 or higher	1%

Elderly/Disability Status of Population to be Served

Head of Household is an elderly person with/without disabilities	50%
Head of Household is a non-elderly person without disabilities	24%
Head of Household is non-elderly with disabilities	26%

Race and Ethnicity of Population to be Served (required)

<u>Race</u>		<u>Non-Hispanic</u>	<u>Hispanic</u>
White	96%	100%	0%
Black or African-American	3%	100%	0%
Other Race	1%	100%	0%

B. Supportive Services Needs

The following is a list of the supportive service needs of the families expected to enroll in the HACA’s FSS program:

- Training in basic skills and executive function (including household management)
- Employment training, including sectoral training and contextualized and/or accelerated basic skills instruction
- Job placement assistance
- GED preparation
- Higher education guidance and support
- Assistance accessing and paying for childcare
- Transportation assistance
- Financial coaching, including assistance with budgeting, banking, credit, debt, and savings
- Access to counseling or treatment for substance abuse and mental health
- Dental care, health care, and mental health care including substance abuse treatment/counseling
- Homeownership readiness

This list of supportive services needs is based on:

- Experience with past FSS or other supportive service program participants

C. Estimate of Participating Families

Over time, HACA hopes to serve all families who are interested in participating in the FSS Program. The number of spaces available in the program at any given time, however, will be limited by the program’s resources, including the number of FSS coordinators funded to work with FSS participants. New families will be admitted to the FSS program as space permits.

Historically, HACA’s FSS program has enrolled 6 new families into the FSS program each year. Accordingly, HACA expects to be able to provide FSS Services to 44 families over a five-year period.

D. Other Self-Sufficiency Program

The HACA expects to enroll into FSS families from the self-sufficiency programs indicated below:

	Number of Families Each Year
Family Unification Program-Family and Youth	3
Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH)	1

IV. FAMILY SELECTION PROCEDURES

A. Waiting List

A waiting list will be maintained for families whose applications cannot be accepted at the time of initial application due to program capacity limits. The waiting list will include the name and contact information for the head of household of the applicant family and the date of their application.

B. Admissions Preference

The FSS program has not adopted any admissions preferences. Families will be selected based on date the family expressed an interest in participating in the FSS program and FSS application was received.

C. Screening for Motivation

The HACA will not use any motivational screening factors to measure a family's interest and motivation to participate in the FSS program.

D. Compliance with Non-discrimination Policies

It is the policy of the HACA to comply with all Federal, State, and local nondiscrimination laws and regulations, including but not limited to the Fair Housing Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. No person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under the FSS program on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, national or ethnic origin, family status, source of income, disability or perceived gender identity and sexual orientation. In addition, the HACA's FSS staff will, upon request, provide reasonable accommodation to persons with disabilities to ensure they are able to take advantage of the services provided by the FSS program (see Requests for Reasonable Accommodation).

The FSS program staff has the primary responsibility to make sure that participants are not discriminated against in the selection process. For families or individuals whose potential enrollment is in question, the FSS coordinators will review the file in the staff review meeting to ensure that non-selection is not based on discriminatory factors before the final decision is made. Applicants will be notified in writing of the reason(s) they were not selected for participation and will have the opportunity to appeal the decision (see Hearing Procedures). At all times, the HACA will select families for participation in the FSS program in accordance with FSS Regulations and HUD guidelines.

E. Re-enrollment of Prior FSS Participants

The following previous FSS families will be allowed to re-enroll in HACA's FSS program:

- FSS program graduates
- FSS participants who have withdrawn voluntarily
- Families terminated with escrow disbursements
- Family members who were not Heads of FSS Family previously

The following conditions apply to re-enrollment

- A person can re-enroll a total of 1 time
- A person must wait to re-enroll until a minimum period of 1 year after contract end
- Re-enrollment is at the sole discretion of the HACA

F. Head of FSS Family

The head of the FSS family is designated by the participating family. The HACA may make itself available to consult with families on this decision but it is the assisted household that chooses the head of FSS family that is most suitable for their individual household circumstances. The designation or any changes by the household to the Head of FSS Family must be submitted to the HACA in writing.

V. OUTREACH

The HACA will conduct widespread outreach to encourage enrollment in the FSS program. Interpreter's will be used as needed and clients may contact staff to express interest in person, via our toll-free telephone number or by email. Outreach efforts will include the activities identified as deemed necessary:

- Posted information about FSS on the HACA's website
- Posting FSS program flyers in locations likely to be seen by eligible families
- Providing information about the FSS program during scheduled re-examinations
- Holding well-publicized information sessions about FSS
- Providing information about the FSS program to eligible families by mail
- Information about the FSS program will also be provided at all voucher orientation sessions

Outreach informational material about the FSS program will include a program overview and information about program benefits, available resources, participant responsibilities, and program outcomes.

Outreach efforts will be targeted equally to all families, using materials in both English and other commonly spoken languages to ensure that non-English and limited English-speaking families receive information and will have the opportunity to participate in the FSS Program. In conducting outreach, the HACA will account for the needs of persons with disabilities, including persons with impaired vision, hearing or mobility and provide effective communications to ensure that all eligible who wish to participate are able to do so.

VI. FSS ESCROW ACCOUNT AND OTHER INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPANTS

FSS participants will be eligible to build savings from the FSS escrow account. Key policies and procedures applicable to the FSS escrow account, as well as any additional incentives offered by the HACA, are described below.

A. Additional Incentives

While the HACA's FSS program does not provide any other financial incentives for FSS participants, it does provide coaching services, as well as referrals to other service providers, that can be very valuable for FSS program participants.

B. Interim Disbursements

The HACA will not allow for interim disbursements.

C. Use of Forfeited Escrow Funds

FSS escrow account funds remaining from terminated participants will be collected in a general fund. Funds will be disbursed evenly among current participants in good standing on an annual basis determined by the HACA.

These forfeited funds will only be deposited to tenants' accounts in order to maximize their FSS savings. No disbursements will be made by check.

VII. FAMILY ACTIVITIES AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

All families participating in the FSS program will benefit from coaching that helps them identify and achieve goals that the family selects. Drawing on partners on the program coordinating committee and relationships with other service providers, the coaches will provide referrals as needed to help FSS participants access appropriate services to help them achieve their goals:

Assessment	Disability Assessment	Family Psychological Family Counseling
Transportation	Bus passes	Town and Country Transp.
Education	Post-secondary certificates and degrees	Community College of Butler County LENAPE Vo-Tech.
Skills Training	Basis skills and job training	Career Link Career Track
Job Search Assistance	Resume preparation Interview skills Dress for success Workplace skills Job development Job placement	PHA staff Career Link Career Track
Health/Mental Health Care	Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Alcohol and Drug Abuse treatment Women’s services (abuse) Primary Care Dental services Mental Health Services Health Insurance Advising	Family Psychological Family Counseling ARC Manor HAVIN Public Assistance
Household Management and organization	Cleaning Organization	In-house
Homeownership preparation	Bank loans Types of housing Maintenance and repair skills	1 st time homeownership bank programs Habitat for Humanity
Child protective services	Children’s welfare services	Children and Youth of Armstrong County

VIII. METHOD OF IDENTIFYING FAMILY SUPPORT NEEDS AND DELIVERING APPROPRIATE SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

A. Identifying Family Support Needs

To help determine the supportive services needs of each family, the FSS coordinator will work with the family to complete an initial informal needs assessment for that family before completion of the initial Individual Training Service Plan (ITSP) and signing of the contract of participation. After enrollment in the FSS program, the FSS coordinator may make referrals to partner agencies for completion of one or more formal needs assessments. These assessments may focus on such issues as: employment readiness and employment training needs, educational needs related to secondary and post-secondary education, financial health, and other topics, depending on the needs and interests of the family.

The formal assessments may lead to adjustments of the Individual Training Service Plan, if requested by the family.

B. Delivering Appropriate Support Services

Coaching. All families who participate in the FSS program will be assigned an FSS coordinator who will provide coaching services to help each participating family to:

- Understand the benefits of participating in the FSS program and how the program can help the family achieve its goals.
- Identify achievable, but challenging interim and final goals for participation in the FSS program, break down the goals into achievable steps and accompany the family through the process.
- Identify existing family strengths and skills
- Understand the needs that the family has for services and support that may help the family make progress toward their goals
- Access services available in the community through referral to appropriate service providers.
- Overcome obstacles in the way of achieving a family's goals.

C. Transitional Supportive Service Assistance

Families that have completed their CoP and remain in assisted housing may request assistance with referrals to service providers in-order to continue their progress toward economic security. Subject to limitations on staff capacity, the HACA will try to help these families with appropriate referrals. The time spent on these referrals will not be covered by funds designated by HUD to support the FSS program.

IX. CONTRACT OF PARTICIPATION

All families enrolled in the FSS program will be required to sign a Contract of Participation (CoP) that includes an Individual Training and Services Plan (ITSP). This section describes the contents of the CoP and the HACA's policies and practices regarding the CoP.

A. Form and Content of Contract

The CoP, which will incorporate one ITSP for each participating member of the family, sets forth the principal terms and conditions government participation in the FSS program. These include the rights and responsibilities of the FSS family and of the HACA, the services to be provided to, and the activities to be completed by, each adult member of the FSS family who elects to participate in the program.

B. ITSP Goals

Each individual's ITSP will establish specific interim and final goals by which the HACA and the family will measure the family's progress towards fulfilling its obligations under the CoP. For any FSS family that is a recipient of welfare assistance at the outset of the CoP or that receives welfare assistance while in the FSS program, the HACA will establish as a final goal that every member of the family become independent from welfare assistance before the expiration of the CoP. The ITSP of the head of FSS family will also include a final goal that they seek and maintain suitable employment. The FSS coordinator will work with each participating individual to identify additional ITSP goals that are relevant, feasible and desirable. Any such additional goals will be realistic and individualized.

C. Determination of Suitable Employment

As defined in the FSS regulations (24 CFR 984.303(4)(iii)), a determination of what constitutes "suitable employment" for each family member with a goal of seeking and maintaining it will be made by the HACA, with the agreement of the affected participant, based on the skills, education, job training and receipt of other benefits of the family member and based on the available job opportunities within the community.

D. Contract of Participation Term and Extensions

The CoP will go into effect on the first day of the month following the execution of the CoP . The initial term of the CoP will run the effective date through the five-year anniversary of the first reexamination of income that follows the execution date. Families may request up to two one-year extensions and are required to submit a written request that documents the need for the extension. HACA will grant the extension if it finds that good cause exists to do so. In this context, good cause means:

1. Circumstances beyond the control of the FSS family, as determined by the HACA, such as a serious illness or involuntary loss of employment;

2. Active pursuit of a current or additional goal that will result in furtherance of self-sufficiency during the period of the extension (e.g. completion of a college degree during which the participant is unemployed or under-employed, credit repair towards being homeownership ready, etc.) as determined by the HACA; or
3. Any other circumstances that the HACA determines warrants an extension including:
 - Goals have changed
 - Goals have not been completed but in process
 - Obligations not fulfilled but in process

E. Completion of the Contract

The CoP is completed, and a family's participation in the FSS program is concluded when the FSS family has fulfilled all its obligations under the CoP, including all family members' ITSPs, on or before the expiration of the contract term. The family must provide appropriate documentation that each of the ITSP goals has been completed. The HACA will accept the following form of verification for completion of the ITSP goals:

- The HACA will require a combination of self-certification and third-party verification to document completion of ITSP goals.

F. Modification

The HACA and the FSS family may mutually agree to modify the CoP with respect to the ITSP and/or the contract term, and/or designation of the head of FSS household. All modification must be in writing and signed by the HACA as well as the Head of FSS Family.

The HACA will allow for modifications to the CoP under the following circumstances:

- When the modifications to the ITSP improve the participant's ability to complete their obligations in the CoP or progress toward economic self-sufficiency
- When the designated head of the FSS family ceases to reside with other family members in the assisted unit, and the remaining family members, after consultation with the HACA, designate another family member to be the FSS head of family
- When a relocating family is entering the FSS program of a receiving PHA and the start date of the CoP must be changed to reflect the date the new CoP is signed with the receiving PHA

G. Consequences of Non-compliance with the Contract

Participant non-compliance with the CoP may result in termination from the FSS program. See policies on Involuntary Termination in Section X(A).

X. PROGRAM TERMINATION, WITHHOLDING OF SERVICES, AND AVAILABLE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

A. Involuntary Termination

The HACA may involuntarily terminate a family from FSS under the following circumstances:

1. If the participant fails to meet their obligations under the Contract of Participation, the Individual Training and Services Plan and related documentation. Non-compliance includes:
 - a. Missing scheduled meetings, failure to return phone calls, and/or maintain contact after written notification of non-compliance
 - b. Failure to work on activities and/or goals set forth in the Individual Training and Services Plan, including employment activities
 - c. Failure to complete activities and/or goals within the specified time frames
2. If the participant's housing assistance has been terminated.

Participants who fail to meet their obligations under paragraph I above, as determined by an FSS coordinator, will be given the opportunity to attend a required meeting with the FSS Coordinator to review the situation. At this meeting, a review of the Contract of Participation, Individual Training and Services Plan, and all related documentation will be conducted, and amendments will be made as necessary (within HUD guidelines) to allow for changes in circumstances. Failure to contact the FSS Coordinator to schedule this meeting within fourteen (14) days of a written request by the FSS program to set up this meeting or failure by the FSS Head of Household to attend this meeting without some type of correspondence to clarify the issue(s), may lead to termination from the program. Participants who remain out of compliance after this meeting will be subject to termination from the FSS program.

If the initial meeting does not resolve the problem, or if the meeting is not requested by the family within the required period, notification of termination will be made to the family by letter stating;

- a. The specific facts and reasons for termination;
- b. A statement informing the family of their right to request an informal hearing and the date by which this request must be received (see Grievance Procedures);

- c. A statement informing the family that termination from the FSS program for the reasons stated therein will not result in termination of the family's housing assistance. Failure to request a hearing in writing by the deadline will result in closure of the family's FSS file and all rights to a hearing will be waived. All escrow money held on the family's behalf will be forfeited in accordance with HUD regulations. Housing assistance will not be terminated based on non-compliance with the FSS program. The current amount of escrow in the family's escrow account will be included in the letter.

B. Voluntary Termination

Participants may also be terminated from the FSS program under the following circumstances:

- Mutual consent of both parties; and/or
- The family's withdrawal from the program

C. Termination with Escrow Disbursement

In most cases, families whose FSS contracts are terminated will not be entitled to disbursement of their accrued FSS escrowed funds. However, the CoP will be terminated with FSS disbursement when one of the following situations occurs:

1. Services that the HACA and the FSS family have agreed are integral to the FSS family's advancement towards self-sufficiency is unavailable.
2. The head of the FSS family becomes permanently disabled and unable to work during the period of the contract, unless the HACA and the FSS family determine that it is possible to modify the contract to designate a new head of the FSS family.
3. An FSS family in good standing moves outside the jurisdiction of the HACA (in accordance with portability requirements at 24 CFR 982.353) for good cause, as determined by the HACA, and continuation of the CoP after the move, or completion of the CoP prior to the move, is not possible.

D. Grievance Procedures

A request for an informal hearing must be made in writing and delivered to the HACA either in person or by first class mail, by the close of the business day, no later than 10 business days from the date of the HACA's FSS termination letter.

The HACA must schedule and send written notice of the informal hearing to the family within 10 business days of the family's request.

At its own expense, the family may be represented by a lawyer or other representative at the informal hearing.

The family may request to reschedule a hearing for good cause, or if it is needed as a reasonable accommodation for a person with disabilities. Good cause is defined as an unavoidable conflict which seriously affects the health, safety or welfare of the family. Requests to reschedule a hearing must be made orally or in writing prior to the hearing date. At its discretion, the HACA may request documentation of the “good cause” prior to rescheduling the hearing.

If the family does not appear within 20 minutes of the scheduled time, and was unable to reschedule the hearing in advance due to the nature of the conflict, the family must contact the HACA with 24 hours of the scheduled hearing date, excluding weekends and holidays. The HACA will reschedule the hearing only if the family can show good cause for the failure to appear, or if it is needed as a reasonable accommodation for a person with disabilities. If the family cannot show good cause for the failure to appear, or a rescheduling is not needed as a reasonable accommodation, the HACA’s decision will stand.

XI. ASSURANCE OF NON-INTERFERENCE

Participation in the FSS Program is voluntary. A family’s decision on whether to participate in FSS will have no bearing on the HACA’s decision of whether to admit the family into the Section 8 program. The family’s housing assistance will not be terminated based on whether they decide to participate in FSS, their successful completion of the CoP, or on their failure to comply with FSS program requirements.

HACA will ensure that the voluntary nature of FSS program participation is clearly stated in all FSS outreach and recruitment efforts.

XII. TIMETABLE

HACA implemented its FSS program in 1993 and will continue to implement it per this FSS Action Plan.

XIII. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS, EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, AND LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS

A. Requests for Reasonable Accommodations

A person with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations to facilitate participation in the FSS program. Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

B. Request for Effective Communications

A person with disabilities may request the use of effective communication strategies in order to facilitate participation in the FSS program. Examples include: appropriate auxiliary aids and services, such as interpreters, computer-assisted real time transcription (CART), captioned videos with audible video description, visual alarm devices, a talking thermostat, accessible electric communications and websites, documents in alternative formats (e.g. Braille, large print), or assistance in reading or completing a form, etc.

Requests for reasonable accommodations, including affective communications, should be made to the Section 504 Coordinator. If a family is not satisfied with the Section 504 Coordinator's response, the family may submit a request in writing for an informal review within 10 days of the Section 504 Coordinators response.

C. Limited English Proficiency

The HACA will comply with HUD requirements to conduct oral and written communication related to the FSS program in languages that are understandable to people with Limited English Proficiency.

XIV. COORDINATION OF SERVICES

A. Certification of Coordination

Development of the services and activities under the FSS program has been coordinated with programs under title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 29 U.S.C. 3111 et seq., and other relevant employment, childcare, transportation, training, education, and financial empowerment programs in the area. Implementation will continue to be coordinated, in-order to avoid duplication of services and activities.

B. Program Coordinating Committee

The principal vehicle for ensuring ongoing coordination of services is the Program Coordinating Committee (PCC), which has been established in accordance with FSS regulations to assist in securing commitments of public and private resources for the operation of the FSS Program. Among other responsibilities, the PCC will help the FSS program to identify and build strong referral relationships with providers of supportive services that meet the needs of FSS participants.

The PCC will meet quarterly and may conduct business on an as-needed basis via email or telephone conference. The PCC includes the following representatives:

1. One or more FSS Program Coordinators
2. One or more participants from each HUD rental assistance program served by the FSS program
3. Representatives from a variety of agencies and individuals, which include but are not limited to the following:
 - Community Action Agency of Armstrong County
 - Career Link
 - Veterans Program (Community Action or VA)
 - Children and Youth
 - Habitat for Humanity

XV. FSS PORTABILITY (Applicable to HCV Only)

A. Portability in Initial 12 Months

While HACA is not required to allow FSS participants to exercise portability within the initial 12 months after signing a CoP, it is the policy of the Housing Authority to allow for portability within this period to the extent feasible.

B. Moves into the HACA's Jurisdiction

If an FSS participant moves into the HACA's jurisdiction, they will be admitted in good standing into the HACA's FSS program unless the Housing Authority is already serving the number of FSS families identified in this FSS Action Plan and determines that it does not have the resources to manage the FSS contract.

C. FSS Termination with Disbursement for Porting Families

If an FSS family seeks to move to a jurisdiction that does not offer an FSS program, the HACA will closely examine the family's progress to determine if it would be appropriate to exercise FSS Termination with Disbursement as discussed above in the section on Terminations.

Where continued FSS participation is not possible, the HACA will discuss the options that may be available to the family, depending on the family's specific circumstances, which may include, but are not limited to, modification of the FSS contract, termination of the FSS contract and forfeiture of escrow, termination with FSS escrow disbursement in accordance with 24 CFR 984.303(k)(1)(iii), or locating a receiving PHA that has the capacity to enroll the family into its FSS program.

XVI. DEFINITIONS

The definitions below are specified in CFR 24 984.103. The terms 1937 Act, Fair Market Rent, Head of Household, HUD, Public Housing, Public Housing Agency (PHA), Secretary, and Section 8, as used in this part, are defined in 24 CFR Part 5.

Certification means a written assertion based on supporting evidence, provided by the FSS family or the *[organization]*, as may be required under this part, and which:

- (1) Shall be maintained by the *[organization]* in the case of the family's certification, or by HUD in the case of the PHA's or owner's certification;
- (2) Shall be made available for inspection by HUD, the *[organization]*, and the public, as appropriate; and,
- (3) Shall be deemed to be accurate for purposes of this part, unless the Secretary or the *[organization]*, as applicable, determines otherwise after inspecting the evidence and providing due notice and opportunity for comment.

Contract of Participation (CoP) means - a contract, in a form with contents approved by HUD, entered into between an FSS family and a *[organization]* operating an FSS Program that sets forth the terms and conditions governing participation in the FSS Program. The CoP includes all Individual Training and Services Plans (ITSPs) entered into between the *[organization]* and all members of the family who will participate in the FSS Program, and which plans are attached to the CoP as exhibits. For additional detail, see § 984.303.

Effective date of Contract of Participation (CoP) - means the first day of the month following the date in which the FSS family and the PHA entered into the CoP.

Eligible families means current residents of Public Housing (Section 9) and current Section 8 program participants, as defined in this section, including those participating in other local self-sufficiency programs.

Enrollment means the date that the FSS family entered into the CoP with the *[organization]*.

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program means the program established by a PHA within its jurisdiction or by an owner to promote self-sufficiency among participating families, including the coordination of supportive services to these families, as authorized by section 23 of the 1937 Act.

FSS escrow account (or, escrow) means the FSS escrow account authorized by section 23 of the 1937 Act, and as provided by § 984.305.

FSS escrow credit means the amount credited by the *[organization]* to the FSS family's FSS escrow account.

FSS family means a family that resides in Public Housing (Section 9) or receives Section 8 assistance or receives HUD Project-Based Rental Assistance for a privately owned property, and that elects to participate in the FSS Program, and whose designated adult member (head of FSS family), as determined in accordance with § 984.303(a), has signed the CoP.

FSS family in good standing means, for purposes of this part, an FSS family that is in compliance with their FSS CoP; has either satisfied or are current on any debts owed the *[organization]*; and is in compliance with the regulations regarding participation in the relevant rental assistance program.

FSS related service program means any program, publicly or privately sponsored, that offers the kinds of supportive services described in the definition of "supportive services" set forth in this § 984.103.

FSS slots - refers to the total number of families (as determined in the Action Plan and, for mandatory programs, in § 984.105 of this part) that the PHA will serve in its FSS Program.

FSS Program Coordinator means the person(s) who runs the FSS program. This may include (but is not limited to) performing outreach, recruitment, and retention of FSS participants; goal setting and case management/coaching of FSS participants; working with the community and service partners; and tracking program performance.

FY means Federal Fiscal Year (starting October 1 and ending September 30, and year designated by the calendar year in which it ends).

Head of FSS family means the designated adult family member of the FSS family who has signed the CoP. The head of FSS family may, but is not required to be, the head of the household for purposes of determining income eligibility and rent.

Individual Training and Services Plan (ITSP) means a written plan that is prepared by the *[organization]* in consultation with a participating FSS family member (the person with, for, and whom the ITSP is being developed), and which sets forth:

- (1) The final and interim goals for the participating FSS family member;
- (2) The supportive services to be provided to the participating FSS family members;
- (3) The activities to be completed by that family member; and,
- (4) The agreed upon completion dates for the goals and activities.

Each ITSP must be signed by the *[organization]* and the participating FSS family member, and is attached to, and incorporated as part of the CoP. An ITSP must be prepared for each adult family member who elects to participate in the FSS Program, including the head of FSS family who has signed the CoP.

Owner means the owner of multifamily assisted housing.

Self-sufficiency means that an FSS family is no longer receiving Section 8, Public Housing assistance, or any Federal, State, or local rent or homeownership subsidies or welfare assistance. Achievement of self-sufficiency, although an FSS program objective, is not a condition for receipt of the FSS escrow account funds.

Supportive services mean those appropriate services that a *[organization]* will coordinate on behalf of an FSS family under a CoP, which may include, but are not limited to:

- (1) *Childcare*—childcare (on an as-needed or ongoing basis) of a type that provides sufficient hours of operation and serves an appropriate range of ages;
 - (2) *Transportation*—transportation necessary to enable a participating FSS family member to receive available services, or to commute to their place(s) of employment;
 - (3) *Education*—remedial education; education for completion of high school or attainment of a high school equivalency certificate; education in pursuit of a post-secondary degree or certificate;
 - (4) *Employment Supports*—job training, preparation, and counseling; job development and placement; and follow-up assistance after job placement and completion of the CoP;
 - (5) *Personal welfare*—substance/alcohol abuse treatment and counseling, and health, dental, mental health and health insurance services;
 - (6) *Household management*—training in household management;
 - (7) *Homeownership and housing counseling*—homeownership education and assistance and housing counseling;
 - (8) *Financial Empowerment*—training in financial literacy, such as financial coaching, training in financial management, asset building, and money management, including engaging in mainstream banking, reviewing and improving credit scores, etc.;
 - (9) *Other services*—any other services and resources, including case management, optional services, and specialized services for individuals with disabilities, that are determined to be appropriate in assisting FSS families to achieve economic independence and self-sufficiency. Reasonable accommodations and modifications must be made for individuals with disabilities consistent with HUD requirements, including HUD’s legal obligation to make reasonable modifications under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- Welfare assistance* means (for purposes of the FSS program only) income assistance from Federal, (i.e. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or subsequent program) State, or local welfare programs and includes only cash maintenance payments designed to meet a family’s ongoing basic needs. Welfare assistance does not include:

- (1) Nonrecurrent, short-term benefits that:
 - (i) Are designed to deal with a specific crisis or episode of need;
 - (ii) Are not intended to meet recurrent or ongoing needs; and,
 - (iii) Will not extend beyond four months.
- (2) Work subsidies (i.e., payments to employers or third parties to help cover the costs of employee wages, benefits, supervision, and training);

- (3) Supportive services such as childcare and transportation provided to families who are employed;
- (4) Refundable earned income tax credits;
- (5) Contributions to, and distributions from, Individual Development Accounts under Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF);
- (6) Services such as counseling, case management, peer support, childcare information and referral, financial empowerment, transitional services, job retention, job advancement, and other employment-related services that do not provide basic income support;
- (7) Amounts solely directed to meeting housing expenses;
- (8) Amounts for health care;
- (9) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and emergency rental and utilities assistance;
- (10) Supplemental Security Income, Social Security Disability Income, or Social Security; and
- (11) Child-only or non-needy TANF grants made to or on behalf of a dependent child solely on the basis of the child's need and not on the need of the child's current non-parental caretaker.