

Focus Forward Program Design

Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara



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Introduction

History and Context: Moving To Work and Self-Sufficiency Programming

In July 2014, the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara (HACSC) Board of Commissioners (BOC) adopted a five-year Strategic Plan guiding the agency's activities within the funding flexibility granted under the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)'s Moving To Work (MTW) demonstration program. The Housing Authority's statutory MTW objectives are to (1) decrease administrative costs and increase cost effectiveness in housing program operations, (2) promote participants' economic self-sufficiency, and (3) expand participants' housing choices.

At the core of HACSC's programs to promote families' economic self-sufficiency has been the Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS). As a federally funded program administered by HUD, FSS maintains specific requirements and expected program outcomes for all participants regardless of location. The traditional FSS model utilizes local resources and case management to connect families with services that support their individual self-sufficiency goals. Individual measures of success under traditional FSS programs can vary from such accomplishments as a year without cash aid to no longer requiring HUD assistance.

HUD FSS Program Goals

Participating families will increase their earned income and reduce their dependency on welfare assistance and rental subsidies in order to gain economic self-sufficiency and no longer require financial or governmental assistance programs.

Impetus for Change: From the Family Self-Sufficiency Program to the Focus Forward Program

Given the unique economic changes that have affected Santa Clara County in the last 20 years, the FSS program population was largely unable to graduate past the requirement for economic assistance; virtually none were successful enough to no longer require HUD assistance. Of the approximately 200 to 300 families that HACSC serves each year through its FSS program, in the past two years only 10% received home ownership counseling, and only two families ceased to need housing assistance. These outcomes indicate a very low rate of success with regard to HUD-defined measures. These statistics are unsurprising, given that housing costs have risen unabated and vacancy rates have been extremely low at any price point in Santa Clara County. In addition, the number of households enrolled in FSS are only a small portion of those eligible for the program. As a result of these ongoing struggles, HACSC recognized that the HUD goals for the FSS were not in alignment with the needs of Santa Clara County residents and sought to evolve the FSS into a new program to serve participants in a more dynamic, flexible, holistic, and location-sensitive manner.

In December 2015, HACSC contracted with Resource Development Associates (RDA), an organization with strategic planning, program development, community engagement, and evaluation expertise, to (1) conduct an assessment of the existing FSS program, (2) research best practices in self-sufficiency programming, (3) engage current and former FSS participants and other stakeholders to inform program development, and (4) lead a series of program planning meetings with an internal workgroup of HACSC staff to transform the FSS into the newly-designed Focus Forward Program (FFP).

In order to understand the current FSS program and inform development of the FFP, RDA engaged in the following activities:

- ❖ A review of HUD rules and regulations that govern MTW agencies and FSS programs.
- ❖ A review of best practices in supporting economic self-sufficiency.
- ❖ Key informant interviews and focus group discussions with stakeholders.
- ❖ Benchmarking research to identify emerging and innovative practices that support economic self-sufficiency from other housing authorities.
- ❖ Four (4) facilitated planning meetings with key HACSC staff to design the FFP.

With the exception of the FFP planning meetings which informed this report, these activities can be reviewed in more detail in the April 2016 Family Self-Sufficiency Program Assessment prepared by RDA. The aforementioned activities are summarized in the section below.

FSS Program Assessment Summary

HUD FSS Guidelines

HUD maintains specific criteria around FSS programs, which serve as the basis for program customization according to local needs. The table below describes the basic federal guidelines that apply to all FSS programs, but each local FSS program has the option to add features that customize services to the needs specific to the population in the local area and use innovations to improve upon the basic requirements to reach stronger outcomes. The Benchmarking and Best Practices in Self-Sufficiency Planning section of this report explores some relevant possibilities considered during the process of FFP development.

Table 1. HUD FSS Criteria

Category	Summary of HUD FSS Criteria
Purpose	Promote the development of local strategies that coordinate public and private resources to assist families with achieving economic independence and other self-sufficiency goals.
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce dependence on certain forms of public assistance (federal or state welfare, housing, homeownership subsidies, etc.) 2. Provide education, job training, counseling, and other social service assistance to help families achieve self-sufficiency.

	<p>FSS programs track achievement of objectives with a number of success outcome measures, including independence from public assistance, improvements in employment circumstances, and educational achievements.</p>
Action Plan Requirement	<p>Each FSS program must outline:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A timeline for implementation; 2. Eligible family demographics; 3. The estimated number of eligible participants; 4. Any selection criteria and procedures; 5. A description of incentives and outreach efforts; 6. A description of the available supportive services and the method for assessing service needs; 7. A description of the termination process; and 8. An assurance that participation will not affect other housing assistance eligibility or receipt.
Selection Procedures	<p>Each FSS program must outline an enrollment prioritization strategy, including the level of motivation for initial participation. Factors prohibited from selection procedures include education level, job history, credit ratings, marital or child status, protected classes, and disability status.</p>
Contract of Participation	<p>Each FSS program must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide a Case Manager to complete a needs assessment of the participant and review it annually. <p>In order to participate, the Head of Household must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree to seek and maintain employment; 2. Sign a Contract of Participation (CoP); 3. Complete an Individual Training and Service Plan (ITSP) with short and long-term goals; and 4. Meet annually with FSS Case Manager to review ITSP. <p>FSS programs are time-limited to five years, extendable to seven in cases of hardship. The program ends when the family has fulfilled the obligations of their CoP, the family no longer meets eligibility for housing assistance based on household income, or are terminated for failure to: a) seek/maintain employment, or b) annually review their goals with their Case Manager.</p>
Escrow Accounts	<p>As households increase their earned income, the PHA will increase their rent portion accordingly and apply that increase to the escrow account. Participants may borrow against their escrow if they are compliant with the program and the loan is consistent with their ITSP.</p> <p>Escrow accounts release upon fulfilling the terms of the CoP and as long as family members have maintained work for 12 months and not received public welfare</p>

	assistance or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamps) during that time.
Federal Reporting	<p>Using the E-Logic Model, PHAs must provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A description of the activities carried out under the program; 2. A description of the effectiveness of the program in assisting families to achieve economic independence; 3. A description of the effectiveness of the program in coordinating community resources for the program; and 4. Any recommendations that would improve or ensure the effectiveness of this federal program.

HACSC FSS Program Assessment Summary

Concurrent to the HUD regulation review, RDA analyzed the HACSC FSS program data. Limited data informing the FSS Program Assessment acted as a constraining factor in drawing data-driven conclusions on some measures. However, RDA used the information in the context of the benchmarking work and literature review to inform program development, mitigating the risks inherent to small or otherwise limited data sets. Listed in the table below are the key findings from the HACSC FSS Program Assessment. These findings are described in more detail in the April 2016 Family Self-Sufficiency Program Assessment:

Table 2. HACSC FSS Program Assessment Key Findings

HACSC FSS Program Assessment Key Findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of households enrolled in FSS was a small portion of those eligible for the program. • Less than two-thirds (2/3) of all enrolled adults used FSS services to support their self-sufficiency. • Participants used financial budgeting and employment counseling services more than any other service, while also reporting that these services were not enough to meet their needs. • Participants indicated a high desire for more educational and job training opportunities. • Many participants expressed a need for more or different incentives to reach their goals. • Participants reported inconsistent levels of engagement with their case managers. • Although half of Santa Clara County speaks languages other than English at home, nearly all FSS families prefer to speak English, indicating that English-speaking families may have greater access to the program.

Benchmarking and Literature Review in Self-Sufficiency Programming

RDA conducted a literature review on effective and promising practices in self-sufficiency programs, along with a targeted exploration of FSS programs in Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) based on their innovative

approaches to FSS programming, similarities in target population, and rental markets. The table below includes the housing authorities included in the review:

Table 3. Public Housing Authorities Reviewed

Housing Authority Programs Researched	
Cambridge	San Antonio
San Bernardino	San Diego
San Mateo	Tacoma

Santa Clara County faces unique challenges effecting the availability of housing in general, housing vouchers specifically, and the feasibility of achieving independence from welfare programs and housing assistance using the same techniques that are successful in other locations. As such, during the design of FFP the literature review and benchmarking, activities were interpreted with special attention to the specific circumstances that effect Santa Clara. Among others, these efforts included identifying populations for targeted outreach, using creative outreach strategies, modifying escrow calculations, and leveraging external partnerships and resources to support the program’s success. The table below describes the key findings from the benchmarking PHAs and literature review.

Table 4. Benchmarking and Literature Review Key Findings

Benchmarking and Literature Review Key Findings	
Participants and Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some PHAs target their recruitment to families fitting particular employment or education criteria; • Some PHAs allow family members other than the HoH to enroll; and • PHAs across the country commonly face challenges in recruiting and maintaining engagement of program participants
Service Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most PHAs maintain the traditional FSS model of internal case managers who refer participants to external partners for support services; • PHAs identified strategies for proactively building community partnerships; • PHAs have developed a variety of escrow calculation methods, including traditional income-based escrow, incentive-based escrow, or a combination of income- and incentive-based; • PHAs have found that simplifying escrow calculations can reduce the staff burden and make the program easier for participants to understand; and • Most PHAs expect that upon completion of a five-year program, families will be prepared for independence from housing assistance
Program Capacity and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PHAs emphasized that external partnerships are often mutually beneficial and necessary to program success

Measuring Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PHAs have developed measures additional to the HUD requirements to assess the outcomes of their unique FSS programs
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Stakeholder Input: Key Informant Interviews and Focus Groups

In order to inform the development and design of the FFP, RDA conducted key informant interviews and focus groups with non-profit organizations, current and former FSS participants, service providers, and other program stakeholders. These activities provided RDA with an opportunity to both learn about the direct experiences of individuals involved with the FSS program or experience with the target population, and hear recommendations targeted specifically to Santa Clara County. Contributors were:

Table 5. Stakeholder Contributors

Key Informants	Focus Group Participants
Nadia Aziz, Law Foundation of Silicon Valley	HACSC staff
Vernice Dominguez, Center for Employment Training	LifeSteps staff
Maniphone Dickerson, San Jose City College	Social Services Agency staff
Dhory Sison, HACSC	Current FSS participants
Eddie Truong, Chamber of Commerce	FSS Graduates
Mark Rosmoser, Silicon Valley Independent Living	
Elizabeth Figueroa, CommUniverCity San Jose	

The table below highlights the key findings from the focus groups and interviews.

Table 6. Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Key Findings

Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Key Findings	
Program Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program should focus on increasing income and lowering housing assistance payments. The goal of completely graduating from housing assistance may be unrealistic.
Case Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The case management approach or philosophy should be supportive, proactive, and comprehensive. Case management should be individualized and based on the person's needs and goals.
Service Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services should be comprehensive and provide support to increase self-sufficiency as well as proactively address barriers.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services should include vocational and educational programs, financial literacy programs, life skills, communication skills, and address other factors affecting housing stability.
Incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The incentive structure should be clear to participants. Incentives should be incremental and be directly related to self-sufficiency goals and achievement. Incentives should include emergency financial assistance, funds to assist participants with reaching goals, and non-monetary support.
Outreach and Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach and engagement efforts should support potential participants and partner agencies to understand the program. Outreach and engagement efforts should leverage existing events, including those sponsored or held by other agencies.
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships with other providers and agencies are critical to program success.

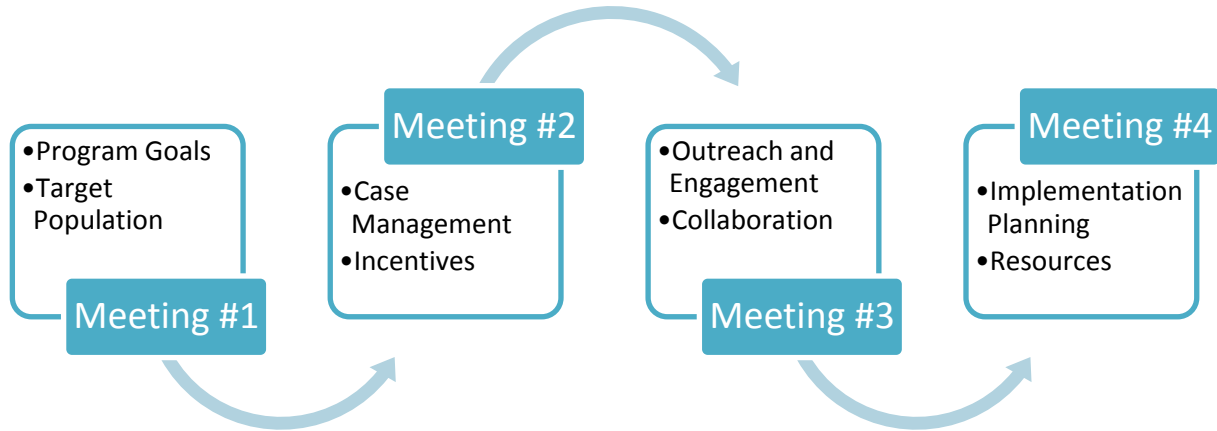
Planning Meetings

RDA conducted four (4) planning meetings to facilitate HACSC’s design of FFP. The participants remained stable over the course of the meetings, which allowed for process continuity and a shared knowledge of the process history. Planning participants included:

Table 7. Planning Meeting Participants

List of Planning Participants	
Julia Burkhead, Housing Programs Manager	Janine Burrier, Housing Policy Manager
Leif Christiansen, Senior Housing Programs Analyst	Amanda Gallo, Senior Housing Programs Analyst
Thomas Graham, Assistant Director of Housing	Gregory Kats, Assistant Director of Strategic Initiatives
Dhory Sison, Housing Services Coordinator	

Each planning meeting had a primary area of focus where HACSC staff reviewed relevant information from the FSS program assessment and engaged in activities and discussions to facilitate decision-making. The meeting process included:



A Transformed Approach: Focus Forward Program Goals and Design

The resulting FFP brings together data on the strengths and challenges of the HACSC FSS program, best practices in self-sufficiency programming, and components from innovative FSS programs in jurisdictions across the country.

HACSC designed the FFP to serve as a time-limited program grounded in an intensive case management philosophy, with an incentive structure to keep participants motivated and engaged. The FFP intends to leverage community resources to support participants' success in reaching their self-sufficiency goals.

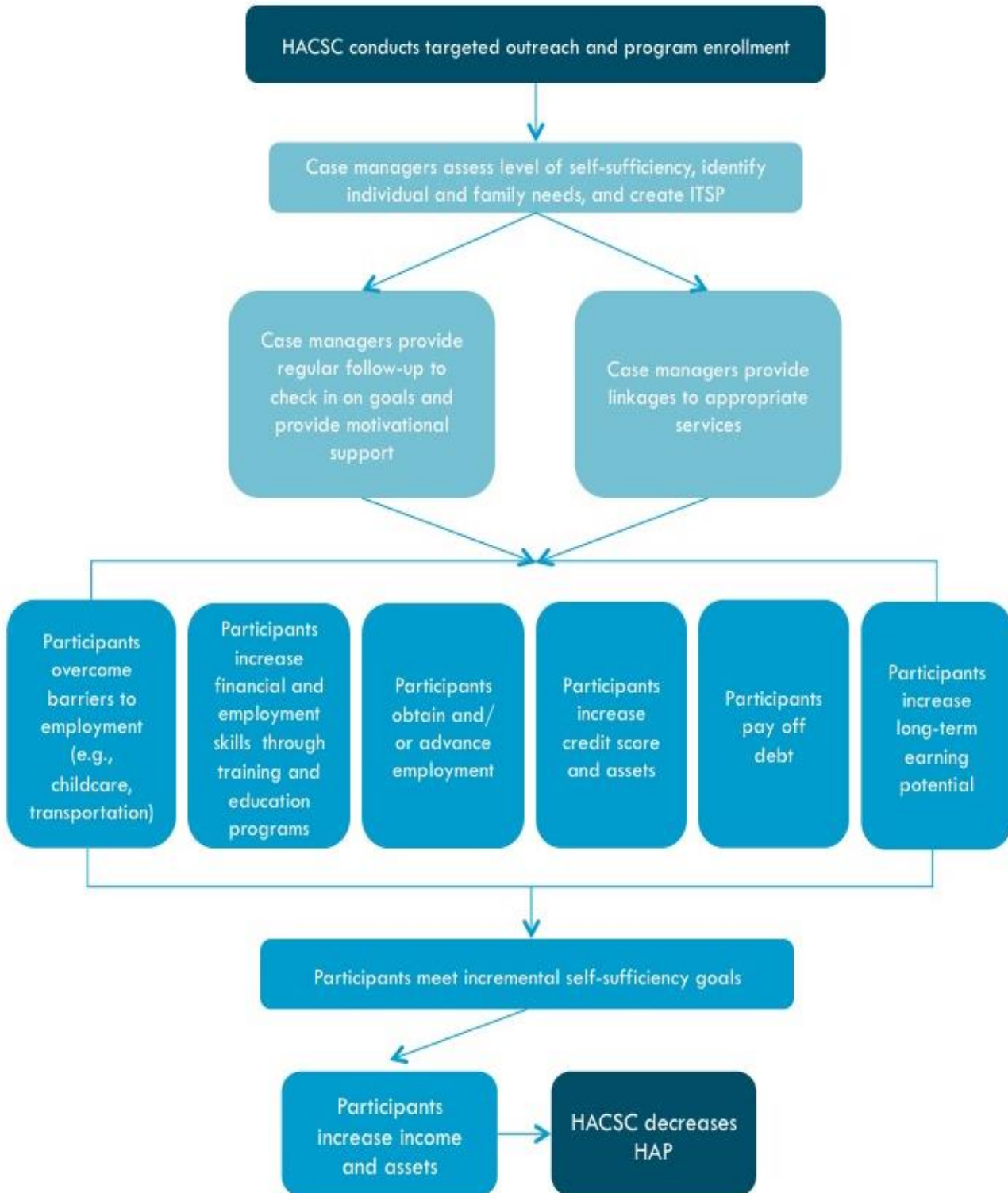
The FFP Theory of Change, which links program activities to short- and long-term outcomes, demonstrates the logical pathway by which FFP program activities are intended to achieve the vision of the FFP.

Focus Forward Program Vision

The vision of the FFP program is to engage and support Housing Choice Voucher recipients to increase self-sufficiency through providing an array of comprehensive services and incentives that promote accountability and motivate program participants to increase their employability, address barriers to employment, and achieve realistic self-sufficiency goals.

As shown in Figure 1, the pathway to program success begins with participant outreach and engagement, followed by an assessment conducted by FFP staff. Next, participants receive education and training, case management with linkage to services and ongoing follow-up and financial incentives. Together, these tangible and emotional supports help families overcome barriers to employment and gain the knowledge and skills needed to obtain or advance their employment and maintain financial stability. As a result, families are able to increase their income and earning potential such that they increase their self-sufficiency and eventually graduate from housing assistance. In turn, HACSC is able to lower its Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) and thereby offer assistance to additional families in Santa Clara County.

Figure 1. Focus Forward Program Theory of Change



Program Design

Target Population and Eligibility

Aligning Participation with the Focus Forward Program's Goals

FSS programs typically do not have a target “group” selected from within each Housing Authority’s general HUD-assisted population. The FFP Steering Committee followed this practice and designed the FFP program as inclusive of all HUD-assisted households. FFP will:

- ❖ Provide services and supports to assist households to become more financially stable;
- ❖ Give households not currently receiving HUD voucher assistance an opportunity to obtain housing benefits and supportive services; and
- ❖ Generate movement on the Housing Choice Voucher (“HCV”) waiting list.

Specifically, the target population for the FFP are households currently on the waiting list for housing assistance. By enrolling in the FFP, they receive priority for “turnover” HCVs with the agreement that (1) the housing assistance is time-limited, and (2) the head of household participates in the FFP.

The FFP Steering Committee reviewed a universe of options to find the right balance for an eligible target population. They considered options including a fully voluntary program, a fully mandatory program, and several different versions of an opt-in program. One of the driving considerations for the design team was to use the HCV as a tool to assist families in obtaining self-sufficiency by supporting families to decrease their need for and reliance on housing assistance. The Steering Committee therefore designed FFP to pair the housing safety net with opportunities to grow self-sufficiency and support exit from housing assistance, while at the same time ensuring that FFP serves the largest possible population.

Target Population

In line with the goals stated above, FFP will make a portion of “turnover” HCVs available to households that meet the following eligibility criteria:

- ❖ Household is currently on HACSC’s HCV waiting list and not currently receiving HACSC assistance;
- ❖ Head of Household (HoH) completes the prerequisite and orientation program requirements to enroll;
- ❖ HoH is willing to engage in educational, vocational, and other activities to address barriers, seek and maintain employment, and pursue other identified self-sufficiency goals;
- ❖ Household elects to enroll in the program in lieu of retaining its place on the permanent HCV waiting list and thereby receives a time-limited HCV tied to FFP participation.

During this pilot program, any HoHs on the current HCV waiting list will be eligible, but households that are not already on the waiting list, including those that already receive housing assistance from HACSC,

will be ineligible. Though this ten-year pilot will be limited to the target population identified in the eligibility requirements above, HACSC recognizes there may be other families that would benefit from FFP. After a demonstration of program success at the end of the pilot period, the Housing Authority reserves the right to redefine and possibly expand the target population.

Time-Limited Housing Choice Vouchers

The FFP HCVs will be limited to ten years or the duration of the household's participation in the program. This means that families that opt into FFP will have access to housing assistance during their participation in the program, but that assistance will end after:

- ❖ Ten (10) years;
- ❖ They complete the program by reaching 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) for a period of 180 days; or
- ❖ They are otherwise terminated from FFP or the Section 8 program.

The FFP Steering Committee designed this program to enable families to build self-sufficiency in a deliberate, structured, and time-limited frame, and considered several options, including five years, seven years, and ultimately ten years. This ten-year timeframe serves three purposes:

- ❖ Provides an adequate window of guaranteed supportive housing assistance in which participants can identify and attain milestone self-sufficiency goals
- ❖ Provides the opportunity to prepare for self-sufficiency through incremental housing payment increases based on income and tenure in the program;
- ❖ Incentivizes households to transition into financial self-sufficiency before the specified end-date; and
- ❖ Enables HACSC to help more families in need by generating movement in the program and on the HCV waiting list.

Given the goals of the FFP, this ten year window provides participants with the opportunity to achieve their individualized goals with the highest degree of available services while also allowing the Housing Authority the ability to assist more families in need in the County's tight housing market.

Benefits of Participation

While enrollment in the FFP will be voluntary for eligible households, participation will offer many benefits, both tangible and intangible. In Santa Clara County—where the wait for an HCV exceeds ten years and the waiting list has been closed to new families for at least that long—the first and most immediate benefit of FFP will be the **ability to move to the top of the HCV waiting list**. Because HCVs turn over very slowly and relatively few families attain sufficient financial ability to “graduate” from housing assistance, the FFP pilot will enable 100 more Santa Clara families to **receive an automatic HCV** tied to their program participation.

The FFP Steering Committee designed the program to attract, retain, and reward motivated households that seek independence. Program participation will **help these families increase their household earnings** through **intensive case management** and **linkages to supportive services** to help them attain financial self-sufficiency. After developing an individualized training and service plan (“ITSP”) with their assigned case manager, participants will be linked to supportive services such as financial literacy education, career training and counseling, education and vocational programs, and family and childcare services.

Additionally, the program design incorporates an incentive structure to reward, motivate, and sustain self-sufficiency achievements. Participants will be provided a clear incentive menu and **acquire interim financial rewards for reaching individual milestones**, as well as **non-monetary recognition and praise** to inspire, encourage, and motivate. Finally, the HACSC will make annual contributions to an escrow account for each individual so that they receive a **cash incentive** at the end of their program participation to support transition from the program and additional self-sufficiency goals as well as increase financial assets.

Risks of Participation

Though the benefits of enrollment are many, households that opt-in to FFP also accept the risks of participation. Notably, families who enroll in the program (and thereby receive a time-limited FFP voucher) will forego their place on the HCV waiting list.

Enrolled households will be expected to take actions that increase their self-sufficiency. Though participants will receive a variety of incentives to motivate and encourage them, participants will also be held accountable for completing FFP milestones and for attaining self-sufficiency goals that further their financial independence. As part of their participation, enrolled participants will sign a Contract of Participation (CoP) that outlines these expectations.

The Steering Committee designed the FFP pilot to require participants, at minimum, to:

- ❖ Engage in a comprehensive intake assessment;
- ❖ Develop a personalized and actionable ITSP;
- ❖ Complete the required financial literacy courses and other mandatory trainings;
- ❖ Attend regular meetings with their case manager;
- ❖ Seek and maintain employment; and
- ❖ Attain other individualized self-sufficiency goals listed in the ITSP.

If a participant is unable to meet the program expectations at any point during the ten-year period, they risk being terminated from the program and therefore risk an early end to their housing assistance. Also, participating households will accept the risk that if at the end of the ten-year period the family has a sudden change in their financial situation, that family will have foregone its place on the permanent HCV waiting list.

Policy Considerations

In advance of implementation, the Housing Authority's leadership will need to agree on a set of policy decisions to address fairness and equity concerns for both eligible and ineligible populations.

- ❖ **Recruitment objectivity and selection criteria.** In the case that the benefits of participation encourage more than 100 eligible families to seek FFP enrollment, HACSC will have more qualified households than it has capacity to serve during this pilot program. In this circumstance, enrollment of families will be prioritized in the order they complete the prerequisites, and if there are multiple qualified families that complete the prerequisites at the same time, their original rank on the voucher waitlist will be used to select participants.
- ❖ **Waitlist concerns.** Because FFP will enable certain eligible families to "jump" the HCV waiting list, non-participant households may face longer than normal waiting periods for an HCV. HACSC may wish to consider other policies or programs to provide non-FFP (e.g. not work-able) households with other opportunities to obtain housing assistance.
- ❖ **Achieving racial and ethnic representation in FFP.** HACSC will need to develop outreach policies that will attract a full representation of Santa Clara County's racial and ethnic diversity. HACSC's existing FSS program had a lower Asian population than the overall HACSC population and HACSC may wish to explore FFP implementation policies that target, recruit, retain, and successfully graduate participants that reflect the County's racial and ethnic diversity.

Outreach, Engagement, and Enrollment

Prospective FFP participants will be identified, oriented, and enrolled in the FFP pilot through a process of outreach, engagement, and application assistance. The ultimate goal of the FFP is to provide support needed to reduce reliance on housing assistance and other public benefit programs to participants. The participants themselves drive the process, which is structured to tailor plans to their individual needs and situations through active facilitation and assistance by their case manager. A large factor in ensuring the success of the FFP is that each participant is willing to work towards economic self-sufficiency and is motivated to participate in the program. Therefore, the enrollment process from the initial start to final acceptance into the program is directed toward identifying potential participants who have the enthusiasm, abilities, skills, and potential for success.

Table 8. Outreach, Engagement and Enrollment Components

Outreach: Identification	Engagement: Orientation	Enrollment: Application
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly mailed invitations to HCV waitlisted individuals • Presentations to partner agency staff, or at partner agency client events • Disseminating publicly available information on the website, e-mail campaigns, and announcements in public venues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic overview of the FFP structure, including risks and benefits of the program • Details about how the program works from the perspective of the participant • Information about the application requirements and enrollment process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial application completion • Readiness Workshop attendance • Intake process

Outreach: Identification

HACSC staff will continuously perform outreach activities to identify potential FFP participants. All forms of outreach are designed to target the population of individuals that meet the stated qualifications for enrollment in FFP and demonstrate the appropriate readiness and motivation to work towards self-sufficiency and participate in improving their lives. Outreach to potential program participants will occur in a variety of ways designed to connect not just with as many qualifying individuals as possible, but specifically those who are willing to engage in and commit to pre-enrollment activities.

Regularly mailed invitations to HCV waitlisted individuals. HACSC maintains a list of individuals currently on the HCV waitlist and will invite them to attend orientation sessions when there are openings in the program. This technique will foster ongoing program growth by incentivizing individuals already on the waitlist who are interested in utilizing FFP to move to the top.

Presentations to partner agency staff, or at partner agency client events. Because FFP eligible households are likely to be already receiving other services, FFP staff will be responsible for fostering relationships with local agencies to support FFP outreach. By maintaining strong ongoing relationships and continually looking for new partners, FFP will be able to reach a greater number of potential participants and build on a base of complimentary programs to help participants to meet their goals. FFP staff will make presentations at local programs to raise their awareness of the program and to encourage them to connect eligible participants with HACSC. Additionally, when a partner agency holds an event where potential participants will be present, whenever possible FFP staff will make short introductory presentations to raise awareness, garner interest, and invite interested parties to an orientation session.

Targeted outreach in racially and ethnically diverse populations. In order to attract a full representation of Santa Clara County’s racial and ethnic diverse population, the FFP will need to create targeted outreach strategies, like creating materials in languages reflective of the communities being served. Also, the FFP will partner with other agencies currently serving diverse populations, such as the Latino and Asian Pacific Islander communities, to ensure that potential participants are being reached.

Disseminating publicly available information on the website, e-mail campaigns, and announcements in public venues. HACSC will maintain a website and associated publicity materials with current information about the program. Additionally, FFP will disseminate information via e-mail, local community websites (e.g. Patch), and social media in order to reach individuals who are not enrolled in any local face-to-face services. FFP staff will monitor local events, news and activities electronically and based on the information provided in these venues, potential participants will be able to proactively contact the program through the website and request an invitation to the next orientation session.

These FFP outreach strategies showcase HACSC's commitment to proactively reaching potential participants who are likely to thrive in the program.

Engagement: Orientation

Once potential participants have expressed interest in learning more about the FFP, HACSC will invite them to attend an orientation session. Orientation is an opportunity for FFP staff, current participants, and program graduates to provide information about the program in a welcoming environment. During the orientation session, HACSC staff will present the following information about the FFP:

Basic overview of the FFP structure, including risks and benefits of the program. FFP staff will explain the overall structure of the program, requirements of enrollment, and expectations of participants. Staff will also discuss the risks and benefits of the program, including the timelines associated with receiving a voucher as a participant versus without FFP participation, the required goals and associated activities, optional activities, and incentives available.

Details about how the program works from the perspective of the participant. After FFP staff present basic information about the program, the current FSS participants and/or graduates will present their experience. They will share their lessons learned from participating in a self-sufficiency program, how they dealt with barriers, and their general program successes and challenges. Eventually, FFP graduates will take the place of FSS graduates.

Information about the application requirements and enrollment process. At the end of the session, HACSC staff will give attendees an initial application or information about how to apply. FFP staff will make every attempt to answer questions about the program in the question and answer portion of the orientation. However, they will also take individual questions afterwards via phone or email. The staff will also assist applicants with the application form when appropriate.

Attendance at an orientation itself is a signal of enthusiasm and a level of commitment, and is therefore the first step in program application. HACSC staff will note if potential participants have signaled their intention to attend the session but do not attend, arrive late, or repeatedly reschedule. These actions show that they may not be committed to the types of activities that they will be required to engage in as a FFP participant, such as workshops and case management meetings.

Enrollment: Application

Initial Application

The FFP Initial Application is distinct from the HCV application, which individuals applying for a voucher complete. The FFP Initial Application will gather basic information about the potential participant's current life situation and future goals. If less than 100 eligible individuals apply to the FFP, HACSC will approve all of the Initial Applications. For more than 100 applicants, selection is based upon a participant's completion of the program prerequisites. If multiple families complete the prerequisites at the same time and the program does not have the capacity to accommodate all of the families, their original rankings on the voucher waitlist will be used to prioritize their enrollment.

The FFP Initial Application will be comprehensive yet brief to ensure that staff can gather pertinent information needed to understand the individual's readiness for the program and what may be most helpful. The Initial Application will cover the following areas:

- Education status
- Employment status
- Family/household composition
- Social supports
- Current goals
- Self-identified areas of need (i.e. barriers to employment)
- Previous participation in similar programs

The purpose of the Initial Application is to develop an initial understanding of the potential participant's situation, motivation, and understanding of his or her own needs. HACSC will consider Initial Applications with all the required information and accompanying documentation. All complete Initial Applications will be given provisional approval; final acceptance will be provided upon successful completion of the Readiness Workshop.

Readiness Workshop

The purpose of the Readiness Workshop is to continue to evaluate the potential participant's personal goals, capabilities, and situation as compared to the goals of the program, as well as to provide an opportunity for the participant to demonstrate commitment and enhance their understanding of what will be required of them. While there may be many individuals with Initial Applications suggesting they would be a good fit for the FFP, the Readiness Workshop will allow staff to communicate with potential participants in a more meaningful way, and determine whether each potential participant truly understands the program requirements, as well as the potential benefits and risks of participation. Finally, the workshop gives the HACSC staff an opportunity to begin to build a collaborative relationship with the potential participant.

Following the provisional approval of a FFP Initial Application, the applicant will attend a Readiness Workshop. Whereas the orientation session provides information about the FFP to the potential

participant, the Readiness Workshop combines detailed information about the program while simultaneously gathering in-depth information from the applicant. The Readiness Workshop will (1) provide a thorough overview of FFP, (2) assist applicants with completing a self-assessment, and (3) guide applicants through completing their initial budget.

Provide a thorough overview of FFP, including risks and benefits. With more depth and attention to the specifics of FFP mechanics than presented in the orientation, the overview presented in the Readiness Workshop is intended to assist applicants in fully understanding their responsibilities and commitments to the program, including minimum expectations for participation, and the potential consequences of not meeting those expectations.

Assist applicants in completing a self-assessment, including the Self-Sufficiency Matrix. In order to attend a Readiness Workshop, applicants will have already completed an Initial Application, which is the first step of identifying the salient characteristics of their life circumstances. During the Readiness Workshop, individuals with provisionally accepted applications expand on this information by engaging in goal setting activities; identifying strengths, needs, and potential barriers to goal attainment; and completing the Self-Sufficiency Matrix to provide a more nuanced picture of their current situation and needs.

Guide applicants through creating their initial budget. Using financial materials they bring with them to the Readiness Workshop, applicants will create a budget that provides a meaningful picture of the household financial situation and provide information to the FFP regarding the applicant's current resources, including other public assistance received, as well as financial literacy.

At successful conclusion of the Readiness Workshop, the applicant will be referred for the Housing Choice voucher intake.

Housing Choice Intake

Following successful completion of the Readiness Workshop, HACSC will invite approved applicants to participate in an intake meeting for the Housing Choice voucher. The intake aligns with other HUD/Section 8 application requirements and follows the same process. Applicants will provide information (and verification documents) regarding¹:

- ❖ Names of all persons who would be living in the unit, their sex, date of birth, and relationship to the family head
- ❖ Present address and telephone number of all persons who would be living in the unit
- ❖ Names and addresses of current and previous landlords
- ❖ Estimate of the family's anticipated income and income sources for the next twelve months

¹ HUD's Public Housing Program/U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). (n.d.). Retrieved June 29, 2016, from http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/topics/rental_assistance/phprog

- ❖ Names and addresses of employers, banks, and any other information HACSC would need to verify income and deductions, and to verify the family composition

Once the participant has completed the Housing Choice Intake, they will move on to the FFP intake, which includes an assessment and plan development. Vouchers will only be issued once the FFP Assessment and Self-Sufficiency Plan have been successfully completed. At the time the voucher is issued, the applicant will be formally enrolled in the FFP.

Case Management

Philosophy

The Focus Forward Program (FFP) case management philosophy supports Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) recipients in meeting program requirements and achieving their self-sufficiency goals. Case management values center around (1) building supportive relationships, (2) engaging in proactive problem solving to remove barriers to self-sufficiency, and (3) taking a comprehensive approach to supporting HCV recipients and their families.

Throughout the process, case managers have an ongoing responsibility to work alongside participants in utilizing personalized activities to achieve program goals. In their daily activities, case managers will employ a coaching model with participants, implementing a reward structure to encourage completion of activities that will contribute to self-sufficiency goals.

It is critical to the FFP's philosophy and its ultimate success that case managers are collaborative in their approach to working with participants. Case managers will learn about the unique needs and strengths of each participant through the formal process of case management, which is underpinned at each step by an attitude of curiosity and appreciative inquiry. Case managers will guide participants toward activities that will help them achieve their goals, but will not dictate to participants what action they should take. In all aspects of the program, case managers will respect that progress and change is achieved through genuine engagement on the behalf of the participant and understand that engagement is a result of the participant owning their own process.

At times, case managers may believe that a participant is not fully engaged with the process and is falling behind on goal achievement. This is an opportunity for the case manager to examine their own practices with the participant around (1) whether the problem is a result of a breakdown in how the FFP or the case manager is experienced, (2) whether the issue stems from an unrecognized or unaddressed need, or (3) whether the participant is no longer an appropriate fit for the FFP. Regardless of the source of the challenge, the case manager will bring the issue to the attention of the participant and maintain their inquisitive position to determine the source of the challenge, with the awareness that, if a barrier is identified, it can be addressed and resolved. If this is not successful, the case manager will seek guidance from the program manager.

Goals

Based on the FFP Theory of Change, the FFP is centered on improving self-sufficiency for each participant, and there are expected goals that participants will work towards in support of this overall objective, described below in Table 9. Focus Forward Program Goal Examples. Participants will address goals in an order they determine collaboratively with their case manager, based on their current strengths, abilities, and priorities. Case managers will seek to leverage each participant’s unique abilities toward the universal goals of the program, requiring them to build personalized and individualized relationships with each participant. Once the participant reaches 80% of the AMI and sustains that level of income for 180 days, the participant will graduate from the program and receive the maximum escrow amount. Regardless of whether the participant has reached this benchmark, after 10 years their participation in the program will end. If the participant continues participation for the ten-year period and is compliant with program expectations, they will graduate from the program at the end of the 10-year period and receive the maximum escrow amount.

Table 9. Focus Forward Program Goal Examples

Employment	Fiscal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcome barriers to employment • Obtain and/or advance employment • Increase employment skills through training and education programs • Increase long-term earning potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase credit score and assets • Pay off debt • Increase financial skills through training and education programs

Goals and Incentives

The incentive structure, discussed in more detail below, is designed encourage participants to meet program goals. From intake through graduation, participants will utilize these incentives to maintain engagement, reward achievements, and prepare for long-term self-sufficiency. Goal-driven incentives are designed as (a) “small, early, and often;” (b) smaller short-term and larger long-term; and (c) both financial and non-financial to maintain a consistent, predictable, and achievable schedule of successes and rewards. Incentives for achieving goals works to build momentum in the earliest phases of the program and maintain it to successful completion.

Case Management Process

The foundation of FFP case management comes from the belief that participants can attain their goals through proactive problem solving and ongoing communication that encourages successes and celebrates accomplishments. Case managers will always guide the participant in their process but never lead it. Case managers work from an understanding that participants will progress when their motivation is internal and facilitated by the case manager, as opposed to originating from or being led by the case manager. Though the case manager may not agree with the path that the participant chooses to follow, they will support the participant’s personal agency by discussing how that path can be followed to meet the participant’s ultimate self-sufficiency goals. If the participant decides to divert from progress on goals

altogether or acts in a counterproductive way, the case manager will remind them of the consequences of noncompliance and their level of accountability to the program. If the case manager reaches a point with any participant in which their enrollment in the program may be jeopardized, they will immediately seek guidance from the program manager.

The FFP is comprised of complementary case management components: (1) Collaborative Assessment, (2) Self-Sufficiency Plan Development, (3) Linkages, and (4) Evaluation. FFP case management is dynamic in expecting and planning for changes in circumstance, priorities, and participant needs. Though these are discrete categories of service, they are not unidirectional; over the course of program participation, each component will be revisited as needed. The case manager will maintain a supportive relationship with each participant in which they explore needs together. Through an ongoing process of coaching, accountability, support, and evaluation, case managers and participants will be able to complete the Self-Sufficiency Matrix and create the appropriate initial Self-Sufficiency Plan. As the case progresses, the Self-Sufficiency Plan will be frequently evaluated to account for progress, challenges, and an evolving understanding of needs.

Collaborative Assessment

The purpose of the Collaborative Assessment is for the case manager and participant to work together to assess individual needs, strengths, barriers, and resources. This is an in-depth assessment conducted from a respectful, inquisitive, and conversational place. Primarily, it will help to determine what specific linkages are most appropriate for the needs of the participant, and to identify overlapping areas of development that could be addressed with one linkage. Additionally, it will help to lay the foundation for an ongoing collaboration between the participant and the case manager. The Self-Sufficiency Matrix will be used as the primary assessment tool, combined with an interview with the case manager to gather a brief but comprehensive overview of life domains, identifying current strengths, challenges, and barriers to self-sufficiency.

The Collaborative Assessment is a critical component of case management. At this point in the relationship, the focus shifts to establishing a rapport in which the participant feels able to share their needs and concerns with the case manager so that they can work together to devise specific, realistic, and achievable strategies. Additionally, as the participant may share highly sensitive information in this stage of the program, the case manager is responsible for fostering an environment of acceptance and open-mindedness in order to facilitate that level of discussion.

It is critical that the Collaborative Assessment cover all areas of the participant's life, to identify:

1. Opportunities for self-sufficiency goal development
2. Strengths that can be leveraged to meet self-sufficiency goals
3. Areas that directly impact moving towards self-sufficiency
4. Areas that only indirectly effect self-sufficiency goals, but require consideration in Self-Sufficiency Plan development
5. Areas that require ongoing monitoring due to their potential to develop into barriers

In general, the participant's accurate self-report will be considered a demonstration of their engagement and commitment, and no additional information is needed. However, in exceptional cases, third-party follow-up to the Collaborative Assessment may allow the case manager to build an adequate understanding of the participant's current situation.

Self-Sufficiency Plan Development

Once the participant has worked with their case manager to build a Collaborative Assessment, they will then engage in a second collaborative process to create a Self-Sufficiency Plan. Working from the cooperative, accepting relationship base that they established during the Collaborative Assessment, the participant and case manager will discuss how the participant can leverage their strengths against their needs to meet program goals. Based on the results of the Self-Sufficiency Matrix completed during this phase, case managers will guide the process and assist participants in identifying realistic and achievable goals. Case managers will help participants to phrase goals in strength and action-based language, broken into achievable parts with specific timelines. It is critical that case managers are proactive in ensuring that the Self-Sufficiency Plan aligns with the results of the Self-Sufficiency Matrix, and also avoids vague, unrealistic language or poorly defined completion plans.

The Self-Sufficiency Plan form template includes program goals and provides space for a participant's specific activities toward each goal. Each plan:

- **Defines current goals.** It is not feasible or appropriate for all goals to be addressed simultaneously. The participant and case manager will work jointly to determine what goals and associated activities should be addressed first. In the spirit of collaboration, the case manager will refrain from dictating to the participant their beliefs about what goals should be addressed first; instead, based on their experience and knowledge, the case manager will assist the participant in making their own decisions about where to focus.
- **Customizes linkages.** Based on the current goals and associated activities, the case manager will partner with the participant to customize appropriate linkages for the participant and ensure that these are completed. As with goal definition, the case manager will discuss with the participant the available options and proceed with the linkages the participant prefers.
- **Sets expectations.** The Self-Sufficiency Plan template shows each FFP goal directly above the Continuing Goals Matrix. The correctly completed Matrix incorporates explicit expectations accompanied by a timeline and roles for both case managers and participants. Clear definitions around these roles allows the case manager and participant to hold one another accountable, a key value of FFP.

A sample Self-Sufficiency Plan and Case Management Template is shown in Table 10. Focus Forward Program: Example Self Sufficiency Plan and Case Management Meeting Template. Ideally, a participant's Self-Sufficiency Plan will include both long- and short-term goals. When it is not feasible to determine dates for all steps of goal activities, "TBD" is allowable only until more information is available.

Table 10. Focus Forward Program: Example Self Sufficiency Plan and Case Management Meeting Template

Participant	Case manager	Date/Meeting Type	Next scheduled meeting date	Self-Sufficiency Matrix Update	FFP Comp. Deadline	Current Escrow Amount	Linkage name and date referred	Linkage name and date referred	Linkage name and date referred	Linkage name and date referred
John Joe	Jane Jax	6/26/2016 (phone)	7/14/2016	7/14/2016	5/1/2023	\$432				

Focus Forward Program Universal Goals: Must be met to complete program; check off goals that have been met

<u>Employment</u>	<u>Fiscal</u>
A) Overcome barriers to employment, B) obtain and/or advance employment, C) increase employment skills through training and education programs, and D) increase long-term earning potential.	E) Increase credit score and assets, E) pay off debt, and F) increase financial skills through training and education programs

Continuing Goals Matrix

Goal(s) Addressed: ACTIVITY (incentive:)	Actions	Responsible Party and Action Completion Deadline	Progress
<u>A, C, D</u> : COMPLETE GED (Incentive: cash payment, newsletter rec.)	1. Obtain records from last high school 2. Provide Linkage to GED programs 3. Enroll in GED program	1. John by 7/14/16 2. Jane by 7/14/16 3. John TBD	<input type="checkbox"/> Actions completed; Goal met <input type="checkbox"/> Actions completed; new Actions needed to meet Goal <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory Progress on Actions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs more time/assistance on Actions <input type="checkbox"/> Goal or Action needs modification
<u>A, C, D</u> : OBTAIN WELDING CERTIFICATION (incentive: textbook/materials purchase assist., gift c., newsletter rec.)	1. Obtain/share information about local p/t welding vocational programs 2. Enroll in vocational welding program	1. Jane by 7/14/16 2. John by TBD	<input type="checkbox"/> Actions completed; Goal met <input type="checkbox"/> Actions completed; new Actions needed to meet Goal <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory Progress on Actions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs more time/assistance on Actions <input type="checkbox"/> Goal or Action needs modification
<u>F</u> : ATTEND FINANCIAL LITERACY 101 (incentive: gift c.)	1. Register for Workshop 2. Attend Workshop	1. John BY 5/1 2. John BY 6/1	<input type="checkbox"/> Actions completed; Goal met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Actions completed; new Actions needed to meet Goal <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory Progress on Actions <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more time/assistance on Actions <input type="checkbox"/> Goal or Action needs modification
<u>E</u> : PAY DOWN DEBT BY 50% BY DATE TBD (SEE ACTIONS) (incentive: gift c.)	1. Determine current debt balances and interest rates for each 2. Utilize budget created in the Readiness Workshop to create payoff plan including completion date	1. John prior to 7/1/16 2. John w/Jane on 7/14	<input type="checkbox"/> Actions completed; Goal met <input type="checkbox"/> Actions completed; new Actions needed to meet Goal <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory Progress on Actions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs more time/assistance on Actions <input type="checkbox"/> Goal or Action needs modification

Focus Forward Program: Self Sufficiency Plan Completed, Removed, New or Updated Personal Goals

If any Goal has been completed, removed created or updated, circle the modification on the opposite side and explain the changes below. The Case manager will update the Self-Sufficiency Plan and send it to the participant via postal or e-mail within 10 working days of the change.

Activity for Goal F Completed on 5/31: ATTEND FINANCIAL LITERACY 101: incentive gift card received at Workshop.

New Activity for Goals A, C: ATTEND COMMUNICATION AND SOFT SKILLS.

Actions:

1. Register for Workshop (John by 7/1)
2. Attend Workshop (John by 8/1)

Meeting Notes

The Case manager will record notes around any information pertinent to the case and goal achievement. All “to do” items will be recorded. This area not to be left blank.

John reported feeling motivated about completing further workshops because the gift certificate helped him feel a sense of accomplishment. The new activity for Goals A and C was decided on to capitalize on this motivation.

Meetings

Consistently scheduled meetings between case managers and FFP participants are integral to the success of participants as well as to the program as a whole. Case managers will directly deliver case management services to participants either in person or by telephone. All scheduled meetings shall be between 45 and 60 minutes long. Meetings will have different structures depending on whether the participant is in the Collaborative Assessment development phase, or has completed the Collaborative Assessment and moved on to goal-related activities. Regardless of the type of meeting, all interactions between the case manager and the participant will be defined by the case manager's inquisitive, collaborative stance toward this relationship. Even if the participant is not fully engaged in the program, case managers will always seek to determine the cause of the challenge and to address it through determining the participant's needs and working together to develop solutions.

Assessment and Plan Development Meetings

Meeting Purpose. Initial case management meetings will be the setting for the Collaborative Assessment process. The participant will complete the Self-Sufficiency Matrix and then work collaboratively with the case manager to create a Self-Sufficiency Plan that aligns closely with the strengths and areas of weakness the participant and case manager identified during the Collaborative Assessment.

Meeting Structure. Generally, initial case management tasks will be completed in one meeting. In some situations it may involve two meetings to complete the tasks, such as when a translator is required or the participant has complex needs. During this phase, all meetings between the case manager and participant are face-to-face. The meetings will conclude with the case manager and participant agreeing to next steps, roles, and responsibilities.

Ongoing Case Management Meetings

Ongoing case management is the foundation of the relationship between the case manager and participant. It is critical that these meetings embody the values and philosophy of the FFP, especially that the case manager and participant are engaged in an openly communicative partnership. Ongoing case management will occur on at least a monthly basis, primarily via phone. Depending on the participant's level of need and their current progress on their activities and goals, contacts may occur more frequently or face-to-face.

Meeting Purpose. Ongoing case management meetings are conducted in person or by telephone, and will utilize the current Self-Sufficiency Plan and Case Management Meeting Template to:

- Review progress on goals and objectives laid out in the Self-Sufficiency Plan
- Review incentives earned and in progress
- Review outstanding needs or linkages
- Assess any changes that could impact Self-Sufficiency Plan goals

In line with FFP's case management values, all meetings will engage in proactive problem solving to overcome barriers, communicate a belief that the participant can attain their goals, and recognize and celebrate participants' accomplishments.

Meeting Structure. Ongoing case management meetings will follow a structured format in order to ensure that:

- All meeting tasks are performed
- Responsibilities for activities are clear to both the participant and the case manager
- Documentation of progress is consistent
- Documentation/administrative burden on the case manager is minimal in order to allow maximum focus on meeting the participant's needs

These meetings will conclude with the case manager and participant agreeing to next steps, roles, and responsibilities. If a goal has been completed, removed, created, or updated at an ongoing case management meeting, the case manager will circle the modification on the Plan and explain the changes in the space provided. If a meeting occurs via telephone and changes are made, the case manager will update the Self-Sufficiency Plan and send it to the participant via postal or e-mail within 10 working days.

Quarterly Plan Update Meeting

Meeting Purpose. In person meetings will occur on a quarterly basis to update the Self-Sufficiency Matrix and to formally review and update the Self-Sufficiency Plan. The purpose of this meeting is aligned with the ongoing case management meetings, but addresses the domains in more depth. During the quarterly plan update meeting, case managers:

- Review progress on goals and objectives laid out in the Self-Sufficiency Plan, revising to accommodate changes in circumstance
- Reassess for outstanding needs or linkages, or whether a different linkage is needed for an established activity or goal
- Review incentives earned and in progress, planning for activities toward desired incentives in the next quarter
- Assess any developing changes that could impact Self-Sufficiency Plan goals

Meeting Structure. The quarterly plan update meeting format is the same as for ongoing case management meetings. Whether or not changes to the Self-Sufficiency Plan have been made, the case manager will send the new Plan to the participant following the quarterly plan update meeting. The meeting will conclude with the case manager and participant agreeing to next steps, roles, and responsibilities.

Linkages

Linkages to additional services are critical to the success of program participants in meeting their goals, as well as being a cornerstone of the FFP philosophy. While the case manager provides guidance, most

services in pursuit of program goals are delivered by a linked service in the community. Linkages can be either foundational or general services, and seek to accomplish the following:

- Address barriers to services
- Connect participants to providers through open houses and networking
- Track referrals and provide warm hand-offs
- Offer a variety of workshops and group services offered directly by HACSC.

Linkages can be made at any point in the life of the case and will be added and removed as new needs become apparent and goals are met. In conjunction with the participant, the case manager will identify appropriate linkages to support each identified goal, and discuss with the participant which linkages best suit their needs. The case manager and participant will carefully consider the options and if the participant expresses that the linkage is not appropriate for them in some way, the case manager will take prompt action to identify the issue and resolve any barriers to goal achievement.

Case managers will make linkages as appropriate, and assign the linkage completion activity to themselves during a Case Management meeting with the participant. Once the linkage is made, the case manager will record the name of the service provider and date in the space provided on the Self-Sufficiency Plan and Case Management Meeting Template.

Foundational Services

In order to meet their goals, FFP participants will be required to engage in a set of foundational services delivered as workshop series, described below in Table 11. Focus Forward Program Foundational Service Examples

Table 11. Focus Forward Program Foundational Service Examples

Workshop	Components	Length
Financial Literacy 101	Money Management/Budgeting, Credit Counseling, The Value of Saving	4 – 6 sessions
Communication and Soft Skills	Proactive/Assertive Communication, Workplace Communication, Managing Change and Coping Skills	2 – 4 sessions
Career Readiness	Goal Setting, Career Assessment, Resume Building, Interviewing	2 – 4 sessions

While foundational services are required of all participants, they will not be sufficient to helping participants meet all of their Self-Sufficiency Plan goals. Case managers and participants will collaboratively decide on appropriate linkages to other programs to complete the activities required to achieve each of the participant’s goals.

General Linkages

General linkages, continually made over the course of program participation, are available to all participants depending on their current goals and activities, but no individual linkage is specifically

required to complete the FFP. Linkages will be made to specific providers for common goal activities. If an individual presents the case manager with an activity toward a goal that is compatible with the program but does not have an associated linkage provider established, the case manager will discuss the special circumstance with the program manager to determine the correct provider.

Budgeting and Financial Literacy

Many low-income households will need additional support beyond the foundational FFP Financial Literacy 101 course in areas such as managing household budgets and building assets. Without access to services for additional basic financial management skills, households may be at risk of succumbing to a cycle of debt and dependence. Repairing broken credit, managing a checking account, and having access to emergency assistance are vital to living independently. Please see Table 5 for service providers who will serve as linkages for budgeting and financial literacy needs.

Table 12. Budgeting and Financial Literacy Examples

Need Area	Providers
Credit repair services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Way • Silicon Valley Credit Repair
IDA support services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity Fund
Budgeting and Money Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD
Bank account & tax filing support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VITA programs
Loan counseling (personal, business)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCORE • Consumer Credit Counseling Service • Peninsula Family Services
Emergency financial assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Valley Community Services
Rent and utility assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Way of the Bay Area? • Housing Industry Foundation • Sunnyvale Community Services • LifeMoves • Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)
Home ownership counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Sentinel • Money Management International

Vocational Training and Career

Similar to additional financial literacy needs, many FFP households will need additional supports around finding and retaining a stable job that enables them to attain self-sufficiency. Additionally, once someone decides to seek full-time employment, they may discover they need training or re-training, support with building a resume or practice interviewing, and transportation to interviews. Without a starting income, paying for car repairs, bus tickets, or business attire can prevent job seekers from making an interview.

See Table 13 below for service providers who may serve as linkages for vocational training and career needs.

Table 13. Vocational Training and Career Examples

Need Area	Providers
Job search, resume building, & interview skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOVA • Work2Future • AppleOne Employment • EDD
Skills training and certification programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goodwill Industries • Occupational Training Institute • Center for Employment Training (CET)
Transportation services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salvation Army • Ways to Work • Heart of the Valley • CarHop • Outreach • Jump Start Repair
Uniforms, supplies and interview clothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dress for Success San Jose

Benefits and Entitlement Access

As FFP participants work toward their goals, they may be able to benefit from other forms of public assistance to alleviate financial burdens relating to other employment barriers. FFP participants may also face additional challenges navigating complex and lengthy government application procedures for services such as SSI and Medi-Cal. To the extent that HACSC can enable FFP participants to access public benefits for themselves and their dependents, those households will have additional resources to resolve other employment barriers, such as job coaching, car repairs, or childcare. See Table 14 below for service providers who may serve as linkages for benefits and entitlement access needs.

Table 14. Benefits and Entitlement Access Examples

Need Area	Providers
On-site enrollment for SSI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Security Office of SCC
WIC & SNAP/CalFresh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Santa Clara County Social Services Agency
TANF/CalWORKs, GA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Santa Clara County Social Services Agency
Health insurance enrollment (ACA/Medi-Cal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthier Kids Foundation of SCC

Education

Attaining a standard level of education is often an essential prerequisite to securing a job that pays a living wage. Some participants may need additional courses to learn English in order to expand their job opportunities, while others may benefit from completing high school or college courses in order to obtain jobs that pay above minimum wage. Many well-paying jobs also require basic computer literacy, and programs that help adults gain this essential job skill will have greater opportunities for self-sufficiency. Please see Table 15 below for service providers who may serve as linkages for education needs.

Table 15. Education Examples

Need Area	Providers
English Language Learning (ELL/ESL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VIVO • St. Mary Catholic Community • Santa Teresa Branch Library • Metro Ed
High school and adult education (GED/HSET/ABE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campbell Adult & Community Education • Santa Clara Office of Education
College courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Colleges • Cal State and UC System
Computer skills training programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sacred Heart Community Services

Children and Family Services

For both single parents and two-parent households, the need to care for children is often a barrier to obtaining gainful employment. The costs of finding adequate preschool programs, daytime childcare, or after-hours childcare may exceed the wages that parents feel confident in earning. In addition, many low-income parents may not have sufficient access to parenting supports and family services that facilitate confidence and skills needed to raise children. Connections to high-quality preschools, childcare, and family support services are essential to helping parents manage their family and earn sufficient wages to graduate from public assistance. Please see Table 16 below for service providers who may serve as linkages for children and family service needs.

Table 16. Children and Family Examples

Need Area	Providers
Preschool, childcare and after-hours childcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 5 Learning Together Initiative • Head Start • SCC Afterschool Collaborative
Youth training and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SJ Conservation Corps • San Jose Job Corps Center • AmeriCorps

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Cadre • Big Brothers Big Sisters • Work2Future • NOVA • YearUp
Parenting classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gilroy Family Services • EMQ Families First • Health Trust Family Resource Center • Parents Helping Parents • Parent Solutions • Bill Wilson Center
Miscellaneous family services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCC Child Car Seat Program • Holy Family Catholic Church • Rebekah Children’s Services • Dahl Elementary Family Resource Center • Santee Family Resource Center • Luther Burbank Family Resource Center • St. Joseph Family Center • Morgan Hill Community Center • Love, Inc.

Health and Wellness

Physical and behavioral health needs can present significant barriers to obtaining and maintaining employment. For low-income households, costly medical emergencies or regular healthcare expenses—such as dental problems or improper eyeglasses—can disrupt attendance at work and put stable employment at risk. Insufficient access to healthy food can contribute to chronic diseases, which are costly for not only for FFP households but also for the public. At one time or another, everyone needs physical and/or behavioral health services, and FFP households will need support covering these expenses to stay on the path toward self-sufficiency. Please see Table 17 below for health and wellness service providers.

Table 17. Health and Wellness Examples

Need Area	Providers
Low-cost physical health care and medication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gardner Family Services • County Health Partnership • Santa Clara County Better Health Pharmacy
Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Eyes for the Needy
Dental care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD
Food support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Harvest Food Bank • Loaves and Fishes Family Kitchen

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martha's Kitchen • Gilroy Compassion Center
Substance abuse & recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCC Department of Behavioral Health
Chronic disease management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bay Area Cancer Connection • Stanford Cancer Cares • Stroke Info • Pacific Stroke Association • Kaiser Permanente Stroke Support Groups • Palo Alto Medical Foundation
Behavioral health & counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT for Mental Health
Tattoo removal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of the Alternate Defender

Legal Supports

Legal barriers can be the most entrenched obstacles to obtaining employment, and the most difficult to overcome without professional support. Legal services can support program participants in moving forward toward self-sufficiency goals and gaining access to better employment through activities like expunging records. See Table 18 below for legal supports service providers.

Table 18. Legal Support Examples

Need Area	Providers
Pro-bono or low-cost legal representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law Foundation of Silicon Valley • Pro Bono Project of Silicon Valley • Katheryn and George Law Center • Bay Area Legal Aid • Office of the Public Defender, SCC • Asian Law Alliance
Obtaining Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sacred Heart
Immigration services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Galivan College citizenship class • Catholic Charities • SIREN • Project Shine
Court self-help services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD
Custody/Family court assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD
Domestic violence support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next Door: Solutions to DV • Asian Women's Home AACI • Support Network for Battered Women
Record Expungement and Clean Slate Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expungement Program • SJSU Record Clearance Project

**DNC programs & Traffic Court
Assistance**

- SCC Traffic Amnesty Program

Participant Evaluation and Program Compliance

In the context of case management, evaluation refers to participants' ongoing progress assessment. Evaluation will utilize (1) the change over time of Self-Sufficiency Matrix results, (2) progress toward and achievement of Focus Forward Program goals, and (3) FFP records regarding compliance with program requirements.

Successes in the FFP will be celebrated in alignment with program values, both formally and informally. Deficiencies will be discussed and if not promptly resolved, a Remediation Plan will be developed. HACSC will maintain a clear policies and procedures to address program compliance issues. The case manager will always keep the participant up to date as to their progress on goals with respect to the timeline laid out by the program, but no issue should be allowed to persist without being discussed and addressed as part of the ongoing case management evaluation process. In addition to the case manager providing feedback to the participant, the participant will also provide feedback to the case manager and FFP about their experiences, both informally and formally, as a way to improve the program.

Program Compliance and Terminations

FFP will be a time-limited program where participants face an end to their voucher term after 10 years. FFP will use the following process to address program non-compliance:

1. Case manager reaches out to engage the participant.
2. If the case manager is unable to make telephone or in-person contact, the case manager will send a letter to the participant.
3. If the participant is not responsive to the case manager's letter, the HACSC FFP program manager will send a warning letter communicating service participation expectations.
4. If the participant does not respond to the warning letter, the HACSC FFP program manager will send a termination/discharge letter to the person with information about the appeal process².
5. If the participant submits a written appeal, the provider and HACSC staff will convene an appeal hearing where the person can present their situation and plan to comply with program expectations.
6. If the person does not submit a written appeal request, they may be terminated from the FFP and HCV program.

² The FFP case manager can/should support the participant to complete the appeal request and prepare for and attend the hearing, as appropriate and requested by the participant.

Hardship Policy

HACSC will establish a hardship policy that addresses circumstances that were not the fault of the participant. (i.e. family illness, loss of job) but that make it difficult or impossible to pay the stepped subsidy rent calculation in years 6-10. If a participant applies for and qualifies for a hardship during years 6-10, the participant will return to the income based subsidy calculation, 32% of GMI for up to a one-year period. At the end of the hardship period, the family’s rent portion will return to the stepped subsidy calculation based on the year of the program that they were enrolled when they requested hardship considerations.

Participant Rental Payments

HACSC has designed an alternative rent calculation for the FFP, in which FFP participants will take on more fiscal responsibility for their rental payments as they progress through the program. This increase of responsibility for the rental payment is intended to prepare participants for graduation from the program and from housing assistance.

Years 1-5. FFP participants will have a standard rent calculation (same as HACSC’s MTW programs) based on 32% of the participant’s Actual Gross Monthly income (GMI).

Years 6-10. FFP participants’ rent calculation will switch into a stepped subsidy rent calculation intended to prepare participants for graduation from the program and housing assistance. The Rent Calculation for Years 6-10 will be based on a set percentage of the AMI that will increase annually or 32% of the participant GMI, whichever is higher.

Example: A family of one in the FFP Program, year 6, would have a monthly Total Tenant Payment of \$625. ($\$23,450/12 \times 32\%$)

Table 19. Total Tenant Payment for FFP participants in Years 6-10 by Family Size³

Persons in Family	Year 6-30%	Year 7- 40%	Year 8-50%	Year 9-60%	Year 10-70%
1	\$625	\$833	\$1,043	\$1,249	\$1,460
2	\$715	\$9,52	\$1,191	\$1,428	\$1,667
3	\$804	\$1,072	\$1,340	\$1,607	\$1,876
4	\$893	\$1,191	\$1,488	\$1,785	\$2,083
5	\$965	\$1,285	\$1,608	\$1,928	\$2,251
6	\$1,037	\$1,381	\$1,727	\$2,071	\$2,417

³ This chart contains the calculation of 32% of Santa Clara County’s \$107,100 AMI.

7	\$1,108	\$,1476	\$1,845	\$2,215	\$2,584
8	\$1,180	\$1,571	\$1,965	\$2,357	\$2,752

Incentives

The mission of HACSC is to provide and inspire affordable housing solutions to enable low-income County residents to achieve financial stability and self-reliance. With this mission in mind, the FFP Steering Committee collectively defined the following vision for the FFP pilot:

The vision of the Focus Forward Program is to engage and support Housing Choice Voucher recipients to increase self-sufficiency through providing an array of comprehensive services and incentives that promote accountability and motivate program participants to increase their employability, address barriers to employment, and achieve realistic self-sufficiency goals.

Core to this vision’s philosophy is that FFP will provide an array of incentives that motivate participants to initiate and sustain actions toward self-sufficiency. The Planning Committee designed the following program incentives in line with its mission and vision in order to encourage and inspire participants to achieve their individual self-sufficiency goals, resolve any barriers to employment, and proactively increase their ability to maintain financial independence.

“Small, Early, and Often” Incremental Incentives

Building on the traditional FSS escrow-based model, the Steering Committee designed an FFP incentive approach that also provides interim rewards for achieving milestone activities on the path toward financial independence. This approach pivots from the classic “end goal” of escrow, a structure that has presented challenges to enrollment, motivation, and long-term engagement of participants. Nationwide, public housing authorities like HACSC have struggled to enroll sufficient numbers of FSS participants, due in part to an escrow structure that can feel complex, far away, and sometimes unattainable. Many families experiencing great financial need have limited financial education, may have never saved before, and may not feel capable of reaching a long-term savings goal that increases their expenses in the short term. For these families, the FSS income-based escrow model can feel like an unknown, risky, and expensive proposition.

RDA’s benchmarking research shows that alternative incentive-based programs that reward short-term accomplishments, when clearly outlined and explained, can help attract participants into programs like FFP. Smaller, earlier, and more frequent incentives give families the opportunity to experience successes and rewards while still on the path toward self-sufficiency. These “early wins” also maintain continued engagement over time. For example, the Tacoma FSS program utilizes a pay-point incentive structure, which provides incentives for achieving milestone self-sufficiency activities. Tacoma’s FSS staff shared:

With regard to encouraging people to stick with the program, we look at behavioral economics: if we're going to get people to stick, they need to see results quickly and consistently...so giving opportunities for frequent wins is key.

The FFP Steering Committee determined that a “small, early, and often” incentive-based approach that rewards interim milestone achievements would best support households in achieving success in the program. They designed a set of incentives that relate directly to the level of effort, and grow in size as the FFP participant achieves greater financial independence goals during the ten-year program. The following table presents examples of the types and amounts of interim incentives that FFP would offer participants for reaching the corresponding milestone achievements.

Table 20. Incremental Monetary Incentive Examples

Incremental Monetary Incentive Examples	
<i>Rewards relate to the level of effort required to reach program milestones and complete ITSP goals</i>	
\$25 gift card (Target, Safeway, or Clipper)	❖ Complete the intake needs assessment
\$50 gift card	❖ Complete the ITSP
\$200 cash or gift card	❖ Complete all the financial literacy course requirements ❖ Complete a resume ❖ Prepare a household budget
\$500 cash	❖ Submit ten resumes to potential full-time employers ❖ Receive a certificate of successful completion of a parenting class
\$800 cash	❖ Complete a GED or ESL courses ❖ Obtain a full-time job
\$1,000 cash	❖ Complete an advanced degree ❖ Retain full-time employment for six months ❖ Improve credit score
\$1,200 cash	❖ Receive health benefits from an employer ❖ Graduate from cash aid or GA ❖ Establish a savings or retirement account

Financial Assistance Incentives

In addition to the incentives listed in the table below, FFP participants will have the opportunity to apply for a scholarship program to help fund “cost barriers” to reaching their self-sufficiency goals. The scholarship program will be similar in structure to HACSC’s Strive Scholarship, which provides educational financial assistance for HCV recipients, but FFP participants will have priority to receive scholarship awards. Awards will have annual and program-term caps.

This set of incentives is designed for participants who require funds to help them achieve self-sufficiency goals that directly address barriers to self-sufficiency or employment, such as lack of transportation, lack of a high-school degree, or a criminal record. Nearly all public housing authorities (PHAs) analyzed in RDA’s benchmarking assessment provide some sort of financial support for self-sufficiency expenses related to program participants’ educational or career goals. The FFP Steering Committee agreed that interim financial assistance would improve participants’ chances for success by enabling them to access the financial means to eliminate barriers. With this in mind, HACSC will provide FFP participants to apply for scholarship funds for goal-related opportunities and needs. The program may also consider small gifts or loans against future escrow earnings on a case-by-case basis.

Table 21. Financial Assistance Incentive Examples

Financial Assistance for Achieving Self-Sufficiency Goals	
<i>Financial supports for completing self-sufficiency goals and removing barriers to full-time employment</i>	
\$50-\$2,000 scholarships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Obtain monthly transportation pass ❖ Pay for school books and supplies ❖ Fulfill a childcare need and remove a barrier to full-time employment ❖ Pay court fees to expunge criminal records ❖ Pay DMV fees or traffic fines to reinstate a driver’s license ❖ Pay down credit card debt or fulfill student loan obligations ❖ Resolve outstanding child support payments

Escrow Accounts

As the Steering Committee learned in the feedback-gathering phase, participants of FSS generally do not understand the current calculation for accumulating funds in their escrow account. Because of this, for FFP HACSC will revise and simplify the escrow calculation. At the successful completion of each program year, the participant will receive \$2,000 in their escrow account. As San Mateo’s FSS staff stated, “That was part of why we redesigned how the escrow was calculated: to be more tangible for folks.”

Because FFP will also provide smaller, earlier, and more frequent incentives, HACSC will place a \$20,000 cap on the total escrow accumulation. HUD research has illustrated that FSS graduates have succeeded in accumulating escrow savings, with the average escrow balance at the time of graduation being about \$5,300 according to HUD’s prospective study.⁴ The Steering Committee determined that with this average escrow earning, a cap of \$20,000 would not likely be a disincentive to many households.

⁴ HUD (2011).

Table 22. Escrow Incentives

Escrow Account	
<i>With FFP services and supports, participants work toward increasing their incomes to a self-sufficient level. As their incomes increase, HACSC will recalculate the FFP participants' rent contributions and deposit the difference (increase) into an escrow account</i>	
\$2,000 per year	Complete all program requirements annually
Up to \$20,000 at successful program completion, up to 10 years	Complete all program requirements and all self-sufficiency goals outlined in the ITSP

Non-Monetary Incentives

A household that has been on the HCV waiting list and that would enroll in a program such as the FFP has undoubtedly faced many economic challenges. Because of their financial struggles, they may also face additional psychological barriers to feeling capable of financial independence. For many families, experiences of poverty and financial need come hand in hand with experiences of isolation and self-doubt. Therefore, the FFP Steering Committee determined that the program would provide participants with additional positive reinforcement and ongoing support to help them work toward the life-changing goal of self-sufficiency.

Throughout the FFP, participants will have the opportunity to receive non-monetary incentives designed to provide this ongoing encouragement for achieving goals. The Steering Committee intends FFP to become a supportive community of program participants, case managers, and HACSC staff. Case managers will do more than just connect participating households to services, housing, and financial rewards; they will also serve as motivators and personal coaches. Non-monetary rewards, such as recognition in the newsletter, access to peer mentors, award ceremonies, and recognition from the HACSC Board of Commissioners will provide clients with additional motivation and inspiration to continue toward their self-sufficiency goals.

Community-Building Events. Family-friendly events like pizza parties and ice cream socials bring clients from similar backgrounds together to develop community. Through their survey responses, FFP participants indicated a desire to attend more community events hosted by HACSC. Peer support groups organized and hosted by FFP will allow participants to provide and receive feedback and guidance on the successes and challenges they encounter during their enrollment in FFP. These groups can provide a venue for sharing struggles and solving problems in a communal and supportive environment. Graduates can move on to become mentors, and offer constructive feedback or encouragement to current participants.

Public Recognition. Public acts of recognition such as featuring a successful participant in a monthly program newsletter serve multiple functions. First, the idea of public recognition and praise can motivate individuals to strive toward their goals. Second, witnessing accounts of other participants who have overcome obstacles in order to achieve self-sufficiency goals can inspire participants to feel that they, too, can achieve their goals. A newsletter also provides FFP the opportunity to display the program's successes

to a broader audience. Program participants who have achieved many of their individual goals and are transitioning out of the program can also be invited to provide personal testimonials at outreach and engagement events. Public speaking opportunities boost self-confidence and develop communication skills, both of which are necessary to lead independent, self-sufficient lives.

Personal Recognition. Incentives such as personal letters of recognition, birthday cards, certificates from the Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, and gift baskets for children from the FFP case managers help to extend personal relationships with case managers and program staff, and reinforce connection to and engagement with the program.

Table 23. Non-Monetary Incentive Examples

Non-Monetary Incentives	
<i>Ongoing support and encouragement to motivate and sustain program participation when a participant completes a milestone achievement, overcomes a barrier to employment, or fulfills a self-sufficiency goal</i>	
Community Building Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Holiday and/or family events ❖ Access to mentorship and peer support groups
Public Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Being featured in the monthly newsletter ❖ Community award ceremonies ❖ Certificates of recognition from the HACSC Board
Personal Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Progress reports and personal letters of recognition ❖ Birthday cards for participants and/or their family members ❖ Holiday gifts for children

Incentive Clarity, Verification, and Management

HACSC will need to determine the precise amounts of each interim incentive as well as concrete explanations for how to qualify for them. It will also need to clearly explain any escrow caps, and the methods by which households can accumulate escrow and apply for a scholarship for goal-related expenses. This clarity will serve as a way to incentivize new enrollees as well as serving as inspiration for existing participants to continue working toward their next ITSP goal. Each client’s progress toward obtaining or earning an incentive will be discussed during their regular meetings with their case manager.

In line with best practices, HACSC will need to ensure that both the incentives and verification procedures are simple enough to be managed by families that are often facing multiple life challenges.⁵ For example, requiring participants to provide extensive documentation to prove they have completed each self-sufficiency activity may serve as a barrier, as it may be difficult for participants to collect, save, and organize such documentation during the time between completing the activity and providing it to their

⁵ MDRC, & National Governors Association Center for Best Practices. (2004). *Building Bridges to Self-Sufficiency: Improving Services for Low-Income Working Families*.

FFP case manager. For this reason, FFP case managers will review and fill out the required paperwork at the regular case management meetings, rather than placing the burden on the participant to keep the paperwork for the entire FFP term.

The FFP will clearly outline the incentive structure and how to achieve them to ensure that potential and enrolled participants understand what is required of them.

Partnership and Collaboration

In 2012, HACSC engaged in discussions with community partners surrounding rental policy reforms and identified the need to collaborate with housing community stakeholders to develop programmatic policies to respond to the MTW objectives while addressing the priorities and needs of the local community. Specific findings from this initiative suggested the importance of strengthening the collaborative relationships with other service agencies in the County to maximize available resources and best meet the needs of the community.

Prior to developing the Focus Forward Program (FFP) design, RDA conducted a literature review of effective and promising practices in self-sufficiency programs, along with a targeted exploration of FSS programs in public housing authorities (PHAs) across California. All programs explored in this research highlighted the importance of collaboration and building a “self-sufficiency network” with outside organizations such as local education institutions, community organizations, social service and behavioral health agencies, workforce centers, credit unions, and local banks. Specific findings highlighted the importance of building external partnerships to:

- ❖ Support outreach and service delivery
- ❖ Leverage external partners’ expertise and credibility with clients
- ❖ Increase coordination efforts across agencies
- ❖ Expand the network of resources available to support program participants

From the initial benchmarking and research conducted prior to developing this program design, the FFP Steering Committee decided to strategically approach partnership, collaboration, and outreach.

Approach to Collaboration

The FFP approach to collaboration is built upon the ideas that (1) supporting participants to achieve self-sufficiency cannot be accomplished by one agency, but rather an entire network working together; and (2) FFP participants need direct referrals and warm-hand offs to a variety of programs and services to support and address barriers to reaching their self-sufficiency goals. In order for FFP participants to successfully reach their goals, HACSC and FFP staff will need to build strong partnerships with these agencies in order to develop and strengthen referral pathways, increase the coordination efforts across agencies, and expand the network of resources available to support participants in their path to self-sufficiency.

Outreach for Providers

The FFP approach to collaboration is to proactively build robust relationships with community leaders and partner agencies through the following concrete outreach strategies:

Formalize partnerships and define roles and responsibilities. The FFP approach to collaboration and partnership requires the FFP and external partners to establish clear roles and responsibilities. Creating memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with delineated roles and responsibilities can help to ensure clarity of roles and to institutionalize partnerships in the event of staff turnover.

Active participation on local boards, coalitions, and committees. FFP staff's ability to stay actively involved in collaborative partner meetings allows for pathways to reliable communication and updates about the program, and increased consistency of access to external partners. It is especially important to note that merely attending partner meetings is not enough; designated program staff must actively engage with external partners, attend partner community events, support outreach to their programs, and provide information on upcoming FFP orientations. These types of strategies will help increase the visibility of HACSC and the FFP pilot.

Host orientations and resource fairs for providers. Several of the benchmarking PHAs offer resources and orientations at their sites, which has offered a threefold opportunity: (1) for the PHA to form partnerships, (2) for participants to find out about local services and the program, and (3) for local partners to network with one another. In a similar vein, when partners host public community events, FFP staff should also use those events as an opportunity to share about the new pilot program.

Conduct outreach and education events at other provider locations for providers and potential participants. In order to build provider knowledge about the FFP, eligibility, and referral process, FFP staff will need to conduct targeted outreach at provider locations where potential participants may already be receiving services. This will ultimately expose potential participants to the program and equip providers and other agencies with the tools to conduct FFP outreach. HACSC and FFP staff will also work closely to research programs and services available for FFP participants, and to identify referral processes.

Formalizing Partnerships

According to the benchmarking literature, engaging organizations and providers that have access to the program's target population is a critical outreach strategy. Community-based organizations, neighborhood or cultural groups, and social service agencies, among others, are beneficial partners in carrying out outreach and marketing. HUD recommends that PHAs partner with partners in numerous fields, including education (e.g., Head Start), workforce development (e.g., Workforce Investment Boards), and health (e.g., community gardens), among others.⁶

⁶ *Promoting Partnerships to Utilize Housing as a Platform for Improving Quality of Life.* (2011). (No. PIH-2011-51, CPD-2011-09).

Upon approval from Board, HACSC will need to identify providers and partner agencies to specifically address the previously mentioned services, and create formal MOUs with providers to ensure participants have direct pathways and providers have accountability to the agreed-upon services. Some of these agencies may include the Emergency Assistance Network (EAN), Social Services Agency (SSA), and CalWorks.

Collaborative Governance Structure

Developing and maintaining partner agencies' engagement is a shared responsibility from front-line staff to agency leadership. Specifically, collaboration requires HACSC and the FFP to create opportunities for regular, ongoing, and bi-directional communication with community partners. The FFP includes a three-tiered approach to collaborative governance that includes individuals at all levels.

HACSC and the FFP will work together to identify leadership from partner agencies to join the various committees and support the pilot implementation. The meetings listed below will serve to provide:

- ❖ Reliable and regular communication;
- ❖ Defined roles and responsibilities; and
- ❖ Shared mission, action planning, and implementation.

The four primary meetings are the FFP Steering Committee with representatives from agency leadership, the FFP Operation Meeting with representatives from agency management, the FFP Team Meeting with representatives from front-line staff and direct referral partners, and the FFP Community Engagement meeting with all FFP stakeholders. The FFP Steering Committee is charged with reviewing and addressing policy issues and planning program implementation. The FFP Operations Meeting will primarily focus on overall program management practices and implementation. The FFP Team Meeting will be responsible for supporting program participants at the individual level. Lastly, the FFP Community Engagement Meeting will initially focus on implementation and outreach, and then transition into sharing program outcomes with the community. Each meeting is structured to support ongoing collaboration between HACSC, FFP staff, and partners through program implementation activities, community updates, and overall program oversight. Please see Table 24 below for a list of the governing team's meeting activities.

Table 24. Collaborative Governance Structure

Meeting Type	Governing Team	Activities	Frequency of Meetings
FFP Steering Committee	HACSC, FFP Provider, key partners (agency leadership)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Plan program implementation 2. Address issues related to policy 3. Review program data 	Quarterly
FFP Operations Meeting	HACSC, FFP Provider, key partners (program management)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss on-going implementation activities 2. Address issues related to program operations 3. Review program data 	Every 6 Weeks

FFP Team Meeting	HACSC, FFP Provider, key partners (front-line staff)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review issues related to specific participants 2. Action planning on how to support participants 3. Review program data 	Weekly/Bi-weekly
FFP Community Partners	HACSC, FFP Provider, key partners (all)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support FFP outreach for participants 2. Develop mechanisms for sharing information on FFP implementation and outcomes 3. Review program data 	Quarterly

FFP Program Staffing

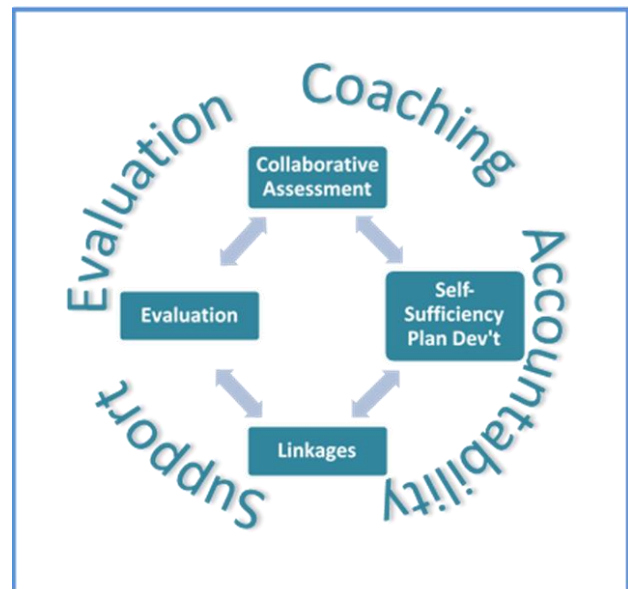
Approach to Staffing

The FFP design is built upon the values of intensive and supportive case management, a concept that is extended to engagement and recruitment of future FFP staff. HACSC will work in close partnership with the FFP to uphold the Case Management Philosophy, which is centered on building supportive relationships, proactive problem solving to remove barriers to self-sufficiency, and a comprehensive approach to supporting participants and their families. This philosophy also applies to the staffing model of teamwork, collaboration, and mutual support.

HUD research cites the importance of coordinated case management to provide holistic, wraparound support to low-income families in addressing multiple barriers to job stability.

Coordinated case management is often the result of a highly collaborative team-based approach. Staff providing FFP case management will work closely as a team, promoting ongoing collaboration and real-time solutions to addressing issues or barriers participants encounter.

Best practices indicate that coordinated case management—where the partners assisting a family communicate about goals, services, and case plans through joint case planning meetings—can avoid duplication of services and help families feel supported by a cohesive system.⁷ In this vein, all FFP staff will support coordinated care for participants by working closely with other service providers. FFP staff will also be responsible for being supportive and inspiring accountability from FFP participants.

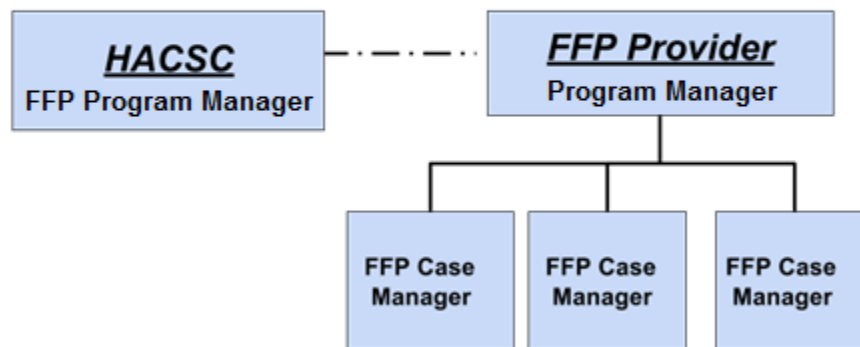


⁷ Ibid

Staffing Structure

The FFP will be comprised of three full-time case managers and one full-time program manager. HACSC will employ an FFP Program Manager and Analyst to act as liaisons between the FFP and HACSC. The HACSC FFP staff will provide program oversight and collaborate with the FFP program manager and staff to support overall program success and contract compliance.

The Focus Forward Program Organizational Chart



FFP staff should be reflective of the racially and ethnically diverse communities being served, so HACSC and the selected contracted provider should consider bi-lingual and bi-cultural staff. All FFP staff will meet weekly to review cases, discuss coaching strategies, and review program data.

Role of Program Manager and Case Managers

The **FFP program manager** will provide one-on-one supervision for all case managers, covering intensive case management techniques and strategies to support participants in reaching their self-sufficiency goals. The program manager will take a collaborative approach to supervision where the communication is not directive, but instead focused on providing mutual support and collectively arriving at solutions. The program manager will have a partial caseload combined with oversight and administrative duties and will be responsible for conducting informal trainings with staff, as well as modeling a coaching technique.

The **FFP case managers** will be responsible for a full time caseload of up to 30 clients each. Case managers will attend weekly meetings to provide real time check-ins about participant status, coaching strategies, and provider referrals. Case managers will work closely to promote team accountability and think through program challenges.

Both the program manager and case managers will be responsible for outreach and engagement to participants and for creating and maintaining provider relationships.

Workshops and Trainings

According to the benchmarking with PHAs, case management staff will benefit from trainings on technical topics related to financial literacy and workforce development, as well as “soft skills” such as motivational interviewing. The FFP staff will receive trainings and workshops in same domain areas as participants’ required trainings. These workshops and trainings will occur both formally and informally through supervision from the program manager. Workshops and trainings will keep case managers current with their techniques and help them to sharpen their skills. For example, armed with information from financial literacy workshops, case managers can work one-on-one with participants on skills to track, prioritize, and control spending, and promote budgeting.

Partnership with Providers

It is essential for FFP staff to work closely with service providers to ensure that FFP participants have proper access to partner programs that address possible barriers to self-sufficiency. The relationship between case managers and service providers requires some face-to face meeting, phone-call check ins, and visibility of FFP staff to providers. Along with case management services, FFP staff will be responsible for:

- ❖ Building external partnerships with providers;
- ❖ Joining boards, coalitions, and committees;
- ❖ Supporting FFP program outreach; and
- ❖ Providing warm-handoffs and follow up with partner program staff.

Case managers should be familiar with the provider network and on a first name basis with service providers. These relationships are key in ensuring that FFP participants on a track and fully supported.

Budget Narrative

The following budget outlines the proposed annual cost schedule for the Focus Forward Program (FFP), as well as justification for the activities and line items

Table 17: Proposed Annual FFP Budget

PERSONNEL					
Agency	Position	Description	% FTE	Salary	Annual Cost
HACSC	Programs Manager	Salary	0.50	\$ 77,158.00	\$ 38,579.00
	Analyst	Salary	0.50	\$ 77,158.00	\$ 38,579.00
	<i>Benefits</i>				\$ 23,252.00
TBD	Program Manager		1.00	\$ 62,500.00	\$ 62,500.00
	Case Manager		3.00	\$ 48,000.00	\$ 144,000.00
	<i>Benefits (33%)</i>		0.33		\$ 68,145.00
Total HACSC Personnel					\$ 100,410.00
Total Provider Personnel					\$ 274,645.00
OPERATIONS					
Agency	Expense	Description	Unit Cost	Quantity	Annual Cost
TBD	Office Supplies	Pens, paper, other	\$ 150.00	12	\$ 1,800.00
	Program Supplies	activity materials	\$ 400.00	12	\$ 4,800.00
	Food/Event Supplies	Food/decorations for events	\$ 400.00	12	\$ 4,800.00
	Computers	Lease costs for computers	\$ 440.00	4	\$ 1,760.00
	Equipment Lease	Copier/fax/scanner lease	\$ 250.00	12	\$ 3,000.00
	Communications	Cell and office phones	\$ 480.00	12	\$ 5,760.00
	Utilities	Assumes shared space	\$ 225.00	12	\$ 2,700.00
	Rent	Assumes shared space	\$ 1,200.00	12	\$ 14,400.00
	Insurance	Liability and other req'd	\$ 950.00	12	\$ 11,400.00
	Local Mileage	\$125/month/case manager	\$ 0.44	10228	\$ 4,500.00
	Training and Staff Development	\$600/staff/year	\$ 600.00	3	\$ 1,800.00
	Employment Expenses	physical/TB/background check	\$ 250.00	1	\$ 250.00
	Administrative Overhead	Indirect costs		15%	
Total HACSC Operations					\$ -
Total Provider Operations					\$ 65,515.50
Total HACSC Expenses					\$ 100,410.00
Total Provider Expenses					\$ 340,160.50
Total FFP Expenses					\$ 440,570.50

HACSC Personnel

HACSC plans to assign a 0.5 FTE program manager and 0.5 FTE analyst to provide supervision and oversight to the FFP program and contract. Each 0.5 FTE position carries a cost of \$50,205, including salary and benefits.

Contract Provider Personnel

The FFP will require three full-time case managers, each carrying a caseload of approximately 30 households/participants. The program manager will provide supervision to these three case managers as well as carrying a small caseload of their own as needed. Although the FFP will provide an intensive case management model, the Steering Committee does not plan to utilize the case managers to address health and/or behavioral health needs. The “intensive” aspect of FFP’s case management model will be directed toward helping participants accomplish self-sufficiency goals, so while case managers will meet frequently with participants, they will not be required to hold Master’s or other professional degrees. The salaries for the program manager and case managers are based on local comparable compensation levels.

Table 18: Proposed Annual FFP Budget

	Position	Description	FTE	Salary	Annual Cost
1	Program manager	Salary	0.50	\$62,500	\$31,250
2	Case manager	Salary	3.00	\$48,000	\$146,000
3	Benefits	Personnel	-	33%	\$59,083
Total Personnel Costs					\$236,333

Operations (Direct Costs)

Office Supplies. The expected amount for a four-person office is \$150 per month, which includes pens, Post-it notes, copier paper, file folders, notebooks and pens, tissues, hand sanitizer, whiteboard markers, binders, staples, cleaning solution, etc.

Program Supplies. This includes all of the workbooks, printing, and other resource materials required to support individual and group activities. It may also include supplies which will be given to participants during FFP activities, as well as materials to support their participation in community-based self-sufficiency classes.

Food and Event Supplies. The anticipated monthly cost for hosting supportive events for FFP participants is \$400 per month, which allows for \$100 per month per case manager and program manager. These funds enable case managers to purchase the food and supplies to host celebratory community events such as pizza parties for participants, host occasional case management meetings at Starbucks, and keep snacks and juice at the office for participants’ children. These expenses will fund the non-monetary incentives outlined in the sections above, and will help keep participants engaged, make it easier for them to attend case management meetings with their children, and enable them continue making progress toward their self-sufficiency goals.

Computers. The annual cost of leasing a Dell laptop is \$440. A total annual cost of \$1,760 will provide all three case managers and the program manager with the ability to work both from the office and out in the field.

Equipment. The lease cost for an all-in-one printer-scanner-copier is \$250 per month.

Communications. The \$480 monthly allocation for communications is for mobile and office phones. Each case manager and the program manager will be provided with a mobile phone for communicating in the field with clients and services providers, at the cost of \$100 per employee per month. The additional \$80 per month is to contribute to office VOIP telephones.

Rent. The \$1,200 monthly allocation is under the assumption that the FFP will function out of a shared office location, with pre-existing meeting spaces for in-person case management meetings. The FFP will pay a portion of the commercial rent costs. The monthly fee of \$1,200 is a reasonable estimate of an office cost share with one to two other programs, with the expectation of shared working space and private meeting rooms.

Utilities. Similar to the rent expense, the \$225 monthly utility expense is based on a shared office model. FFP will contribute to a portion of the internet and water expense. This figure assumes that gas and electricity will be included in the standard commercial rent.

Insurance. For a program of this size with employees working both in the community and in participants' homes, the expected monthly insurance cost in Santa Clara County is \$950.

Local Mileage. This expense is based on the experience of intensive case management in a county the size of Santa Clara. The mileage expense is set at \$125 per case manager per month, reimbursable at \$0.44 per mile and averaging 244 miles per month. This expense allows the case managers to have occasional meetings at participants' homes, as well as to collaborate with other providers to facilitate "warm hand-offs" for client services.

Training and Staff Development. Training and staff development are important components of employee engagement and continuous improvement, as well as to ensure that case managers are consistently providing excellent service to clients in order to maximize client success. The FFP will allocate \$600 (\$200 per case manager) per year to professional training and staff development. This item assumes a \$16 monthly membership (\$192 per year) to an online continuing education provider for health and human services. This expense should also fund each case manager to attend an in-person training as well as provide on-site training on evidence-based practices such as Trauma-Informed Care and Motivational Interviewing.

Employment Expenses. The \$250 allocated for this line item will fund the required tests and verifications required for this type of community-based work. An employment background check for this work costs \$135, and the remaining \$115 is for a workplace physical health screening and a Tuberculosis test.

Table 25: Operations Expenses (Direct Costs)

	Expense	Description	Quantity	Unit Cost	Annual Cost
4	Office Supplies	Pens, paper, other	12	\$150	\$1,800
5	Program Supplies	Activity materials	12	\$400	\$4,800
6	Food/Event Supplies	Food/decorations	12	\$400	\$4,800
7	Computers	Lease expense	4	\$440	\$1,760
8	Equipment	Copier/fax/scanner lease	12	\$250	\$3,000
9	Communications	Cell and office phones	12	\$480	\$5,760
10	Rent	Assumes shared space	12	\$1,200	\$14,400
11	Utilities	Assumes shared space	12	\$225	\$2,700
12	Insurance	Liability and other req'd	12	\$950	\$11,400
13	Local Mileage	\$125/mo. per CM	10,228	\$0.44	\$4,500
14	Training & Staff Development	\$600/staff/year	3	\$600	\$1,800
15	Employment Expenses	Physical/TB/background	4	\$250	\$1,000
Total Direct Costs					\$43,620

Indirect Costs

The typical allowable administrative overhead or indirect cost is 15% of direct costs. This amount is to manage all contracts, process payroll, coordinate office and equipment leases, and process other financial or program-related paperwork and invoices.

	Expense	Description	Quantity	Unit Cost	Annual Cost
16	Administrative Overhead	Indirect cost	-	15%	\$8,658
Total Indirect Costs					\$8,658

Discussion

This budget sets a maximum FFP allocation at \$440,570.50 per year. There is not sufficient padding in this budget to allow the HACSC to change the program structure without adjusting the allocation accordingly. For example, should the program add or remove field-based staff such as the case managers, HACSC would need to adjust the budget. This budget sets a guideline for HACSC to select who will operate and how to budget for the FFP pilot.

In addition to the program operations, HACSC will need to allocate funds for the Tier 1 Interim Incentives.

Ten-year Tier 1 per participant estimate	\$8,000
x participating households	x 100
Ten-year Tier 1 cost estimate	\$800,000

According to RDA's benchmarking research, several PHAs have used creative methods to fund their FSS programs beyond HUD FSS Coordinator funds. These include outside sources such as private foundations,

corporate grants, university funding, and in-kind volunteer support; and MTW and other internal funding. HACSC may benefit from exploring some of these options to fund the FFP.

Performance Monitoring and Metrics

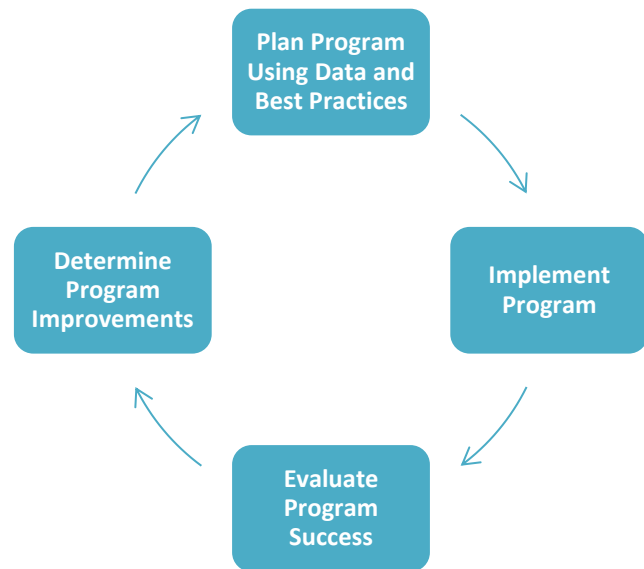
Overview

As described in Section 1, the FFP Theory of Change posits that by providing education, training, case management, and financial incentives, the program will assist families in increasing their income and earning potential such that they become self-sufficient and no longer require housing assistance. HACSC will regularly collect and review data on the implementation and outcomes of the FFP in order to understand the extent to which the program has achieved these aims and, in turn, to inform program improvements. Engaging in regular monitoring of the FFP pilot through a continuous quality improvement (CQI) process will allow HACSC to evaluate the long-term potential of a time-limited self-sufficiency program in helping individuals and families achieve self-sufficiency.

CQI models—such as the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) model illustrated in Figure 2—are designed to provide a structure and process for regular and ongoing efforts to achieve measurable improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of programs designed to improve community wellbeing.⁸ HACSC recognizes that having a process for regularly reviewing program progress and making data-driven program modifications is particularly important given that the FFP is a pilot program that HACSC intends to test for expansion among recipients of housing assistance.

This section describes the performance metrics to be captured, the data sources and data collection procedures to be employed, and the processes by which HACSC will review data to continually monitor and adjust the FFP pilot.

Figure 2. Plan-Do-Study-Act Model



⁸ Institute for Healthcare Improvement. How to Improve. (2016). Retrieved July 15, 2016, from <http://www.ihl.org/resources/Pages/HowtoImprove/default.aspx>

Performance Metrics

In order to measure the success of the FFP and determine areas for improvement, it is important that HACSC understand both *the quality of the program and service delivery*, as well as *how FFP participants are progressing toward the program’s intended outcomes*. As such, HACSC has designed performance metrics to address the following key questions:

How are FFP staff and partners implementing the FFP program?

Who is the FFP serving? How is the FFP recruiting and retaining participants? What services are participants receiving, and at what intensity? To what extent are program staff delivering services in accordance with the program design?

What outcomes are participants achieving?

To what extent are program participants achieving interim and longer-term self-sufficiency outcomes? Upon graduating from the FFP, are participants able to afford market-rate housing without housing assistance?

The associated FFP performance metrics span four categories, described below, which represent a logical progression from program delivery to program outcomes. The ability of the FFP to achieve outcomes in one category depends on the performance in the previous category; for example, the ability to deliver program services depends on having sufficient resources, while the ability to achieve long-term outcomes depends on achievement of interim outcomes. Understanding the strengths and gaps in each category will enable HACSC to identify components of the program that may benefit from modification and/or capacity development.

1. **Program administration and resources.** Metrics in this category will help HACSC track the financial, staffing, and in-kind resources the FFP has to carry out program activities.
2. **Service delivery and participant engagement.** Service delivery metrics will enable HACSC to determine the extent to which the services provided match the intended goals of the program. Participant engagement metrics will assess participants’ level of involvement and satisfaction with the FFP.
3. **Interim outcomes.** Metrics in this category will show participants’ progress toward achieving the milestones defined in the FFP Theory of Change as necessary steps to achieving self-sufficiency.
4. **Long-term outcomes.** These metrics will demonstrate the extent to which FFP participants ultimately achieve self-sufficiency at the end of the program term.

Table 26 lists the metrics HACSC will use to track program performance over time. The HACSC FFP performance metrics—which include both HUD standard metrics and additional measures—will allow HACSC to regularly assess the extent to which the FFP has been implemented as designed and the extent to which FFP participants are achieving the program’s intended outcomes.

Table 26. FFP Metrics and Units of Measurement*

Program Administration and Resources	Service Delivery and Engagement	Interim Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dollars and in-kind resources leveraged • Staff training provided • Number of new MOUs signed with community partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Satisfaction with partnership 	<p><u>Participant Needs and Goals</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of adults in household • Sources and amounts of income for household • Employment, education, financial, and family goals <p><u>Services Delivered</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type and number of workshops/services delivered by FFP and partners • <i>SS #5: Number of households receiving services aimed to increase self sufficiency</i> • Number of participants referred to outside resources; of these, number that accessed the resource • Number of participants that accessed FFP funding for self-sufficiency activities <p><u>Client Engagement and Satisfaction</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach conducted and number of prospective participants reached • Number of individuals who enroll in FFP after each orientation session • <i>SS #3: Number of households enrolled in an educational or job training program</i> • Number of participants (for all heads of household and for work-able heads of household) that successfully complete job training program • Number of individuals who report being satisfied with the FFP orientation • Number of FFP participants who report being satisfied with the FFP and staff • Number of participants with noncompliance warnings or plans 	<p><u>Participant Progress</u></p> <p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants with educational goal in ITSP that gain an educational degree <p>Employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants that reduce barriers to employment • <i>SS #3: Number of households: Employed Full-Time; Employed Part-Time, Unemployed</i> • Number of participants that gain new employment • Number of participants that move from part-time to full-time employment • Average hourly wage of participants • Number of participants with 30, 90, 180, and 365 day job retention <p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants that increased credit scores; average credit score increase • Number of participants that decreased or maintained zero debt <p><u>Participant Goals</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants that complete goals identified in ITSP 	<p><u>Participant Progress</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>SS #1: Average earned income of households</i> • Number of participants that increase annual income <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Average increase in income • <i>SS #2: Average amount of savings/escrow of households</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of participants that accrued savings in their FSS account ○ Average escrow balance • <i>SS #4: Number of households receiving TANF assistance</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of participants with reduced levels of public assistance • <i>SS #6: Average amount of Section 8 subsidy per household</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of participants with a reduction in subsidy • <i>SS #7: PHA rental revenue in dollars</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Average increase in tenant rent share • <i>SS #8: Households Transitioned to Self-Sufficiency</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of hardship requests granted

*HUD standard metrics are in italics.

Data Sources and Data Collection

HACSC will measure the FFP performance metrics using a variety of sources, including program administrative data to track service delivery and a set of tools to track participant progress over time. Table 27 outlines each data source, the information that each source is designed to capture, and the data collection process that HACSC will carry out.

Table 27. Data Sources and Administration

Data Source	Data Captured	Administration Process and Frequency
Intake Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participant Status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employment, education, financial status ● Participant Needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employment, education, financial, family needs 	Case manager to administer at program enrollment
Individual Training and Services Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participant Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Short- and long-term goals related to employment, education, finances, and family ○ Progress toward completion of ITSP, modifications to ITSP 	Completed by case manager at program enrollment; goals reassessed and updated quarterly
Self Sufficiency Matrix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participant Progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Participant status on continuum from “in-crisis” to “thriving” 	Case manager to administer as part of intake assessment and quarterly ITSP review meetings; completed by HACSC FFP Program Coordinator annually for up to two years after program exit
Participant Status Tracking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Employment Status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enrollment in job training, gained new employment, part-time or full-time, change in hourly wage ○ Barriers to employment addressed (e.g., childcare, transportation) ● Education Status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enrollment in educational program, completed certificate or degree ● Financial Status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduced debt, improved credit score ○ Reduction or termination of public assistance ● Housing Status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increased rent payment 	Completed by case manager and entered into database at quarterly meetings while participant is enrolled; completed by HACSC FFP Program Coordinator annually for up to two years after program exit

Data Source	Data Captured	Administration Process and Frequency
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rent or buy a home at market value without rental assistance 	
Participant Satisfaction Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Experience with Program Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Most and least helpful elements of program, level of coordination between case manager and HACSC Housing Specialists, perceived benefit of program ● Experience with Program Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Relationship with case manager, cultural responsiveness of case manager 	Administered by HACSC Housing Specialist to participant annually (to avoid potential bias from case manager administering survey)
Orientation Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Session Content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clarity of content, quality of facilitation ● Program Enrollment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Program fit with individual's/household's needs, likelihood of enrolling after orientation 	Administered by HACSC FFP staff following each orientation session
Provider Satisfaction Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Referrals, communication, and coordination between HACSC and partner agencies ● Satisfaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Partner agency satisfaction with FFP programs and services 	Online survey administered annually by HACSC FFP Coordinator to partner agencies
Administrative Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Target Population <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of adults in household ○ Sources and amounts of income for household ● Service Delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of contacts, duration of contact, services delivered ○ Number of referrals made and completed ○ Services to which participants were referred ● Completion of Program Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Completion of required workshops ● Escrow and Incentives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Obtained incentives, accrued escrow 	Completed by case manager and entered into database following each contact between case manager and participant
Noncompliance Tracking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Effectiveness of Noncompliance Procedure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Steps in noncompliance procedure and outcomes of those steps 	Updated by case managers prior to each weekly team meeting

Data Review Procedures

In order to ensure the FFP uses a data-driven approach to program improvement, HACSC will leverage regular meetings to review data and determine steps for program and/or policy modifications. The three FFP governing teams will review data on a quarterly basis to discuss:

- ❖ The extent to which program delivery matches the program design, what modifications have taken place and why, and successes and challenges in program implementation;
- ❖ Participant progress toward intended outcomes, successes and challenges in achieving outcomes; and
- ❖ Recommended modifications to improve processes and/or address gaps in services.

Table 28 lists the data review roles and responsibilities of each FFP governing team. After each meeting, the team will determine action steps and communicate these steps to all FFP governing teams to ensure all bodies are aware of changes to the FFP.

Table 28. Data Review Procedures by FFP Governing Team

Governing Team	Frequency of Data Review	Data Review Process
FFP Steering Committee	Quarterly	Agency leadership review data on program implementation and outcomes and determine the need for agency-wide policy changes regarding the FFP and other relevant HACSC programs or policies
FFP Operations Meeting	Quarterly	Program management review data on program implementation and outcomes and determine any needed changes to the day-to-day operation of the program, such as staffing, services offered, and service delivery and referral processes
FFP Team Meeting	Quarterly	Front-line staff review data on program implementation and outcomes, discuss successes and challenges in program delivery, and make suggestions for any changes to program services or processes

Implementation Plan

Implementation requires clear milestones to sustain momentum as well as clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and timelines for achievement. The implementation plan enables a shared understanding of the work necessary to achieve HACSC’s objectives for FFP implementation, offers a tool for transparency and accountability, and provides a basis for ongoing communications. This section is intended to serve as a roadmap for implementing the newly designed FFP program with clearly defined steps to support FFP implementation.

Domain: Pre-Implementation	MTW Modifications Required	Implementation Tasks	Timeline	Person Responsible and Necessary Partners	Measures of Success
Agency Buy-in	None	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop PPT describing FFP program. 2. Confirm program design with executive team. 3. Present program design to Board of Commissioners for feedback. 4. Modify program design based on executive team and Board of Commissioners feedback. 			
MTW Plan Inclusion	All (Listed Below)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Refer to the 50900 form. 2. Draft an MTW activity for time-limited assistance. 3. Draft a separate MTW activity for the Focus Forward Program. 4. Modify program design based on HUD feedback. 5. Receive approval from HUD. 			

Domain: Participants and Outreach	MTW Modifications Required	Implementation Tasks	Timeline	Person Responsible and Necessary Partners	Measures of Success
Target Populations	Waitlist regulations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update wait list. 2. Develop procedures for identifying all eligible individuals, including parameters for whether or not current HACSC participants may join the program. 3. Develop methodology/policies for screening, approving, prioritizing, and selecting FFP participants from pool of applicants. 4. Define the parameters for moving up on the waitlist once approved (e.g. response time, family composition). 			
Outreach, Recruitment, and Retention	None	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create an outreach strategy to provide FFP option to all eligible individuals. 2. Develop outreach materials (e.g. flyers, postcards, other materials). 3. Develop orientation session materials (PPT, flyers, handouts, application forms). 4. Plan, schedule and publicize orientation sessions. 			

Domain: Service Delivery	MTW Modifications Required	Implementation Tasks	Timeline	Person Responsible and Necessary Partners	Measures of Success
Case Management Model	None	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify potential respondents for FFP contracted services, develop RFP for any contracted services, and engage in procurement process. 2. Develop job descriptions for any internal positions. 3. Secure space at HACSC for case management meetings. 4. Train case management and HACSC FFP staff in case management model, philosophy, and approach. 5. Develops case management policies, procedures, and forms (e.g. assessment, self-sufficiency plan, consent forms, individual progress reports). 			
Services Provided	None	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and implement community partner outreach strategies, including ongoing collaboration maintenance efforts 2. Create MOUs with community partners to provide required workshops and facilitate linkages to services 3. Secure space at HACSC for community partners to provide services 4. Train HACSC staff, as necessary 5. Update resource and referral lists with referral agency, services provided, eligibility, contact information, admission process. 			

FFP Rent Calculation		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finalize the rental subsidy structure (i.e. full income-based subsidy at 32% GMI versus shallow subsidy). 2. Define any operational changes to the decision of conducting interim increases of income, like in traditional FSS program. 			
Escrow and Incentive Calculations	Simplified escrow calculation Additional incentives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finalize incentive cap, and determine how interim incentives and escrow relate (e.g. Will incremental incentives for achievements be reduced from total escrow award amount?). 2. Finalize amounts and milestones for interim incentives. 3. Develop policies and procedures for incentive distribution and application for financial assistance. 4. Determine formula for escrow calculation, including relationship to income (e.g. will escrow amount be income-based? Fixed amount determined by size of family?). 5. Determine how changes will affect current FSS participants; inform FSS participants of changes. 			

Domain: Program Compliance	MTW Modifications Required	Implementation Tasks	Timeline	Person Responsible and Necessary Partners	Measures of Success
Program Length and Completion Requirements		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define the terms by which a participant is non-compliant (Non-responsive, not meeting goals of the program contract, does not attend courses) 2. Develop policies and procedures to address non-compliance, including engagement efforts. 3. Determine how to manage if a participant reaches zero HAP before the 10 year time frame 4. Develop policies and procedures related to portability. 			
Hardship Policy		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define the parameters of the hardship policy when a participant faces termination and/or graduation. 			

Domain: Program Capacity and Resources	MTW Modifications Required	Implementation Tasks	Timeline	Person Responsible and Necessary Partners	Measures of Success
Enrollment Capacity and Staffing		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define parameters to maintain the program as a pilot of 100 or less 2. Determine necessary staffing to monitor FFP metrics, and contractor performance (i.e. With a time-limited program, there will be an increased amount of accountability. Should there be a designated HACSC staff member assigned to monitor community partnerships, FFP compliance, participant work plans?). 			
External Partnerships	None	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and implement community partner outreach strategies, including ongoing collaboration maintenance effort and how HACSC will maintain involvement in community partnerships, workgroups, etc. 2. Create MOUs with community partners to provide required workshops and facilitate linkages to services 3. Secure space at HACSC for community partners to provide services 4. Train HACSC staff, as necessary 5. Update resource and referral lists with referral agency, services provided, eligibility, contact information, admission process. 			

Financing and Leveraging Resources	Possible flexing of MTW funds	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inform HACSC staff of any changes to funding model 2. Develop policies, procedures, and forms for financial elements of program. 			
Domain: Defining and Measuring Success	MTW Modifications Required	Implementation Tasks	Timeline	Person Responsible and Necessary Partners	Measures of Success
Outcome Measures	Add/modify outcomes for HUD reporting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and implement ongoing CQI process to monitor program performance and progress towards goals. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop tools and/or protocols to monitor and evaluate service array and gaps. b. Develop tools and/or protocols to monitor case management provider performance. 2. Develop tracking mechanism and track HUD metrics for self-sufficiency 3. Define specific FFP outcome measures to inform decision-making, develop tracking tools, and implement. 			

Drawing from a review of the literature, targeted benchmarking research, qualitative analysis with stakeholders, and extensive planning meetings with HACSC leadership, this program design provides a roadmap for actionable steps toward supporting Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) recipients to increase their self-sufficiency. These actionable steps include identifying populations for targeted outreach, providing intensive case management, utilizing a motivational incentive structure, modifying escrow calculations, and leveraging external partnerships and resources to support the program's success.

Considerations for Implementation Process

- ❖ **Developing policies regarding hardship, disability, and portability.** Given that the FFP is designed to engage participants for ten years, it is important that HACSC create policies to respond to any hardships or disabilities that occur during the program length.
- ❖ **Establish MOUs with key service providers.** The FFP is designed to increase access to services needed to remove barriers to self-sufficiency. In light of the shift toward deeper and more solidified partnerships, HACSC will need to establish MOUs with key partners to provide services for FFP participants.