

THURSTON COUNTY FAMILY SELF SUFFICIENCY

The Thurston County Family Self Sufficiency (TCFSS) Program will follow the published guidelines for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development Housing Choice Voucher Family Self-Sufficiency Program.

Participating Families

With two full time staff positions, the FSS Coordinators will seek to serve up to 125 households under the FSS Program. (If funding becomes available for additional staff, the Agency will offer FSS Contracts to a larger number of households).

Intake interview and referral to partner agency

Once participants have attended an orientation and submitted applications, they will be scheduled to meet with the FSS Coordinator for intake in the FSS Program. This is also the point in the process that they will be asked to submit a copy of their Individual Responsibility Plan or equivalent plan stating goals toward self-sufficiency. The FSS Coordinator will refer families who do not have a plan to a partner agency. Candidates who are not already employed will be required to select a partner agency or an agency offering equivalent services. The FSS Coordinator will develop an ITSP plan with an applicant if they are working and/or do not qualify for services provided by a partner agency.

Candidate linkage with partner agency

A partner agency is an agency in the County which agrees to coordinate with the TCFSS Program and which provides the services needed to develop a needs assessment and to deliver some of the support services needed for the candidate to achieve self-sufficiency. The agency has the capacity to provide some form of case management or its equivalent during a specific time frame mandated by the individual programs, usually six to twelve months. Among the agencies that meet this description are WORKFIRST!, Pacific Mountain Employment and Training Program, Community Jobs Initiative program/Morningside, Adult Literacy Program, SPSCC, Behavioral Health Resources, Community Youth Services and Mason-Thurston Head Start.

FSS Activities and Supportive Services in Response to Identification of Family Support Needs and Certification of Coordination

All services and training provided to FSS clients is coordinated through the partner agency that the FSS participant selects. If needs are identified for individual participants for which the agency is not able to secure assistance, the participant may bring the issue to the FSS Coordinator who will work to seek out another resource to fill the gap. In any case, the Housing Authority certifies, in accordance with 984.201 (d)(12), that the implementation of the FSS program will continue to be coordinated with service providers. When the participant leaves the partner agency's program, the FSS Coordinator and participant will determine the next step in the process, e.g., update of the plan, etc.

Family Self-Sufficiency Community Coordinating Committee

As the Thurston County FSS Program has matured, the existing coordinating committee in the community serves the functions of the Advisory Group. The following groups provide support services, help identify gaps and create new programs to address gaps and involve all sectors of the community in their membership:

- Workfirst: Local Planning Agencies Group

The Executive Director of the Housing Authority is a partner member of this group. Periodically the group has open forums that other staff members attend. Representatives on the group include Department of Labor contractors, South Puget Sound Community College, Washington State Employment Security, Department of Social and Health Services, Washington State Division of Child Support among others. Family Self Sufficiency staff attend these meetings periodically.

- Housing Authority's Participant Advisory Committee

This group of rental assistance program participants with oversight from the legal community advises the Authority on policy changes with respect to the program as part of the Five Year and One Year Planning Processes.

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