

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF SALEM
FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM
ACTION PLAN

(Revised March 31, 2016)

Salem Housing Authority (SHA) has been providing rental assistance to families residing in the Salem and Keizer communities since 1969. In April 1994, SHA introduced the Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) Program.

To date (March 2016), over 300 people have completed Contracts of Participation and have graduated. Over \$1 million in escrow money has been paid to our FSS graduates.

The purpose of the FSS program is to enable families on the Section 8 and Public Housing programs to achieve economic independence and self-sufficiency through education and the improvement of employable skills. The FSS Program connects clients to services with the guidance of a Program Coordinating Committee (PCC). The PCC includes community professionals in the areas of social services, employment, education, and healthcare. The PCC is an important resource to ensure a comprehensive array of services is available to the program client.

An individual training service plan (ITSP) is signed with each FSS contract. The ITSP is a very specific, detailed goal plan for the individual joining the program. These goals focus on Education, Employment, Personal, Financial, & Legal goals. It is the job of the coordinator and individual to make sure that the goals are met by the end of the contract in order to successfully graduate.

- Original Effective Date: April 1, 1994 with 26 SC8 contracts
- Amended 12/1/94 to add 25 SC8 contracts to reflect Section 8 Conforming Regulations
- Amended 7/1/97 to add 44 Mainstream vouchers
- Amended 11/1/97 to add 50 Mainstream vouchers
- Amended 7/15/98 to add 45 voluntary Public Housing contracts
- Amended 6/30/99 to reflect a voluntary addition of 50 FSS Contracts based on an agreement with Oregon Dept of Adult and Family Services
- Amended 1/1/00 to reflect a voluntary addition of 5 FSS Contracts dedicated to families, who are victims of domestic violence. These additional temporary slots were in response to a grant application and subsequent award to the Housing Authority of Salem under HUD's Welfare to Work program
- Amended 6/20/2005 to reflect a voluntary addition of 50 PH FSS Contracts to reflect the application for an additional PH FSS Coordinator
- In SHA's 2006 Section 8 FSS Coordinator grant application SHA committed to a 10% voluntary increase in program size to 116 participants

- Amended 6/22/06 (per HUD official Elizabeth Santone's letter) to reflect the deletion of the 50 PH contracts due to the deletion of the second PH FSS Coordinator
- Amended 12/12/14 to add 25 HCV FUP FSS slots as per agreement with OHCS SPRF program

The balance of mandatory and voluntary Section 8 and Public Housing FSS contracts each year was as indicated on the following table:

Date	Increment	Mand S8	Waivers	Grads > 10/21/98	Cum S8 Grads	Remain Waivers	Reduced Mand	Vol S8	Total S8	PH Vol	Total S8&PH
4/1/1994	26	26					26		26		26
12/1/1994	25	51					51		51		51
1996		51					51		51		51
7/1/1997	44	95	44			44	51		51		51
11/1/1997	50	145	50			94	51		51		51
7/15/1998		145		2	2	94	51		51	45	96
6/30/1999		145		14	16	78	51	50	101	45	146
1/1/2000		145		14	30	64	51	55	106	45	151
9/30/2001		145		9	39	55	106	0	106	45	151
9/30/2002		145		11	50		95	11	106	45	151
9/30/2003		145		15	65		80	26	106	45	151
9/30/2004		145		10	75		70	36	106	45	151
6/20/2005		145		8	83		62	44	106	95	201
5/12/2006		145		0	83		62	54	116	95	211
6/22/2006		145		13	96		49	67	116	45	161
9/30/2007		145		10	106		39	77	116	45	161
9/30/2008		145		9	115		30	86	116	45	161
9/30/2009		145		13	128		17	99	116	45	161
9/30/2010		145		11	139		6	110	116	45	161
9/30/2011		145		5	144		1	115	116	45	161
12/12/14		145		50	192		0	141	141	45	186

*As participants graduated, waived slots were reduced one for one, until 2001 when waivers expired and remaining waived slots became mandated slots.

1. FAMILY DEMOGRAPHICS

The following demographics of the Housing Choice Voucher and Public Housing programs are provided to give an indication of the types of households that are expected to be candidates for the FSS program. Also provided are demographics of actual FSS program participants as of January 2010.

The racial/ethnic compositions of the entire Voucher and Public Housing programs are:

Housing Choice Voucher:

Public Housing:

Race/Ethnicity	Families	Percentage	Race/Ethnicity	Families	Percentage
<u>Non-Hispanic</u>	<u>2328</u>	<u>85%</u>	<u>Non-Hispanic</u>	<u>225</u>	<u>76%</u>
<u>Hispanic or Latino</u>	<u>407</u>	<u>15%</u>	<u>Hispanic or Latino</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>24%</u>
<u>White</u>	<u>2087</u>	<u>76.3%</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>197</u>	<u>66.6%</u>
<u>Black</u>	<u>111</u>	<u>4.1%</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>3.0%</u>
<u>American Indian</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>2.3%</u>	<u>American Indian</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1.0%</u>
<u>Asian, Pacific Islander</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>1.3%</u>	<u>Asian, Pacific Islander</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>4.7%</u>

The racial/ethnic composition of the Family Self-Sufficiency Program is:

Housing Choice Voucher:

Public Housing:

Race/Ethnicity	Families	Percentage	Race/Ethnicity	Families	Percentage
<u>Non-Hispanic</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>84%</u>	<u>Non-Hispanic</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>75%</u>
<u>Hispanic or Latino</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>16%</u>	<u>Hispanic or Latino</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>19%</u>
<u>White</u>	<u>69</u>	<u>70%</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>72%</u>
<u>Black</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9.2%</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00%</u>
<u>American Indian</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2.0%</u>	<u>American Indian</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2.4%</u>
<u>Asian, Pacific Islander</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4.1%</u>	<u>Asian, Pacific Islander</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2.4%</u>

Other Characteristics of Voucher and Public Housing Program Participants:

Housing Choice Voucher:

Public Housing:

Head of Household	Families	Percentage	Head of Household	Families	Percentage
<u>Disabled</u>	<u>1009</u>	<u>36.9%</u>	<u>Disabled</u>	<u>66</u>	<u>23.3%</u>
<u>Non-Disabled</u>	<u>1726</u>	<u>63.1%</u>	<u>Non-Disabled</u>	<u>217</u>	<u>76.7%</u>
Head of Household	Families	Percentage	Head of Household	Families	Percentage
<u>Male</u>	<u>604</u>	<u>22.4%</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>62</u>	<u>21.9%</u>
<u>Female</u>	<u>2087</u>	<u>77.5%</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>221</u>	<u>78.1%</u>
Average Age			Average Age		
<u>Male</u>	<u>51</u>			<u>49</u>	
<u>Female</u>	<u>45</u>		<u>Female</u>	<u>44</u>	
Bedroom Sizes			Bedroom Sizes		
<u>One-Bedroom</u>	<u>748</u>	<u>27.8%</u>	<u>One-Bedroom</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>21.6%</u>
<u>Two-Bedroom</u>	<u>1046</u>	<u>38.9%</u>	<u>Two-Bedroom</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>7.8%</u>
<u>Three-Bedroom</u>	<u>675</u>	<u>25.1%</u>	<u>Three-Bedroom</u>	<u>156</u>	<u>55.1%</u>
<u>Four Plus</u>	<u>185</u>	<u>6.9%</u>	<u>Four Plus</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>15.5%</u>

Other Characteristics of FSS Program Participants:

Housing Choice Voucher:

Public Housing:

Head of Household	Families	Percentage	Head of Household	Families	Percentage
<u>Disabled</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>18.4%</u>	<u>Disabled</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0%</u>
<u>Non-Disabled</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>81.6%</u>	<u>Non-Disabled</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>100%</u>
Head of Household	Families	Percentage	Head of Household	Families	Percentage
<u>Male</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9.1%</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>16.7%</u>
<u>Female</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>90.8%</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>83.3%</u>
Average Age			Average Age		
<u>Male</u>	<u>40</u>		<u>Male</u>	<u>40</u>	
<u>Female</u>	<u>36</u>		<u>Female</u>	<u>35</u>	
Bedroom Sizes			Bedroom Sizes		
<u>One-Bedroom</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10.2%</u>	<u>One-Bedroom</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00%</u>
<u>Two-Bedroom</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>32.7%</u>	<u>Two-Bedroom</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9.5%</u>
<u>Three-Bedroom</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>46.9%</u>	<u>Three-Bedroom</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>76.2%</u>
<u>Four Plus</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10.2%</u>	<u>Four Plus</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>14.3%</u>

2. ESTIMATE OF PARTICIPATING FAMILIES

The activities and supportive services described in Section 7 below are anticipated to be available to eligible families participating in the FSS Program. Eligibility criteria vary among the supportive services. In addition, the time that some services are available can vary, depending upon waiting lists and staffing limitations.

Housing Authority staff and the Program Coordinating Committee will work to arrange access to the services needed by the families in the FSS Program, as indicated in their Individual Training and Services Plans. The FSS Coordinators will continue to develop additional services and resources to serve the needs of FSS families.

3. ELIGIBLE FAMILIES FROM OTHER SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAMS

Since Salem Housing Authority has not participated in previous HUD self-sufficiency programs, such as Operation Bootstrap or Project Self-Sufficiency, there are no families from other such programs who will be participating in the FSS Program.

4. FSS FAMILY SELECTION PROCEDURES

Notification: All new Section 8 program participants are provided information about the FSS Program at their briefing session. New Public Housing residents are informed about the FSS Program at their tenant orientation session. Family Unification Program Youth (FUPY) applicants will be nominated by the local Public Child Welfare Agency (PCWA). The PCWA will notify the youth according to 24 CFR 984.201(d)(6) prior to nomination, to ensure the FSS program is a good fit. Any FUPY that wish to join the Family Self Sufficiency Program will be immediately enrolled without going on the waiting list as long as they are within the 120 day requirement. Those wishing to participate in the program may submit an application, and are placed on the waiting list according to the date and time their applications are received. Under 24 CFR 984.203, FUPY will receive preference on the waiting list because the services provided through PCWA are considered as an FSS related service program. The waiting lists for Section 8, PH and FUPY are each kept separately. In addition, information about the FSS Program is provided at the time of their initial briefing and at annual recertification to both Public Housing and Section 8 residents, and FUPY applicants upon nomination from the PCWA.

Eligibility: The head of the FSS family shall be required to seek and maintain employment. Therefore only heads of household who are citizens or eligible-to-work non-citizens are eligible to participate in FSS. All FSS participants must have valid social security numbers.

An individual or family that has successfully completed the FSS program and received an escrow payment, may not participate a second time. A family or individual who participates in FSS, but fails to complete their contract may participate again and attempt to become self-sufficient; unless they are FUPY- Those participants forfeit their HCV upon the end of 60 months or termination, whichever comes first.

Non-discrimination: The Housing Authority will not deny any family eligible to participate the opportunity to apply for or participate in FSS on the basis of disability, race, color, religion, sex, source of income, familial status, national origin, or actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status and/or domestic partnership. In addition, selection for participation in the Program will not depend upon the level of education, job history, job performance or credit history of the applicant. Individuals with disabilities may participate in the program and may graduate, even if they are unable to work. However, no FSS escrow will be established for the participant unless there is an increase in earned income.

Enrollment Preference: In order to fill a maximum of 25% of the available slots, preference for selection to participate in the FSS program may be given to assisted and public housing applicants who are recommended for participation by a cooperating agency, by virtue of the applicant's participation in the DHS Strengthening, Preserving and Reunifying Families program, [Family Unification Program Youth](#), JOBS, Worksource Oregon, Vocational Rehabilitation Division, or a program of a similar social service agency. Such a recommendation will be accepted in cases where the FSS Program would help address a service need of the family that would not otherwise be addressed.

Selection: As FSS slots become available, potential participants will be selected from the FSS waiting list based on date and time of their FSS application unless they meet an enrollment preference. Letters will be sent to the top five applicants on the FSS waiting list for the program in which they qualify for each slot that is available. Those applicants who have been notified will be required to contact SHA by the date specified in the letter. After the specified date has arrived, those applicants who notified SHA of their continued desire to participate in the FSS program will be invited to an orientation. At the orientation SHA will provide instructions concerning the steps necessary to ensure placement on the FSS Program. Final placement will be determined by those applicants who complete the process first, they will then be assigned a FSS Coordinator who will schedule their initial appointment to complete their Individual Training and Services Plan and to sign the Contract of Participation. Those applicants who finish the process after all of the available slots have been filled will remain at the top the waiting list and receive the next available slot based on the date and time that they finished the initial orientation process.

5. INCENTIVES TO ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION

As an incentive to encourage families to participate in the FSS Program and actively work toward achieving the goals in their Individual Training and Services Plan, Salem Housing Authority will establish an escrow savings account according to the provisions of 24 CFR 984.305. Coordinators will also encourage participation by assisting with employment applications, job leads, budgeting, asset building, VIDA accounts for those who are eligible, and provide strong case management to ensure success in the program.

6. OUTREACH EFFORTS

Section 8: Initially, to recruit prospective FSS participants from among eligible families, all two- and three-bedroom Section 8 participants were notified by mail about the FSS Program.

Interested families were encouraged to complete and return a simple form to the Housing Authority within one month. Those who returned the form were invited to attend an orientation session to learn about the program and then fill out a formal application if they were still interested.

Section 8 staff is available to respond to inquiries about the program from those who received letters, whatever their racial or ethnic background. Hispanic families represent the largest non-English speaking minority group in the Section 8 Program, and staff is available to answer inquiries in Spanish.

Orientation meetings were scheduled at various times of day and evenings to provide flexibility for families to attend. Families were advised to contact the Housing Authority to change their orientation meeting time if they could not attend. If a family representative failed to attend its orientation meeting and contacted the Housing Authority, another opportunity was provided to attend an orientation. Special orientation meetings with interpreters were scheduled for non-English speaking families who requested it.

The initial participants for the program were selected by lottery from among the applications submitted at the orientation meetings. Those not selected were placed on a waiting list according to lottery drawing as well.

The initial interest shown in the program was very strong, with 119 applications submitted for 26 slots. With a remaining waiting list of over 90 applicants, additional special outreach efforts were not necessary. Ongoing outreach to Section 8 participants about the availability of the FSS Program is carried out as described in Section 4 above.

Public Housing: Initially, to recruit prospective FSS participants from among public housing families, all public housing residents were notified by mail about the FSS Program. In addition, the FSS program was promoted at resident meetings, by the Central Resident Council, and through additional fliers and the SHARP newsletter. Housing Authority staff working at public housing sites were educated about the FSS program in order to promote the program with residents.

Interested families were encouraged to complete and return a simple form to the Housing Authority as soon as possible. Those who returned the form were invited to attend an individual or small group orientation session to learn about the program and then fill out a formal application if they were still interested.

The Public Housing FSS Coordinator was available to respond to inquiries about the program from public housing residents, whatever their racial or ethnic background. Interpreters were available at orientation sessions for minority and ethnic families who indicate a need. Accommodations for persons with disabilities or handicaps were also made upon request.

Promotion and outreach efforts for the 6/30/99 voluntary expansion targeted both Public Housing and Section 8 families currently receiving benefits from Adult and Family Services in the manner described in this Section and Section 11 of this Plan. With the January 1, 2000

amendment in place, the 50 FSS contracts under the Welfare to Work grant award were promoted to all Section 8 families.

Promotion and outreach efforts for the January 1, 2000, voluntary expansion also targeted five (5) Section 8 families who were victims of domestic violence. Case management services were initially provided through the Salem Women's Crisis Center.

Section 8 families receive the FSS brochure and application upon receiving their new rent amount letters after an annual recertification, interim, or move is finalized. Section 8 Housing Specialists promote the program during interviews and briefing sessions.

PH FSS families are greeted at their home by the Tenant Relations Assistant (TRA) and are given an informal briefing on the program and offered a brochure and application. TRAs are also promoting the program during interviews and offering a brochure and application to participants to join the FSS program. If the TRA sees that a family is struggling and in need of assistance the family will be briefed about the FSS program and will make an immediate referral.

Family Unification Program Youth (FUPY) will be nominated by the local Public Child Welfare Agency (PCWA). The PCWA will notify the youth according to 24 CFR 984.201(d)(6) prior to nomination, to ensure the FSS program is a good fit.

7. FSS ACTIVITIES AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

The following local groups and agencies are currently providing resources and supportive services for FSS participants such as:

Employment	Education	Family/Household	Medical	Homeownership	DHS-related
<u>Worksource Oregon</u>	<u>Chemeketa CC</u>	<u>MVCAA - LEIP</u>	<u>New Perspectives</u>	<u>ABCs of Home Buying</u>	<u>TANF</u>
<u>Workforce Integration</u>	<u>Head Start</u>	<u>Consumer Credit</u>	<u>Willamette Family Medical Center</u>	<u>HOME Down Payment assistance</u>	<u>Oregon Health Plan</u>
<u>GALT Foundation</u>	<u>Merit Program</u>	<u>FamilyMend Grants</u>	<u>Salem Lions Club</u>	<u>Habitat for Humanity</u>	<u>SNAP</u>
<u>OR Vocational Rehabilitation</u>	<u>GED program</u>	<u>NW Natural Gas</u>	<u>Salud de Familia</u>	<u>Homeowner Ed Collaborative</u>	<u>Child Welfare</u>
<u>Rescare (MOU)</u>	<u>SESNA ESL program</u>	<u>CASA of Oregon VIDA program</u>	<u>Guadalupe Clinic</u>	<u>Homestreet Bank</u>	<u>Healthy Kids</u>
<u>Easter Seals</u>	<u>OR School of Massage</u>	<u>Salem Electric</u>	<u>Marion County Mental Health</u>	<u>OR Housing and Assoc. Services</u>	<u>FHIAP</u>
<u>BDI Staffing</u>	<u>Providence Health Services - CNA</u>	<u>United Methodist Church</u>	<u>Bridgeway Drug and Alcohol Tr</u>	<u>US Rural Development Agency</u>	
	<u>SKCDC - Financial Fitness (MOU)</u>	<u>YWCA</u>	<u>West Salem Clinic</u>	<u>Chase Bank</u>	
	<u>School Supply Grants</u>	<u>Mid-Valley Community Action Agency</u>		<u>Wells Fargo Bank</u>	

	<u>Lifeskills</u>	<u>YMCA</u>		<u>Bank of America</u>	
		<u>Mid-Valley Women's Crisis</u>		<u>Bank of the Cascades</u>	
		<u>Salvation Army</u>		<u>CASA of Oregon</u>	
		<u>Legal Aid</u>		<u>OSU Credit Union</u>	
		<u>NW Human Services</u>		<u>West Coast Bank</u>	
		<u>Boys and Girls Club</u>		<u>NEDCO</u>	

8. METHOD FOR IDENTIFICATION OF FAMILY SUPPORT NEEDS

Every family accepted into the program will meet with their assigned FSS Coordinator for preliminary planning. At this first meeting, the FSS Coordinator and the family will discuss the program goals and expectations, and they will do an assessment of the family's baseline status and the family's goals, needs, and resources. The FSS Coordinator will describe the services available.

An Individual Training Service Plan (ITSP) will be drafted by the FSS Coordinator *and* enrolling participant. The agencies that have agreements with the Housing Authority's FSS Program, as well as other agencies will provide services. If a service is not available through an agency the FSS Coordinator will coordinate with a private sector or local community partner to provide the service needed. The FSS Coordinator and the family will both sign the FSS Contract and attached Individual Training and Services Plan (ITSP).

The FSS Coordinator will assist the family, as needed, to make appointments with appropriate service providers. (The FSS Coordinator with the family will determine the appropriate service providers based on the particular needs of the family.) Service providers may change as the needs of the family change. The FSS Coordinator will help identify and match needs to services. The FSS Coordinator will be in contact with the service providers regularly to share information on other services and concerns. If changes to the family's ITSP are needed due to changing family circumstances, both the family and the FSS Coordinator must agree to the changes and sign Amendments to the FSS Contract Individual Training and Services Plans.

9. TERMINATION FROM THE FSS PROGRAM, WITHHOLDING OF SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

FSS participant families who fail to meet the requirements of their FSS Contract of Participation will be advised verbally and in writing of which requirements they are failing to fulfill. The family head will be directed to meet with the FSS Coordinator to discuss the problem and try to negotiate a mutually acceptable resolution.

If an acceptable resolution cannot be reached, the family will lose the supportive services provided for them under the Program. The family will be issued a letter of warning, advising them that they have lost their supportive services and may be terminated from the FSS Program, if the provisions of their contract cannot be met, or if the activities in their Individual Training and Services Plan cannot be satisfactorily renegotiated.

Before such termination from the Program, the family will be issued a letter allowing them to request a hearing in writing within 14 days to the FSS Supervisor. The FSS Supervisor will make a decision on the case after meeting with the family and will notify them in writing of the decision. The family may request and receive a review of the case by the FSS Program Coordinating Committee, which will then make a recommendation to the FSS Supervisor. The FSS Supervisor will then take final action on the case.

FSS participant families who fail to meet their Family Obligations under the Section 8 Program or their Lease Agreement under the Public Housing program *may be* terminated from the FSS Program with no review by the FSS Program Coordinating Committee. The Housing Authority will follow the review procedures in the Section 8 and Public Housing Administrative Plans in considering termination of the Family's housing assistance.

As described in 24 CFR 984.201 (d)(2) If a FUPY is terminated from the FSS Program, the FUPY is subject to the statutory time limit of 18 months, beginning from the time the first HAP contract is signed. If the FUPY has been assisted for more than 18 months, the PHA terminates assistance to the FUPY household immediately.

As a family's income increases, the amount of the housing assistance payment decreases. The Section 8 Admin. Plan states that if the amount of assistance provided by SHA is reduced to zero, the family's assistance terminates automatically 180 days after the last HAP payment. A family's FSS contract will be considered complete if 30 percent of the family's monthly adjusted income equals or is greater than the Fair Market Rent (FMR) amount for the unit size for which the family qualifies. If a family is receiving zero assistance, but their monthly adjusted income is not greater than the FMR they may continue their FSS contract during the 180 days until their assistance is terminated.

10. NON-INTERFERENCE WITH RIGHTS OF NON-PARTICIPATING FAMILIES

If a family elects not to participate in the FSS Program, neither the family's admission into the Housing Choice Voucher or the Public Housing Program or the family's right to occupancy under the terms of its lease will be affected.

11. TIMETABLE FOR PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

A timetable for implementation of the original FSS allocation was approved in the original FSS Action Plan, and has been amended as needed over the years as additional allocations have been allocated. (See Appendix A)

12. CERTIFICATION OF COORDINATION –

The Housing Authority of the City of Salem certifies that development of services and activities under the FSS Program has been coordinated with the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) Training Program under part F and Title IV of the Social Security Act, the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), and other relevant programs.

13. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

A. Definition of Terms

ELIGIBLE FAMILY - a family, which holds a Housing Choice Voucher¹ or a family who is a resident of public housing². Participation in the FSS Program is voluntary, and Salem Housing Authority may enroll any current assisted or public housing resident who chooses to participate in the program and who satisfactorily completes the orientation for the program.

EMPLOYMENT INCOME - see "Annual Income" in the Housing Choice Voucher or Public Housing Administrative Plan.

ESSENTIAL SERVICE - a service that must be available before the family can take advantage of other available services. Transportation to job or school, childcare and basic literacy training are examples of essential services.

SEEKING EMPLOYMENT - activities such as looking for a job, applying for work, going to job interviews, and otherwise following up on employment opportunities. Quarterly progress reports and documentation as requested by the FSS Coordinator are required to substantiate seeking employment.

SUITABLE EMPLOYMENT - employment, which will eventually make the family independent of all types of welfare assistance as, defined in 24 CFR 984.103. The FSS Coordinator, in consultation with the FSS Supervisor and the family, determines suitable employment.

B. Contract Amendments

Amending the FSS contract terms: Either the family or the FSS Coordinator may suggest amendments. Amendments may be to the service plan, goals, the terms, including extensions³, and change to head of household⁴. The FSS Coordinator, in consultation with the family and the FSS Supervisor will have the final decision on the acceptability of amendments. Changes to major goals (employment, education, housing or welfare) will be allowed only if there are at least six (6) months remaining on the FSS contract.

C. **Completion of Contract and Escrow Disbursement (Not all participants will establish escrows, and a person, such as a person with disabilities, may graduate without an increase in earned income.)**

A Family has met the conditions of its FSS contract when the Head of Household certifies that no member of the household has received any federal, state, local, or other public

¹ Those individuals who do not have legal immigration status are ineligible to participate in the FSS Program per Section 23 of the 1937 Housing Act, which provides that a Public Housing Authority can only enter into a contract with someone receiving assistance.

² Ibid

³ Must be approved by the FSS Supervisor.

⁴ Ibid

welfare assistance for at least one year (welfare assistance includes “post-TANF payments) and:

1. A family has met all the conditions of its FSS contract, or
2. When 30 percent of the family’s monthly adjusted income equals or exceeds the published existing housing fair market rent for the size of the unit for which the FSS family qualifies based on the Housing Authority’s occupancy standards.

At the time that the escrow account is to be received by the family, the escrow amount will be calculated, any family debt to the SHA will be deducted and any interest accrued will be added. A check will be issued to the family head of household within 60 days of successful completion of the contract and receipt of family certification.

Early Release of Escrow:

Prior to completion of the Contract of Participation, the Housing Authority may also advance the family a portion of the escrow account, if the Housing Authority determines that the family has completed certain interim goals, and the family needs the funds to be able to complete the contract. Such needs could be to pay for school, job training expenses, business start-up expenses, or an automobile (if no other means of transportation are available). This advance payment of escrow funds may be allowed only if there is no other source of funds available for the completion of the specific goal(s) for self-sufficiency in the contract. A budget will be requested from the participant to show the lack of alternative funding sources. Escrow advances will not be authorized for the purpose of paying bills, debts, or other needs not directly related to the family’s goals. In order to be eligible for an escrow advance the family must be current on rent payments with no outstanding debts or payback agreements with SHA or the Landlord. Escrow advance checks will ordinarily be made payable to third parties if possible, not to the FSS participant. The following are guidelines in approving a FSS Escrow Advance:

1. The participant will be required to have accumulated no less than 12 months of escrow.
2. When requesting escrow advances, no more than 50% of the accumulated escrow will be disbursed.
3. The participant must be in compliance with their FSS Contract, including compliance with their lease and family obligations.

In addition, prior to completion of the Contract of Participation an FSS participant may request an early withdrawal of a maximum of 95% of the current escrow balance when the funds are to be used to purchase a home. The following criteria must be met for disbursement for homeownership:

1. The FSS Head of Household must be suitably employed.
2. No cash TANF funds may be received by the household.
3. The FSS Head of Household must be an applicant on the loan.

4. Homeownership must be a goal in the Training and Services Plan.
5. The FSS family must be approved for the loan by a lender.
6. The family must give notice to vacate their Housing Choice Voucher or Public Housing residence prior to disbursement of funds, and must move out within one month of closing.

D. Termination

SHA may terminate the participant's FSS contract if SHA determines that the family is not in compliance with the terms of the individual contract, or for other reasons specified in the contract. Termination from the FSS program will not affect the participant's status in the Housing Choice Voucher or Public Housing program.

E. Program Coordinating Committee (PCC)

The Salem area Emergency Housing Network (EHN) serves as Salem Housing Authority's PCC. The EHN is made up of social service professionals from the local community including representatives of other social service agencies, public or private sector employment, educational, medical or other professions or services, and FSS participants. This group represents and acts as a liaison with SHA's community partners.

The committee meets at least quarterly to modify and review the Action Plan when necessary, assist in securing and coordinating services, and to monitor the ongoing operation of the FSS Program.

F. Portability

The Housing Authority will treat all portable FSS families in accordance with its Section 8 Administrative Plan. As an initial PHA, however, Salem Housing Authority will first determine if the family is able to complete its FSS contract in the receiving PHA's jurisdiction. If not, the family's portability will be denied, or FSS contract will be terminated.

G. Monitoring

1. FSS Coordinators will monitor the family's use of the FSS services and compliance with the FSS contract. The FSS Coordinators will issue a report to the FSS Supervisor on a routine basis, providing both monthly and annual reports.
2. The FSS Supervisor will ensure that program meets with federal regulations and this action plan.

TIMETABLE FOR PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

A. 9/1/92 - HUD notification of approval of application for FSS.

B. 2/01/93 - SHA notified all current Section 8 participants of the opportunity to participate in FSS and includes a response sheet for interested people to return. Further, as families were

certified for Section 8, they were given a copy of the same notice regarding the availability of the program and a response sheet. As response sheets were returned, they were filed to record families' interest in participating.

- C. 3/01/93 through 3/15/93 - SHA scheduled an appropriate number of orientation meetings for those families who mailed in FSS response sheets.
- D. 3/15/93 through 4/08/93 - Orientation meetings were held for interested family heads, in which the program was explained and there was an opportunity to complete an application.
- E. 4/15/93 - A lottery was held to determine who initial FSS participants would be and the waiting list order of the rest of the applicants. Families selected to participate and those on the waiting list were notified appropriately.
- F. 5/01/93 through 8/31/93 - Interviews were held with the initial participants. Following this interview a preliminary plan was developed, and participants were enrolled as necessary in the Life Skills Program at Chemeketa Community College.
- G. 8/31/93 - At least one FSS contract was signed by this date.
- H. 9/1/93 - First Annual Report to HUD on FSS.
- I. 9/1/94 - All 26 families scheduled to be under FSS contract.
- J. 3/31/96 – All 51 families scheduled to be under FSS contract.**

The Public Housing allotment was implemented in the following manner:

- A. HUD notification of approval of application for FSS slots for public housing.
- B. Within one month of HUD approval: Salem Housing Authority notified all current Public Housing residents by letter of the opportunity to participate in FSS and include an application for interested people to return. Further, as families sign public housing Lease Agreements they were given a copy of a brochure regarding the availability of the program and an application.
- C. Orientation meetings were held for interested families in which the program was explained.
- D. Within one year of HUD approval: At least twenty-two (22) FSS contracts were signed by this time.
- E. 9/30/99: First Annual Report to HUD on Public Housing FSS programs.
- F. Within two years of HUD approval: All (45) families were scheduled to be under FSS contract including FIC client's transitioning between FIC and FSS.

After HUD approval of the 1/1/00 amended Action Plan, implementation of the fifty-five (55) voluntary SC8 slots was as follows:

- A. The existing SC8 FSS waiting list and all present Section 8 participants were notified by mail about the new slots in the FSS program. Interested families were encouraged to complete an application and bring it to the Housing Authority within one month. The application included eligibility information specific to the new slots.
- B. Resident Initiatives staff is available to respond to inquiries about FSS from interested residents whatever their racial or ethnic background. Interpreters were available at orientation sessions for minority and ethnic families who indicate a need. Accommodations for persons with disabilities or handicaps were also made upon request.
- C. A total of fifty-five (55) families were offered the opportunity to sign a contract Within one year of this amendment, until all FSS contracts in the Welfare to Work voluntary expansions of FSS were signed.
- D. 9/30/00: Annual Report to HUD includes progress on the voluntary allocation of fifty-one (55) additional FSS contracts under Welfare to Work.
- E. 1/1/2001: All 55 additional SC8 FSS contracts were signed.