



Staff Report

File #: 16-034

Version: 1

Date: 6/6/2016

Item #: c.

TO: Chair and Housing Authority Commissioners

THROUGH: Steve Powers, Executive Director

FROM: Andrew Wilch, Administrator

SUBJECT:

Approve Revised Family Self-Sufficiency Program Action Plan

Ward(s): All Wards

Commissioners(s): All Commissioners

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

ISSUE:

Shall the Housing Authority Commission adopt Resolution No.2187 approving the Revised Family Self-Sufficiency Program Action Plan to participate in a HUD demonstration program providing opportunities for housing youth?

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Resolution No.2187 (Attachment 1) approving the Revised Family Self-Sufficiency Program Action Plan to participate in a HUD demonstration program providing opportunities for housing youth.

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND:

On January 15, 2016, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) issued Notice PIH 2016-01 providing public housing agencies the opportunity to participate in a demonstration program to provide opportunities for housing youth. The program supports youth in achieving greater self-sufficiency by combining housing choice vouchers under the Family Unification Program (FUP) with assistance from the Family Self Sufficiency program. Specifically, this demonstration extends the current 18-month Family Self Sufficiency program time limit for youth to the same five-year duration available to families.

In order to participate in the demonstration, public housing agencies must currently administer both the FUP and the Family Self Sufficiency program and be in compliance with all applicable civil rights statutes and regulations.

The comprehensive document titled "Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End

Homelessness" sets the goal of ending homelessness for youth (along with families and children) by the year 2020. FUP is a vital tool in achieving this goal.

In a HUD study of the FUP program, a major barrier to greater youth participation was the time limit on the rental subsidy. Public housing agencies and public child welfare agencies suggested the 18-month time limit is too short, noting that landlords generally prefer annual leases with full 12-month renewals. The limited time causes high turnover rates demanding greater staff resources and creating greater administrative costs. The 18-month restriction also does not align with a standard academic term for youth enrolled in an education program. Finally, youth require additional time to become self-sufficient and transition to independent living and adulthood.

Public housing agencies waiting lists for enrollment in the Family Self Sufficiency program can be a barrier to FUP youth having access to the demonstration. To ensure prioritization and enrollment for FUP youth before the 18 month time limit on their voucher, public housing agencies may create a selection preference in their Family Self Sufficiency program. This is allowed under 24 CFR 984.203 because the services provided through public child welfare agencies are considered a "Family Self Sufficiency related service program". FUP youth participating in the services or who are on the waiting list for the services may be considered eligible for the preference.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

HUD issued Notice PIH 2016-01 on January 15, 2016, providing public housing agencies the opportunity to participate in a demonstration program to provide opportunities for housing youth.

A recent HUD study found that by age 26, one-third of youth who age out of foster care have had at least one episode of homelessness. FUP is HUD's only housing program explicitly targeted to youth aging out of foster care. The Housing Authority of the City of Salem has been identified by HUD as an eligible public housing agency to participate in the Demonstration Program.

To participate, the Salem Housing Authority must make revisions to the Family Self-Sufficiency Program Action Plan. Attachment 2 identifies the proposed changes. The changes which appear at pages 4, 5, 8 and 10 of the Plan address the federal requirements in order to participate in the demonstration program. The Plan was last adopted in 2012 by the SHA Commission.

SHA intends to create a selection preference in the Demonstration Program as allowed by HUD under 24 CFR984.203.

Andrew Wilch
Housing Administrator

Attachments:

1. Resolution No. 2187
2. Red-Lined Family Self-Sufficiency Program Action Plan

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05/18/2016