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**For More Information
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or
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HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF PINE BLUFF FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY



***"Working Together
for your
Successful Future"***



**Jeannie H. Epperson
Executive Director**

PBHA ~ "More Than Just Housing!"

WHAT IS THE FSS PROGRAM?

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) is a HUD program that encourages communities to develop local strategies to help voucher and rental assistance families obtain employment that will lead to economic independence and self-sufficiency. Public housing agencies (PHAs) work with welfare agencies, schools, businesses, and other local partners to develop a comprehensive program that gives participating FSS family members the skills and experience to enable them to obtain employment that pays a living wage. A separate program, the public housing FSS program, is available for public housing residents.

SELECTION PROCESS

Families that are selected to receive a voucher or who currently receive assistance through the housing choice voucher programs should discuss participation in the FSS program with their counselor.

FSS CONNECTIONS

Services may include, but are not limited to:



ELIGIBILITY FOR THE PROGRAM

Families who receive assistance under the HCV & PH programs are eligible to participate in the FSS program.

APPLYING TO PROGRAM

PHAs can give a selection preference--for up to 50 percent of its FSS slots--to eligible families with one or more family member enrolled in, or on the waiting list for, an FSS-related service or job placement program. For all other selections, the PHA must use an objective system, such as a lottery. PHAs may screen applicants for interest and motivation to participate in FSS, but may not screen for education, job history, credit rating, marital status, or number of children.

FSS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The PHA and the head of each participating family execute an FSS contract of participation that specifies the rights and responsibilities of both parties. The 5-year FSS contract specifies goals and services for each family. Family members must fulfill all requirements in order to obtain full benefits.

The FSS contract requires that the family comply with the lease, that all family members become independent of welfare, and that the head of the family seek and maintain suitable employment. Possible sanctions for noncompliance with the FSS contract are terminations from the FSS program, forfeiture of the FSS escrow account, withholding or termination of supportive services and termination of housing choice voucher assistance.



FSS ESCROW ACCOUNTS

An interest-bearing FSS escrow account is established by the PHA for each participating family. An escrow credit, based on increases in earned income of the family, is credited to this account by the PHA during the term of the FSS contract. The PHA may make a portion of this escrow account available to the family during the term of the contract to enable the family to complete an interim goal such as education.

If the family completes the contract and no member of the family is receiving cash welfare assistance, the amount of the FSS account is paid to the head of the family. If the PHA terminates the FSS contract, or if the family fails to complete the contract before its expiration, the family's FSS escrow funds are forfeited.

FSS COORDINATORS ROLE

FSS program coordinators assure that FSS program participants are linked to the supportive services they need to achieve economic self-sufficiency.

VOUCHER & RENTAL ASSISTANCE

Although it is hoped that families will no longer need housing assistance upon completion of the FSS program, some families that complete the program will still need assistance for housing. The law provides that a family may complete its FSS contract and receive its escrow while continuing to receive housing assistance under the voucher program.

