

Housing Authority of Skagit County

Family Self Sufficiency Program

2022 Action Plan

OVERVIEW

In accordance with Section 23 of the US Housing ACT of 1937, the Housing Authority of Skagit County established a Family Self-Sufficiency Program as a result of receiving FSS Funding in fiscal year 2012.

The purpose of the Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program is to promote the coordination of public and private resources to enable low-income families to achieve economic independence and self-sufficiency. The program helps participants to build family assets and financial stability through the FSS escrow account and through increased employability.

The minimum FSS Program size will be determined by Housing and Urban Development program regulations.

A service plan and FSS contract will be developed and maintained for each FSS head of household.

The Action Plan describes how the Housing Authority of Skagit County (HASC) will administer the FSS Program.

Terminology:

The Housing Authority of Skagit County is referred to as “PHA” or “HASC” throughout this document. “Family” is used interchangeably with “Applicant” or “Participant” and can refer to a single person family. “HCV program” is used interchangeably with “Section 8 voucher program”

See Section VIII, Definition of Terms for definitions of additional terms found in this document.

Table of Contents

I.	Profile	3
	Family Demographics	3
	Number of FSS Program Participants	3
	Supportive Services.....	3
	Estimate of Families in Supportive Services.....	4
II.	Family Selection Procedures	5
	Outreach and Recruitment.....	5
	Selection of FSS Participants	6
	Re-application	6
	Portability	7
III.	Incentives to Encourage Participation	8
	FSS Escrow Account.....	8
	Contract of Participation.....	10
	Grievances and Informal Hearings	13
	Home Ownership.....	13
IV.	FSS Activities and Supportive Services	14
	LPA Members	14
	Identification of Support Needs and Design of Individual Training and Service Plan	16
	Modifying the ITSP.....	16
	ITSP for Additional Family Members.....	16
	Changes to the Head of the FSS Household.....	17
	Changes to Income	17
	Transitional Support	17
	Support Services.....	17
V.	Assurance of Non-Interference	22
VI.	Timetable for Program Implementation	22
VII.	Certification of Coordination	22
VIII.	Definition of Terms	23

I. PROFILE

Family Demographics

HASC has 485 vouchers, including portables, receiving housing assistance as of June 2022. Although FSS Program enrollment statistics will fluctuate as families enter and leave the program, the demographic characteristics are expected to be similar to those enrolled in the HCV Program.

Race: White=92.39 %, Black=3.91%, Native American=1.09%, Asian=1.09%, Pacific Islander=.87%, Other=.65% and .41% declined to report

Ethnicity: Hispanic=21.65% and Non-Hispanic=78.7%

Gender of Head of Household: Male=32.61% and Female=67.39%

Disabled: 70% of participant households identify as having a family member with a disability

Households receiving welfare (TANF): 3.7%

Number of FSS Program Participants

The PHA intends to maintain approximately fifty (50) families with a minimum number of 25 participants but will not limit the number of participants in the FSS Program.

Supportive Services

In order to reach the goals of the FSS Program, participants are expected to need some of the following supportive services:

Childcare	Family counseling
GED or High School completion	Case management
Career assessment and development	Job training
Household and parenting skills	Job search assistance
Secondary education	Transportation
Homeownership counseling	Healthcare access
Legal advice	Financial Education
	Credit Repair

The above supportive services are available in Skagit County. FSS participants will be referred to the applicable community service provider as stipulated in their individual training and service plan. (See FSS Activities and Supportive Services).

Estimate of Participating Families in Support Services

It is anticipated that 100% of the FSS participants will be recipients of various types of supportive services. The type of supportive services received will depend on the family's individual goals and objectives listed in their service plan. The quantity and quality of supportive services received will depend on the resources available in the community and the availability of federal and private funding.

II. FAMILY SELECTION PROCEDURES

Families selected for participation in the FSS Program will be current participants of the PHA's Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. Families will be selected without regard to race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, national or ethnic origin or sexual orientation. Families who meet FSS Program eligibility requirements will be selected to participate in the FSS Program. All families receiving vouchers are informed about the Family Self-Sufficiency Program and offered an opportunity to join.

Outreach and Recruitment

Program outreach and recruitment is an ongoing component of FSS. Families will be notified that the FSS Program is a voluntary program and that their HCV assistance will not be withheld for non-participation or non-completion of program requirements.

Recruitment activities will include, but are not limited to:

- A. During new voucher briefings, all families receiving vouchers will be informed about the Family Self-Sufficiency Program and given an opportunity to show their interest by asking questions and submitting a contact form.
- B. Informational brochures and contact forms will be on display at the PHA reception office.
- C. All Housing Choice Voucher holders who come in for an annual recertification meeting will be informed of the program by their Housing Specialist in English, Spanish or other language as needed and given the option of meeting with the FSS Coordinator. Contact forms will be available in the meeting room.
- D. FSS information in English/Spanish and a contact form will be included in the annual review packets which are sent out to all HCV participants yearly.
- E. The Coordinator will make follow-up contact with each person who submits a contact form and will be available to answer questions and make recommendations. Onsite interpretation is available for Spanish speakers and telephone interpretation for speakers of other languages.
- F. Before an FSS participant graduates, an opportunity will be given for him or her to provide feedback on the program. This may include speaking with potential FSS candidates in a small group, filling out an exit survey and/or having a picture taken. Comments and/or pictures may be used, with permission, for promotional purposes.

Selection of FSS Participants

Families who meet FSS Program eligibility requirements will be selected to participate in the FSS Program. Families will be selected without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national or ethnic origin, familial status, source of income, disability or sexual orientation. HASC will select program participants based on the date and time the family indicates interest in the FSS Program.

FSS Family Program eligibility requirements include the following:

- A. Family must be currently participating in HCV Program.
- B. FSS Head of Household must attend a mandatory FSS orientation/briefing session.
- C. Family must have an overall goal to obtain self-sufficiency and to be off public assistance (TANF) before the expiration of the term of the Contract of Participation or any extension thereof as required by the FSS contract.
- D. FSS Head of Household must be willing to seek and maintain suitable employment during the FSS contract period or any extension thereof
- E. FSS Head of Household and any other family member with an ITSP must be willing to receive case management as part of their supportive services and to participate in activities needed to establish and follow an Individual Training and Services Plan. Activities may include participating in career assessments and financial literacy classes and will include ongoing contact and communication with their FSS Coordinator.
- F. HCV participants owing a debt to HASC must be in compliance with the HASC repayment requirement and must be current with payments as defined in a signed repayment agreement.

Re-Application

The PHA, at its discretion, may allow a family that previously participated in the FSS Program, to sign a new contract of participation if they meet the FSS Selection Criteria.

Families denied participation in the FSS Program may request an Informal Hearing to determine whether the decision was made in accordance with HUD regulations and the guidelines in this plan. The request for an Informal Hearing must be made in writing within ten (10) working days of the date of notification of the decision to deny participation.

Portability

There may be advantages to porting that allow a family to reach their FSS goals. For example, the family may be choosing to move to obtain employment as specified in the Contract of Participation. Creative solutions should be sought so that the family may benefit from the program to the maximum extent possible.

A. Portability in initial 12 months

While HASC is not required to allow FSS participants to exercise portability within the initial 12 months after signing a CoP, it is the policy of HASC to allow for portability when it is in the best interest of the family.

B. Outgoing portability

An FSS family in good standing may move outside HASC's jurisdiction under the portability regulations if the family has complied with obligations under the HCV program, and the family moves to a jurisdiction of a receiving Housing Authority that administers an FSS program.

If a family wishes to port to another jurisdiction, but the receiving housing authority does not have an FSS Program or the receiving housing authority's FSS Program is full, the relocating FSS family may continue in HASC's FSS Program (the initial housing authority) if the family demonstrates to the satisfaction of HASC that the relocating family will be able to fulfill its responsibilities under the initial Contract of Participation.

If the receiving housing authority is absorbing the voucher and continued participation in the FSS Program is not possible, HASC will discuss the options that may be available to the FSS family. Depending on the family's circumstances the options may include modification of the FSS Contract of Participation, termination of the FSS contract and forfeiture of escrow, termination of the contract with FSS escrow disbursement in accordance with 24 CFR 984.303 (k)(1)(iii) or locating a receiving PHA that has the capacity to enroll the family into its FSS program.

If termination of the contract with forfeiture of escrow is the only option remaining, HASC will clearly notify the family that the move will result in the loss of escrow funds.

C. Incoming Portability

Incoming portable families whose vouchers are not absorbed may continue in the FSS Program of the initial PHA, if the initial PHA is willing to maintain their Contract of Participation and FSS escrow account. If their voucher is absorbed by HASC at a later date, the family must execute a new FSS Contract of Participation with HASC to continue in the FSS program.

III. INCENTIVES TO ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION

As required by HUD, HASC will provide incentives for families who participate in the FSS Program. The main incentive that is provided is the establishment of an FSS Escrow Account.

FSS Escrow Account

Each FSS participant will have their own Escrow Account established in accordance with HUD regulations. The FSS Coordinator will calculate and track escrow credits, interest, disbursements and forfeitures for each family. FSS escrow funds held by HASC will be invested in accordance with HUD Handbook 7475.1, revised Section 4-8. Deposits to a family's escrow account will be made monthly and investment income (interest) will be deposited at least quarterly to each participating family's FSS escrow account. A statement of escrow balance, deposits, interest, and payments will be mailed to each family annually.

A. Disbursement of FSS escrow funds upon completion of contract

Escrow funds will be disbursed following successful completion of program requirements according to the FSS Contract of Participation. The FSS Head of Household must make a written certification that to the best of his or her knowledge and belief that no member of the FSS household is receiving cash welfare assistance (TANF). The accrued escrow balance, minus any debts owed to HASC, will be disbursed to the designated FSS Head of Household.

B. Disbursement of FSS escrow funds as an interim disbursement

A family may request an interim disbursement from their escrow account to pay for specific goods or services that will help the family make progress toward achieving the goals in its Individual Training and Services Plan (ITSP).

Examples of potentially eligible activities include, but are not limited to, payments for post-secondary education, job training, small business start-up costs, job start-up expenses, childcare and transportation to/from a place of employment.

The FSS Coordinator will decide on a case-by-case basis regarding the funds requested. Escrow disbursements must also be approved by the Section 8 Program Manager or the Executive Director.

Policies and procedures:

1. The request must be submitted in writing. The family will show that the purpose is goal-related and that the family has attempted other resources.
2. Disbursements will be made payable directly to the agency, business or individual providing the required items or services.
3. Only one interim withdrawal from escrow will be approved per family.

4. The amount of interim withdrawal from escrow may not exceed 50% of participant's current escrow balance.
5. Any interim disbursement will be deducted from the participant's escrow balance.
6. Interim disbursements will not be granted for past due rent or utility payments.

C. Disbursement of FSS escrow funds upon termination of contract

The Contract of Participation will be terminated with FSS disbursement when:

1. Services that HASC and the FSS family have agreed are integral to the FSS family's advancement towards self-sufficiency are unavailable
2. The head of the FSS family becomes permanently disabled and unable to work during the period of the contract, unless HASC and the FSS family determine that it is not possible to modify the contract to designate a new head of the FSS family; or
3. An FSS family in good standing moves outside the jurisdiction of HASC in accordance with portability requirements for good cause, as determined by HASC, and continuation of the Contract of Participation after the move, or completion of the Contract of Participation prior to the move, is not possible.

D. Forfeiture of FSS Escrow

The FSS family will automatically forfeit their FSS escrow when any of the following conditions apply:

1. The family fails to complete the goals and obligations in the Contract of Participation, resulting in program termination.
2. The family voluntarily withdraws from the program.
3. The family moves to another housing authority's jurisdiction and continued participation or termination with escrow are not possible. (See portability section).
4. The family is terminated from the HCV program for non-compliance of lease agreement and/or HCV policy and rules.
5. The family continues to receive welfare assistance (TANF) at the end of the FSS contract term (this does not include Medicaid, childcare assistance, food stamps or housing subsidies).

E. Eligible uses of forfeited escrow

FSS escrow account funds forfeited by a FSS family (if any) will be used for FSS participants in good standing.

A family may request a disbursement from the forfeited escrow account to pay for specific goods or services that will help the family make progress toward achieving the goals in its Individual Training and Services Plan (ITSP).

Examples of potentially eligible activities include, but are not limited to, payments for post-secondary education, job training, small business start-up costs, job start-up expenses, childcare and transportation to/from a place of employment.

The FSS Coordinator will decide on a case-by-case basis regarding the funds requested. Escrow disbursements must also be approved by the Section 8 Program Manager or the Executive Director. Forfeited escrow funds may also be used for group activities to benefit FSS participants or for training for the FSS Coordinator.

The procedure and policies for requesting a disbursement of funds from the forfeited escrow account is similar to the procedure for requesting an interim disbursement from the family's escrow account, but with some differences (**in bold**):

1. The request must be submitted in writing. The family will show that the purpose is goal-related and that the family has attempted other resources.
2. Disbursements will be made payable directly to the agency, business or individual providing the required items or services.
3. **More than one request may be made and granted during the participant's time in the FSS program.**
4. **The amount of withdrawal from forfeited escrow for one family at one time may not exceed the amount of the total forfeited escrow account divided by the number of current FSS families at the date of the request.**
5. **Any forfeited escrow disbursement will be deducted from the escrow balance of the forfeited escrow fund.**
6. Forfeited escrow disbursements will not be granted for past due rent or utility payments

Contract of Participation

The Head of the FSS Household will be required to sign a Contract of Participation (CoP). The Contract of Participation is a HUD approved form HASC will use that creates a contract between a participating family and a PHA operating an FSS Program. The Contract of Participation will record the family's baseline annual income, baseline earned income and baseline monthly rent in effect as of the family's most recent income certification as of the effective date of the CoP.

The CoP will include an Individual Training and Services Plan (ITSP) as described in this action plan. If an additional family member chooses to have an ITSP, that member's ITSP will be attached to the CoP and that member will sign and date his/her ITSP.

Adult members of the family must select the family member who will be the FSS Head of Household by signing and dating a statement that designates this person as the Head of Household for FSS purposes.

If a change of FSS Head of Household is later desired, the family may submit a new statement designating a different family member to be FSS Head of Household. The statement must be signed and dated by all adult members of the family. Upon successful

completion of the program, the family's FSS escrow will be awarded to the FSS Head of Household.

A. Family Responsibilities

1. Head of the FSS Household must:
 - a. Seek and maintain suitable employment during the term of the contract, and
 - b. Complete activities in the ITSP within the specified dates and
 - c. Provide the PHA with information about the family's participation in the FSS Program upon request, including information regarding employment, job interviews, training, educational attendance and other FSS services and activities

2. All FSS Family Members must
 - a. Comply with the terms of the Section 8 Program and the lease: and
 - b. Comply with the family obligations under the Section 8 Program and
 - c. Live in the jurisdiction of the FSS Program at least twelve (12) consecutive months from the effective date of the contract, unless waived by the PHA and
 - d. Complete their ITSP goals (if applicable).

B. Requirements for Successful Completion of the Contract of Participation

1. The family has fulfilled all its responsibilities under the contract.

C. Termination: Voluntary, Non-compliant, or Expiration

The FSS family will be terminated from the FSS Program if the family does not fulfill the requirements of the Contract of Participation and/or is terminated from the HCV Program. FSS families will be thoroughly briefed prior to signing the Contract of Participation of the conditions under which the family will be terminated from the FSS Program.

HASC may terminate participants from the FSS Program for the following reasons:

1. Mutual consent of both HASC and the family
2. Failure of the FSS family to meet its obligation under the Contract of Participation without good cause. This includes:
 - a. Failure of the FSS Head of Household to seek and maintain suitable employment during the contract period, or
 - b. Failure to comply with items listed on Individual Training and Services Plan, or
 - c. Failure to provide HASC/FSS Coordinator with information about family's participation in the program, such as: no contact for extended periods, missed appointments, or lack of response to phone messages, emails,

written correspondence and/or information requests made by FSS Coordinator

- d. Failure of the household members to become independent of welfare assistance (TANF) before expiration of FSS contract
 - e. Failure of the FSS family to complete the contract requirements on or before the expiration date
3. Termination from the HCV Program
 4. Portability, if
 - a. Family ports to another housing authority and is not accepted into receiving agency's FSS Program, or
 - b. Family ports to another housing authority and is not able, or is not approved, to continue in HASC's FSS Program (see portability section)
 5. The family's voluntary withdrawal from the FSS Program
 6. By such other act is deemed inconsistent with the FSS Program
 7. By operation of the law

D. Contract Extensions

The term of the Contract of Participation ends no later than five years after the first recertification of income after the execution date (date of signing) of the CoP. Some FSS Families may complete their Contract of Participation in less than five years. Others may need more time to successfully complete the CoP. A CoP may be extended for a period not exceeding two years from the original ending date of contract for the following reasons:

1. If a client has an involuntary job loss in the 6 months preceding the contract expiration date; or
2. If a client, or a dependent of the client has experienced a serious illness or injury that resulted in a delay of client meeting and completing goals listed within the ITSP; or
3. If a client has an interruption in their supportive services due to moving (porting) and the interruption delays the completion of a goal (i.e., client is in college and needs to take more credits to graduate due to a credit(s) not being transferable due to school policy); or
4. If a family member is in pursuit of a current or additional ITSP goal that will result in furtherance of self-sufficiency during the period of the contract extension; or
5. Other reasons HASC would deem valid.

When available, clients must be able to provide verification of one of the above situations to qualify for a contract extension.

Requests for a contract extension must be made in writing by the FSS head of household and include a description of the reason for the requested extension. The HASC staff person responsible for the administration of the FSS Program will review the extension requests. HASC will grant no more than one (1) extension of the two (2) years. Extensions are granted at the discretion of the PHA.

Families denied contract extensions may request an Informal Hearing to determine whether the decision was made in accordance with HUD regulations and the guidelines

in this plan. The request for an Informal Hearing must be made in writing within ten (10) working days of the date of notification of the decision to deny the extension.

Grievances and Informal Hearings

The FSS Program will make efforts to resolve any and all grievances of FSS participants in accordance with the policies outlined in the Action Plan, current HUD regulations for the HCV and FSS Programs, and the Section 8 Administrative Plan. In the event that a grievance is not resolved, FSS participants may request an Informal Hearing to determine whether the decision was made in accordance with HUD regulations and with the guidelines in this plan. The request for an Informal Hearing must be made in writing within ten working days of the date of notification of a negative action, denial or termination. HASC will follow procedures outlined in the Section 8 Administrative Plan when conducting an Informal Hearing.

Home Ownership

Attention is focused on homeownership preparation and education. The FSS Program assists families with connections for homebuyer counseling and financial readiness. Families are encouraged to consider various first-time homebuyer options. FSS participants with interests in home ownership will be referred to local housing counseling agencies for education, counseling and potential down-payment opportunities.

IV. FSS ACTIVITIES AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

The supportive services which will be provided by both private and public resources to FSS families may include, but are not limited to, the following: child care, remedial and secondary education, career development, job readiness and placement, parenting skills, household management skills, homeownership counseling, money management, transportation, family counseling and case management.

FSS families will participate in various activities facilitated by the service providers that relate to completion of the goals identified on their ITSP. Some of the activities include, but are not limited to, career exploration and assessments, resume writing courses, small business exploration, parenting and budgeting classes, credit repair, and attending GED and college classes.

HASC uses our Local Planning Area (LPA) group which serves as the Program Coordinating Committee (PCC). This alternate committee will assist the FSS Coordinator in securing use of public and private resources for the operation of the FSS Program.

The local LPA defines itself as a local partnership to connect, coordinate, communicate and plan activities and projects together with other community organizations and entities so those living in poverty can succeed. Members of the LPA will meet frequently and share information so those living in poverty and moving toward employment may access needed services and overcome barriers. The LPA strives to be collaborative, to work with potential new partners and to prevent duplication of services.

Membership of the LPA meets regulatory requirements as an alternative committee. In addition to the FSS Coordinator and a Section 8 Participant, the membership of the LPA is listed below:

LPA Members	
Housing Authority of Skagit County FSS Coordinator	A Housing Choice Voucher recipient
NW Refugee and Immigrant Services	Skagit Valley College ECEAP (Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program)
Skagit Valley College	Nooksack Tribe
DSHS – Economic Services Administration - Division of Child Support	Opportunity Council
DSHS – Community Services Division –	Friendship House

Mt. Vernon and Oak Harbor	
Lummi Nation	Brigid Collins Family Support Center
Island Transit	Washington Hospitality Association
Samish Tribe	Catholic Community Services
Goodwill	Skagit County – Nurse Family Partnership
Employment Security Department	Skagit Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services
Upper Skagit Tribe	Department of Commerce
Sea Mar Community Health Centers	Workforce Northwest – San Juan
Anacortes Family Center	Island County Housing Authority
Citizens Against Domestic and Sexual Abuse (CADA)	Oak Harbor School District
WSU Extension-Skagit	Spin Café
Community Action Agency of Skagit	Workforce Snohomish
Island County	Washington State Health Care Authority
Mount Vernon Police Department	Service Alternatives

Identification of Support Needs and Design of the Individual Training and Service Plan

All FSS Heads of Household participating in the FSS Program will be interviewed by the FSS Coordinator who will assess their family's needs using a needs-based assessment. The informal assessment gathers information about the applicant family including basic needs, special needs of the family, education, career skills, employment, financial and credit needs as well as mental health and personal needs. The completion of the needs assessment is facilitated by the FSS Coordinator during an interview by asking questions and documenting the applicant's responses. The applicant is given a follow up appointment to review the assessment and develop goals for the ITSP.

With the information gathered, the FSS Coordinator will develop a service plan with the FSS Head of Household. The service plan will be documented on HUD 52650 and will contain the goals, objectives, tasks, resources and responsible parties which will enable the FSS Family to accomplish their goal of becoming economically self-sufficient. The FSS Coordinator and the FSS Head of Household will together determine the supportive services that the FSS Head of Household will need to accomplish their goals. They will also determine target dates for the completion of each activity and service.

The FSS Coordinator will monitor participants' progress on an ongoing basis and will make contact with the participant by phone, by mail, by email or face-to-face as he/she determines is necessary to best serve participants.

To determine progress on a service plan, the FSS Coordinator will request proof of completion of each goal. When possible, the documentation will be written from the agency providing the service. In the case of completion of a class, a certificate would show proof of completion. In some cases a certificate may not be appropriate but instead a document that showed attendance or written third party documents that demonstrated the activity was completed such as a copy of a credit report may be used. When third party documents are not available to demonstrate completion of an activity or goal, a signed self-certification by the participant or a written narrative by the FSS Coordinator will be required. The proof of completion will be kept in the participant's folder along with the service plan.

Modifying the ITSP

During the term of Contract of Participation, the service plan goals may be adjusted to reflect the changing needs or plans of a family. In order to remove or add a goal, the FSS Coordinator and/or participant will make a written statement of the change desired, which both will sign. If requested, the participant will submit any necessary verification and/or documentation. All changes to the service plan should provide value to the family and result in helping the family towards self-sufficiency.

ITSP for Additional Household Members

Any family member aged 18 and older may have a service plan if they desire, and the family members' goals are binding for purposes of determining successful completion of the program. The FSS Head of Household will be the only member of the family whose employment is required for the family's successful completion of the Contract of Participation. (The mandatory employment goal only applies to the FSS Head of Household.)

Changes to the Head of Household

If a family wishes to change the adult member who is the head of the household for FSS purposes, the family must submit a new statement designating that family member as the FSS Head of Household. The statement must be signed and dated by all adult members of the family. The new FSS Head of Household will help to create or update their own individual training and services plan. The baseline annual earned income and baseline monthly rent on the Contract of Participation will remain unchanged. The contract expiration date will also remain unchanged unless an extension of the contract is requested and approved.

Changes to Income

A participating FSS family must report income changes to their assigned Section 8 Housing Specialist as required by HCV regulation for reporting changes. If the family underreports their income and or assets, they will be required to repay HASC. HASC will follow the Debts Owed Policy for entering into a repayment agreement.

Transitional Support

Families that have completed their CoP and remain in assisted housing may request assistance with referrals to service providers in order to continue their progress toward economic security. Subject to limitations on staff capacity, HASC will try to help these families with appropriate referrals. The time spent on these referrals will not be covered by funds designated by HUD to support the FSS program.

Support Services

FSS participants will be referred to the following agencies for activities and supportive services. Additional services not listed will be developed for families as stipulated in the Individual Training and Services Plan.

Support Services

Basic Skills and GED Test Preparation

Skagit Valley College	HS21+ classes (\$25 per quarter)
	GED Exam prep-in English or Spanish
	I-Best: (Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training) Career pathway paired with basic education. Areas: Allied Health, Automotive, Early Childhood Education, Business Management, Manufacturing, Nursing, and Welding.
Community Action	GED prep, evening and day
Goodwill Skagit	Math
	GED and HS21+ classes

Career Guidance and Training

Burlington, Mount Vernon Libraries	Microsoft Imagine Academy: Microsoft Office applications, computer science, data science, and IT infrastructure.
Economic Development Association of Skagit County	Small business support and counseling, including Latino business support
Goodwill Skagit	Computer Basics, Keyboarding and Microsoft Word
	Cashiering Career Building Lab
Skagit Valley College	I-CATCH (Innovations in Creating Access to Careers in Healthcare) I-Best: (Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training) Career pathway paired with basic education. Life Transitions Program
WorkSource Skagit	
	Career guidance, resume development, interview practice
	Skills Discovery

	Interview Ready
	Resume Reboot (Spanish and English)
	Fresh Start (background of conviction)
	Career Course
	Self Employment Assistance Program
	Hiring events
	LinkedIn workshop (create LinkedIn account)
Mount Vernon City Library and Burlington Public Library	Resume Development
Chinook Enterprises	Skagit County residents with disabilities or other barriers
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	Job coaching and placement for persons with disabilities
DSHS	BFET Basic Food Employment and Training program
Love INC	Let's Dress for your Success (Women's work clothes)
Childcare	
Office of Head Start	HeadStart (3-5) and EarlyStart (0-2)
Mount Vernon School District	Referrals to Children of the Valley, (free afterschool program)
Skagit Valley College	Emergency & Childcare Assistance Program
DSHS Childcare Assistance	Working Connections Child Care Program
Inspire Development Centers	Seasonal Child Care
Child Care Aware	Referrals and resources to help pay for services
Citizenship Classes	
Goodwill Skagit	Citizenship Test Preparation (Spanish/English)
Community Action	Citizenship Classes (English, evening)
Counseling	
Compass Health	

SeaMar Clinic	
Sunrise Services	
Brigid Collins Family Support Center	
Catholic Community Services	
Substance Use and Gambling	
Phoenix Recovery	
Lifeline Connections	
Catholic Community Services	
English For Speakers of Other Language	
Goodwill Skagit	ESOL Level 1 Day and evening, preliterate ok
	ESOL Level 2 & 3 Day
Community Action	English Language Classes (day or evening)
Skagit Valley College	English Language Acquisition program (\$25 per quarter) (day or evening)
Burlington, Mount Vernon City Libraries	Access to Mango Language program online
Financial Literacy	
WorkSource	Personal Budgeting Workshop
Community Action	Budgeting Workshop
	Credit Workshop
	Financial Coaching
Financial PEOPLE Project	Financial education and peer training program
Love INC	Loving Hope Mentoring Program (financial counseling and mentoring)
Homeownership	
USDA Rural Development home loans	
Housing Trust	
Habitat for Humanity	
Healthy Living	
SeaMar Clinic, Mount Vernon	Monthly Healthy Cooking class

Washington State University Extension	Plan, Shop, Save, Cook (PSSC)
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Legal and Domestic Issues	
Northwest Justice Project	CLEAR Hotline at 1-888-201-1014 weekdays between 9:15 am - 12:15 pm Seniors (age 60 and over) can also call CLEAR*Senior at 1-888-387-7111 (statewide)
Skagit DVSAS (Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services)	Legal information and free legal forms (website)
Medical Resources	
Apple Health	
Skagit County Dept. of Public Health	ABCD: Access to Baby and Child Dentistry
SeaMar Clinics	
Medicaid Transportation	1-360-738- 4554, 1-800-860-6812
C.A.R.E. Medical Center	
Parenting	
C.A.R.E. Medical Center	Thriving Heart parenting class
Washington State University Whatcom and Skagit County Extension	Strengthening Families Program (peer pressure and drug prevention) (youth 10-14 and their families)
Parent to Parent of Skagit County	Support for parents of children with special needs
Brigid Collins Family Support Center	Parenting classes online
SPARC (Skagit Preschool and Resource Center)	Programs and resources
Help Me Grow Skagit	Resources and referral, navigator onsite
Inspire Development Centers	Head Start including migrant/seasonal
Special Needs	
Skagit Valley College	Invest program

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	
Chinook Enterprises	Serves Skagit County residents with disabilities or other barriers to employment
Transportation	
Skagit Transit and Dial A Ride	
Community Action	Critical Needs Program bus passes
Medicaid Transportation	1-360-738- 4554, 1-800-860-6812
Mount Vernon City Library	Access to Consumer Reports (car purchase)
	Access to Auto Repair Source (AutoMate) service and repair info
Burlington Public Library	Chilton Library (do it yourself auto repair)
Central Skagit Library	Consumer Reports (car purchase)

V. ASSURANCE OF NON-INTERFERENCE

Participation in the FSS Program is strictly voluntary. All HCV Program participants, both minority and non-minority groups, will be notified in all literature, media and verbal presentations related to the FSS Program that participation is voluntary and that their housing assistance will not be terminated based on whether they decide to participate in FSS, their successful completion of the CoP, or their failure to comply with FSS program requirements.

VI. TIMETABLE FOR PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The Housing Authority of Skagit County implemented the FSS Program and enrolled 25 participants within 12 months of the 2012 Section 8 FSS Award as required by HUD FSS Regulation 984.301. Within 2 years of receipt of the award, all FSS families signed received supportive services as stipulated in their service agreement. Active operation of the program continues, following the requirements of HUD regulations.

VII. CERTIFICATION OF COORDINATION

The Housing Authority of Skagit County certifies that services and activities have been coordinated with Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, Community Action Skagit, WorkSource and other local public and private providers, and that implementation will continue to be coordinated in order to avoid duplication of services and activities.

VIII. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Absorption. In portability, the point at which a receiving PHA stops billing the initial PHA for assistance on behalf of a portability family. The receiving PHA uses funds available under the receiving PHA's consolidated ACC.

Administrative Plan. The HUD required written policy of the PHA governing its administration of the Section 8 rental assistance program.

Applicant (or applicant family). A family that has applied for admission to a program but is not yet a participant in the program.

Baseline annual earned income. For purposes of determining the FSS credit under § 984.305(b), the FSS family's total annual earned income from wages and business income (if any) as of the effective date of the FSS contract. In calculating baseline annual earned income, all applicable exclusions of income must be applied, except for any disregarded earned income or other adjustments associated with self-sufficiency incentives that may be applicable to the determination of annual income.

Baseline monthly rent. For purposes of determining the FSS credit under § 984.305(b) this is:

The FSS family's total tenant payment (TTP), as of the effective date of the FSS contract, for families paying an income-based rent as of the effective date of the FSS contract; or the amount of the flat or ceiling rent (which includes the applicable utility allowance), and including any hardship discounts, as of the effective date of the FSS contract, for families paying a flat or ceiling rent as of the effective date of the FSS contract.

Certification. A written assertion based on supporting evidence.

Contract of Participation (CoP) HUD form 52650. A contract between the Head of Household and the PHA. The Contract of Participation must include an Individual Training and Services Plan (ITSP). The effective date of the Contract of Participation is the first day of the month following execution date (signing date) of the contract by the Head of Household and the PHA. The end date of the contract is no later than five years after the first recertification of income after the execution date of the CoP (24 CFR 984.303(c).)

Current monthly rent. For purposes of determining the FSS credit under § 984.305(b) this is:

The FSS family's TTP as of the most recent re-examination of income, which occurs after the effective date of the FSS contract, for families paying an income-based rent as of the most recent re-examination of income; or

The amount of the flat rent (which includes the applicable utility allowance) or ceiling rent, including any hardship discounts, as of the most recent re-examination of income which occurs after the effective date of the FSS contract, for families paying a flat rent or ceiling rent as of the most recent re-examination of income.

Effective date of Contract of Participation (CoP). The first day of the month following the date in which the FSS family and the PHA or owner executed (signed) the CoP.

Enrollment. The date that the FSS family entered into the CoP with the PHA or owner.

Family Self Sufficiency Program (FSS). The program established by the PHA to promote self-sufficiency of assisted families, including the coordination of supportive services.

FSS family in good standing. An FSS family that is in compliance with its FSS CoP; has either satisfied or is current on any debts owed the PHA or owner; and is in compliance with the HCV program requirements.

Head of FSS family. The designated adult family member of the FSS family who has signed the CoP. The head of FSS family may, but is not required to be, the head of the household for purposes of determining income eligibility and rent.

HUD Requirements. HUD requirements for the Section 8 and FSS programs. HUD requirements are issued by HUD headquarters as regulations, Federal Register notices or other binding program directives.

Incoming Portable. A family that has left the jurisdiction of its initial PHA and has leased a unit in the jurisdiction of the Housing Authority of Skagit County.

Initial PHA. In portability, the term refers to both a PHA that originally selected a family that decides to move out of the jurisdiction of the selecting PHA; and a PHA that absorbed a family that later decides to move out of the jurisdiction of the absorbing PHA.

Individual Training and Services Plan (ITSP). A written plan that is prepared by the PHA or owner in consultation with a participating FSS family member (the person with for and whom the ITSP is being developed), and which sets forth:

- (A) The final and interim goals for the participating FSS family member;
- (B) The supportive services to be provided to the participating FSS family member;
- (C) The activities to be completed by that family member; and,
- (D) The agreed upon completion dates for the goals, and activities.

Each ITSP must be signed by the PHA or owner and the participating FSS family member and is attached to, and incorporated as part of the CoP. An ITSP must be prepared for each adult family member who elects to participate in the FSS program, including the head of FSS family who has signed the CoP.

Outgoing Portable. A family initially leased up in the jurisdiction of the Housing Authority of Skagit County that moves to a new (receiving) PHA's jurisdiction.

Participant. A family that has been admitted to the PHA's FSS program. The family becomes a participant on the effective date of the Contract of Participation.

Portability. Renting a dwelling unit with Section 8 tenant-based assistance outside the jurisdiction of the family's initial PHA.

Public Assistance. Welfare or other payments to families or individuals, based on need, which are made under programs funded, separately or jointly, by Federal, State, or local governments.

Public Housing Agency (PHA). Any state, county, municipality, or other governmental entity or public body which is authorized to administer the Section 8 program (or an agency or instrumentality of such an entity). The Housing Authority of Skagit County is referred to as the PHA throughout this document.

Receiving PHA. In portability, a PHA that receives a family selected for participation in the tenant-based program of another PHA. The receiving PHA issues a voucher and provides program assistance to the family.

Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP). A set of criteria established by HUD for rating of housing authority performance. Housing authorities are given points for performance under a number of indicators.

Self-sufficiency. Self-sufficiency means that an FSS family is no longer receiving Section 8, public housing assistance, or any Federal, State, or local rent, homeownership subsidies, or welfare assistance. Achievement of self-sufficiency, although an FSS program objective, is not a condition for receipt of the FSS escrow account funds.

Suitable Employment. The determination of suitable employment will be made with the agreement of the affected participant, so that the affected participant has input into this matter along with the PHA or owner. The determination will involve consideration of the receipt of other benefits of the participant, to ensure that new employment will not cause the loss of necessary supports, in addition to the skills, education, and job training of that participant.

Tenant Rent. The amount payable monthly by the family as rent to the unit owner.

Utility Allowance. When the cost of utilities (except phone and cable) is not included in the Contract Rent but is the responsibility of the tenant, the PHA estimates the cost of a reasonable consumption of utilities for an assisted unit. The utility allowance is only applicable to the portion of utilities paid by the tenant.

Welfare Assistance. Income assistance from Federal or State welfare programs, including assistance provided under TANF (formerly AFDC) and general assistance. Does not include assistance directed solely to meeting housing expenses, nor programs that provide health care, childcare or other services for working families.