



Technical Assistance for HUD Multifamily Assisted Housing to Launch a Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program: **Request for Interest**

HUD seeks assisted housing owners and management agents interested in receiving technical assistance (TA) to support their establishment of a Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program in one or more of the properties they own or manage. The TA will help owners/agents get ready to successfully execute the program by working through the steps of program start-up, launch, and initial operation.

Owners/agents selected through this Request for Interest (RFI) will receive a combination of group and individualized TA. The TA will include coaching, education, and concrete support from an expert in FSS program implementation. This opportunity will help housing providers successfully develop the program framework and launch their FSS programs. The TA will also include assistance in outreach to and relationship-building between management agent staff and community service providers.

What is the Family Self-Sufficiency Program?

The FSS program helps assisted housing residents increase their earnings and build financial assets. The program has two key features:

- A financial incentive for residents to increase their earnings in the form of an escrow account that increases as residents' earnings increase. The escrow account helps residents build savings that they can use to improve their quality of life and advance their personal goals.
- Coaching or case management to help residents access services to overcome barriers to employment and strengthen their financial capabilities.

Residents who choose to enroll in FSS work with an FSS program coordinator, who partners with residents to identify a series of intermediate and long-term goals and the steps to achieve those goals. Each resident will have his or her identified goals and steps recorded in an Individual Training and Services Plan (ITSP). The ITSP is part of an FSS Contract of Participation (CoP) signed by the owner and the participating family. The CoP records the commitments of the family and the owner to work together to achieve the identified goals.

For more detail on the FSS program and its components, see the resources on the [Multifamily Family Self Sufficiency Program HUD Exchange page](#).

Benefits of Launching an FSS Program

- FSS programs support owners' efforts to help residents make progress toward economic self-sufficiency. As participant earned income increases, amounts equal to any rent increases triggered by the higher earnings are deposited into an escrow account. Funded by HUD, the escrow account provides both a financial incentive for participants to increase their earnings and a vehicle for participants to build savings.
- FSS programs support a mixed-income resident body and enable some participants to transition to market-rate housing. This frees up space within the development for other families in need of assisted housing.
- FSS builds economic capacity among residents. Residents have an opportunity to be actively engaged in a forward-looking program designed to help them make progress toward economic self-sufficiency.
- FSS benefits owners/agents by decreasing the incidence of nonpayment of rent, since participants will work towards an increased and stable income stream.

Owners who choose to establish an FSS program must develop a program design and then submit an FSS Action Plan to HUD for approval.

At this time, Congress has not appropriated any new direct funding for the employment of FSS program coordinators in multifamily assisted housing. However, properties with available residual receipts may use these funds to support the position of the FSS program coordinator and will be exempt from the requirement to use residual receipts to offset Section 8 payments. Owners/agents of properties without residual receipts are encouraged to seek alternative and third-party funding sources.

Overview of Technical Assistance

HUD will provide the following technical assistance services to a cohort of up to 10 owners/agents over a nine-month period:

- 1. Live virtual peer learning opportunities and individual assistance;**
- 2. Access to self-guided online training during the TA period, and**
- 3. On-site visit to help with program launch.**

The TA will help cohort members work through the steps of program start-up, launch and operation. Curriculum topics will include the following:

- Identifying sources of funding to hire or retain FSS coordinators who are qualified to provide case management or coaching;
- Understanding options for structuring the core services provided through the FSS program, including implementing an asset-building approach that incorporates financial coaching;
- Identifying and aligning key stakeholders;
- Writing an implementable and HUD-compliant Action Plan;
- Developing program policies and procedures to effectively operate an FSS program;
- Establishing and maintaining FSS escrow accounts for program participants;

- Designing data collection methods for completion of HUD performance reports, and
- Planning the program-launch process, including developing program materials, conducting marketing and outreach, and enrolling the first participants.

As part of this TA cohort, organizations should expect to participate in 6-8 hours per month of self-guided online training, peer-learning groups, and individual TA sessions for approximately nine months. The organizations will also be expected to complete activities and assignments outside of this structured TA to support the launch of their FSS programs.

Considerations for Selecting FSS Properties

Owners/agents must identify a specific priority property for their FSS program. This property will be the subject of the TA. Applicants may also identify up to two additional properties that they wish to be considered for FSS TA. HUD's ability to fund TA activities at more than one property per applicant will depend on the number and content of applications received.

Consider the following factors in determining which properties in your portfolio are the best candidates for an FSS program:

- 1. Enrollment Potential:** Owners/agents should consider the potential for enrollment in FSS in determining which properties to prioritize for FSS. While properties of all sizes are eligible to participate in FSS, larger properties will likely be better able to absorb the administrative costs associated with starting a new FSS program. While smaller FSS programs may be able to operate with shared staff, a dedicated FSS staff will generally be needed for larger programs. Past experience suggests that, when marketed effectively, enrollment in FSS at a multifamily property can reach a number equal to approximately 30-40 percent of the number of project-based Section 8 households that are neither elderly nor disabled in a development.¹
- 2. Property Stability:** FSS programs are most successful when property operations are stable. High staff turnover, large capital projects, or other big changes or new initiatives typically disrupt properties in ways that make them poor environments to launch new FSS programs.
- 3. Relationships with Residents:** Properties where management, resident services, and other staff have healthy, trusting relationships with residents will have an advantage launching new FSS programs.
- 4. Commitment to Implement FSS:** FSS programs are more likely to be successful when owners/agents have a strong commitment at all levels of the organization to implement the program efficiently at their property(ies). This includes buy-in and support early on at the leadership level, as well as an understanding from property operations staff of the commitment needed to launch a new FSS program.
- 5. Potential Community Partners:** Properties that already have resident programs and other supportive services, or where owners/agents have knowledge of or relationships with potential community service providers that could serve as a referral partner or program delivery partner, will have an advantage in starting up an FSS program.

¹ Note that all households are eligible to participate in FSS, including households headed by people who are elderly or who have a disability.

Criteria for Selection

A limited amount of funding is available for TA to assist in launching an FSS program at HUD-assisted multifamily properties. This section describes the criteria for selection as well as the preferences that will be applied in the event interest in the TA exceeds available funding.

To be eligible for this TA, housing owners and management agents must:

1. Own and/or manage HUD-assisted multifamily housing properties that are designated for families and subsidized through project-based Section 8 assistance;
2. Be able to identify specific multifamily properties where an FSS program can be implemented successfully, and
3. Express a commitment to participate actively in the TA and implement a robust FSS program.

If applicant interest exceeds available TA funding, housing owners and management agents that meet the following criteria will be given preference in the selection process:

1. Has identified a primary property that has at least 100 project-based section 8 units.
2. Has already taken preliminary steps to develop an FSS program at the principal property designated for TA, including identifying:
 - How the FSS program will be funded, and/or
 - Potential program staff (i.e. FSS program manager and/or a coordinator who provides coaching or case management to participating residents). This can be done through new or existing staff or a third-party provider.

Application Process and Timeline

- Request for Interest (RFI) application submission deadline: **Tuesday, October 8, 2019 at 11:59 PM Eastern.**
- Initial selections will be made from completed RFI applications submitted by the deadline.
- Candidates being considered for technical assistance may be contacted to participate in a needs assessment phone interview.
- HUD plans to notify applicants selected for TA by **November 15, 2019.**
- Individual TA will begin in early **December 2019** and will conclude in **August 2020.**
- Applications received after **October 8, 2019** will be considered on a rolling basis and will be contacted if and when additional TA funds are available.

Interested applicants should fill out and return the form below to: multifamilyFSS@abtassoc.com by the application deadline date.

Please direct questions about the Multifamily Housing FSS program and the RFI to: Carissa Janis in HUD's Office of Multifamily Housing Programs at carissa.l.janis@hud.gov, 202-402-2487.

Application for Technical Assistance for Multifamily Housing Family Self-Sufficiency Program

Housing Owner or Management Agent Name:

Please enter name here

	Housing Owner Contact Information:	Management Agent Contact Information:
Name		
Title		
Phone		
Email		

Briefly describe your organization’s interest in requesting technical assistance (TA) and its commitment to both participating in this TA opportunity and efficiently implementing an FSS program.

Enter a 1-2 paragraph description here...

In the table below, please list at least one (and up to three) HUD-assisted multifamily properties that you believe are strong candidates for the FSS TA based on the considerations for selecting FSS properties listed above. List the properties in order of your preferred priority, in the event HUD determines it can provide TA to only one or two of the properties identified. *Please complete the table below:*

Priority	Property name and address:	Total Units (#):	Project-based Section 8 units (#):	Considerations for Selecting FSS Properties (reason(s) the property is a good fit for FSS, e.g. enrollment potential, property stability, relationships with residents)
1st Priority Property				
2nd Priority Property				
3rd Priority Property				

If you wish to be considered for the selection preference, describe and demonstrate in the table below the readiness of your property(ies) to launch an FSS program through this TA opportunity. Specify what steps, if any, you have already taken to develop an FSS program at one or more of the properties listed by identifying:

- How your FSS program will be funded and
- The program staff (i.e. FSS program manager and/or coordinator who will provide coaching or case management to participating residents), either through existing staff or a third party provider.

Property (list in same order as above)	DEMONSTRATED READINESS: identified and/or secured funding	DEMONSTRATED READINESS: identified or hired program staff to provide coaching or case management to participating residents
1st Priority Property		
2nd Priority Property		
3rd Priority Property		



In the fields below, provide the full name, title, affiliation, phone, email, and signature of one primary individual who will lead this effort. This contact will be making a formal commitment of time to the activities described above.

Representative Name:

Title:

Affiliation:

Phone:

Email:

Representative Signature:

Date: