



Family Rehousing and Stabilization Program (FRSP) Task Force
Customer Planning Meeting
October 29, 2019
DHS Headquarters
64 New York Ave, NE, Sixth Floor

Customer Planning Meeting: 12:00pm-3:00PM

Grounding: Recap Task Force process to date and next steps, including both 10/18 memos that clarify charge and process; and quick overview of “themed suggestions” and “customer themes”.

Meeting attendees: Family Advocates

Samirra Robinson
Shonta Jones
Shauna Gray
Sheena Parker

Travonna Brooks
Uchenna Egenti
Yvette Barnes
Kimberly Harris

DHS staff: resources to attendees

Tamitha Rama Davis
Noah Abraham
Darrell Cason

Lorraine Nwaoko
Christy Evans
Nancy Blackwell

Facilitator: Barbara Poppe

Family advocates discussed the summary of key themes document which was part of the Task Force #3 meeting mailing and draft documents that summarized ideas for the “two pathways” approach and “vision and values” that were discussed at Task Force #2 meeting.

The participants revised and ultimately approved the following program models, enhancements and vision/values as recommendations to the Task Force. Items in [] indicate areas of discussion for alternative approaches.

I. DRAFT – FRSP Bridge Model

Eligibility: Must meet all three criteria:

1. District residents who have been deemed eligible for homeless services after being assessed at the Virginia Williams Families Resource Center.
2. Families who are in shelter or families who are in the first three months of FRSP.
3. Families who are eligible for TAH/PSH as follows:
 - TAH Eligibility Factors
 - A household member with a documented chronic disability and significantly impacts the household member(s) to earn income necessary to maintain housing.
 - Household must include at least one adult (18+ years old) and one minor or dependent child
 - Connected and engaged to community resources.
 - PSH Eligibility Factors
 - Have a chronic mental and/or physical health diagnosis and unable to appropriately utilize and follow-up on diagnosis (i.e. medical appointments);
 - Inability to follow through with basic program requirements (i.e. service plan);
 - Lack of ability/interest to manage income/funds; and in addition, may;
 - Have suspected cognitive impairment;
 - Have a history or current incidences of domestic violence or otherwise.

Program length: Families can expect to be in the program until transferred to TAH/PSH:

- Initially, families will sign a 12-month FRSP lease. If they receive the voucher before the 12-month lease is over, they will lease in place until the end of the lease.
- Landlords will be informed in advance that families may get a voucher before the 12-month lease is over and they should agree to change the subsidy from FRSP to TAH/PSH for the remainder of the year.

Case Management Provider: Families will receive case management services from a TAH and PSH case manager in the following manner: *[This was preferred over FRSP case manager who transferred case to TAH/PSH case manager]*

1. If families qualify for TAH, they will receive light touch¹ case management and rental assistance until they are connected to a voucher. The light touch case management will consist of monthly contacts with the family and case manager

¹ Light touch case management means monthly for the first three months and quarterly check in and support as needed after that.

for the first 90 days and quarterly contacts after the initial 90 days. *[Discussion on initial intensity of case management – decided it need to be more intense than ongoing TAH]*

- The case management ratio for this group would be 1: 20
 - Case management services will be provided DHS TAH case managers
 - Housing search/location
2. If families qualify for PSH, they will receive intensive case management and rental assistance until they are connected to a voucher. The intensive case management will consist of two face-to-face and two non-face-to-face contacts per month.
 - The case management ratio for this group would be 1:17
 - Case management services will be provided by DHS contracted PSH service providers
 3. Families can look for units that meet voucher rent reasonable guideline upon moving to FRSP
 4. Families will pay 30% of their income towards rent

Services: Case management services will be focused towards connection to health care; other services to support the head of the household and all household members as needed.

Housing Case Management Services:

- Assistance and support with lease signing
- Tenant Landlord
- Ensuring timely submission of rental payments
- Ensuring timely remediation of maintenance and unit issues
- Connections to needed community resources and supports

Landlord Management:

- Consistent communication with landlords to establish clear expectation about leasing in place when the family gets the voucher.
- Provide landlords updates on the status of the family's voucher application.
- Discussion and communication regarding required documents in order to lease in place.

Exits:

- FRSP rental subsidy will remain in place until the voucher is available and no more than 90 days after family is approved for the voucher.
- If the family is deemed eligible for TAH/PSH while in FRSP, the FRSP case manager completes warm handoff to PSH/TAH case manager within 15 days of eligibility.

II. DRAFT – FRSP TANF Model

Eligibility

District residents who have been deemed eligible for homeless services after being assessed at the Virginia Williams Families Resource Center and who are receiving TANF or are working but not earning enough² to pay market rent.³

Program length: *[Extensive discussion on fixed time frame v. individualized; extension v. no extensions; automatic eligibility v. current approach based on compliance with case plan as condition for up to 2 extensions; on what criteria should be used to determine length of time; ultimately decided on fixed time frame with automatic six months when meet specific criteria. Recommended that this be fully discussed at TF #3 meeting]*

Each family remains in the program based on individualized needs and program timeframe is determined when a family is assessed⁴ at intake:

12 months	24 months	36 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ High School Diploma (or higher)○ Connected to community resources, including TEP vendors, that are assisting the family to gain and maintain housing stability○ Experience temporary hardship or setback (ex: injury on the job) and is expected to recover and maximize employment potential within a year○ Employed in the	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ GED○ Challenging Employment History○ Currently unemployed but has history of employment in the past 12 months.○ Underemployed (income is at 50% of market rent)○ Youth Head of Household○ 1 eviction○ Aging out of the foster care system○ Currently pregnant or has a child under 1 year old○ In job training program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Minimal Education- Has not attained a GED or equivalent○ Unemployed and has no history of employment in the past 18 months.○ Undocumented○ 2 + Evictions○ Current CFSA involvement○ Has mental health barriers

² Families who are paying more than 50% of their income towards housing are included in this group

³ DHS is completing a cost assessment to determine if working families can be served by TANF in FRSP TANF Model

⁴ DHS, in partnership with customers and providers, will develop an assessment tool that will determine the length of stay in the program

past 6 months		
<p>*Families will be eligible for a onetime additional six-month period based on meeting at least one of the following criteria: education/training program that ends within the 6 months additional time frame, medical condition and/or change in family housing situation such as job loss. <i>[Extensive discussion on what conditions should trigger eligibility for additional 6 months in the program]</i></p>		

Case Manager: *[Extensive discussion on feasibility of this model; lots of concerns about quality and usefulness of TEP services; recommended that there be additional follow with DHS to determine how TEP can be more responsive to individual/family needs. Agreement that if TEP was working well this design made sense]*

- TEP case manager:
 - Case load: 1:12 (up to 15)
 - will be the lead in attaining employment and education goals
 - The goal is to help families make enough to pay housing costs - e.g. market rent and utilities (up to 50% housing cost burdened).
- FRSP case manager:
 - Will provide housing case management (e.g. paying rent, household maintenance, tenant rights and responsibilities, landlord relationship, etc.) and connection to supportive services (e.g. credit repair, health, children's education, etc.) to provide a wrap-around support for the family.
 - Caseload 1:30 *[Discussion on appropriate case load size]*
- FRSP case manager will be responsible for organizing at least quarterly joint case conferences with TEP case manager and family; other programs will be invited as appropriate. *[Discussion that joint case management was needed]*

Education and Employment: *[Extensive discussion on feasibility of this model; lots of concerns about quality and usefulness of TEP services; recommended that there be additional follow with DHS to determine how TEP can be more responsive to individual/family needs. Agreement that if TEP was working well this design made sense.]*

- TANF Employment Provider engagement is required in order to remain eligible for the FRSP program and housing subsidy. *[Additional discussion that while Family Advocates believed that client accountability to making progress on education and employment was necessary to receive ongoing FRSP rent subsidy, however, if TEP provider was ineffective/non-responsive to FRSP family that the family can apply to*

DHS to waive this requirement and instead develop client accountability plan for FRSP case manager to monitor.]

- Individualized goal setting and service coordination by TEP case manager.
- Quarterly joint case and goal review by TEP and FRSP case manager.

TANF Employment/Education Program Provider Types

Services	Customer Needs	Program
Job Placement Services	Employment	Job Placement Service Provider (JP)
Education Services	Education and training	Education and Occupational Training (EOT)
Nursing Services	2- or 4-year degree nursing programs	University of the District of Columbia (UDC)
Behavior Health	Strengths based approach to employment service or behavioral health needs	DHS Office of Work Opportunity (OWO)
Multigenerational Services	Family stabilization	Variety of providers

TANF Incentives

Education Incentives (EOT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1-day training completion - \$50 ▪ 30-day training completion - \$200 ▪ 1-3 month training completion - \$400 ▪ 4-6 month training completion - \$600 ▪ 7+ month training completion - \$1,000
Job Placement (JP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Job placement - \$150 ▪ Retention month 1 through 11 - \$150 ▪ Retention month 12 - \$500 ▪ Promotion - \$400 ▪ Exit from TANF due to earnings/4 months - \$500
Both EOT and JP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$15 daily stipend for 4 or more hours of approved activity ▪ \$250 per 12 months for discrete work related expenses

Landlord Management:

- Families will sign initial 12-month lease.
- After a year, depending on the individualized case management plan, families may lease in place for the remainder of the program period.
- Consistent communication with landlord to solve tenant/landlord issues.
- FRSP case manager to work with landlord to inform of program status and to reiterate program goals and expectations of both landlord and family.

Exits: *[Extensive discussion on this topic]*

- Length of stay depends on the timeframe the family has been allocated upon entry.
- Exit planning will occur with both the FRSP and TEP case manager on ongoing basis. However formal exit planning with the TANF and FRSP case manager will be initiated once the family is within 3 months of the program exit date.
- FRSP Case Manager will work with family to identify whether the family is going to remain in the current unit or looking to identify another unit.
- Failure to engage with the TEP vendor and follow through on TANF program requirements may result in termination; except if the family declines TEP services after FSA attempted resolution to resolve TEP issues. In this event, the family will develop and adhere to an accountability plan for employment and education that is approved by DHS and monitored by the FRSP case manager; failure to follow this plan may result in termination. *[This alternative approach to client accountability was strongly supported]*

III. Program Improvements: Topics for Further Discussion/Analysis

- Administrative
- Assessment
- Data and evaluation
- Housing and financial assistance
- Program services and offerings

Administrative

- Accountability and transparency – customer-facing *[Discussion and agreement with these improvements]*
 - Clear communication
 - Client handbook on how to navigate homeless services
 - Simplified language in FRSP program rules
 - Criteria for entering
 - Criteria for exits
 - Ombudsman – single person covering for all program components/aspects
- Accountability, consistency, and transparency – staff roles/responsibilities *[Discussion and agreement with these improvements]*
 - Clear expectations for TCP, FRSP contractors, DHS, and DCHA
 - Clear communication
 - Consistency among FRSP providers
 - Hold case managers and providers accountable for performance outcomes
 - Improve contract monitoring/oversight
 - Outside oversight and review
 - Outside oversight of DHS
 - Better oversight of DCHA
- Accountability, consistency, and transparency – OAH *[Discussion and agreement with these improvements]*
 - Clear communication
 - Process
 - Manual
 - Representative for participant

Assessment – initial and ongoing

- Initial assessment *[Significant discussion about these improvements resulted in a few changes from the original themes as noted below]*
 - Assessments at the shelter or in HPP to begin case planning across programs (TANF, DBH, CFSA, etc.) rather than only being referred to homelessness prevention program and shelter (have someone to assist with linkage and care coordination)
 - Assessment should ask about current and past barriers

- Clear eligibility criteria
- Ranking/scoring families with complexities
- Exit strategies developed at intake
- VI-SPDAT - end using the tool for FRSP except if eligible for TAH and PSH *[Strong opposition to all families being required to complete this assessment]*
- Trained case manager
- Goal setting *[Discussion and agreement with these improvements]*
 - Comprehensive, family centered, two generation, and unified case plan
 - Eligibility for other housing programs *[Support adding this]*
 - Housing affordability assessment *[Support adding this]*
- Ongoing assessment *[Discussion and agreement with these improvements]*
 - 3-month check-ins
 - Progress on goals and case plan
 - Update on barrier reduction and any new barriers encountered
 - Housing affordability assessment *[Support adding this]*
- Assessment for readiness for program exit
 - Criteria for exits
 - Plan for assuring affordability of housing after the end of program subsidy *[Support adding this]*
 - Eligibility for other housing programs *[Support adding this]*

Data and evaluation *[Agreement with these improvements]*

- Quality and comprehensive data collection
- Income and earnings over time
- Cash assistance and other benefits over time
- Match to other systems data – actual earned income
- Eviction data
- Basic demographic data of families
- Data analysis to understand rental burden
- Clearly communicate ongoing data

Housing and financial assistance

- Expand financial assistance *[Discussion and some agreement with these improvements but not unanimous support for what should be program paid v. family paid]]*
 - Application fees
 - Furniture/other apartment set up needs
 - Budgeting
 - Credit repair
 - Waive amenities fee and application fees from landlords

- Revise participant rent share requirements *[Discussion but no agreement or unanimous support for what program should be paid v. family paid – suggestion that this be discussed at the TF #3 meeting]*
 - Minimum income requirements
 - Gradual increases in rent not to exceed 30% of income
 - Reduce FRSP rental payments by participants to 30% of income and include utilities
 - Tie rent amount to total rent vs household income
 - Portion of monthly rent amount to escrow
- Apartment options *[Discussion and agreement with these improvements]*
 - More apartments with affordable rents
 - More apartments with utilities included
 - Expand to MD and VA landlords
 - Shared housing options
- Housing supports for participants *[Discussion and agreement with these improvements]*
 - Universal application for housing
 - Better housing search assistance
 - Better tenant protections
 - Better tenant education
 - Advocacy with landlord to address conditions of unit, other landlord issues.
 - Better tracking of tenant payments to landlords
- Landlord engagement *[Discussion and agreement with these improvements]*
 - Improve inspection process and response to initial and ongoing property issues so participants are assured higher quality housing
 - Pest control
 - Carpet cleaning
 - Faster inspections from DCHA
 - Better relationships and communication with landlords
 - FRSP case managers should directly work with and be a resource to landlords when tenant is not following lease requirements
 - FRSP should improve communication and planning with landlord for participant exits
 - Develop alternatives to landlord evictions at end of FRSP (e.g. FRSP moves tenant to other housing)
 - Lease in place options
 - Landlord notification when the program ends, and the subsidy stops
 - Better landlord protections when participants don't pay rent after program ends
 - Waive application fee *[Recommended instead of using FRSP to pay for multiple application fees]*

Program services and offerings

- Accessible information for participants *[Discussion and agreement with these improvements]*

- Clear program manual for clients; repeated communication about program expectations, resources, etc.
- Client portal to submit documents and better way to track tenant payments to landlords
- Manual or training on how to maintain an apartment
- Improved case management services *[Discussion and agreement with these improvements]*
 - Provide case management at admission to FRSP; match to case managers upon lease up
 - Multigenerational approach
 - Services beyond 9 am – 5 pm
 - Individualized services
 - Engaged client participation
 - Client directed goal setting *[Significant discussion on need for this improvement]*
 - Clear exit criteria
 - TEP Services *[Significant discussion on need for this improvement]*
 - Improve TEP provider accountability
 - Streamlined and consistent documentation
 - Better TEP orientation and guidelines
- Better linkage and case coordination to other services *[Discussion and agreement with these improvements]*
 - Training and education
 - Mental health services
 - DOES
 - Childcare
 - GED
 - Job readiness/job training
 - Other DC offerings
 -
- Expand program offerings *[Discussion and agreement with these improvements]*
 - Credit repair
 - Housing search
 - Housing maintenance
 - Safety net program approach

Shauna Gray, Travonna Brooks, Uchenna Egenti and Kimberly Harris agreed to present the above at the task force meeting scheduled for 10/30/2019.

The group decided to ask the following questions to providers and landlords:

Fees beyond rent

- **Issue:** Fees for utilities, trash, water, sewage, amenities, and application fees are not routinely covered by FRSP and must be paid directly by the FRSP participant.
- Should this practice/policy change for any of these fees? Why/why not?
- What are pros and cons?
- What are alternatives?

FRSP providers expertise on TEP and other DHS programs

- **Issue:** FRSP participants report that FRSP case managers are not knowledgeable about TEP and other DHS services/programs. Also, joint case management is not occurring per the participants. DHS reports that FRSP case managers have been trained in TEP services.
- How could FRSP case managers become more knowledgeable about TEP and other DHS programs?
- Is joint FRSP/TEP case management and TEP programming feasible?
- What will be required to make this work?
- What are pros and cons?

FRSP case managers need to be better trained to support the housing needs of participants

- **Issue:** FRSP participants report that FRSP case managers do not seem to be able to support the housing needs of participants. This includes housing search/location, landlord advocacy and communication, education about tenant rights and responsibilities, be aware/track of participants payments to TCP, etc. as needed by FRSP participants.
- How could FRSP case managers become more knowledgeable about best practices in housing case management and the FRSP housing supports?
- What will be required to make this work?
- What do landlords need from FRSP case managers? What do FRSP case managers need from landlords?

FRSP providers expertise on community programs

- **Issue:** FRSP participants report that FRSP case managers are not knowledgeable about community services/programs. Also, FRSP case managers are not considering how these services fit within the FRSP goal plan.
- How could FRSP case managers become more knowledgeable about community programs?
- How could FRSP case managers better coordinate with these other providers and the FRSP participant?
- What will be required to make this work?
- What are pros and cons?

FRSP participants prefer family-centered, 2-generation, unified goal planning and case management

- **Issue:** FRSP participants report that FRSP case managers do not seem to be able to support the unique needs of participants. They report that goal plans are not family-centered, and 2-generation based on family needs and composition. They report that these are also not unified with other service providers.
- How could FRSP case managers become able to provide family-centered, 2-generation, unified goal planning and case management?
- What will be required to make this work?

FRSP participants want greater clarity and communication about assigned FRSP provider, document tracking, and how to resolve gaps in services and concerns about inaccurate document tracking/submission.

- **Issue:** FRSP participants report that they do not know who is there FRSP case manager and feel that the FRSP case manager is not consistently honest about what services will be provided. FRSP participants also report that documents, payment of fees, and documentation of activities are not accurately tracked by FRSP providers.
- How could FRSP participants be better informed about the assigned FRSP provider and FRSP program services?
- How could submission and tracking of documents, payment of fees, and documentation of activities be more effectively and accurately tracked?
- What will be required to make this work?

Meeting adjourned at 3 pm.