



DC Department of Human Services

FRSP Taskforce Meeting Presentation

Feasibility Study Report

December 13, 2019

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DHS – Family Services Administration

Webinar Overview

FRSP Task Force - Webinar Agenda

1. Present the findings from the Feasibility Study
2. Provide an overview of updated recommendations
 - Program Models
 - Program Enhancements

FRSP Task Force - Purpose

To recommend improvements in key areas:

1. Customer experience and outcomes
2. Efficiency and effectiveness of program delivery
3. Oversight and accountability

FRSP Task Force - Process

1. Gathered input from stakeholders:

- Customers
- Advocates
- Providers
- DC Council
- DC Government Agencies (Child and Family Services, DC Housing Authority, Department of Employment Services, Department of Behavioral Health, Department of Human Services)
- National Alliance to End Homelessness

2. Facilitated stakeholder listening sessions

3. Facilitated Task Force meetings

Feasibility Study - Questions

- **Overview:** Description of the recommendation
- **Operational Feasibility:** Is the recommendation operationally feasible?
- **Legal:** Does the recommendation require legislative or regulation change?
- **Shelter Exits:** Does the recommendation adversely impact current rate of shelter exit?
- **Cost:** Is the recommendation cost neutral?
- **Recommendation:** DHS's recommendation (Yes/No)
- Highlight dependencies and provide alternative for consideration

Overview

Operational

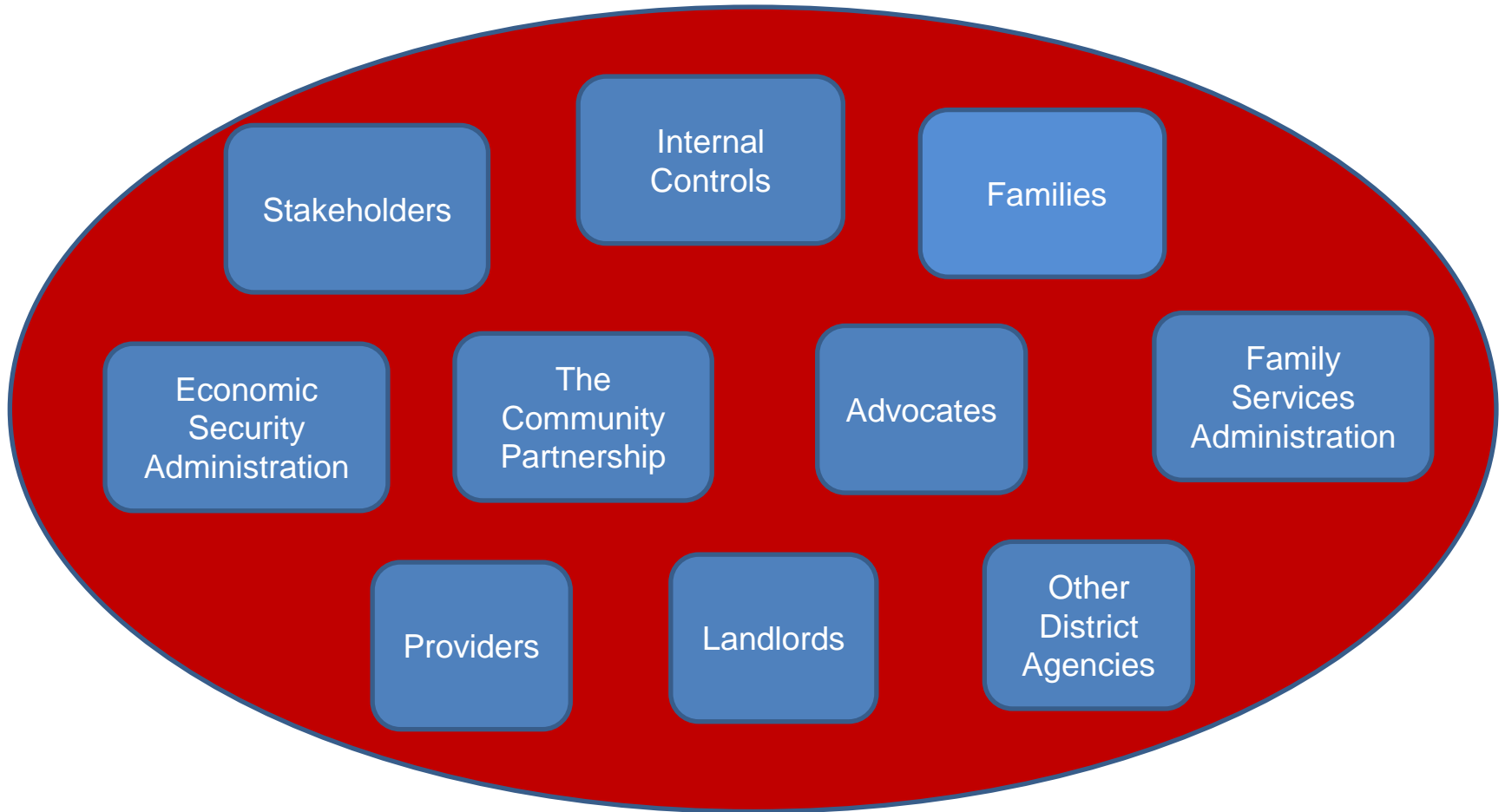
Legal

Shelter

Cost

Recommendation

Feasibility Study - Considerations



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FRSP Bridge Model

FRSP Bridge Model

TF Recommendation

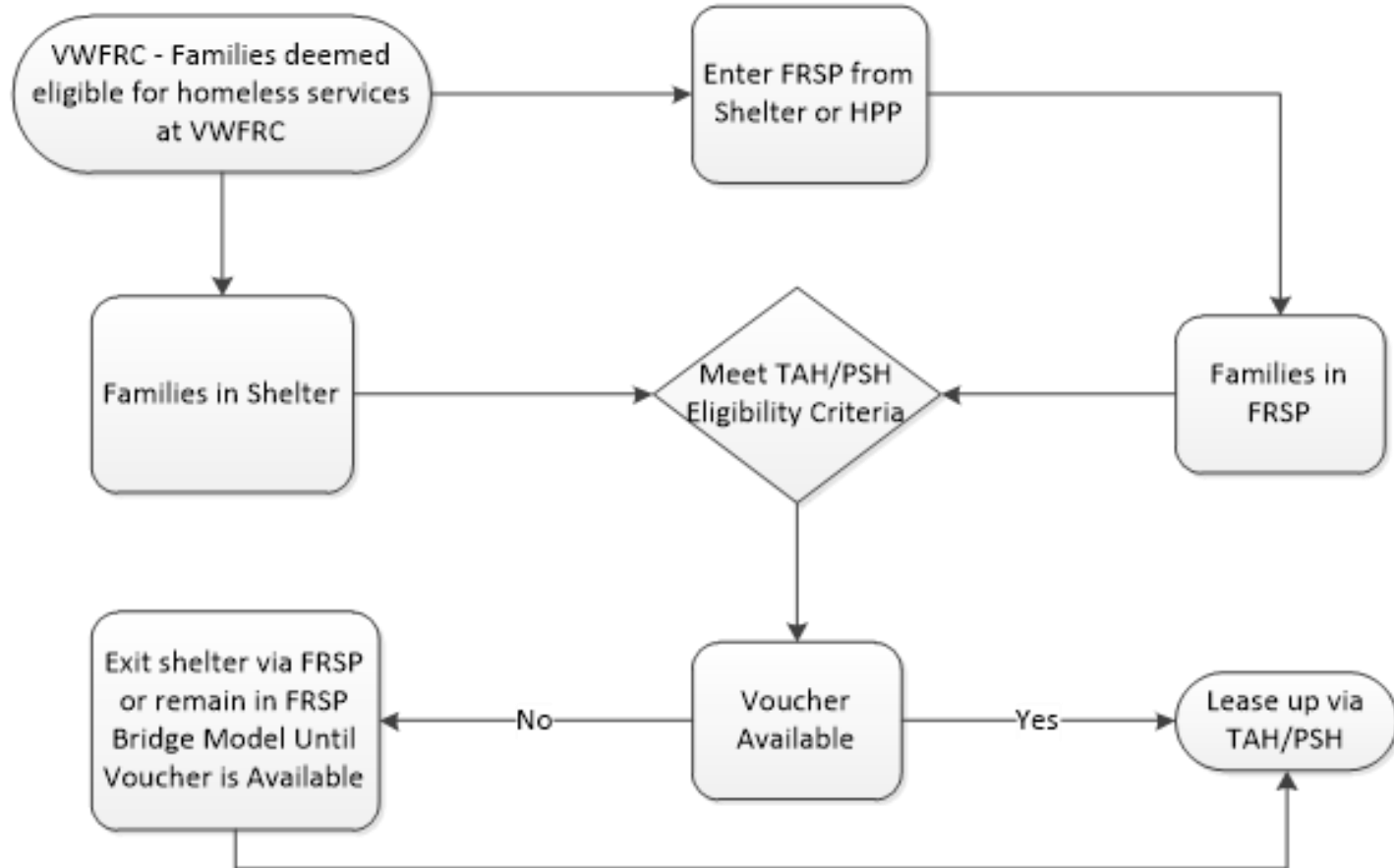
Overview:

- Families who qualify for TAH/PSH will be deemed eligible while in shelter or within the first three months in FRSP
- In cases where there is no available voucher, families will exit shelter through FRSP with the following conditions:
 - Families will be assigned to TAH/ PSH case manager
 - The case management will be focused on housing
 - They will enter a 12-month lease with FRSP and remain in FRSP program until voucher becomes available

Overview

FRSP Bridge Model

TF Recommendation



Overview

Operational

FRSP Bridge Model

TF Recommendation

Operational Feasibility:

- **Families:** exit shelter with FRSP with the recognition that a new lease will be signed upon receiving a voucher
- **DHS FSA:** update voucher priority policy, match families to TAH/PSH case management services, allocate resources for families who remain in FRSP until voucher becomes available
- **Shelter Providers:** ensure F-SPDAT assessments are completed to all families, lease families in bridge model to FRSP
- **TCP:** F-CAHP process needs to be altered to match more families to TAH/PSH from shelter.
- **Landlords:** agree to lease in place when families receive voucher while in FRSP

Overview

Operational

FRSP Bridge Model

TF Recommendation

Legal implications:

- **Legislative change:** Not required
- **Regulation:** needs FRSP regulation update to reflect the FRSP bridge model
- **Program rules:** would need to be updated to highlight rights and responsibilities of families, shelter providers and TAH/PSH case managers

Overview

Operational

Legal

FRSP Bridge Model

TF Recommendation

Impact on Shelter Exits

- The FRSP bridge model will not impact current shelter exits provided, enough vouchers are available to ensure movement through shelter and FRSP:
 - Families would continue to exit shelter through FRSP until vouchers become available
 - If FRSP is over capacity due to extensions, potential impact on shelter exits to FRSP

Overview

Operational

Legal

Shelter

TF Recommendation

FRSP Bridge Model

Families in FRSP	% of families with chronic disabilities	Total # of Vouchers needed	Average Voucher Allocation	Projected Need (Annually)
2,200 (apprx.)	21%	462	292	170

FRSP Average Length of Stay	Additional Families	Expected program length of stay until voucher match	Difference	Projected Yearly Additional Cost
22 months	170	36	14 months	Case Management: \$2.1M Subsidy: \$3.5 Total: \$5.6M

^[1] Projection based on 2018 Point-in-time count

^[2] Based on Voucher Allocations from FY17-20

^[1] Average case Management monthly per unit cost: \$884; Subsidy monthly average: \$1,470

Overview

Operational

Legal

Shelter

Cost

FRSP Bridge Model

DHS Recommendation: The FRSP Bridge model as proposed is not feasible for implementation because:

- The need for vouchers could easily exceed number of vouchers available and placing families in FRSP indefinitely until voucher becomes available is not cost feasible
- DHS can only make voucher assignments based on the number of vouchers allocated for the given year
- Attachment to a voucher based on disability, although stabilizing, does not contemplate the importance of ensuring that people with disabilities are supported to work, with the reasonable accommodations necessary to do so.
- The model as proposed allocates a voucher based on need at a specific point in time, but does not account for the dynamic nature of family needs

Overview

Operational

Legal

Shelter

Cost

Recommendation

FRSP Bridge Model

Alternative Approach for Consideration: The FRSP Bridge model may be feasible with the following dependencies:

- Families will have an initial assessment at shelter and exit shelter into FRSP to a TAH/PSH case manager
- A psycho-social assessment to determine final eligibility based on the criteria outlined (within 3 – 6 months in FRSP Bridge)
- Voucher assignments based on the number of vouchers allocated for the given year, consistent with CAHP governance
- Families who exit shelter under the Bridge Model but do not receive a voucher will be assigned to an FRSP TANF provider and continue in the FRSP lease.

Overview

Operational

Legal

Shelter

Cost

Recommendation

Questions

Darrell Cason
Program Manager

FRSP - TANF Model

FRSP TANF Model

Overview:

- Families who do not qualify for TAH/PSH will connect to FRSP via the TANF Model pathway
- Program length based on individualized needs and determined via assessment at intake
- Extension assessment will be completed at 9 months and 90 days before the lease ends
- Families may be eligible for a one time 6 month extension prior to exit
- Extension eligibility: education/training program ends within 6 months extension period; recent medical diagnosis; and/or change in the family housing situation
- Quarterly assessments to ensure families are receiving all needed services and engaged with case management

Overview

TF Recommendation FRSP TANF Model-Program Time Lengths

Overview: 12 Months

- **Education:** High School Diploma (or higher)
- **Employment:**
 - Employed in the past 6 months
 - Connected to community resources, including TEP vendors, that are assisting the family to gain and maintain housing stability with employment expected within 6 months of admission.
- **Health:** Experience temporary hardship or setback (ex: injury on the job) and is expected to recover and maximize employment potential within a year
- **Other Barriers:** None

Overview

FRSP TANF Model- Program Time Lengths

Overview: 24 Months

- **Education:** GED or equivalent to high school diploma
- **Employment:** Currently unemployed but has history of employment in the past 12 months.
- Underemployed (ex: income is at 50% of market rent)
- Enrolled in job training program
- **Health:** Currently pregnant or has a child under 1 year old
- **Other Barriers:**
 - Youth Head of Household
 - One eviction
 - Aging out of the foster care system

Overview

FRSP TANF Model- Program Time Lengths

Overview: 36 Months

- **Education:** Minimal Education-Has not attained a GED or equivalent
- **Employment:** Unemployed and has no history of employment in the past 18 months.
- **Health:** has a long term treatable medical condition that doesn't qualify for SSI
- **Other Barriers:**
 - Two or more evictions
 - Open case with CFSA
 - Criminal background

Overview

FRSP TANF Model

Operational Feasibility/Considerations:

- **Families:** extensions will be considered if families are fully engaged with TEP vendors, recertify quarterly, paying their portion of the rent and in good standing with their lease
- **FRSP Providers:** case management support would ensure the connection to TEP vendors and then focus solely on housing
- **Shelter Providers:** the TANF Comprehensive Assessment (TCA) would need to be completed while clients are in shelter
- **ESA TEP:** all FRSP families would be assigned to a vendor and required to complete the TANF Comprehensive Assessment (TCA)
- **TCP:** extension requests will be reviewed for approval based upon consistency of client effort (engagement with TEP, goal progress and rental payment)

Overview

Operational

FRSP TANF Model

Legal implications:

- Legislative change: Not required
- Regulation: Not required
- Program Rules: would need to be updated to highlight responsibilities of families to engage with their assigned TEP vendor, complete quarterly recertifications, progress towards goal completion and paying their rent as a contingency for an extension approval

Overview

Operational

Legal

FRSP TANF Model

Impact on Shelter Exits:

- The FRSP TANF Model could impact current shelter exits if the number of families that are assessed for 36-month program terms is high and the overall FRSP length of stay increases to a point where FRSP resources are not available.

Overview

Operational

Legal

Shelter

FRSP TANF Model

DHS Recommendation:

§ Look at an alternative approach to implement a similar model

Overview

Operational

Legal

Shelter

Cost

Recommendation

FRSP TANF Model

Challenges with implementing proposed TANF Model

- This approach does not address when family situations change over time
- Criteria for 12, 24, 36 months in practice is challenging because there is no available evidence that a single attribute or challenge accurately predicts the length time assistance is needed – *(alternatively — How might we support family success based on the entirety of a family’s situation, and as the situation evolves?)*
- Proposal does not fit TEP program operations
 - Ex: Customers not engaging in TEP are removed from vendor caseload making integration with FRSP challenging unless there is active engagement

Overview

Operational

Legal

Shelter

Cost

Recommendation

FRSP TANF Model

Updated TANF Model Overview:

Provide a base program period of 12 months with an option to request a program extension based on the following factors:

- The time it takes to complete an educational and/or training milestones
- The time it takes to address the barriers identified at the beginning of the program (and that newly emerge?)
- Active and productive engagement with TEP
- Progress made towards employment and/or education goals
- Percentage of rental payments made
- Participation in quarterly case reviews

Overview

Operational

Legal

Shelter

Cost

Recommendation

FRSP TANF Model

Modify proposed housing and TANF case management coordination approach to one that offers all supports through one service provider

- § FSA will work with ESA to create a performance based contracting vehicle for the provision of Unified Case Management Service (TEP and housing) within a given provider.
- § Families will only be assigned to one provider that address employment, education, housing needs and barrier remediation.
- § Providers will be compensated for helping families attain employment, educational and housing goals to ensure continuation of employment services
- § The employment services will mirror the current TEP services and incentives.

Overview

Operational

Legal

Shelter

Cost

Recommendation

FRSP TANF Model

Benefits of the updated TANF Model:

- This will provide an opportunity to complete ongoing assessment as opposed to one-time assessment conducted at entry to determine length of stay in the program.
- The approach also follows empowerment model and provides families supports needed to attain milestones
- The approach also establishes basis for accountability for service providers and program participants
- Fewer service providers and appointments for families to juggle.

Overview

Operational

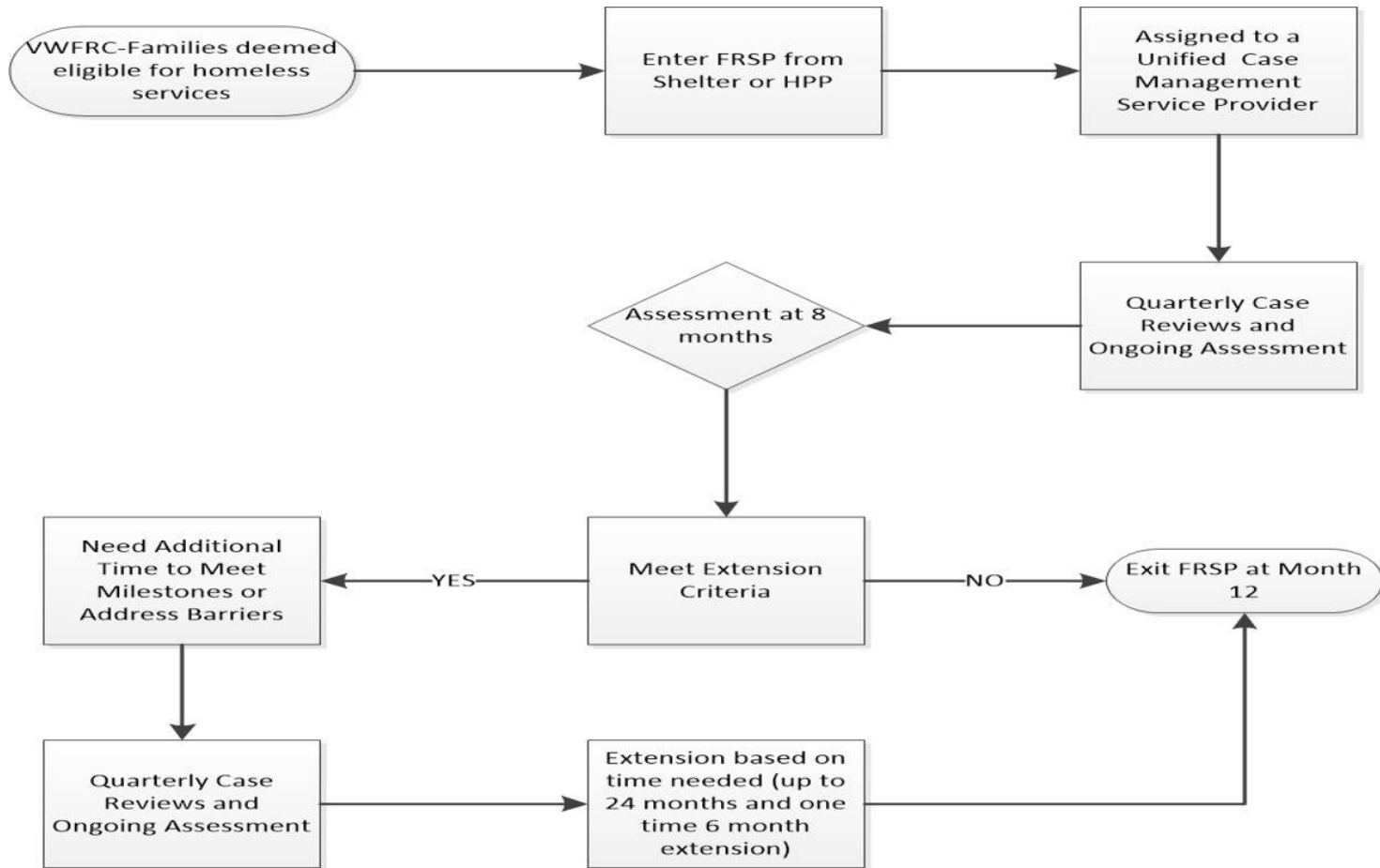
Legal

Shelter

Cost

Recommendation

FRSP TANF Model



Overview

Operational

Legal

Shelter

Cost

Recommendation

FRSP TANF Model – Additional Enhancements

The following are proposed for TF members consideration and discussion:

- Families who enter the TANF model from the Bridge model should be offered an initial term of 12-months in TANF model and be able to choose between services or no services model. Total time in FRSP (Bridge and TANF) may not exceed 30 months.
- To avoid a cliff upon exit and provide strong support while the family is engaged in education, training, and job seeking, rental payments could be based on income then shift to being rent-based rather than income-based during the step-down subsidy phase.
- Families should be eligible to receive up to 50% of the rental portion that they paid to FRSP as a bonus upon successful exit from the program.
- Families may opt to decline FRSP case management (no-services model) which provides 12-months of rental assistance **only**.

Questions

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Additional Recommendations for Housing Stability

Offer DC Flex

Overview:

- The DC Flex Program is a new type of housing assistance being tested in the District.
- The program is for low-income households that are working and earning income, but have trouble making ends meet in some months.
- The program provides \$7200 per year for up to four years to fill the gap between earned income and housing cost
- Families that are participating in FRSP TANF model and have been able to obtain employment but have a gap between their housing costs and their income could benefit from this type of assistance.

Overview

Combined Benefit Model

*DHS Draft Proposed Recommendation –
no decision as-of-yet on feasibility*

Overview - Problem we are trying to solve:

- The current public benefit programs have inconsistent eligibility criteria and operate separately and without consideration for household needs and costs of living.
- Households experience penalties to increasing earned income, which impedes career development and attaining family sustaining employment.
- An increase in income results in fewer net resources in households.
- Families in FRSP and similar public benefit programs trade off long-term career opportunities with short-term, minimum wage employment opportunities – impeding meaningful pathways to the middle class.

Overview

Combined Benefit Model

Overview:

- DHS is interested in exploring the potential for Combined Benefit Model (CBM) as a pilot program aimed at removing these structural barriers that prevent families from achieving long-term career opportunities through the provision of combined cash benefit.
- Combined Benefit Model could offer DHS and other District benefits that a family is eligible for as a combined cash assistance
- Benefits may include: Housing, Healthcare, Food, TANF, Childcare
- The goal is to provide families the flexibility to manage the combined benefit to meet the needs of the household while focusing on increasing income without the fear of losing housing
- Pilot will include 50 families

Overview

Combined Benefit Model

Overview:

- FRSP TANF families who are enrolled in a 2 or 4 year degree or other career pathway training program geared to increasing household income to family sustaining wage
- FRSP for up to 48 months with annual recertifications required to continue
- Enrollment with UDC Paths TEP vendor
- Families sign 12-month lease
- Families exit upon completion of education program with gainful employment
- If HOH discontinues the education program, the family will be exited from the pilot and redirected to the Bridge or TANF Models

Overview

Combined Benefit Model

Legal Implications

- Major Legislative Change: DHS is working with General Counsel to determine implementation constraints
- Regulation: FRSP regulation need to be updated to reflect Combined Benefit Model
- Program Rules: Rules need to updated to highlight rights and responsibilities and expectations of families participating in the pilot

Overview

Operational

Legal

Combined Benefit Model

Impact on Shelter Exits

- The FRSP combined benefit model will not have an impact current shelter exits and the hope is that it would decrease returns to shelter

Overview

Operational

Legal

Shelter

Combined Benefit Model

Cost Feasibility:

- Enrollment in a in a 2 or 4 year educational or training program is a requirement
- Benefits Calculations

Benefit	Monthly Benefit	Annual Amount	
TANF	\$503	\$6,036	*Annual Benefit amount based on household size of 1 adult and 2 children
Housing	\$1,470	\$17,640	
Healthcare	\$895	\$10,740	
Childcare	\$2,134	\$25,612	
SNAP	\$544	\$6,531	
Total	\$5,546	\$66,559	Gap:\$3,441 Annual Amount: \$17 2,050
Living Cost - DC	\$5,833	\$70,000	

Overview

Operational

Legal

Shelter

Cost

Combined Benefit Model

DHS Recommendation:

- DHS would like to continue to explore the potential feasibility of a FRSP Combined Benefit Model
- Some considerations:
 - Huge lift, questionable outcomes
 - Urgency to do something to address benefit cliff – potential with this group to demonstrate success when overall assets do not decrease with earnings.
 - Expensive once earnings grow – potential for interest from private funders
 - Strong interagency collaboration needed
 - Clear eligibility and expectations regarding pilot purpose, outcomes and program closure timeframes

Overview

Operational

Legal

Shelter

Cost

Recommendation

Questions

Lorraine Nwaoko, Supervisory Homeless Coordinator

Dana Looper, Supervisory Vocational Development Specialist

Nancy Kay Blackwell, Special Assistant

Program Enhancements

FRSP Enhancement – Administrative

Accountability and transparency:

- 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

Customers

FRSP Enhancement – Administrative

Accountability, consistency, and transparency:

- Clear expectations for TCP, FRSP contractors, DHS, and DCHA
- Consistency among FRSP providers
- Hold case managers and providers accountable for performance outcomes
- Improve contract monitoring/oversight

Customers

Staff

FRSP Enhancement - Administrative

Accountability, consistency, and transparency - Office of Administrative Hearings:

- Clear communication
- Process
- Manual
- Representative for participant

Customers

Staff

OAH

FRSP Enhancement - Administrative

DHS Recommendation: Implement the recommendations forwarded by task force members.

- § DHS will establish a customer advisory group composed of families, FRSP providers, TEP providers and DHS (ESA/FSA), advocates and ICH to ensure transparent accountability, receive and address concerns about program quality.
- § DHS will hire an FRSP ombudsman who will be able to field FRSP client concerns and work to resolve.
- § DHS will set and enforce clear expectations for TCP, FRSP contractors, DHS, TEP, and DCHA
- § DHS will establish a timeline for implementation working with stakeholders.

FRSP Enhancement – Assessment

Initial assessment:

- Quicker assessment at VWFRC beyond eligibility to begin case planning across programs (TANF, DBH, CFSA, etc.), referrals to homelessness prevention program, shelter, linkages to resources and care coordination
- Assessment should identify current and past barriers
- Clear eligibility criteria
- Ranking/scoring families with complexities (children with special needs)
- Exit strategies developed at intake
- Client led goal setting

Initial

FRSP Enhancement – Assessment

Ongoing assessment:

- 3-month check-ins
- Progress on goals and case plan
- Update on barrier reduction and any new barriers encountered
- Housing affordability assessment before families lease up

Initial

Ongoing

FRSP Enhancement - Assessment

Exits:

- Criteria for exits
- Plan for assuring affordability of housing after the end of program subsidy
- Eligibility for other housing programs

Initial

Ongoing

Exits

FRSP Enhancement - Assessment

DHS Recommendation:

- Implement the recommendations forwarded by task force members. DHS will work with providers and families to establish housing affordability assessment.

Initial

Ongoing

Exits

Task Force

Landlord
and Provider

Recommendation

FRSP Enhancement- Data

Overview:

- 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 costs
- Clearly communicate ongoing data

Overview

FRSP Enhancement- Data

Task Force Member Recommendations:

- If the client has not met the first quarter goals or with their case manager then they should be brought in to have a conversation with DHS, Landlord, Case Manager- a teaming effort to show the service needs.
- Clearer reporting requirements for providers and clear reporting requirements for DHS to council

Overview

Task Force

FRSP Enhancement- Data

DHS Recommendation:

- § Implement the recommendations forwarded by task force members to enhance data and tracking.

Overview

Task Force

Recommendation

FRSP Enhancement - Housing and Financial Assistance

Overview:

- Apartment options
 - More apartments with affordable rents
 - More apartments with utilities included
 - Expand FRSP to MD and VA landlords
 - Shared housing options
- Long term subsidies

Overview

FRSP Enhancement - Housing and Financial Assistance

Overview:

- Housing supports for participants
 - 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

Overview

FRSP Enhancement - Housing and Financial Assistance

Overview:

- Expand financial assistance
 - Application fees
 - Furniture/other apartment set up needs
 - Budgeting and credit repair
 - Waive amenities fee and application fee from landlords
- Revise participant rent share requirements
 - Minimum income requirements
 - Escrow rent
 - Reduce FRSP rental payments by participants to 30% of income and include utilities (see below alternative model for consideration)

Overview

FRSP Enhancement - Housing and Financial Assistance

Houston Model:

12-month program:

- 1st 6 months – share is based on income
- 2nd 6 months – share is based on rent (sliding adjustment to full rent after exit)

12-month plus 6 months

- 1st 6 months – share is based on income
- 7-18 months – share is based on rent (sliding adjustment to full rent after exit)

Overview

Alternative Model

FRSP Enhancement - Housing and Financial Assistance

Houston Model:

24-months

- 1 - 12 months – share is based on income
- 13-24 months – share is based on rent (sliding adjustment to full rent after exit)

24-months plus 6 months

- 1 - 12 months – share is based on income
- 13-30 months – share is based on rent (sliding adjustment to full rent after exit)

Overview

Alternative Model

FRSP Enhancement - Housing and Financial Assistance

Houston Model:

36-months

- 1-24 months – share is based on income
- 25-36 months – share is based on rent (sliding adjustment to full rent after exit)

Overview

Alternative Model

FRSP Enhancement - Housing and Financial Assistance

DHS Recommendation:

- Allow families to identify units within their budget. It is not cost effective to pay application fee for all families.
- DHS has established a Landlord Engagement work group in collaboration with TCP, ICH and DCHA to engage and service landlords, track available units, and manage the matching and lease-up process in order to improve landlord and client experience. DHS will explore the suggestions around housing support and landlord engagement under this work group.
- DHS recommends request to expand FRSP to MD and VA landlords forwarded for task force voting

FRSP Enhancement - Program and Service Offerings

Overview:

- Accessible information for families
 - Clear program manual for clients;
 - Marketing/messaging program expectations, resources, etc.
 - Client portal to submit documents
 - Electronic tracking of rental payments
 - Manual or training on how to maintain an apartment
- Linkages and case coordination

Overview

FRSP Enhancement - Program and Service Offerings

Overview:

- Improved case management services
 - Case management assignment at lease up
 - Multigenerational approach
 - Services beyond 9 am – 5 pm
 - Lower case loads
 - Individualized services
 - Engaged client participation
 - Client directed goal setting
 - Clear exit criteria

Overview

FRSP Enhancement - Program and Service Offerings

Overview:

- Expand program offerings
 - Credit repair
 - Housing search
 - Housing maintenance
 - Safety net program approach
 - Non mandatory case management for people who do not need it

Overview

FRSP Enhancement - Program and Service Offerings

Advocates Exit Recommendations:

- Exits based on individual circumstances
- Exits not just based on time
- Considerations for families prior to exits:
 - Did they receive adequate case management;
 - Do they have any chance of affording their housing on their own;
 - Have they have been evaluated for all available long-term housing options (such as PSH, TAH or other programs) and,
 - Were appropriate referrals were made.

Overview

Task Force

Landlord Provider

Advocates

FRSP Enhancement - Program and Service Offerings

Advocates Exit Recommendations:

- Increase stability during the program.
- Participants should be required to pay no more than 30% of their income towards their housing costs, including utilities
- The program should be required to timely pay its portion of the rent and participants should not be held legally responsible for the program portion

FRSP Enhancement - Program and Service Offerings

DHS Recommendation:

- DHS will consider implementing the recommendations outlined under program and service offering as part of the FRSP Bridge and TANF models.
- DHS recommends forwarding the rent burden limit (30 or 50% of income) for task force voting.

Overview

Task Force

Landlord
Provider

Advocates

Recommendation

Questions

Thank you!