



**Family Rehousing and Stabilization Program (FRSP) Task Force**

**Meeting #2 – Annotated Notes**

**October 9, 2019**

DHS Headquarters

64 New York Ave, NE, Sixth Floor

**Orientation for Customers 10:00-10:30AM**

Barbara Poppe and Darrel Cason met with ten Customer Representatives/Family Advocates/ who participate on the FRSP Task Force. The Family Advocates discussed the Task Force agenda and were given an overview of the charge for the Task Force, meeting dates, logistics, voting process and the customer panel.

**Pre-Meeting Gathering: 10:00-10:30am**

- Registration
- Meet and greet other Task Force members
- Meeting materials at each seat:
  - Agenda
  - FRSP presentation
  - Task Force #1 Provider Listening Session Notes
  - Task Force #1 Customer Listening Session Notes
  - Task Force #1 Landlord Listening Session Notes
  - Task Force #1 Session Notes
  - Task Force Members List

**Task Force Meeting: 10:30AM-1:30PM**

Task Force member attendees:

Kathy Zeisel	Children’s Law Center
Kevin Craver	The Community Partnership
Jannie Lebby	DC Housing Authority
Tamitha Rama Davis	DHS
Noah Abraham	DHS
David Ross	DHS
Monique Banks	Echelon Community Services

Karen Cunningham	Everyone Home DC
Ashley Rhodes	Family Advocate
Simirra Robinson	Family Advocate
Shonta Jones	Family Advocate
Shauna Gray	Family Advocate
Sheena Parker	Family Advocate
Travonna Brooks	Family Advocate
Sheena Parker	Family Advocate
Yvette Barnes	Family Advocate
Kimberly Harris	Family Advocate
Keri Tait	Family Advocate
Uchenna Egenti	Family Advocate
Danisha Gravitt	Family Advocate
Courtney Hall	Housing Up
Sandra Jackson	House of Ruth
Damon King	Legal Aid DC
Sharon McDonald	National Alliance to End Homelessness
Patty Fugere	Washington Legal Clinic
George Jones	Bread for the City

Observer attendees:

Blaine Strum	Chairman Mendelson's Office
Imani Stutley	CFSA
Jane Oh	Community Partnership
Michelle Loggins	Councilwoman Nadeau's Office
Ebony Thomas	DC Housing Authority
Darrell Cason	DHS
Lorraine Nwaoko	DHS
Hersh Gupta	DHS
Christy Evans	DHS
Nancy Blackwell	DHS
Tai Meah	DHS
Jazamine Stallings	DHS
Nami Mody	DHS
Nat Mammu	DHS
Sam Quinney	DHS
Jenny Shin	Echelon Community Services
Warda Davis	Echelon Community Services
Kimberly Waller	ICH
Rachel Rittlemann	Legal Aid DC
Erika Duthely	OPLA
Carolyn Perez	Washington Legal Clinic

Amber Harding	Washington Legal Clinic
Jamey Burden	Community of Hope
Samantha Beckelt	Bread for the City
Rhonda Mitchell	WC Smith
Jennifer Boston	SOME
Sade Adeeyo	SOME

## Welcome

Tamitha Davis-Rama, Family Services Administrator welcomed task force members and participants.

Barbara Poppe, Consultant and Facilitator, welcomed everyone to the FRSP Task Force and discussed the charge for the Task Force.

Recap: DHS is launching the FRSP Task Force to collaboratively work with stakeholders to assess what is working and not working in the program and develop recommendations to improve the experiences and outcomes of families receiving services in the FRSP. Essential to our approach is recognizing the strengths of each family and facilitating meaningful connections to resources that support participants to grow their incomes and address their needs while reinforcing what is working well in their lives.

## Agenda Review and Introductions

Barbara Poppe reviewed the agenda and the expectations for the flow of the meeting.

- Review the process and time line
  - Listening sessions
  - Task Force meeting dates
    - Meeting #1 9/11/2019
    - Meeting #2 10/8/2019
    - Meeting #3 10/30/2019
    - Meeting #4 12/4/2019
- The purpose is to recommend improvements in the key areas
  - Customer experience and outcomes
  - Efficiency and effectiveness of program delivery
  - Oversight and accountability

**Planning Session #1:** Task Force members engaged in creating a vision and values statement for the FRSP program. This was requested by several Task Force members. This is in addition to the established mission (purpose) of FRSP.

Creating a vision:

- 1) Working in pairs, develop a vision statement for FRSP – *limit yourself to one sentence of 5-15 words*
- 2) Write your shared vision statement on a post-it note
- 3) Stand up and read your shared vision statement
- 4) We will pick up the post-it notes and group them

Participants reported the following:

- Safe, sustainable and affordable housing for every family
- Get families self-sufficient by providing a percentage of savings to families
- Families who enter rapid rehousing get services they need to leave the program with stable affordable housing.
- We envision FRSP to be a launching pad for a family to ultimately regain stability and secure long term housing affordability
- Every families achieve housing stability once financial security
- Creating pathways to economic independence through stable and affordable family housing
- Pathway to independent stability taking into account job and education
- Quickly stabilize families in housing with services that empower families to thrive in their community
- Program helps families get back on their feet, improve lives, strongly encourage participation through significant incentives
- To provide families with support through case coordination services and income based resources
- Provide services and support which are flexible, transparent and with dignity for each individual
- All families have a right to safe, stable and service enriched housing
- To assist homeless families with a connection to stable housing while providing them with resources, services and skills aimed to reduce the reoccurrence of homelessness
- Providing safe and affordable housing for district residents
- A program that provides housing stability and wrap around services
- We envision a District where the FRSP partners with families and service providers to ensure that all families can achieve long term safe and stable housing
- Give families the resources so that when they are on their own they do not go back to homelessness

The facilitator organized the above into the above into top categories and Task Force members contributed additional suggestions:

- Individualized/client focused
- Dignity and independence
- Safe, stable and affordable housing
- Services, supports and resources
- Education and job skills
- Financial security/income
- Trained educated competent staff
- No returns to homelessness

Additional concepts were offered by Task Force members but were not fully explored due to time constraints so deferred for later consideration.

- Sustainable (as adjective before housing)
- Urgent (as adjective before services)

Task Force members were asked to vote on the eight threads to be incorporated into a draft vision statement that would be brought back to the Task Force for review, modification, and adoption at the next meeting. However, task force members were not able to reach consensus because some task force members strongly advocated including the word sustainable in the vision statement.

Core Values:

- What's important to supporting the vision?
- How should FRSP treat its customers?
- How should FRSP treat its other stakeholders?
- What are our principles and beliefs that create the culture of FRSP?

Working in small groups, the Task Force members created 5 values statements per group. These statements were shared with the full Task Force. Task force members reported the following:

Values suggested by more than one small group.

**Integrity:** belief in ethical practices and truth

**Empathy**

- Protecting families from the negative effects of homelessness and housing instability on children is an urgent matter
- Listen to families and have compassion and respect for their experiences, feelings and choices

**Trauma informed**

**Motivation:** fostering and maintaining a positive attitude towards self and others

**Accountability**

- Everyone understands their role and acts accordingly with excellence;
- Transparency - honest and open with families about how FRSP works and each of our roles and responsibilities;
- Consistent expectations

**Dignity and respect**

- Value differences and conveying unconditional positive regard
- Respect and caring - each person cares about the other's needs
- Treat people with dignity, be client centered and client driven

**Empowerment**

- Believing each person has strengths which are unique and knowing every person is capable of growth and progress;
- Prevent eviction

**Quality**

- Commitment to excellence in the provision of services;
- Effectiveness - making sure the resources provided are overall effective for each family or individual;
- Consistent, meaningful activities which produce desired outcomes

**Client centered**

- Honor the ability and agency of the family to know best what will help them regain stability;
- Self-determination - participants maintain dignity and accountability by driving the case planning process; tailored to individual family's needs, goals;
- Focus on individual needs and strengths of families from a strengths driven perspective and provide individualized program to them; one size doesn't fill all
- Suspend judgement, respect life circumstance, aim for present and future stability for the entire family;
- Individualized planning for sustainable housing future

**Collaboration**

- We value and respect community voices and power

- Partnership - working with families as equal partners respecting their right to have choices and to set Goals that meet their unique needs
- We can get more done faster by working together with one another
- Collaborative partnership between families and caseworkers

Values Statements – not suggested by more than one group

- Internal
- Resourceful
- Evolving - program adapts and compares with data a performance, adapts to changing needs
- Innovative leadership, fostering a low income base program
- We believe that access to safe, quality, affordable housing is a human right
- Clean open communication
- Results driven with client chosen goals
- Self-sufficiency - recognize the family as an economic unit which can operate outside the constraints of the government
- We believe in a racially equitable and all forms of equity
- Housing first (voluntary consensual services)
- Growth
- Reliable
- Perseverance
- Non punitive system where work together with all stakeholders including other agencies to get to client goals

Some task force members objected the voting process and constraints, specifically the suggestion that the recommendations of the task force should be cost neutral, cannot be free of program participation time limits and no adverse impact on emergency shelter flow. The facilitator agreed to work with DHS team to share the constraints with task force members before task force meeting #3. Participants will also receive document that outline the task force process.

**FRSP Overview Presentation:**

Due to time constraints, the full presentation was not able to be covered. Instead, the full presentation will be offered to Task Force members through webinar format.

Noah Abraham, Deputy Administrator, DHS, presented a summary of the presentation which included updated data on eviction and return to homelessness from Task Force #1 Meeting data based on feedback receiving from task force members.

He also presented a comparison data between families who are receiving TANF, employed (earning) and receiving SSI/SSDI in the areas of household composition, length of stay in the program, income and rental portion amount.

**Planning Session #2:** meeting attendees engaged in an abbreviated small group exercise to discuss working concept for a two pathways approach - *FRSP Integrated with TANF* and *FRSP Bridge to PSH and TAH*

**FRSP Integrated with TANF**

Each small group discussed and answered questions. All group notes were collected and collated. Responses are below.

- What services are needed for this population to achieve greater housing stability and income?
  - Two Gen approach
  - Better childcare services- voucher and childcare
  - Full participation – more income
  - Provide accurate information re TANF eligibility & services with sufficiency stuffed TANF
  - Credit repair
  - More affordable housing or sustainable housing that matches the service worker income.
  - Education and training
  - Identify barriers medical and mental health needs
  - Utilities assistance
  - Address transportation needs (school, work, food, medical)
  - Employment services geared towards careers vs jobs
  - Collaboration between DHS and TANF vendors
- How can FRSP services align with and access TANF program, services and incentives?
  - Provider Integration
  - FRSP Case Manager check in with TANF Employment Providers (TEP) providers
  - Vocational Development Specialists (VDS) in every FRSP provider or add employment specialists to FRSP providers
  - Actually, put VDS in prevention program
  - More comprehensive data analysis to find out how much a client gets if 50% income being taken out for rent
  - Work requirements under TANF are flexible but not for FRSP. They need to align.
  - Integrated system management documentation between provider and others case workers
  - Central hub to provide information for all parties regarding progress in TANF
  - Partnership with utilities for low income families
- How could FRSP case manager and TANF staff ensure seamless care coordination and services delivery?
  - Integrated case management
  - Monthly meetings
  - CATCH system doesn't always work. Fixing it
  - TEP providers do not communicate back when FRSP case managers reach out
  - Early assignment to FRSP case manager upon lease-up
  - Case conferencing (1 per month)
  - To talk and work with each other because sometimes communication can be delayed
  - Client has the ability to verify information
  - Effective communication and structured coordination
  - Establishing rules, roles and responsibilities
- What incentives should be in place to support improved housing stability and household income growth?
  - Expedited housing goals

- Saving, matched savings, etc.
  - Change in policies so it does not hurt families to get part time job
  - Easier to get back on TANF if job is lost
  - Time period before rent increases, if income increases
  - Continue services after at 60% of rent – or some maintenance of rent for some period of time.
  - Gradually increase rent to incentivize work
  - Work with landlords on when rent is paid
  - Employment bonuses sooner after employment
  - Bonus for maintaining employment
  - Credit help
  - Holding landlords accountable for problems with their unit like 48 hours or less
  - Clients can receive their percentage of rent back they pay to DHS via the Housing Authority at the end so funds are in escrow.
  - Encourage and inform TANF families of incentives and resources available
- What should be participant's requirements? How should non-compliance with requirements be handled and what consequences should occur if noncompliance happens?
    - Warnings and sanctions
    - Shouldn't lose both TANF and FRSP
    - Comply with FRSP rules
    - Compliance with TANF requirements
    - Fixed time – not working for everyone
    - Is it a technical non-compliance?
    - If technical and substantive non-compliance
    - Enroll in employment training/ comply with TANF Employment requirement
    - Engage with Case Manager
    - Automatic rent payments (ACH) drafts
- What are benefits and challenges of a fixed time period versus a flexible time period?
    - Flexible – can consider challenges mental/medical needs
    - Flexible time – not work for everyone
    - Flexible to an extent is preferred.
    - With structured re-certifications to keep momentum going.
    - Set short term goals with TEP
    - Flexible based on engagement with TANF services.

#### **FRSP Bridge to PSH and TAH**

- What eligibility criteria will most effectively prioritize families for the limited available PSH/TAH resources?
  - Repeated incidents of homelessness or shelter entrances
  - Long shelter stays
  - Disability status of parents or children of family (SSI, IEP, etc.)
  - Repeated stays in rapid re-housing
  - Intake process
  - SPDAT done in first 30 days in FRSP when doing lease up get case manager
  - Multiple previous episodes of homelessness



- Having children or parent with special needs (permanent special needs)
  - Criteria of support service's needs (i.e. have to be in DC have to be housed to get services)
  - Inability of parent to work (large family, kid w/ high level of needs, etc)
  - Priority repeated RR or shelter or 1-year shelter stay
- When should the eligibility determination be made?
    - At the onset
    - Screen in shelters and in FRSP (within first 3 months)
    - Made at beginning / pre-entry front door
    - Then a midway assessment to see if situation has changed. Done well before subsidy ends
    - Screen earlier in shelter and FRSP
- What types of services are needed for this population?
    - Employment
    - Education
    - Accessibility services
    - Housing navigator
    - Financial management
    - Credit services
    - Employment
    - Competitive career training
    - Maintaining own apartment; building credit
- What should be participant requirements? (be specific)
    - Required to meet with case manager
    - % of income (maybe 30%)
    - Monthly case management
    - Career Training
- What is most efficient way to provide access without creating bottleneck in shelter?
    - Communication
    - Proper case management
    - Day one providers
    - Leave shelter w/FRSP

**Parking Lot:**

1. Can the purpose/charge be emailed to the group again?
2. Is there anything off the table than time limits?
3. Purpose - achieve stability in permanent housing
4. The critical question is for how long? Only while in the program or sustainable after?
5. Authentic measure of outcome
6. End poverty in DC by 2040: 2040 by ensuring that all residents have safe affordable quality housing but eliminating all socioeconomic disparities.

**Customer Panel:** Barbara Poppe facilitated a discussion with FRSP client customers, Samirra Robinson, Travonna Brooks, Uchenna Egenti and Keri Tait

The main takeaways of the customer panel include:

- Clear guidance on the services and expectations of the program from the onset
- Quality services are needed
- The decisions of the task force impact the lives of families in the program “This is our life”.

**Next steps:**

Task force members also asked if they would like DHS to schedule an online presentation of the data that was not fully presented at the meeting due to time constraint. Task force members agreed to the suggestion and the webinar is scheduled for Monday, October 21, 2019.

The next Task Force meeting will be 10/30/2019 from 10:30 am – 1:30 pm. Calendar invites, meeting notes, as well as document outlining the constraints and the task force process will be sent out to all Task Force members a week before the next meeting.