Instrument 7: Interview Guide for Public Housing Agency Administrator and FUP Liaison

Before we begin, I want to tell you a few things about this study and your participation in it. Please feel free to ask me any questions you might have. We will also email you a copy of this information.

A team of researchers from the Urban Institute and Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago is working with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to learn about how communities are using the Family Unification Program (FUP) to serve youth. We are not evaluating your agency or its programs. The information we gather will be used to inform efforts by ACF and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to improve the administration of the program.

As part of this process, we are talking with representatives from public housing agencies that received FUP vouchers in 2018, their child welfare agency and Continuum of Care partners, and other partner agencies including those that make referrals or provide services. You or another staff member from your agency completed a survey earlier this year about how FUP is being used by your agency to serve youth. Based on the results of that survey, we identified the program in your community as a promising one for further study.

A pair of researchers will ask you some questions about [PHA NAME]'s FUP program, including questions about your collaboration with community partners, ways in which serving youth may differ from serving families, and successes or challenges you may have encountered serving youth, along with lessons learned. The discussion will take about 60 minutes. We may contact you after the interview to ask for clarification. Your participation in this discussion is voluntary.

We will share what we learn about your Family Unification Program with ACF as part of our evaluation activities. All the information you provide will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. With your permission, we will audio record the discussion so that we have an accurate record of what is said. However, we will not audio record if you do not want it to be recorded. One of the researchers will be taking detailed notes, but the notes will not include your name.

DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY OR TODAY'S DISCUSSION?

MAY WE PROCEED WITH THE DISCUSSION OF YOUR FUP PROGRAM?

If you have questions or concerns about the study, please contact:

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If you feel that your rights have been violated or that you have not been treated fairly, contact:

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Discussion Guide for Public Housing Agency Administrator and FUP Liaison

On-Site Conversation

Introduction

We are interested in how your agency collaborates with [PCWA name] and with [CoC name] to serve FUP-eligible youth. We know you may work with multiple CoCs, but we want to focus on [CoC name] here. Also, we know that you may also use FUP to serve families, but we would like to focus on youth for our conversation today.

Do you have questions before we continue?

Do you consent to be recorded?

[If consented to recording] I am going to turn on the tape recorder now, and we can get started.

Now, please tell me about yourself and your agency.
(Ask all respondents)
- What is your position at the PHA?
    - o What are your primary responsibilities?
    - o How long have you held this position?
- How much of your time do you spend on FUP?

Community Context
(Ask agency administrator, unless otherwise indicated)
Now we'd like to learn about how the community context you work in affects how you serve FUP-eligible youth.
- What geographic area does your agency serve?
- How does the supply of affordable housing in the area compare to demand?
- How has the local housing market affected your ability to house youth with FUP vouchers?
- Is there a waitlist for Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers?
    - o If yes: How long is it?
- Is there a waitlist for public housing?
    - o If yes: How long is it?
- What other housing assistance programs, besides Housing Choice Vouchers and public housing, are available to youth who age out of foster care in your community?
- (Ask FUP Liaison) How often are youth who do not receive FUP vouchers able to access other housing programs?
- (Ask FUP Liaison) How easy or difficult is it for youth who age out of foster care in [PHA jurisdiction] to find and maintain housing?
    - o Please describe any particular challenges that this population may be more likely to face than other young adults in [PHA jurisdiction].
- How, if at all, are youth in the community given opportunities to shape the FUP program (e.g., through advisory boards)?
- What, if any, regulatory or statutory barriers are there to serving youth in [PHA jurisdiction]?

FUP Voucher Allocation
(Ask all respondents, unless otherwise indicated)
Next, we have some questions about how you allocate FUP vouchers.
- Was [most recent FUP award date] the first time your agency was awarded FUP vouchers?
    - If no: When was your agency first awarded FUP vouchers?
    - If no: How many FUP vouchers did your agency have before your most recent award?
- Does your agency use FUP to serve both families and youth?
    - If yes: (Ask agency administrator) Why did your agency decide to use FUP to serve both youth and families?
        - Who made the decision? Probe: PHA; cooperative decision between partners; PCWA
- When did your agency begin serving FUP-eligible youth?
- Has your agency set aside a certain number of vouchers for youth?
    - If yes, why?
    - If no, why not?
- (If set aside vouchers for youth) How many vouchers has your agency set aside for youth?
    - (If had FUP previously) How many of those vouchers are from your most recent award and how many are from previous awards?
    - (Ask agency administrator) How did your agency decide the number of vouchers to set aside for youth?
        - Probe: Who made the decision?
    - (Ask FUP Liaison) How many vouchers has your agency issued to youth (whether or not they have leased up) since [most recent FUP award date]?
        - (If serves families) How does that compare to the number of vouchers your agency has issued to families since [most recent award date]?
- On what basis do you allocate FUP vouchers to youth (e.g., need, first-come, first-served)?
    - Probe: Who decided the priority?
    - (If based on need) Which youth does your agency prioritize?
    - (If serves families) How, if at all, does your agency's approach to allocating vouchers to youth differ from your approach to allocating vouchers to families?
- What do you see as the tradeoffs between using vouchers to serve families and using vouchers to serve youth?

Staffing
(Ask agency administrator, unless otherwise indicated)
Now we'd like to learn about how staffing is structured at your agency.
- Please provide a basic overview of how staffing is structured at your agency.
    - How is the FUP program situated within that structure?
    - (*Ask for a copy of an organizational chart*)
- Is there a staff person who is responsible for overseeing the FUP program?
    - Is FUP the only program they oversee?

- (Ask FUP Liaison) Who else at your agency is involved in administering FUP in any way?
  - What are their roles?

Service Partnership Development
(Ask agency administrator)
Now let's talk a bit about your partnership with [PCWA name] and [CoC lead organization name] in serving youth receiving FUP vouchers.
- When did you begin partnering with [PCWA name] to administer FUP?
  - Why did you enter this partnership?
- Before this partnership, did your agency have a relationship with [PCWA name]?
  - How would you describe the relationship?
- Did your original Memorandum of Understanding, or MOU, with [PCWA name] and [CoC lead organization name] include language about serving youth?
  - If no, when was this added?
  - If no, why was this added?
  - Did your agency approach [PCWA name] about serving youth, or did [PCWA name] approach your agency?
- Before there was a FUP in [PHA jurisdiction], did you have a relationship with [CoC lead organization name]?
  - If yes, please describe the relationship.
- When did you begin partnering with [CoC lead organization name] to serve FUP voucher recipients?
  - Why did you enter this partnership?
- What does your MOU with [PCWA name] and [CoC lead organization name] require of each party?
  - Probe: prioritization of FUP youth, coordination of referrals, integration into coordinated entry system, identification of services funded through CoC, quarterly meetings, common goals and standards of success
  - Did you develop your own MOU or use a standard template from HUD or another organization?
  - How, if at all, do you update your MOU to reflect changes in activities?

Service Coordination with the PCWA
(Ask FUP Liaison, unless otherwise indicated)
Now we'd like to discuss your coordination with [PCWA name] to use FUP to serve youth.
- Do you have a point of contact at [PCWA name] to address issues around serving youth using FUP?
  - If not: Would having a single point of contact be helpful?
- How regularly do you meet with your partners at [PCWA name] about FUP?
  - Please describe those meetings.
    - Probe: mode, topics, frequency
- What other communication, beyond regular meetings, do you have with the PCWA?
  - Probe: topics

- o Do you think there should be more or less communication, or is the amount about right?
- Does your agency provide any training to staff at [PCWA name] around using FUP to serve youth?
  - o If yes: What training does your agency provide?
  - o If yes: How often do you provide the training?
  - o If no: Are there any plans for future training?
- Does [PCWA name] provide any training to your agency around using FUP to serve youth?
  - o If yes:
    - What training does [PCWA name] provide?
    - How often do they provide the training?
    - How helpful do you find the training?
    - Would training on other topics be helpful?
  - o If no:
    - How helpful would this type of training be?
    - What topics would be helpful to cover?
    - Are there any plans for future training?
- (Ask all respondents) How successful overall would you describe your agency's relationship with [PHA name]?
  - o What factors have contributed to successful collaboration?
  - o What barriers to collaboration has your agency encountered?
  - o How has your agency dealt with those barriers?
  - o What else, if anything, could be done to improve the collaborative relationship?

Service Coordination with Continuum of Care
(Ask FUP Liaison, unless otherwise indicated)
We now have some questions about your partnership with the Continuum of Care to serve youth using FUP.
- (Ask all respondents) How is the CoC involved in the partnership serving FUP youth?
  - o How long have CoC-funded agencies been referring youth to [PCWA name] for FUP?
- Who at [CoC lead organization name] and agencies funded through the CoC are responsible for identifying FUP-eligible youth and referring them to [PCWA name]?
- What training, if any, is [CoC lead organization name] providing to your agency around using FUP to serve youth?
- What training, if any, is [CoC lead organization name] providing to agencies funded through the CoC around using FUP to serve youth?
- What training, if any, is your agency providing to [CoC lead organization name] and agencies funded through the CoC around using FUP to serve youth?
- What kinds of services are provided to youth with FUP vouchers using CoC program funds?
- (Ask all respondents) How successful overall would you describe your agency's relationship with [CoC lead organization name]?
  - o What factors have contributed to successful collaboration?

- o What barriers to collaboration has your agency encountered?
- o How has your agency dealt with those barriers?
- o What else, if anything, could be done to improve the collaborative relationship?

Service Coordination with Other Providers
(Ask all respondents, unless otherwise indicated)
We'd also like to understand the partnerships your agency has with other service providers that serve youth with FUP vouchers.
- What other public agencies or private organizations does your agency partner with to serve youth who receive FUP vouchers?
  - o Please describe the roles of each of these partners.
- How formal are these partnerships (i.e., is there a contract or MOU established)?
- Which, if any, of these partners does your agency provide funding to?
- What advantages or disadvantages are associated with maintaining these partnerships?
- (Ask FUP Liaison) What communication do staff at your agency have with these partners?
  - o Do you think that the frequency of this communication is too much, too little, or about right?
- How would you characterize your relationship with these partners?
  - o Are respective roles and responsibilities clear?
  - o Is there a sense of common mission?

Referral
(Ask FUP Liaison)
Now we'd like to learn more about your agency's role in the identification of FUP-eligible youth.
- Does your agency review its Section 8/HCV waitlist to identify youth who may be FUP-eligible and refer them to [PCWA partner] to certify their eligibility?
  - o What proportion, if any, of the youth referred for FUP were already on the waitlist?
    - ▪ If FUP program existed prior to most recent funding award: Has this proportion changed with the most recent award of FUP vouchers?
  - o Have you identified FUP-eligible youth in other ways?
  - o Approximately how many youth have you referred to [PCWA Name] to certify as FUP eligible since [most recent FUP award date]?
- Approximately how many FUP-eligible youth have been referred to your agency by [PCWA name] since [most recent FUP award date]?
  - o How does this compare to the number of families that have been referred by [PCWA name] since [most recent FUP award date]?
  - o How many youth can your agency serve with FUP vouchers?
- What, if anything, does your agency do to encourage [PCWA name] to refer youth?
- What, if anything, does your agency do to encourage CoC-funded agencies to refer FUP-eligible youth to [PCWA name]?

- What, if anything, does your agency do to encourage other organizations to refer FUP-eligible youth to [PCWA name]?

Application and Eligibility Determination
(Ask FUP Liaison)
Now we'd like to learn more about the application and eligibility determination process.
- What types of assistance do youth receive with the voucher application process? (e.g. gathering documentation, filling out the form).
    o Does your agency provide that assistance?
    o If yes: Does anyone else also provide it?
    o If no: Who provides it?
- (Ask all respondents) What are the eligibility criteria for youth to qualify for a voucher?
    o Probe: No criminal history, no drug use, no past lease violations
    o *Why are these eligibility requirements?*
- Does [PCWA name] screen FUP-eligible youth for voucher eligibility?
    o Does [PCWA name] use a screening tool?
    o If yes: Did your agency help develop this tool?
    o *How important is it for [PCWA name] to screen youth for voucher eligibility?*
- Approximately how many youth have completed the voucher application process since [most recent award date]?
    o What are the most common reasons youth do not complete the process?
- How long does it typically take your agency to determine a youth's eligibility?
- Approximately how many youth have been determined to be ineligible since [most recent award date]?
    o What are the most common reasons youth are determined to be ineligible?

Issuing Vouchers
(Ask FUP Liaison)
The next few questions are about issuing vouchers to youth.
- How long does it typically take for a voucher to be issued once a youth's eligibility is confirmed?
- To what proportion of eligible youth are FUP vouchers issued?
- Are youth issued tenant-based vouchers, project-based vouchers, or both? (If both)
    o How does your agency decide which type of voucher to issue?
    o What are the advantages and disadvantages for youth associated with each type of voucher? (e.g., restrictions on having a roommate)
- How would you describe the voucher briefing that youth are required to attend?
    o Probe: purpose, topics

Securing Housing
(Ask FUP Liaison)

Next, we have some questions about the housing search and lease up process for youth with a FUP voucher.
- What, if any, housing search assistance does your agency provide to youth with FUP vouchers?
  - o (If serves families) How does this compare to any assistance your agency provides to families with FUP vouchers?
- What, if any, housing search assistance do youth with FUP vouchers receive from [PCWA name] or from its contracted agencies?
  - o How, if at all, does your agency coordinate housing search assistance with [PCWA name]?
- What, if any, housing search assistance is provided to youth with FUP vouchers through CoC-funded programs?
  - o How, if at all, does your agency coordinate housing search assistance with CoC-funded programs?
  - o What proportion of youth who lease up with FUP are eligible for assistance from these programs? What makes them eligible?
- How much time do youth have to lease up once a voucher is issued?
- How long does it typically take for youth to lease up?
  - o How does this compare to the time it typically takes families to lease up?
- How often, if ever, do you provide extensions when youth find it hard to secure housing?
  - o How long are these extensions?
- What proportion of youth who receive FUP vouchers lease up?
  - o How, if at all, does this differ for youth who are parenting versus those who are childless? Why do you think this is?
  - o What are some of the most significant barriers to leasing up?
- Are youth permitted to use their FUP voucher outside of the jurisdiction you serve?
  - o If yes: How common is this?
  - o If yes: What are the requirements around doing this?
- Does your agency provide any counseling to youth after they lease up with a FUP voucher?
  - o What type of counseling does your agency provide?
  - o (If serves families) Does your agency provide this same type of counseling to families that lease up with a FUP voucher?
- Are youth required to recertify their eligibility during their 36 months of eligibility for housing assistance payments?
  - o How often are they required to recertify?
  - o What are youth required to do to recertify?

Other Supportive Services
(Ask FUP Liaison, unless otherwise indicated)
We'd also like to know what other supportive services you and other agencies provide to youth who have leased up.
- How long after lease-up are you and other agencies providing supportive services to youth? To what extent does this vary?
- (Ask all respondents) Do you connect youth who have leased up with FUP vouchers with the Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program?

(If yes)
- o Are FUP youth required to participate in the FSS program?
- o Is your agency part of HUD's demonstration to provide the FSS program to youth receiving FUP vouchers?
- o About how many youth have been part of the FSS program since [most recent FUP award date]?
- o How does the FSS program complement or substitute for other services youth need?
- What other supportive services, if any, does your agency provide directly to youth who have leased up with a FUP voucher?
- What other supportive services does [PCWA name] or its contracted agencies provide to youth who have leased up with a FUP voucher?
- What other services are provided using CoC program funds to youth who have leased up with a FUP voucher?
  - o What proportion of youth who lease up with FUP are eligible for these services? What makes them eligible?
  - o What is the funding source of these services?
- How, if at all, does your agency coordinate the provision of these supportive services?
- Are all youth offered these services?
  - o If no: Which youth are offered services? Why?
- Are youth required to participant in any of these services?
  - o If yes: What are the consequences of not participating?
- In your opinion, which of the services that are offered to youth who have leased up are the most essential? What makes you say this?
- (Ask all respondents) Are there additional services that youth need after leasing-up that your agency or its partners do not provide?
  - o If yes: What are those services.
  - o (Ask agency administrator) If yes: Why is your agency not currently providing those services?

Youth Mobility and Exit from FUP-Assisted Housing (ask only if PHA served youth with FUP previous to most recent award)
(Ask FUP Liaison, unless otherwise indicated)
Now we'd like to learn more about what happens when youth move or reach the end of their eligibility for housing assistance payments.
- How often do youth move between approved units during their 36-months of eligibility for housing assistance payments?
  - o Does your agency ever encourage or discourage youth from moving? How and why?
- How often do youth voluntarily exit the program before their 36 months of housing assistance payments is exhausted?
  - o How does this compare to the rate for FUP families?
  - o What are the most common reasons youth give up their voucher voluntarily?
- How often do youth involuntarily exit the program before their 36 months of housing assistance payments is exhausted?
  - o How does this compare to the rate for FUP families?

- o What are the most common reasons youth give up their voucher involuntarily?
- How, if at all, do the rates of successfully maintaining a lease differ for parenting youth than for those who are childless? Why do you think this is?
- (Ask all respondents) How often do youth obtain a standard Housing Choice Voucher after their FUP voucher expires?
  - o Are youth added to the waitlist for standard HCV vouchers after their FUP voucher expires?
  - o Are they given preference for standard HCV vouchers?
- What, if any, assistance does your agency provide to youth as they near the end of their 36 months of housing assistance payments?

What, if any, assistance does your agency provide to youth after their voucher expires?

Data and Evaluation

We'd like to ask about how you may be tracking data on youth with FUP vouchers.

- (Ask all respondents) Does your agency collect data about youth with FUP vouchers?
  - o If yes: What system does your agency use to record the data?
  - o If no: Why not?
- (Ask FUP Liaison) What types of data does your agency collect?
  - o How are those data collected (e.g. from youth, from partner agencies)?
  - o Who is responsible for collecting those data?
  - o When did your agency begin collecting those data?
  - o How consistently are those data collected?
  - o How does this compare to the data your agency collects for families?
  - o (*Request a list of measures or shells of spreadsheets*)
- (Ask FUP Liaison) At what points does your agency collect information?
  - o Does your agency collect information from youth at program exit?
  - o Does your agency collect information from youth after they exit FUP?
- (Ask all respondents) How does your agency use the data it collects?
- (Ask agency administrator) Does your agency share this information with external researchers?
  - o What is the process to obtain access to these data for research? (e.g. an Institutional Review Board or a Research Review Board, Data Sharing Agreement)
- (Ask agency administrator) Has your agency's FUP ever been evaluated?
  - o If yes: What can you tell me about that evaluation?
  - o (*If yes: Ask for a copy of the report*)
  - o If no: Do you have any plans to have the program evaluated?

Reflections

(Ask all respondents)

As we approach the end of our conversation, we'd like to ask you to reflect on your experience with using FUP to serve youth and provide any recommendations you may have.

- What are the biggest challenges your agency has encountered using FUP to serve youth?

- o Probe: lease length; tenant screening; cost of administering FUP versus regular vouchers; single PHA waitlist
- What lessons have you learned about using FUP to serve youth?
- What advice, if any, do you have for other PHAs about using FUP to serve youth?
- What could be done to encourage more communities to use FUP to serve youth?

Closing
(Ask all respondents)
Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today.
Is there anything that I did not ask about that you think I should know about FUP or your experience using FUP to serve youth?
Do you have any final questions for me about the study?