

Appendix N: Interview Guide for Family Self Sufficiency Manager

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, along with their child welfare agency, Continuum of Care, and service and referring agency partners, to learn more about their FUP services for youth.

We will ask you some questions about the [PHA name] 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.

A pair of researchers will conduct the discussion, which 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 FSS Program Manager
On-Site Conversation

Introduction

We are interested in how your agency collaborates with [PCWA name] to serve FUP-eligible youth. We know that you may also serve families with FUP vouchers, but we would like to just 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.

Please tell me about your role at [PHA name].

- What is your position at the PHA?
 - o How long have you held this position?
 - o What are your primary responsibilities?
 - o Probe: How much of your time do you spend on FSS? What about on FUP?
- Please describe the roles of anyone else at your agency who is involved substantially in administering FSS for youth.

FSS Process for FUP Youth

We have some questions about how youth receiving FUP vouchers participate in FSS.

- What are the goals of the FSS program for youth receiving FUP vouchers?
 - o Probe: What outcomes are you trying to effect for these youth?
 - o How, if at all, are your goals and approach to this population different from other youth who participate in FSS?
- What are the FSS eligibility requirements for youth receiving FUP vouchers?
- Do you have a waitlist for FSS?
 - o If yes: Do you give youth receiving FUP vouchers priority selection?
- How many youth receiving FUP vouchers through [PHA name] do you serve?
- Is FSS mandatory for youth who receive FUP vouchers?
 - o (If not mandatory) What, if anything, do you do to encourage youth receiving FUP vouchers to participate?
 - How, if at all, do you target outreach to these youth?
 - How easy or difficult is it to recruit these youth to participate? Why do you think this is?
- Please walk us through what happens when a FUP youth becomes involved in FSS.
 - o How are youth notified of the opportunity [or, if mandatory: the requirement] to participate?
 - o Which staff are responsible for working with youth on FSS?
 - Is there a single staff member assigned to work with each youth on FSS?
 - o What does the process of establishing a Contract of Participation with the youth involve?
 - When do you begin working with youth?
 - What types of things do youth have to agree to?
 - How much variation is there between contracts for FUP youth?

- How do you define graduation from the program?
 - Probe: Education completion? Employment? No longer receiving public assistance? No longer receiving housing assistance?
- o What, if anything, do you do to encourage youth to comply with their contract?
 - What, if anything, are the consequences if youth do not comply?
 - Under what circumstances are youth terminated from FSS? Do they lose their housing?

Supportive Services and FSS Benefits

Now, we'd like to hear about the services and opportunities available to FUP youth through FSS.

- First, is your agency part of HUD's demonstration for youth combining FUP with the FSS program?
- Are youth able to extend their voucher eligibility to match the length of their FSS contract? If yes, please explain how this works.
 - o Are youth automatically given a 5-year voucher?
 - o Can youth continue to receive a voucher beyond 5 years if their Contract of Participation is extended?
- Does [PHA name] receive any funding for operating FSS beyond covering the coordinator salary?
- What is the size of the caseload of the case worker(s) working on FSS?
- Please describe the services that you provide to FUP youth through FSS, either directly or through partners. (Probe for description of each type of service)
 - o Coaching/case management
 - o Child care assistance
 - o Transportation assistance
 - o Other assistance for essential expenses
 - o Healthcare access assistance
 - o Educational opportunities
 - o Job training/employment counseling
 - o Financial literacy training
 - o Homeownership counseling
 - o Housing search assistance
 - o Landlord assurances
- Which of these services do you provide directly?
- Which of these services do you provide through partner agencies?
 - o If any through partners: Which partners?
- (If provide services through partners) Why do you provide services through partner agencies, rather than internally?
 - o Probe: Funding, organizational capacity
- Please explain how the escrow account that FUP youth have access to through FSS works.
 - o How does the savings structure work?
 - o When are youth able to access the account?

- Our understanding is that youth who are head of household must create an individual training and service plan. Would you please describe how that works?
 - o What are the requirements?
 - o What do you do to monitor progress?
 - o How frequently are you in contact with the youth about the plan?
- Are there services the FSS program offers youth that I haven't asked about? Please describe them.

[Ask the following if contracts out FSS services]

Service Coordination with Service Providers through FSS

Now we'd like to discuss your coordination of services with other service providers for FUP youth provided through FSS.

- What is the role of the Program Coordinating Committee (PCC)?
 - o Who are its members?
 - o How do member agencies partner with [PHA name] to coordinate service delivery for youth receiving FUP voucher who participate in FSS?
 - o Please describe any other roles that the PCC plays in the administration of the FSS program for youth receiving FUP vouchers.
- Do you have formal partnerships with any of these other agencies (i.e., is there a contract or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) established)?
- Does your agency provide funding to these partners?
 - o If yes: Which ones? Please describe the financial arrangement(s).
- Do you have a point of contact at partner organizations providing services to youth through FSS to address issues around FUP for youth?
 - o If not: Would having a single point of contact be helpful?
- Has your agency assigned a point of contact for partner agencies to reach out to with questions about serving FUP youth through FSS?
- Do you meet regularly with partner organizations providing services for FUP youth through FSS?
 - o If no: Do you think it would be helpful to meet regularly? Why?
 - o If yes: Please describe those meetings.
 - Probe: mode, topics, frequency
- Please describe any other communication, beyond regular meetings, that you have with service providers.
 - o Probe: Topics
 - o Do you think there should be more or less communication, or is the amount about right? Why?
- How successful overall would you describe your collaboration with service-providing partners?
 - o Please describe any factors that have contributed to successful collaboration.
 - o Please describe any barriers to collaboration that have come up and how you have dealt with them.
 - o What else, if anything, do you think you could do to improve the relationship?
- Which, if any, other agencies or organizations would you consider partnering with? Why?

Service Coordination with Other Providers

Now we'd like to discuss your relationship with service providers outside of FSS serving youth who receive FUP vouchers.

- How do you coordinate internally at [PHA name] around services for FUP youth?
- Do you have relationships with organizations that provide services to youth receiving FUP vouchers that are not FSS program partners?

[If has these relationships]

- Outside of your FSS partners, what other public agencies or private organizations do you coordinate services with to serve youth who receive FUP vouchers? Please describe the roles of each of these partners.
 - For each partner ask: Is this a formal partnership? (I.e., is an MOU or contract established?)
 - Probe: PCWA, CoC-funded agencies, independent living program
- Please describe communication that you [and/or other FSS staff, if applicable] have with these organizations.
 - Do you think that this communication is too much, too little, or about right? Why?
- How successful overall would you describe your collaboration with these service-providing organizations?
 - Please describe any factors that have contributed to successful collaboration.
 - Please describe any barriers to collaboration that have come up and how you have dealt with them.
 - What else, if anything, do you think you could do to improve the relationship?

Data and Evaluation

We'd like to ask about how you may be tracking data on FUP youth involved in FSS.

- Do you use a data system to record client data for the FSS program?
 - If yes: What system?
 - If no: Why not?

[If records client data]

- Is this system unique to the FSS program or is it part of the [PHA Name]'s data system?
- Is there a way to flag FUP youth participating in FSS in [PHA Name]'s data system?
- What types of information do you track? (*Request a list of measures*)
- At what points do you collect data?
 - Do you collect (or plan to collect) information at program exit? What about after youth exit FUP?
- When did you begin collecting this information?
- How consistently do you collect this information?
- How do you use the information you collect?
- Who is responsible for entering/tracking information about youth in the FSS program?

- (If uses a data system separate from the PHA) What is the process for an external organization to get data for research? (e.g. an Institutional Review Board or a Research Review Board, Data Sharing Agreement)

Reflections

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

- What are the biggest challenges you have encountered working with FUP youth? What lessons have you learned?
- What advice, if any, do you have for other PHAs about using the FSS program with FUP youth?
- Are there any changes to the program that would encourage more communities to offer the FSS program to FUP youth? Or that would help agencies better use the FSS program to serve youths' needs?

Closing

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 the FSS program or your experience with FUP youth?

Do you have any final questions for me about the study, or about the research team?