

Summary of the Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) Program

The Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program is a voluntary program designed to assist Section 8/Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) participants become economically independent from government services within 5 - 7 years. FSS participants work to attain and maintain economic independence through job training and/or education. The FSS participants set individual, 5-7 year goals, and a final goal of not receiving welfare assistance for 12 months prior to the end of their FSS contract. In order to graduate from the FSS program, participants would need to meet both individual goals and final goal.

The FSS program offers a financial incentive to participants to obtain and maintain employment. As the participant family's income increases, and they have to pay more toward their portion of rent (rent for all participants is based on income), the Housing Authority establishes a savings account for that difference in the participant's name called an "Escrow Account." Once the FSS participant has met their goals and they have not received welfare assistance for 12 months, they graduate from the program earning the amount saved in their Escrow Account.

The Burbank Housing Authority had a program minimum size requirement of 50 FSS program households established in 1993. To date, the BHA has successfully graduated 46 families. Successful completion of this program reduces the minimum size of the FSS program which will continue until the FSS program is phased out completely. Currently, there are 2 participants on the FSS program. Staff is continuously educating HCV program participants about the FSS program by calling potential participants and mailing out letters and brochures with the goal to enroll at least the two required participant households, but more is best, in order to reach the required, remaining four participant households.