



Foster Youth to Independence Vouchers in California: The Role of Public Housing Authorities

1. What is the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Voucher Program?

The Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Program provides housing choice vouchers (HCVs) for young people who are leaving or have left foster care. These vouchers were developed to improve housing security for youth aging out of foster care and are an excellent resource for our communities to support young people. These vouchers can be requested by Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) when they collaborate with local child welfare agencies to support young people. The PHA will provide the voucher and the child welfare agency provides or arranges for support services for the young person. These types of vouchers last for three years, but can be extended for two additional years if the young adult is participating in the [Family Self Sufficiency Program](#) (FSS).

2. Who is Eligible for an FYI Voucher?

Currently the FYI program provides housing vouchers for young people with experience in foster care and the option to receive support services. Eligible young adults are:

- a. 18 through 24 years of age (have not reached their 25th birthday),
- b. Have left foster care, or will leave foster care within 90 days, and
- c. Homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless at age 16 or older

Probation supervised foster youth are also eligible as long as they meet the requirements listed above.

3. How Does FYI Benefit Young People?

Stable housing is crucial for young people to achieve independence and to successfully transition into adulthood. Without stable housing, young adults face significant challenges to meet their education and employment goals. But, young people aging out of foster care face many barriers to securing safe and affordable housing, including their age and lack of family support, which most young adults rely on for their first apartment. The FYI program can be a lifeline and critical stepping stone for young adults as they move from foster care into the adult world.

4. What is the Role of PHAs in Helping Young Adults Secure Stable Housing through Distributing FYI Vouchers?

PHAs are a critical partner in making FYI and FUP vouchers available to young people in our communities. Any PHA capable of administering HCVs are eligible to request FYI vouchers. Once the PHA partners with the Public Child Welfare Agency (PCWA), it is able to request FYI vouchers for young people following the PCWA's referral of an eligible young adult. Once the PHA verifies the young person's HCV eligibility, it will simply email HUD and request an FYI voucher. PHAs can provide or connect the individual with any of their services or programs, but it is the



PCWA that is responsible for arranging or providing any support services.

PHAs can partner with as many PCWAs as they want. PHAs can request up to 50 FYI vouchers a year. They can request up to 25 and then ask for another 25 vouchers per federal fiscal year as long as they meet certain requirements related to voucher utilization, which have been expanded pursuant to a [recent notice from HUD](#). PHA's may request additional vouchers even if they do not meet the required utilization rates in certain exceptional circumstances, which includes when a voucher has been issued, but a unit has not yet been leased up.

For more information about the FYI program go [here](#).