



## **It's A Great Time to Implement Your Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Program**

### **Important Updates and Funding for the FYI Program**

The Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Program provides a time-limited Housing Choice Voucher for young people who are leaving or have left foster care and can be a critical part of an excellent transition plan to provide housing stability and security. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has issued a series of exciting [policies](#) that make access to FYI vouchers easier for Public Housing Authorities and recent state laws make more funding available to county child welfare agencies for the services that are to be provided to those receiving vouchers. **These changes provide counties more tools and funds to launch or expand their FYI (or FUP for youth) programs.**

#### **FYI Vouchers are Easier to Access than Ever Before**

- Almost all Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) in CA are eligible for FYI vouchers since they already administer Housing Choice Vouchers.
- PHAs can administer both Family Unification Program (FUP) Vouchers *and* FYI Vouchers.
- PHAs may request as little as one voucher at a time or as large as 25, to be responsive to the needs of counties and young people.
- HUD has decreased the administrative burden on PHAs! To request an FYI voucher, a PHA just completed this online form:  
[https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=xSRVYekizUuokxGApT\\_Hsk87tlyyQEVAhG55Zd12yGBUNVNTU1IDVIEwMUhLRzdGQVhOUIZETTJVSyQIQCNOPWcu](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=xSRVYekizUuokxGApT_Hsk87tlyyQEVAhG55Zd12yGBUNVNTU1IDVIEwMUhLRzdGQVhOUIZETTJVSyQIQCNOPWcu)

#### **There are More FYI Non-Competitive Vouchers Available Than in Previous Years**

- All PHAs that administer Housing Choice Vouchers can draw down non-competitive FYI vouchers. Non-competitive FYI vouchers are FYI vouchers PHAs can request directly from HUD at any point during the fiscal year. Competitive FYI vouchers are issued to PHA after they respond to a Notice of Funding Opportunity.
- PHAs can request up to 50 non-competitive FYI vouchers per fiscal year, with a maximum of 25 vouchers per request. (The opportunity exists for each PHA in your county).
- October 1st is the beginning of the federal fiscal year. PHAs will be eligible to request as many as 25 non-competitive FYI vouchers at that time with an option to ask for another 25 during the fiscal year.
- PHAs can request FYI vouchers even if they are not yet meeting the 90% utilization rate. New HUD [guidance](#) provides PHA the opportunity to request additional vouchers and submit a narrative to explain the efforts that are being made to support young people in leasing up (getting into a unit).

### **Counties Have More Housing Navigation and Maintenance Program (HNMP) Funds that Can be Used to Provide Services to FYI Voucher Holders**

- These funds were increased to \$13.7 million in FY 2022-23 year for the Housing Navigation and Maintenance Program serving youth age 18 through 24, with the express purpose of assisting youth with FUP/FYI vouchers.
- HNMP funds are allocated each year.
- These funds have been allocated to nearly all counties, but many counties have not yet claimed their 2022-23 funds.
- These funds can be used for transitory services (e.g. move-in costs, security deposit, etc.); housing navigation (i.e. help youth locate housing units); to recruit and support landlords (e.g. provide landlord incentives) so counties have available units for young people to use their vouchers; and provide ongoing supportive services (e.g. case management, education/employment support, budgeting and other independent living skills, etc.).
- Child welfare agencies/probation departments can provide *or* arrange for services, which can include connecting young people with existing programs like WIOA and Chafee, depending on their identified needs and interests. While the child welfare agency is required to provide *or* arrange for services, the young adult with the voucher is not required to receive them as a condition of receiving the voucher.
- John Burton Advocates for Youth offers technical assistance related to the Housing Navigation and Maintenance Program. Contact: Simone Tureck Lee at [simone@jbay.org](mailto:simone@jbay.org).

### **There is Free Technical Assistance Available to Support Your Implementation**

- John Burton Advocates for Youth and National Center for Child Welfare and Housing offer an FYI Community of Practice that counties and Public Housing Authorities can take part in and receive ongoing support from JBAY, national experts and your peers. To learn more about the Community of Practice, contact Andy Lomeli at [andy@jbay.org](mailto:andy@jbay.org).
- National Expert, Ruthie White, from the Center for Housing and Child Welfare, is able to provide technical assistance to child welfare agencies, juvenile probation departments, and PHAs.
- Youth Law Center and California Youth Connection are also available to provide support and create tools and materials. Please contact Jenny Pokmepner at [jpokempner@ylc.org](mailto:jpokempner@ylc.org).

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