**Forward Motion, a Family Self-Sufficiency Program**

What is it?

Forward Motion or FSS is a work incentive program available to any household with a Section 8 voucher to help increase economic self-sufficiency.

How long is it?

The program lasts up to five years following enrollment after your next recertification of income that is processed after you join. You can ask for up to a two-year extension if you are not able to complete your goals by the initial contract end date for good cause. You can finish the program sooner if you complete all your goals.

I am disabled. Can I join?

Forward Motion is open to disabled and non-disabled participants who want to work and increase their economic self-sufficiency.

How does it work?

You work with your Coordinator to plan and set goals that will help you become more economically self-sufficient. You will meet with your Coordinator at least three times a year.

What are the goals?

You get to choose your own goals. If you need to change your goals throughout your participation, you can do so; however, there are two goals that are required at the time of graduation. One of these goals is to become free from welfare cash assistance and the other goal is to become employed.

What if I decide that Forward Motion is not for me? Will I lose my voucher?

Forward Motion is a voluntary program, and you are not at risk of losing your voucher if you decide not to participate.

Do I have to pay more for my rent if I enroll?

You pay the same amount of rent as non-participants. You won’t pay more just because you enroll.

What are the benefits of being in this program?

You will work with your Coordinator who will help you as your work towards your goals. You can also build money in an escrow or savings account that will be released to you upon completing the program.

How does the escrow account work?

When your family’s income goes up ***because of an increase in countable earned income***, you pay more in your portion of rent. Let’s say that when you enroll in Forward Motion that you are paying $200 a month for your portion of rent. Then you start working and your portion of rent increases to $350 a month. VSHA matches the increase of $150 in an escrow or savings account.

How do I get the money in the escrow account?

You can get the escrow money when you graduate from the program. This happens when you have accomplished all the goals in your Individual Training Service Plan that you have created with your Coordinator. You will need to be working and free of welfare cash assistance at the time of graduation.

How much will the escrow account be?

The amount in the escrow account will depend on how much your household’s countable earned income increases. Some participants build a little and others build a lot. HUD estimates that the average of most graduate’s escrow is between $6000 and $7000. Escrow money is not taxable and can be used for any purpose after you graduate.

If I can’t be receiving welfare cash assistance at the time of graduation, do I have to give up food stamps and other benefits?

The requirement of being free from Reach-Up cash assistance only applies to the cash portion (Reach-Up, TANF, or General Assistance). You don’t have to give up food stamps, heating assistance, childcare subsidy, health insurance help, etc.

Can my household designate who will have the FSS Contract?

Yes, the adult household members will determine who will be the head of the FSS Family. The head of the FSS family will be responsible for completing the contract and will receive the escrow, when the goals are completed.