



FSS Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to give up my Section-8 voucher or move out of public housing after completing the Family Self-Sufficiency Program?

No. You do not have to give up your Section-8 voucher or move out of public housing after completing the Family Self-Sufficiency Program. You can keep your subsidized housing as long as you qualify.

What do I Need to do to Receive My Escrow?

Families must meet the program goals to be eligible to receive escrow funds. The program goals are:

- Be suitably employed
- Be in good standing with SHA and your HCV landlord
- Be free of cash welfare assistance for at least the last 12 consecutive months of the contract
- Meet the goals that you have set for yourself in the Individual Training and Service Plan

What is an escrow account?

Escrow is an interest-bearing account established by the housing authority for each participating family. An escrow credit is based on increases in income from employment only. FSS families must increase their earned income in order for credits to be applied to the escrow account.

What is the Family Self- Sufficiency (FSS) Program?

Family Self-Sufficiency is an employment related program designed to assist families in becoming self-sufficient and not dependent on welfare assistance. Families or individuals work with their case manager to develop goals that will be achievable within a 5-year period. The goals must include seeking and maintaining employment and independent of welfare assistance for 12 months prior to the contract expiration. Other FSS goals may include but are not limited to education, job readiness, career counseling, homeownership, financial education. As the family meets goals and completes the contact, they become eligible to receive the funds from escrow account.



FSS Frequently Asked Questions

Am I Eligible for the FSS Program?

All HCV participants are eligible to join FSS. However, families must be able to increase their earned income to benefit from the escrow incentive and be able to successfully complete the program.

How can I Benefit from FSS?

If you are ready to make the necessary changes in your life to achieve financial self-sufficiency, the FSS program can assist you in making **SMART** goals, provide you with the support and community resources you need to meet your goals and give you an opportunity to earn money in a tax-free escrow account.

Do I Have to Use My Escrow to Buy a House?

The escrow that is accrued during FSS participation may be used to meet any financial or personal goals and/or obligations. During the program, FSS coordinators encourage participants to attend financial counseling and budget development classes to prepare you for homeownership if you choose to go down that route.

What are the steps to enrolling in the FSS program?

- 1) Express Interest by completing application and submit application to Salem Housing Authority.
- 2) Attend Orientation Meet with FSS Coordinator to discuss program
- 3) Complete Needs Assessment Develop Action Plan using the Individual Training and Services Plan template
- 4) Sign the Contract of Participation

What happens to the escrow if I quit FSS or don't complete the contract?

Remember, this isn't your money until you complete the program. If you quit or don't complete the program, the money is forfeited. If you voluntarily withdraw from the program, you may re-enroll the program at a later time. If you are terminated from the program, you will not be allowed to re-enroll.