

## Family Unification Program Vouchers: Frequently Asked Questions\*

### 1. What is a Family Unification Program (FUP) voucher?

These are special purpose federally-funded vouchers offered through the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Section 8 program. A Family Unification Program (FUP) voucher is a type of rental assistance dedicated to: a) FUP-eligible families, and b) youth ages 18 to 24, who are involved with the NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS). HPD has been allocated a limited number of FUP vouchers. FUP vouchers assist households that locate housing of their choice and that pay a portion of the monthly rent to the owner. The household will typically pay 30% of their household income towards rent and HPD pays the difference.

### 2. How is eligibility determined for FUP vouchers?

HPD's FUP voucher program is administered in coordination with ACS and the NYC Department of Homeless Services (DHS). ACS and DHS are responsible for identifying and referring eligible families and youth to this program. First, they will determine whether you may be eligible to qualify for a FUP voucher. If you are identified as eligible, they will work with you to complete your application for a FUP voucher and refer you to HPD. If you currently have a case manager with both ACS and DHS, you will be allowed to choose which case manager you will work with to complete the application process.

FUP vouchers assist two eligible groups involved with ACS:

- **Families:** In order for a family to be eligible for a FUP voucher, you must be currently involved in the child welfare system. You must also be at risk of having your child(ren) being placed in out-of-home care due to lack of adequate housing, or at risk of not being able to reunite with your child(ren) due to inadequate housing.
- **Youth:** In order for you to be eligible for a FUP voucher, you must be age 18 to 24 at the time of admission to the program. You must have either left foster care or plan to leave foster care with a transition plan within 90 days. You must also either be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

### 3. I believe I am eligible for a FUP voucher. How do I apply?

Only staff at ACS or DHS can refer you to HPD as someone who may qualify for a FUP voucher. If a staff member at ACS or DHS has identified you for this assistance, they will help you complete and submit an application; you may not submit an application directly to HPD. If you have not already been identified as eligible, you may ask an ACS or DHS staff member about your eligibility. If you have case managers or other staff that you are working with at both agencies, you have the option of choosing who you would prefer to help you with your application.

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### 4. I'm going to turn 25 soon. Am I still eligible for this voucher?

- **Families:** If you are applying as a family, you will remain eligible.
- **Youth:** If you are a youth (the second eligible group from question 2, above), you must be age 18 to 24 at the time you are formally admitted into the FUP voucher program. If you turn 25 after being formally admitted, you will remain eligible for the FUP voucher program as long as you continue to comply with program requirements. You are formally admitted to the program after:
  - you have located an apartment;
  - you have submitted a completed HPD Landlord Package for the identified apartment;
  - you have received a move-in letter indicating HPD approval of the rent and the apartment;
  - the owner of the unit has signed a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract with HPD for the subsidy; and
  - you have signed a lease for the apartment.

HAP is the subsidy, or the amount that HPD pays your landlord towards your rent each month. Generally, it may take approximately six to eighteen months to be formally admitted to the program once your application for FUP assistance has been submitted. If you turn 25 at any point in this process prior to formal program admission, you will be unable to receive subsidy through the FUP voucher program. **Note: If you are 24 years old and applying for a FUP-Youth voucher, be aware that your application may be denied due to lack of adequate processing time prior to turning 25.**

### 5. What happens after my application is submitted?

HPD will review your application for completeness and program eligibility. HPD may contact you to request more documentation. If you are determined eligible for the FUP voucher program, HPD will contact you to schedule a tenant briefing. You will be required to bring updated income documentation to this appointment. If your application is denied, you will receive a notice in the mail from HPD.

If HPD has received all required documentation at the briefing, you will be issued a voucher and Landlord Package.

### 6. I am being told there are no more vouchers available. Why?

HPD has been allocated a limited number of FUP vouchers by the federal government. Once these vouchers have been issued to eligible applicants, HPD will not accept further applications. If you are interested in additional housing resources, you may access affordable housing lotteries on the NYC Housing Connect website at <https://a806-housingconnect.nyc.gov/nyclottery/lottery.html>.

\*For additional information on the rental subsidy process, please see: [Department of Housing Preservation and Development \(HPD\) Section 8: Housing Choice Voucher Program FAQ](#) available on HPD's website

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### 7. I have received a FUP voucher. What do I do now?

Once you receive a FUP voucher, you must find an apartment to rent. There are a variety of resources available to you:

- **For families:** ACS' Housing Support Services Unit will reach out to assist you in your housing search.
- **For youth:** ACS' Housing Academy Collaborative will reach out to assist you in your housing search.
- **For families and youth:**
  - **NYC Housing Connect** is an online resource that contains information on affordable housing opportunities in New York City. It can be accessed at: <https://a806-housingconnect.nyc.gov/nyclottery/lottery.html>.
    - **Housing Ambassadors:** HPD partners with community-based service providers in New York City to provide information about Housing Connect's affordable housing lotteries and assistance with the Housing Connect application process. Information about Housing Ambassadors can be found at: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/hpd/renters/housing-ambassadors.page>.
  - You may consider applying for a unit in one of HPD's **Project-Based Voucher (PBV) buildings or developments**, in which the Project-Based voucher subsidy is attached to a designated unit. Tenant-based Section 8 applicants, or voucher holders, may be eligible to apply for a project-based voucher while looking for an apartment with your voucher. If you receive a PBV, you will have to forfeit your FUP voucher. However, after one year of residence in a project-based unit you may be eligible either to move or receive a tenant-based voucher, depending on voucher availability. Information about these projects, including how to apply can be found at: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/hpd/section-8/project-based-voucher.page>.
  - **[www.GoSection8.com](https://www.gosection8.com):** Owners interested in participating in HPD's rental subsidy programs register available apartments through this website. Voucher holders are encouraged to check these listings often. You may view information on available apartments at: <https://www.gosection8.com/logreg.aspx?user=tenant>
  - **HRA emergency assistance:** New York City's Human Resources Administration (HRA) has limited funds available to help with moving expenses, security deposits, broker's fees, and temporary storage for furniture and personal belongings. Information and eligibility requirements can be found at: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/cash-assistance.page>, or by calling HRA's Infoline at 718-557-1399.

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### **8. How long does my FUP voucher last?**

The initial term of the voucher is listed on the voucher as 120 days. If you are close to the end of your voucher term and you have not yet located housing, you may submit a request for an extension within 30 days of your voucher's expiration date. The extension request form is available on HPD's website, at <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdf/voucher-extension-request-form.pdf>. If you do not use the voucher within the approved term, the voucher will expire and you will not receive rental assistance. If you are a youth (see question 2) and you turn 25 at the time of voucher expiration, you will not be eligible for a voucher extension.

### **9. Once I am admitted and become a FUP participant, how long will I receive rental subsidy?**

If you applied as part of a **family** (see question 2, above), and you are formally admitted into the program, you will continue to remain eligible for assistance as long as you continue to meet program requirements, subject to funding availability for the FUP program.

However, if you applied as a **youth** (see question 2) and you are formally admitted to the program, HPD's FUP rental assistance **cannot last more than 36 months (or three years)**. After you are formally admitted into the program, you will be invited to join HPD's Family Self-Sufficiency program to help you meet your educational, employment, and financial goals that can help with stability in the coming three years.

### **10. Can I move and still be assisted with my FUP voucher?**

Yes. You may be eligible to move after you have been subsidized for one year if you have complied with FUP program requirements. More information about moves, including the Move Request Form, can be found at <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/hpd/section-8/tenants-moving.page>.

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### 11. What additional assistance can I receive as a FUP participant?

- **HPD's Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP)** is an eviction prevention program that is available to assist all of HPD's Section 8 voucher holders. HPD's HPP program works with three community based partner organizations: BronxWorks, serving the Bronx; Catholic Charities, serving Manhattan; and CAMBA, serving Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island. To learn more about HPP, ask your HPD case manager.
- **HPD's Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS)** is a voluntary program available to all Section 8 participants. It helps Section 8 participants achieve their education and employment related goals and accumulate savings through education, job training, job placement, and financial counseling services. Any increase in tenant share of rent due to an increase in employment income is matched by HPD in a savings account that becomes available upon FSS program completion. Information about FSS can be found at: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/hpd/section-8/tenants-family-self-sufficiency.page>. After you are formally admitted into the program, you will receive an invitation to join the Family Self-Sufficiency program.
- **ACS' Housing Academy Collaborative (HAC)** provides a range of resources to help you find and keep your housing. HAC Housing Specialists can help you with:
  - Resume and career building
  - Employment and career planning
  - Education goal setting and planning
  - Financial Literacy
  - General Knowledge of Landlord and Tenant Rights
  - Negotiating With Creditors
  - Referrals for education, employment, internships
  - Job training and placement through partnerships with FECS Academy, Swiss Board, Year Up, and CO-OP Technical.

The Housing Academy Collaborative is located at 150 William Street, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10038. You can also call them at (212) 442-4273, or reach out to your ACS case manager.

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