

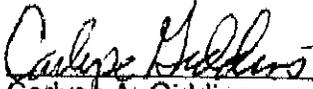
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

THE DEPARTMENT OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND THEIR FAMILIES
The Division of Family Services

and

THE DELAWARE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY



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**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
FAMILY UNIFICATION PROGRAM
BETWEEN
DELAWARE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY
AND
DEPARTMENT OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH & THEIR FAMILIES
DIVISION OF FAMILY SERVICES**

THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING is made on this 22nd day of January 2009, by and between the Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA) and the Division of Family Services (DFS).

DSHA, in cooperation with DFS, has made application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under the Family Unification Program (FUP).

The purpose of the FUP is to:

- A. Provide Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) to youth at least 18 years old and not more than 21 years old who left foster care at age 16 or older to find affordable and decent housing in a safe and supportive environment; and
 - B. Promote family unification by providing HCVs to families for whom the lack of adequate housing is a primary factor in the imminent placement of the family's child or children in out-of-home care, or in a delay of discharge of a child or children to the family from out-of-home care.
- I. **Delaware State Housing Authority Duties:**
- A. To determine whether the youth and families referred by DFS are eligible for HCV assistance;
 - B. To administer the FUP waiting list by comparing names with those families and youth age 18 through 21 already on DSHA's waiting list. Any family and youth already on DSHA's waiting list that matches with DFS must be assisted in order of their position on the waiting list in accordance with DSHA admission policies. Any family or youth certified by DFS as eligible and not on the waiting list must be placed on the waiting list. If DSHA has a closed waiting list, it must reopen the waiting list to accept a FUP applicant family or youth who is not currently on DSHA's waiting list;
 - C. Determine if any families with children on DSHA's waiting list are living in temporary shelters or are currently homeless, that also have issues of abuse, neglect or dependency, and refer them to DFS for assessment and

possibility of on-going services, which may or may not include a referral to the FUP, depending on the family's circumstances;

- D. Determine if any youth age 18 to 21 on DSHA's waiting list are living in temporary shelters or are currently homeless, that also have issues of abuse, neglect or dependency, and refer them to DFS for assessment and possibility of on-going services, which may or may not include a referral to the FUP, depending on the youth's circumstances;
- E. To process and distribute housing subsidies to families with children and youth identified by DFS as FUP-eligible;
- F. To reissue FUP Housing Choice vouchers to FUP-qualified families and youth in the event such assistance becomes available (i.e., another family or youth ends/loses its FUP participation);
- G. Ensure that DSHA's administration plan is in accordance with applicable program regulations and requirements and update when necessary;
- H. To expedite the process for third party verification of a family's or youth's income and eligibility to the maximum extent possible (i.e., completing the third party verification while the family or youth begins searching for a unit and using oral verification when possible);
- I. To provide briefing sessions for FUP tenants, covering topics such as: the application and apartment leasing process, apartment search techniques, lease negotiations, housing discrimination, housing quality standards, tenants' rights and responsibilities, and, where appropriate, apartment maintenance, housekeeping and budgeting;
- J. To maintain FUP-data for future program evaluation and cooperate with and provide requested data to the HUD office or HUD-approved contractor responsible for program evaluation;
- K. Families and youth will be informed of DSHA's Moving to Work (MTW) Program and be will be required to participate in MTW unless they are exempt due to a disability.

II. **Division of Family Services:**

- A. To establish and implement a system to identify eligible families and youth within the agency's caseload for referral to DSHA and to review referrals from DSHA (from their waiting list) for eligibility. DFS is responsible for certifying eligibility of families and youth for FUP;

- B. To develop procedures for referring FUP-eligible families and youth to DSHA to establish service population priorities, and provide written certification to DSHA that families and youth qualify for FUP;
 - C. Provide written certification to DSHA that a family or youth qualifies as FUP-eligible based upon the criteria established in Section 8(x) of the United States Housing Act of 1937, and the FUP Federal Register notice;
 - D. Through the Independent Living Program and the Treatment Program, DFS currently has sufficient staff resources in place and will continue to commit these resources to ensure that eligible families and youth are identified and the certification process is completed in a timely manner;
 - E. To provide supportive services to eligible families and youth throughout the housing application and lease-up process;
 - F. Provide follow-up services for not less than the 18 months to a FUP-eligible youth that is receiving rental assistance;
 - G. To maintain relevant data and provide written information as requested for program evaluation. Cooperate with the evaluation that HUD intends to conduct on the FUP, and submit a certification with DSHA's application for FUP funding indicating that DFS will agree to cooperate with and provide requested data to the HUD-approved contractor having responsibility for program evaluation; and
 - H. The Treatment Program Manager and the Independent Living Program Manager will be responsible for administering the entire program, ensuring that staff are aware of the program and are complying with the terms and conditions of the MOU. They will also ensure that a tracking mechanism is designed to track the information necessary for the independent program evaluation.
- III. **DFS agrees to provide the following services to FUP-eligible youth (either through DFS staff or DFS contracted agencies):**
- A. Provide basic life skills information/counseling on money management, use of credit, housekeeping, proper nutrition/meal preparation; and access to health care;
 - B. Provide counseling on compliance with rental lease requirements and with HCV program participant requirements, including assistance/referrals for assistance on security deposits, utility hook-up fees, and utility deposits. In cooperation with DSHA, DFS will assist youth in locating and securing appropriate eligible units for leasing;

- C. Provide such assurances to owners of rental property as are reasonable and necessary to assist FUP-eligible youth to rent a unit with a FUP voucher;
- D. Provide job preparation and attainment counseling (where to look, how to apply, dress, grooming, etc);
- E. Provide education and career advancement counseling regarding attainment of general equivalency diploma (GED); attendance/financing of education at technical school, trade school or college; including successful work ethic and attitude models;
- F. Upon placement of the youth in housing through FUP, DFS shall assist the youth in identifying ongoing service needs and shall ensure that youth have been referred to community resources that can assist the youth in meeting those needs;
- G. DFS will engage the participation of the FUP-eligible youth in the assessment and implementation of actions to address their needs, including the development of an individual case plan on each youth for services to be received and the youth's commitment to the plan. Youth are required to sign a service plan agreeing to attend counseling/training sessions and to take other actions as deemed appropriate to the youth's successful transition from foster care; and
- H. Youth will be informed of DSHA's Moving to Work (MTW) Program and will be required to participate in MTW unless they are exempt due to a disability.

IV. Past experience and cooperation between DFS and DSHA in administering a similar program

DFS and DSHA established a HUD approved Family Unification Set-Aside Program in 1995. Fifteen vouchers were set-aside from DSHA's HCVs to implement the program. The goals of the program are identical to the goals of the FUP. All vouchers are utilized in housing families in which lack of adequate and affordable housing is the primary factor in either the imminent placement of the family's child(ren) in out-of-home care or delayed return of the child(ren) from out-of-home care. DSHA maintains a waiting list for eligible applicants as the demand continually exceeds availability.

DFS currently will capitalize on the structure already in place to implement HUD's FUP program.

Appendix A

OUTREACH AND REFERRAL EFFORTS FOR SELECTION OF FAMILY UNIFICATION PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

DSHA will use FORM "E" to identify potential FUP participants from their existing and new applicants. DFS will use FORM "B" to refer families and youth to participate in the Family Unification Program.

DSHA will send the "release of information" from FORM "E" for each referred family and youth that they include in FORM "B."

- a. FORM "B" will be returned from DFS with verification of each family's and youth's status. Families and youth verified to fit all FUP criteria will be placed on a Family Unification Program eligibility list and will have a coded entry next to their name on the waiting list.
- b. Those families and youth deemed INELIGIBLE by DFS on FORM "B" will be notified by DSHA in writing that their application to participate in the Family Unification Program has been denied on grounds of program eligibility, while their position on the waiting list is unaffected.
- c. DSHA will review the files of all families and youth referred to them from DFS on FORM "A." The status of each family and youth will be recorded and the original FORM "A" will be returned to DFS. Those families and youth already on the waiting list will have a coded entry placed next to their name.
- d. Families and youth who are eligible for housing but not currently on the waiting list will submit a housing application to DSHA's office and placed on the waiting list with a coded entry. The status of all families and youth approved by DSHA will be documented to DFS on FORM "C."
- e. Families and youth determined to be ineligible will be notified in writing by DSHA that they do not qualify for housing (under public housing agency criteria) and therefore cannot participate in the FUP. This notification will also inform the applicant of its right to appeal the decision, as set forth in the Agency Administrative Plan. DSHA will schedule an informal review, if requested in writing. During the review, the applicant will be allowed to present documentation and oral/written objections to the decision to deny housing assistance.

Appendix B

DFS OUTREACH AND REFERRAL EFFORTS FOR THE FAMILY UNIFICATION PROGRAM AMONG ALL FAMILIES AND YOUTH SERVED BY THAT AGENCY

- a. DFS will review all existing and in-coming families and youth. Caseworkers will use FORM "D" to reach-out to these families and youth either at their intake sessions or their regular meetings. All families and youth who meet child welfare criteria will be referred to DSHA for housing verification on FORM "A." The "release of information" (part of FORM "D") will be included for each applicant listed on FORM "A."
- b. DSHA will return FORM "A", indicating the status of each family and youth, to DFS. Applicants deemed eligible by DSHA will be added to the waiting list (if necessary) with a coded entry. Documentation of the status of these applicants will be sent to DFS on FORM "C."
- c. Applicants determined to be ineligible by DSHA will be notified in writing by DSHA that they do not qualify for housing (under public housing agency criteria) and therefore cannot participate in the FUP. This notification will also inform the applicant of its right to appeal the decision, as set forth in DSHA's administration plan. DSHA will schedule an informal review, if requested in writing. During the review, the applicant will be allowed to present documentation and oral/written objections to the decision to deny housing assistance.
- d. Applicants referred to DFS from DSHA on FORM "B" will be reviewed for child welfare criteria. The status of each applicant will be recorded and the original FORM "B" will be returned to DSHA. Applicants that meet all FUP requirements will be placed on the FUP list and their status will be documented to DFS on FORM "C."
- e. Applicants (from FORM "B") deemed INELIGIBLE by DFS will be notified that their request to participate in the Family Unification Program has been denied on grounds of program eligibility, while their position on the DSHA waiting list is unaffected.

FAMILY UNIFICATION PROGRAM

**REFERRAL LETTER FROM THE DIVISION OF FAMILY SERVICES TO DELAWARE
STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY**

FORM "A"

DATE:

TO: Delaware State Housing Authority

FROM: Division of Family Services

Please see the attached forms. We are referring these families and youth to you from our active caseloads. Note the attached release of information form for each family and youth. They have each been determined to fulfill the child welfare criteria for the Family Unification Program. Please verify whether they are currently on the waiting list, whether they are eligible to be placed on the list, or if they are ineligible for housing. Please add the eligible families and youth to the waiting lists. Check the appropriate column, make a copy of the list for your files and return the original form to DFS.

Please send DFS the form of confirmation (FORM "C") for each family and youth that is granted a voucher through the Family Unification Program.

If you have any questions about this process please call their Independent Living Program Manager at DFS.

Questions about particular applicant should be directed to their caseworker as noted on the form.

Thank You

**DFS ELIGIBLE FAMILIES AND YOUTH FOR FAMILY UNIFICATION PROGRAM
(FORM "A")**

Name Address, Phone Contact Social Security Number Case Worker: Name & Number	Families and Youth Currently on the waiting list	Families and Youth eligible & will be placed on the waiting list	Families and youth NOT eligible for housing
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

REFERRAL FROM DELAWARE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY
TO DIVISION OF FAMILY SERVICES
FORM "B"

DATE:

TO: Division of Family Services

FROM: Delaware State Housing Authority

Please see the attached list of families and youth (FORM "B") and their release of information forms. We are referring these applicants for possible participation in the Family Unification Program. Each of these applicants is currently on the waiting list. Please verify whether they are among your open cases and whether they qualify for the Family Unification Program under child welfare criteria. Please check the appropriate column, make a copy of the form for your records, and return this form to DSHA. Applicants on this list that are verified by you will be granted a slot in the Family Unification Program.

A form of confirmation (FORM "C") will be sent for each applicant that is issued a voucher through this program. If you have any questions about this process please call _____ at DSHA. Questions concerning individual families and youth should be directed to the caseworker indicated on the form.

Thank You.

FAMILIES AND YOUTH FROM DSHA: ON WAITING LIST (FORM "B")

NAME ADDRESS, PHONE CONTACT SOCIAL SECURITY # CASE WORKER: NAME & NUMBER	Families and youth currently on the waiting list.		Families and youth NOT an active case with DFS
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

FAMILY UNIFICATION PROGRAM

NOTIFICATION OF FAMILY UNIFICATION PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

FORM "C"

TO: Division of Family Services

FROM: Delaware State Housing Authority

RE: CONFIRMATION OF A REFERRED FAMILY OR YOUTH'S PARTICIPATION

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD NAME: _____

CURRENT ADDRESS: _____

PHONE CONTACT: _____

DATE FAMILY PLACED ON FUP LIST: _____

* APPROXIMATE RANK ON LIST: _____

OR DATE HCV GRANTED: _____

VOUCHER BEDROOM SIZE NEEDED: _____

VOUCHER BEDROOM SIZE GRANTED: _____

PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY CONTACT: _____

* CONTACT PHONE NUMBER: _____

Both DSHA and DFS have verified the above noted family or youth to be eligible for the Family Unification Program. They have either been placed on the waiting list (coded for FUP) or have already been granted a FUP voucher (as noted). If you have any questions or concerns about this family or youth or about the Family Unification program in general, please contact the DSHA worker noted above.

FAMILY UNIFICATION PROGRAM

FORM "D" INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Name
Address
City, State, Zip

The Delaware State Housing Authority may be able to assist you with your housing needs if you are at least 18 years old and not more than 21 years old, who left foster care at age 16 or older, and do not have adequate housing. To know whether you are eligible for housing, for the reasons stated above, through the Family Unification Program, please fill out the Form "D" Below and leave it with your DFS caseworker.

Your participation in this process is strictly voluntary and any existing position on the waiting list will not be jeopardized!

DFS will evaluate your housing needs upon receipt of the form. If you meet the criteria for the Program, we will notify the DSHA – and request that they determine your eligibility for Housing Choice Voucher housing. If you qualify for a Housing Choice Voucher, your name will be coded as Family Unification Program eligible on the waiting list. Participation in the program is based on both eligibility and position on the waiting list. Eligibility does not guarantee that you will receive immediate housing.

FAMILY UNIFICATION PROGRAM

CONSENT FROM "D"

I hereby request that DFS review my circumstances, and if I qualify for the Family Unification Program, certify the same to DSHA.

(PLEASE PRINT)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

TELEPHONE: () _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER _____

FAMILY UNIFICATION PROGRAM

FORM "E"

DSHA may be able to assist you with your housing needs through the Family Unification Program. This program may help you if you are at least 18 years old and not more than 21 years old who left foster care at age 16 or older and who does not have adequate housing. If you think you may qualify for the program, please fill out and mail the form below to your DFS caseworker.

Your participation in this process is strictly voluntary and your position on the waiting list will be not be jeopardized!

If DFS certifies that you meet the criteria for the Family Unification Program, and you are also found eligible for assistance under the guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the Housing Choice Voucher Program, you will be placed on a waiting list for a Family Unification Program voucher. Although this will not guarantee housing for you, it may increase the opportunity for you to receive rental assistance.