



## What is Family Self-Sufficiency?

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) is a voluntary program that provides Housing Choice Voucher participants the opportunity to achieve economic independence over a five-year period. This is achieved through the close assistance of a case manager who supports monitors and links up FSS families to public and private resources in the community.

## What are the Responsibilities of the FSS Participants?

- ◆ Each participating family must sign a Contract of Participation that spells out their responsibilities and specific services to be provided through the program. The contract is for five years.
- ◆ An Action Plan is developed that documents the responsibilities the family must fulfill and sets specific, individual goals that the family works toward to become self-sufficient.
- ◆ The designated head of the household must participate in appropriate job training, attend school and/or be employed during the term of the contract.
- ◆ At the end of five years, in order to receive the monies held in an escrow savings account, the family must successfully complete their contract and withdraw from public assistance programs.

## How Families Benefit from FSS?

The Family Self-sufficiency Program gives families that have been struggling the opportunity to become economically independent. FSS is an innovative program designed to improve the quality of life for families caught in the cycle of poverty.

Families that participate in the FSS program gain skills that last a lifetime. This is a program that addresses the long-term needs of individuals living in poverty. Families have access to the supportive services they need to become self-sufficient, including:

- Job Training
- Life Skills Classes
- Education
- Counseling
- Child Care
- Transportation
- Support Groups
- Financial Guidance
- Opportunity to save for home ownership through an escrow account.

### **How Businesses and the Community Can Participate in the Success of FSS**

By combining private contributions and public resources, communities can offer a wide range of opportunities that can help families participating in the FSS program. Below are some examples:

- Contribute monetary donations.
- Volunteer time and talents
- Provide apprenticeships/shadowing/mentoring opportunities.
- Donate equipment and vehicles.
- Provide sliding scale services.
- Sponsor and organize employment fairs.
- Offer business development and consultation.
- Provide scholarships and tuition assistance.
- Provide incentives to participants (e.g. restaurant coupons, merchandise and/or services).
- Assist in developing or providing creative loans.
- Consider hiring qualified FSS participants.
- Provide publicity about needs as well as accomplishments of the FSS program.

*If you would like to assist with any of these programs or would like more information please contact*

*Ms. Angela Davis, Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator at (703) 792-7530 or [akdavis@pwcgov.org](mailto:akdavis@pwcgov.org).*

## What is the Welfare-to-Work (WtW) Program?

Federal and state welfare reform efforts have recently created a second program, the Welfare-to-Work (WORK) Program. This program has a 4-year contractual period for families with the desire to become welfare free. The federal government has issued 450 new Housing Choice Vouchers to Prince William County, to be used exclusively for families currently on public assistance.

## How Do I Qualify?

OHCD recognizes the needs of our community's working poor. A good number of these families are currently, or have had a need in the past two years, to receive assistance from the PWC Department of Social Services. Some of this aid comes in the form of medical, daycare, foodstamps, and/or TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families).

## How Families Benefit from the WtW Program

Many of these families are struggling day-to-day to provide for their families. These families benefit greatly when they receive rental assistance. By alleviating some of the financial burden of the families, these families improve in areas that will enable them to become welfare free.

## What are the Responsibilities of WtW Participants?

The WORK Program requires families to observe a few basic rules. The family must work a certain amount of hours per week, (depending on the family size) or they must pursue, or increase their educational standings. The families are aware that there is no tolerance for non-compliance with the contract. If a family chooses to leave their employment because the government subsidizes their housing, they will not get a reduction in their rental portion. The family will be required to find other employment and stay employed.

Families in the WORK Program are also aware that they need to adhere to all of the rules and regulations set forth by the Housing Choice Voucher. Every year, the family will be re-evaluated to ensure that they are abiding by the rules set forth for the program. If a family chooses not to abide by the rules, they will lose their assistance.

*There are families in our community that are struggling on a daily basis, so we welcome the opportunity to help them as they help themselves. We can only give these families the tools and supplies they need to build their futures; but, it is up to them to build those futures...*

*For more information on the Welfare to Work program, please contact Jennifer Thompson, 703.792.7530.*

The FSS and WtW programs  
are administered by:

Prince William County Office of  
Housing and Community Development

### Agency Information:

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY  
OFFICE OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Angela Davis,  
FSS Coordinator

Jennifer Thompson,  
Housing Specialist – Welfare to Work Program

15941 Donald Curtis Drive, Suite 112

Woodbridge, Virginia 22191

Phone: (703) 792-7530

TTY: (703) 792-4364

Fax: (703) 792-4978

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## FAMILY SELF SUFFICIENCY



County of Prince William

# Office Of Housing And Community Development



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15941 Donald Curtis Drive, Suite 112  
Woodbridge, VA. 22191

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