

2022-23 State Budget:

Housing Navigation & Support for Youth with Housing Vouchers

The 2022-23 California state budget includes \$8.7 million in ongoing funding, championed by Assemblymember Phil Ting for the expansion of the Housing Navigation & Maintenance Program (formerly the Housing Navigators Program).

Information about this investment is included in the Human Services budget trailer bill, [SB 187](#) and budget bill, [SB 154](#).

The policy changes described below take effect July 1, 2022. The funding will roll out over the 2022-23 fiscal year.

The Housing Navigation & Maintenance Program (formerly the Housing Navigators Program) is administered by the California Department of Housing & Community Development (HCD) to county child welfare agencies to provide housing navigators to help young adults secure and maintain housing.

What changes did SB 187 make to the Housing Navigation & Maintenance Program?

SB 187 changed the upper age limit, expanded the priority population, and changed the name of the program. These changes are detailed in the table below:

Change	Prior to 7/1/22	Effective 7/1/22
Age range	Age 18 through 21, inclusive (up until turning 22)	Age 18 through 24, inclusive (up until turning 25)
Priority population	Current foster youth	Current and former foster youth
Program name	Housing Navigators Program	Housing Navigation & Maintenance Program

What is the intent of these programmatic changes?

The intent of these changes is to align the Housing Navigation & Maintenance Program with federal Housing Choice Voucher programs for former foster youth, increasing access to these vouchers.

The U.S. Department of Housing Urban Development administers two voucher programs for former foster youth ages 18 through 24—the Family Unification Program (FUP) and the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) program. Both provide up to 36 months of housing assistance via a Housing Choice Voucher administered by a Public Housing Authority, coupled with supportive services provided by the county child welfare agency.

While HUD provides funding for the rental subsidy (voucher), there is no designated funding for the services. By increasing the upper age limit and expanding the priority population of the Housing Navigation & Maintenance Program, counties can now use this funding to provide housing navigation and supportive services to youth with FUP/FYI vouchers.

Providing housing navigation and services to youth with vouchers will increase access to vouchers by:

- Equipping counties with funding to meet a federal mandate: Currently, some counties do not access these vouchers at all, or they access fewer vouchers than they need simply because they lack designated funding to provide the required and necessary supportive services.
- Improving Public Housing Authorities’ voucher utilization rates: Before a housing authority can request new vouchers, HUD requires that they have an at least 90% utilization rate for their existing FUP/FYI vouchers. A voucher is considered utilized once a youth has entered into a lease for housing. Without adequate resources to offer quality housing navigation services, youth struggle to lease up with a voucher, and the housing search time can last several months or fail to result in actual housing.

How much funding was included in the state budget for the Housing Navigation & Maintenance Program?

The 2022-23 state budget included \$8.7 million to increase the annual budget for the Housing Navigation & Maintenance Program from \$5 million to \$13.7 million. This budget increase enables counties to provide housing navigation and supportive services to at least 870 youth with FUP/FYI vouchers. As of June 30, 2021, there were approximately 870 of these vouchers in California.