



JOHN BURTON
Advocates
for Youth



VIRTUAL POLICY UPDATE

Despite Federal Cuts, FYI
Voucher Funding Preserved with
Youth-Centered Reforms

June 25, 2025

TODAY'S AGENDA

- Introductions
- Overview of FYI/FUP
- FYI/FUP in California
- Remarks from HUD SF Field Office Director
- Status of FYI/FUP at the Federal Level
- New FYI/FUP Policy Changes
- Resources and Q&A

TODAY'S PRESENTERS



Simone Tureck Lee

Director of Housing and
Economic Mobility

**John Burton Advocates
for Youth**



Christopher Middleton

Equal Justice Works Fellow
Youth Law Center

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Salesforce Inc.*



Eduardo Cabrera

San Francisco Field Office
Director

**U.S. Department of Housing
& Urban Development**



Valerie Lynne Kane

Senior Project Manager,
Housing & Economic
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**John Burton Advocates
for Youth**



Jenny Pokempner

Senior Policy Director
Youth Law Center

OVERVIEW OF FYI/FUP

Chris Middleton, Youth Law Center

OVERVIEW OF FYI

- The Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) initiative is a distribution mechanism for Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers, specifically for youth.
- FYI was developed by youth and the program has been embedded in federal law.

OVERVIEW OF FYI, CON'T

- FUP vouchers are a type of Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (U.S. HUD) that are designated for families or youth involved with the child welfare system.

ELIGIBILITY FOR FYI VOUCHERS

Eligibility Criteria Include:

- Youth must be at least 18 and no more than 24 years old.
- Must be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless at the age of 16 or older.
- Must have left foster care (including probation-supervised foster youth) or will leave foster care within the next 90 days* in accordance with a transition plan.

* This will change to 180 days as of August 7, 2025.

HUD ADMINISTERS FYI VOUCHERS IN TWO WAYS

Competitive Vouchers

- HUD issues Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to invite applications from eligible Public Housing Authorities for the program and purpose described within the NOFO.
- The most recent competitive [award](#) was on May 19, 2025.

Non-Competitive Vouchers

- Authorized by [PIH 2023-04](#) and [2025-08](#).
- PHAs may request vouchers on a rolling “*on-demand*” basis in batches as small as 1 or as large as 25.
- Each PHA may request up to 50 non-competitive vouchers per federal fiscal year.

ROLES OF PARTNERS IN LOCAL ADMINISTRATION OF FYI

- ✓ **Public Child Welfare Agency (PCWA) and Public Housing Authority (PHA)** must collaborate through a MOU or letter of intent.
- ✓ **PCWA** must refer youth and verify their eligibility.
- ✓ **PCWA** must provide for or arrange for supportive services.
- ✓ **PHA** must take referrals from the **PCWA** and request the voucher from HUD.
- ✓ **PHA** must offer and facilitate the two-year voucher extension through Family Self-Sufficiency Program or participation conditions.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

The PHA provides the voucher and the PCWA provides or arranges for supportive services:

Up front services to help youth identify housing and lease up

- *i.e. housing navigation; financial assistance with security deposit, move-in, etc.*

Ongoing services to maintain housing and meet their goals

- *i.e. help with employment or school, being connected with mental health services, or financial management support*

These services are voluntary and youth don't have to accept services to receive a voucher

PROGRAM LENGTH

FYI vouchers last for **3 years** but can be extended for **2 add'l years** if the youth is:

Participating in the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program, or

Fulfilling participation conditions if PHA does not offer FSS or it is full/has waitlist.

Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS):

- Must execute **FSS Action Plan**
- Must be **employed** (*but not at the start of the program*);
- FSS provides and/or coordinates **services**; and
- Establishes an **interest-bearing escrow account** where increases in voucher holder's rent from increased earned income result in a credit to the escrow account which they receive at exit.

Participation Conditions:

- Education;
- Workforce development;
- Employment; or
- *Exceptions: has child under 6, cares for incapacitated person, in drug/alcohol treatment, documented medical condition*

STATUS OF FYI/FUP IN CALIFORNIA

Simone Tureck Lee, John Burton Advocates for Youth

CALIFORNIA'S RAPID EXPANSION OF FYI/FUP SINCE 2021



46 (47%) Public Housing Authorities administer FYI/FUP for youth in partnership with **33 (53%)** counties.



2,049 FYI/FUP vouchers for youth in California as of October 2024, up **136%** since 2021.



55% of California's housing for former foster youth is made possible by FYI/FUP.

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HOUSING NAVIGATION & MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

- HNMP is administered annually by the CA Dept. of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to county child welfare agencies.
- **Purpose:** To hire housing navigators to help youth ages 18-24 secure and maintain housing; priority given to current and former foster youth.
- **Connection to FYI/FUP:** Expanded in 2022 to \$13.7M to explicitly assist former foster youth with FYI/FUP vouchers.
 - HNMP helps California access over \$33 million in federal housing assistance through FYI/FUP.

HNMP IS COMMONLY USED FOR:

- Move in costs
- Security deposits
- Housing navigation (i.e. helping youth to locate housing units)
- Recruiting and supporting landlords (e.g. provide landlord incentives) so counties have available units for youth with vouchers
- Provide ongoing supportive services



REMARKS FROM HUD'S SAN FRANCISCO FIELD OFFICE DIRECTOR

Eduardo Cabrera, U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development



Eduardo Cabrera

San Francisco Field Office
Director

U.S. Department of Housing and
Urban Development



STATUS OF FYI/FUP AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL

Valerie Lynne Kane, John Burton Advocates for Youth

THERE IS NO PAUSE ON FYI/FUP VOUCHERS AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL

- **FYI/FUP is funded through discretionary funds;** they are not impacted by the Budget Reconciliation process.
- **H.R.1968** - Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 was passed on March 15, 2025 and contained appropriations through the fiscal year for several federal departments including HUD.
 - **FUP is funded at \$30M, \$25M of which will be distributed as non-competitive FYI.**



STATUS OF FYI IN THE FEDERAL BUDGET



This is level funding from FY 2024, 2023, and 2022.

WHAT'S IN THE WHITE HOUSE "SKINNY BUDGET"



- **\$25M is noted for housing support for former foster youth.**
- This is despite a proposed 43% total cut from other HUD rental assistance programs.
- The budget proposes to combine 5 HUD programs into a single block grant distributed to states for state flexibility to implement the programs under their policy goals.
- **The housing support for former foster youth is noted separately from this proposal.**

CURRENT ADMINISTRATION SUPPORTS FYI

First lady Melania Trump scores win for America's foster youth with \$25M investment

Funding is a 'game-changer in providing young adults with access to short-term housing assistance'

First lady [Melania Trump](#) announced Friday that a \$25 million foster youth investment will be included in the president's 2026 fiscal year budget.

The funds will go to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Foster Youth to Independence program to support young people who are transitioning out of foster care. It will help provide housing for them, according to a press release from the first lady's office.

NEW FYI/FUP POLICY CHANGES

Jenny Pokempner, Youth Law Center

HUD NOTICE PIH 2025-08

- Issued on April 9, 2025.
- Alerts PHAs and Child Welfare Agencies that HUD is waiving certain requirements to improve implementation of the FYI/FUP Program and to make it more responsive to the experiences of young people leaving foster care and FUP eligible families.
 - ✓ Some waivers are mandatory/required.
 - ✓ Some waivers are optional for the PHA.
 - ✓ **PHAs must implement the new requirements and take any options by 120 days from the issuance of the notice. (August 7, 2025).**
- Reminds PHAs and stakeholders about the availability of on demand FYI vouchers.
- Reminds PHAs and stakeholders to consult and use [PIH Notice 2023-04](#), which lays out the basics on requesting on demand FYI vouchers.

MANDATORY WAIVER: INCREASING TIME FOR REFERRALS TO HUD

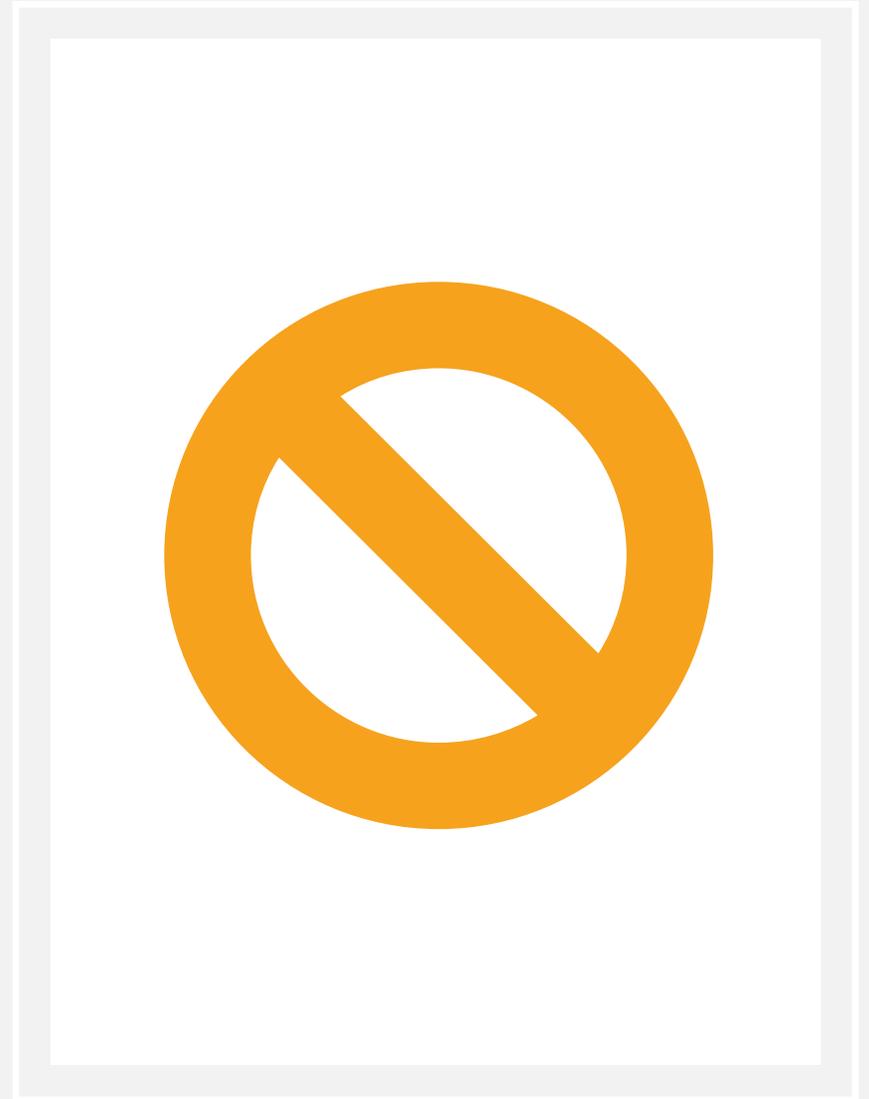
- PHAs must waive the current 90 days prior to leaving care for an FYI referral.
- **PHAs should make referrals to HUD 180 days prior to a youth's exit from foster care in accordance with the transition plan.**

This means that an FYI/FUP youth may lease a unit prior to officially leaving foster care in order to ensure a smooth transition from foster care to independence, as long as all requirements of the FUP and FYI programs and HCV program are met.



**MANDATORY WAIVER:
PROHIBITING RESIDENCY
PREFERENCES**

- A PHA may not apply any residency preference to FUP/FYI voucher applicants.
- **PHAs cannot require that an FYI/FUP voucher holder have ties to the PHA's jurisdiction or currently live there.**



MANDATORY WAIVER: EXTENSION OF INITIAL SEARCH TERM

- PHAs must extend the initial search term for living units, currently at 60 days, for FYI/FUP voucher applicants.
- **PHAs must provide a minimum initial search term of 120 days for FYI/FUP voucher applicants.**
- If an individual with disabilities is a voucher applicant, PHAs also must include a current listing of available accessible units known to the PHA, and if necessary, otherwise assist in locating an available accessible dwelling unit.



MANDATORY WAIVER: EXTENSION OF SEARCH TERM

PHAs must adopt an extension policy for FYI/FUP applicants that includes the following:

- ✓ **Extension Length:** Each extension must be for a minimum of 90 days.
- ✓ **First Extension:** The PHA must approve the first extension request, regardless of how the request is made (written or oral) or when it is made, as long as the request is made on or before the term expiration date and is consistent with applicable requirements. Subsequent requests should be processed in accordance with the PHA's administrative plan.
- ✓ **Notification:** The PHA must, on at least one occasion after voucher issuance, notify the applicant prior to the initial term expiration, to remind them of the term expiration date and the process for requesting an extension of the initial term, and to inquire if the applicant is in need of assistance with their housing search.

WAIVER OPTION TO CREATE A SEPARATE FYI/FUP WAITING LIST

Currently, HCV regulations require PHAs to use a single waiting list for admission to all of its HCV programs.

- This notice provides PHAs the option to maintain a separate waiting list for the FYI/FUP program.
- If a PHA opts to create a separate waiting list for FYI/FUP, it must notify and inform individuals and families of the separate waiting list.
- **The notice requires that PHAs establish their own policies regarding whether to remove the applicant from the general HCV waiting list upon being issued an FYI/FUP voucher.***

***This is an important policy to consider:** leaving young people on the general HCV waiting list could enable that individual to transition to a regular HCV at the termination of the time-limited FYI/FUP voucher. *(Regular HCVs are not time-limited)*

WAIVER OPTION TO ESTABLISH PREFERENCES

HUD is waiving the requirement that PHAs maintain one set of HCV preferences and allowing PHA the options to establish separate preferences for FUP and FYI applicants.



RESOURCES AND Q&A

Please submit your questions & comments using the Q&A box

FYI/FUP RESOURCES FROM YOUTH LAW CENTER & JOHN BURTON ADVOCATES FOR YOUTH

[List of FYI Resources for Advocates in California and Nationwide \(YLC\)](#)



[Family Self-Sufficiency \(FSS\) Program Fact Sheet \(YLC\)](#)

[New HUD Guidance on FYI/FUP Responds to Needs of Young People \(YLC\)](#)



[Best Practices for Local Administration of Federal Housing Vouchers for Former Foster Youth in CA \(JBAY\)](#)

[Roster of Statewide FYI/FUP Points-of-Contact by County \(JBAY\)](#)



CONTACT INFORMATION

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