

**ACF Region IX  
State and Territorial  
TANF Strategic Session**



**Housing  
and TANF**

**Prepared under ICF International Contract No. HHSP23320095636WC**

# ACF Region IX State and Territorial TANF Strategic Session

September 15-16, 2010 | San Francisco, California



## Housing and TANF

### **HIP Housing**

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HIP Housing operates a self-sufficiency housing program that provides rental subsidies for one year to families who are either receiving, eligible for, or have left TANF in the last 24 months. When entering the program, the family is required to have a clearly defined career or educational goal that they will reach in 12-24 months. To enter the program, the family needs to provide a recommendation from their case manager, counselor, or instructor. The program is funded by TANF funds along with county-controlled Federal housing and general funds, as well as foundation grants. The program has been estimated to have saved taxpayers \$1,400,000 in housing subsidies.

### **YES: Your Earnings Saved Program**

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The Your Earnings Saved (YES) is a partnership between the state housing agency (AHFC) and the state TANF agency (DPA) to expand participation in the Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program among TANF households. FSS is a voluntary program designed to promote economic self-sufficiency. Families living in public housing or those receiving a Section 8 voucher or certificate are eligible to apply for FSS. The program combines housing assistance with education, job training, and support services to help residents find full-time employment. Under this partnership, DPA provides case management while the FSS participant is receiving TANF assistance and for up to six months thereafter. AHFC handles case management for the remainder of individuals' FSS terms. Since the program helps advance the objectives of both agencies, each agency covers its own participation costs. Before considering expansion of the YES program, AHFC and DPA decided to implement it on a pilot basis in Anchorage. All DPA case managers in Anchorage have been trained to initiate enrollment in the YES program of eligible housing participants. They recruit potential participants for the program and prepare enrollment forms which are sent to the housing authority for processing. Work Services case managers have identified FSS/YES as a tool for asset developments and as an additional incentive to work for many families on their caseloads.

### **Mid-Columbia Housing Authority**

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Executive Director

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Because the Mid-Columbia Housing Authority covers five counties and two states, the Housing Authority (HA) has partnered with all the TANF agencies in this large area to improve their services. The HA was faced with a dilemma of implementing a Welfare to Work (WtW) Voucher program without hiring additional staff. To solve this program, the HA began a collaboration with local TANF agencies. The Mid-Columbia HA provides housing assistance to TANF recipients while the TANF agencies provide the case management, counseling, and support to voucher holders developing individual employment plans.

The Mid-Columbia HA and TANF offices have also adapted their forms to meet the requirements of both agencies. Joint forms include individual employment plans and selection criteria documents. This coordination helps provide seamless tracking and delivery of services to voucher recipients. In addition, the TANF agencies and Mid-Columbia HA work with one-stop centers to expand employment services and educational courses. With these partnerships, the Mid-Columbia HA is careful not to replicate supportive services already available in the community. This model ensures that all WtW voucher recipients have access to key job and supportive services from the TANF agency and other local service providers, while making effective use of limited resources.

### **Transitional Rental Assistance Program (T-RAP), Connecticut**

Contact: *Housing Assistance Office*

*Department of Social Services*

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The Department of Social Services in Connecticut uses Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds to provide rental assistance to those families that have left the state TANF program. The T-RAP program is operated by a private organization called J. D'Amelia and Associates and is intended to help ease a family's transition from welfare to work. To be eligible, the family must live in privately owned rental housing, have left TANF within the last 6 months and have an adult member of the family working at least 12 hours per week earning income that is above the TANF payment standard. The amount of benefit the family receives depends on the family size and income. The rental subsidy is paid directly to the landlord. Once J. D'Amelia and Associates issues the benefits, a local housing authority is assigned to work with the family. A family's Medicaid benefits are not affected by participation in the program, however it may decrease Food Stamp benefits.

### **The Emergency Housing Program**

Contact: *Mr. Leslie Jones*

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The Emergency Housing Program is operated by a nonprofit called Family Homestead under the oversight of the Denver Office of Economic Development. Assistance is available to homeless families who have been in Denver 30 days or more and who have applied for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Clients are referred to Family Homestead from homeless service providers in the Denver area. Housing is available in one of four public housing projects for up to 90 days if the family will work towards regaining self-sufficiency and cooperate with case management services provided through Family Homestead. For the first 30 days of a maximum 90-day period, an apartment is provided without charge. The family works with a case manager who develops an individualized case plan with the family. The case plan focuses on helping the family learn to live in independent housing while the parents strive to develop a source of income, begin the search for next-step housing, and deal with concerns that are pertinent to their particular family.

### **TANF Supportive Housing Program**

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Housing Partnership Inc., as part of the organization Community Partnership Group operates a TANF Supportive Housing program. The supportive housing program is designed to specifically meet the needs of very low-income families and offers assistance in finding housing, landlord-tenant education, furniture acquisition, budgeting, case management, referrals, and vocational counseling. Housing Partnership has developed numerous housing resources in various communities to assist supportive housing clients. The TANF supportive housing program is supported by a contract with the Florida Department of Children and Families.

### **Minnesota Families Affordable Rental Investment Fund**

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In 2000, the Minnesota Legislature authorized the state housing agency, Minnesota Housing, to develop a program that would provide affordable rental housing for families with incomes that qualify them for the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), the state's TANF program. The program is called the Minnesota Families Affordable Rental Investment Fund (MARIF). Cities, individuals, nonprofits, Native American Tribes, and builders can apply for the funds to provide new, refurbished, or existing housing to low income families. Using MARIF appropriations and other resources, Minnesota Housing has funded 54 developments with a total of 2,093 new or substantially rehabilitated affordable rental units. Of these, 443 units or 21.2 percent are affordable to tenants with MFIP-level incomes.