

MEDIA RELEASE

COUNTY RECEIVES \$760,394 AWARD TO HELP FAMILIES REACH SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Federal Funding to Support Education and Employment Among Participating Families

Alhambra, CA, January 17, 2020 – On December 31, 2019, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced the award of more than \$79 million to nearly 700 public housing authorities across the country. \$760,394 has been earmarked for the Los Angeles County Development Authority's (LACDA) Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program. This represents the LACDA's largest FSS Program award to date, and \$66,599 more than last year's grant. These funds will help residents of public housing (PH) and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) assisted housing increase their earned income and reduce their dependency on public assistance and rental subsidies.

The grant will enable LACDA FSS Program Coordinators to collaborate with social service agencies, community colleges, businesses, and other local partners to help participants further their education, gain marketable skills, and otherwise increase their earning potential. The FSS Coordinators work directly with residents to connect them with existing programs and services in the local community. The broad variety of services made possible through the FSS Program enables participating families to find jobs, increase earned income, reduce or eliminate the need for rental and/or welfare assistance, and make progress towards achieving economic independence and housing self-sufficiency.

Participants in the FSS Program sign a five-year contract requiring the family head to obtain employment. In addition, no member of the family may have received cash welfare assistance for 12 months prior to program graduation. An interest-bearing escrow account is also established; the amount credited to the family's escrow account is based on increases in the family's earned income during the term of the FSS contract through new employment or by advancing in their current workplace. FSS participants who successfully complete the requirements of their FSS contract receive the escrow funds upon completion. They are able to apply those funds to improve their personal circumstances, including, for example, paying educational expenses or making a down payment on a home.

The LACDA FSS Program currently has 448 families enrolled. Out of the 448 families, 239 families have escrow accounts. For Fiscal Year 2018-2019, the FSS Program graduated 44 participants with a total of \$439,380.28 in escrow funds disbursed. In 2019, six participants transitioned out of housing subsidy, and one graduate purchased a home.

For more information on the FSS Program, please contact Cathy Castro, Supervisor, at (626) 586-1636. All media may contact Elisa Vásquez, LACDA Public Information Officer, at (626) 586-1762.

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