

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Office of Public and Indian Housing

Self-Sufficiency Programs

SUMMARY OF RESOURCES

(Dollars in Thousands)

	Enacted/ Requested	Carryover	Supplemental/ Rescission	Total Resources	Obligations	Net Outlays
2023 Appropriation	175,000	169,464	-	344,464	154,749	117,071
2024 Annualized CR	175,000	198,554	-	373,554	199,000	182,000
2025 President's Budget	175,000	175,000	-	350,000	175,000	194,000
Change from 2024	-	(23,554)	-	(23,554)	(24,000)	12,000

a/ 2023 Carryover includes \$2.7 million in recaptured prior year unpaid obligations.

b/ 2023 into 2024 Carryover includes \$8.8 million (FSS) in recaptured prior year unpaid obligations.

PROGRAM PURPOSE

HUD's Self-Sufficiency Programs (SSP) promote economic opportunity and housing stability for HUD-assisted residents by providing families access to training and services that help them grow their earned income, build assets and savings and increase their overall financial well-being. The programs provide HUD-assisted individuals and families access to supportive services that are essential to helping them achieve their full potential. The Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS), Jobs Plus, and Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) programs provide funding for case management and service coordination, while also focusing on building employment skills, connecting residents to educational resources, health care, and other services needed to lay a strong foundation for financial stability and economic empowerment of HUD-assisted residents. The ROSS program also helps elderly and disabled residents continue to live independently and avoid more costly forms of care. These programs contribute to the overall social and economic wellbeing of the communities served.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

The 2025 President's Budget requests \$175 million for Self-Sufficiency Programs, which is equal to the 2024 Annualized CR level. The request supports the following activities:

- \$125 million is for the FSS program;
- \$15 million is for Jobs Plus; and
- \$35 million is for ROSS.

These programs align with HUD 2022-2026 Strategic Objective 1C: *Invest in the Success of Communities*.

JUSTIFICATION

HUD has implemented various strategies to help HUD-assisted residents develop new skills and capabilities, earn more, and become economically self-sufficient. SSP facilitates these efforts.

The 2025 requested funding levels and descriptions for the three components of SSP to achieve its priorities are:

Family Self-Sufficiency Program - \$125 million

The 2025 President’s Budget provides funding for FSS service coordinators’ salaries. The requested funding level of \$125 million for FSS will fund approximately 1,470 FSS coordinators to support at least 74,000 families in more than 700 public housing programs, as well as in voucher housing and Multifamily housing. Service coordinators are critical to the success of program participants who need help to leverage an array of services provided by other local, state, and national programs that expand employment opportunities and increase economic self-sufficiency. Some of the services coordinated through the program include childcare, transportation, education, job training, employment counseling, financial literacy, and homeownership counseling, among others. Almost 60 percent of participants earned escrows while in the program, and participants with escrow averaged almost \$10,000 in savings.

Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency - \$35 million

The Budget provides \$35 million for ROSS. This funding will provide three-year renewal funding to all eligible 2022 renewal grantees, which will maintain the salaries and administrative expenses for 137 existing service coordinators who serve over 62,000 residents. Additionally, HUD would be able to fund approximately 14 new grantees, bringing the 2025 ROSS service levels in line with the other renewal cohorts. ROSS service coordinators serve families in public housing, Tribally Designated Housing and designated Multifamily housing. Of the more than 62,000 residents served by ROSS service coordinators, approximately 17 percent are elderly, 16 percent are people with disabilities, 63 percent are adults who are neither elderly nor a person with disabilities (a category HUD terms “work-able adults”), and four percent are youth. Service coordinators assess the needs of residents and connect them to the resources necessary to help them make progress toward economic security or remain in their homes and age in place.

Jobs Plus - \$15 million

The Budget provides \$15 million for Jobs Plus to fund up to nine new grants in communities with low employment rates. Jobs Plus is a place-based, evidence-based program that increases earnings and advances employment outcomes for public housing residents. The program funds grants to public housing agencies (PHAs) to develop locally based, job-driven approaches. The Jobs Plus model includes the provision of employment-related services, a financial/rent incentive, and community support for work. Jobs Plus services are tailored to residents’ individual needs and are drawn from a selection of on-site and referral services. Case managers can help identify short- and long-term employment goals for unemployed residents and create plans to accomplish those goals. Employed individuals work with case managers to take the necessary steps to advance in the labor market.

Equity

HUD’s SSP programs advance equity for HUD-assisted residents. Participants in SSP have direct access to activities and programs that promote economic opportunity by helping families grow their earned income and savings resulting in increased overall well-being.¹ HUD requires that SSP services and programs are available to all residents in a systematic, fair, just, and impartial way.

SSP programs are especially vital to extremely and very low-income families of color. Over 75 percent of FSS participants are non-white, which mirrors the overall population of those living in HUD-assisted housing. Additionally, housing developments that are eligible for Jobs Plus are often located in communities of color. For example, the largest Jobs Plus grant ever awarded was given to

¹ Sun S, Chen YC. Is Financial Capability a Determinant of Health? Theory and Evidence. J Fam Econ Issues. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9628498/>

Nickerson Gardens in Watts, California, a development that is over 99 percent African American and Latino.

ROSS has the unique ability to fund service coordinators for Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA)-assisted units. In recent years, over 30 Tribes or Tribally Designated Housing Entities (TDHEs) have been awarded grants under this program. Participation in these programs generally mirrors the population of those receiving housing assistance in any given place.

Performance Indicators and Other Evidence

SSP programs have performance indicators to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of their activities. At the requested funding level, SSP is able to accomplish the following:

Family Self-Sufficiency Program

The FSS program successfully promotes the economic security and self-sufficiency of public housing, voucher participants, and residents of Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA), as demonstrated by local communities achieving the following outcomes for calendar year 2022.² All data is represented by the calendar year period of performance for the FSS awards:

- Over 57,500 households actively participated in the program (there are approximately 10,000 additional households at the Initial 39 MTW agencies);
- 4,346 families successfully completed their FSS contracts and graduated;
- 100 percent of graduating families did not require temporary cash assistance (TANF/welfare);
- 23 percent of graduates had escrow savings at graduation;
 - Those with escrow had approximately \$9,810, and 59 percent of participants earned escrow while in the program. Many participants who accumulated escrow chose to use some or all of their escrow while in the program toward reaching their self-sufficiency goals;
- There were 1,467 FSS program graduates (34 percent of graduates) that no longer needed rental assistance within one-year of leaving the FSS program. This figure represents a 25 percent proportional increase over calendar year 2021; and
- The FSS program had 353 graduates (8 percent of graduates) who ultimately purchased homes.
- The 2022 FSS Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Competition was the first time HUD funded PBRA owners in FSS, and those programs began in calendar year 2023. Between the 2022 and 2023 funding cycles, there are now 97 total PBRA properties with funded programs.

In 2023, HUD began the process of monitoring each FSS program at least once every five years. In addition, in November 2023, HUD published the Federal Register notice implementing updated FSS Achievement Metrics (FAM), which provides an analysis of each funded PHA's FSS program by examining three factors: earnings performance, graduation rate, and participation rate. No new reporting is required to assess performance; HUD analyzes data already collected through the PIH Information Center (PIC) (soon to be the Housing Information Portal (HIP)). HUD will use the FAM

² This data excludes participant outcomes in the Initial 39 Moving to Work (MTW) agencies and does not include Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) residents. Participant outcomes are collected via the standard 50058 Family Report in PIC, which is not used by initial 39 Moving to Work (MTW) agencies or PBRA owners. HUD anticipates having qualitative data on PBRA residents sometime this spring, however this data will not include outcomes, CY23 was the first year of PBRA program funding. Data on MTW agencies will be available after conversion to the Agency's new Housing Information Portal (HIP).

to target monitoring and technical assistance to the poorest-performing programs while engaging with the highest-performing programs to distill best practices that can be shared. HUD provided a briefing for Congressional staff and industry groups as well as a training webinar for FSS stakeholders. As in prior Budget requests, HUD continues to request the removal of the provision that prevents HUD from using the FAM score to determine funding awards.

Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency

The 2019 evaluation of the ROSS program found that ROSS was often the sole source of funds for service coordination among grantees in lower-resourced areas, and therefore, a vital lifeline that allowed residents to access critical services and supports.¹ Through ROSS, residents receive services in a range of areas, including health and wellness, education, financial literacy, employment training, and substance abuse programs.

Key findings and accomplishments for the ROSS program from 2017 through 2021 include:

- A total of 99,125 residents participated in ROSS programs, including 36 percent who were elderly (17,823) and/or individuals with disabilities (20,256), and 58 percent were work-able adults (57,421) or youth (3,502);
- More than three-quarters (approximately 79 percent) of all participants received at least one service after the initial assessment. Of those who received services, most participants (73 percent) received two or more services;
- ROSS Service Coordinators provided case management services to 86 percent of elderly and people with disabilities and to 70 percent of work-able adults, including comprehensive needs assessments and links to other services; and
- A total of 6,266 participants attained a degree, with another 3,236 individuals enrolled in an educational program.

Employment is another area of emphasis of the ROSS program. Service coordinators helped program participants in this area by connecting them to services such as job search, skill-building, and job retention training and career counseling/guidance.

Jobs Plus Initiative

Since 2015, 16,500 public housing residents have participated in the JobsPlus program, benefitting from its comprehensive program model. Nearly 90 percent of participants have received an employment-related service connection. Over 6,500 public housing residents reported full-time or part-time employment as a result of participation in the JobsPlus program. More than 13,000 have been enrolled in the JPEID rent incentive, resulting in residents saving over \$36 million in rent over the life of the program, supporting the Administration's emphasis on wealth-building for underserved communities.

A study conducted on the original Jobs Plus demonstration published in May 2023 found that the initial effects persisted and residents living in the Jobs Plus communities earned 16 percent more on average than those in comparison sites. Later findings indicated that the three sites that fully implemented the original Jobs Plus model continued to have positive effects on adult residents' earnings and employment between 2017 and 2019, two decades after the program launched. Moreover, an exploratory analysis suggests that Jobs Plus led to higher employment and earnings in adulthood for children who lived in the Jobs Plus developments during the demonstration. Residents that were children at the time of the original pilot had quarterly employment rates that were six percentage points higher, and their annual earnings were \$2,706 greater than their counterparts living in the comparison developments. By contrast, participants at sites that did not fully implement the Jobs Plus model did not experience the same long-term positive effects on adults'

income and employment.³ These findings demonstrate the benefits of place-based interventions in areas of concentrated underemployment and joblessness. The report also suggests that for these interventions to lead to long-term benefits, they must be well implemented.

Most importantly, evaluations have also found that the program's effectiveness is dependent on available resources. An implementation study (report issued December 2019) found that the current program's first nine grantees implemented the Jobs Plus model more quickly and fully than the original demonstration and Social Innovation Fund replication sites. It described how PHAs are able to implement the ambitious program, despite challenges. An outcomes study (report issued May 2023) assessed participation and labor market outcomes for the current program's first 24 grantees. While it found earnings and employment were similar for residents of Jobs Plus and comparison developments, the findings underscore the importance of further examining variation in Jobs Plus implementation on the ground to identify promising practices that lead to robust implementation and high levels of participant engagement to help future grantees realize the potential of the program.⁴

Key Assumptions

The assumptions used to estimate SSP funding requirements are based on the following:

- The average request for an FSS position is \$90,000 to \$100,000 thousand for the salaries and fringe of one service coordinator. This is calculated using the 2023 salaries as baseline (\$85,000 to \$90,000 thousand on average) and applies an estimated cost-of-living adjustment. HUD assumes the industry standard of an average of 50 participants per position.
- ROSS allows a maximum yearly salary and fringe of \$83,000 thousand per coordinator for three years. The program also assumes each coordinator will request up to \$2,500 for training and travel costs, in addition to administrative costs that do not exceed 10 percent of the combined grantee-requested salary, fringe, travel, and training cost per ROSS Service Coordinator position.
- Jobs Plus assumptions for number of grants are based on the smallest eligible grant size, serving no less than 100 non-elderly households with a maximum of \$1.6 million in grant funding.

Stakeholders

SSP Grant recipients and residents are the key stakeholders impacted by each program. Grant recipients are PHAs for all three SSP programs; FSS also serves PBRA owners; and ROSS also serves Tribes, non-profit organizations, and resident associations. HUD's SSP programs help families become more economically stable, which enables governments (Federal, State, Tribal, and local) and private partners to stretch limited housing dollars further.

Operational Improvements

HUD continues to take steps to improve the operations of the SSP programs and sustain their collaborative relationships with stakeholders. Operational Improvements for SSP are as follows:

³ Miller C, Castells N, Verma N, Vermette J, Kanengiser H. HUD Jobs Plus Outcomes Evaluation - Long-term Effects from the Original Jobs Plus Demonstration: Employment and Earnings for Public Housing Residents after 20 Years. <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/Jobs-Plus-Long-Term-Effects.html>.

⁴ Castells N, Verma N, Miller C, Vermette J, Kanengiser H. Participation and Labor Market Impacts for the First 24 Sites to Replicate HUD's Jobs Plus Program: Final Report. <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/Jobs-Plus-Replication-Study-Final-Report.html>.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAMS

- HUD published the FSS final rule in May 2022. Following this, HUD reviewed updated FSS Action Plans for all 900-plus FSS programs to ensure compliance, including the provision of newly required local program policies. HUD also began monthly Office Hour webinars and continuously updated Frequently Asked Questions in 2023.
- In 2023, HUD began the process of monitoring each FSS program at least once every five years. In addition, in November 2023, HUD published the Federal Register notice implementing updated FSS Achievement Metrics (FAM), which provides an analysis of each funded PHA’s FSS program by examining three factors: earnings performance, graduation rate, and participation rate. No new reporting is required to assess performance; HUD analyzes data already collected through the PIH Information Center (PIC) (soon to be the Housing Information Portal (HIP)). HUD will use the FAM to target monitoring and technical assistance to the poorest-performing programs while engaging with the highest-performing programs to distill best practices that can be shared. HUD provided a briefing for Congressional staff and industry groups as well as a training webinar for FSS stakeholders. As in prior Budget requests, HUD continues to request the removal of the provision that prevents HUD from using Family Self-Sufficiency performance measures to determine funding awards.
- HUD staff is also working with MTW PHAs to establish an MTW FSS community of practice that will identify best practices in FSS modifications from the Initial 39 MTW agencies. This will be shared with the expansion MTW agencies as well as, wherever applicable, FSS programs at large. In 2024, HUD will initiate its first-ever annual report collection, which will gather qualitative data and feedback from practitioners on the impact of the final rule and the expansion to Multifamily residents.
- As PHAs continue to convert public housing units to Section 8 project-based assistance, it has become increasingly important for Jobs Plus to be available beyond the traditional public housing program. Currently, that is not the case, and HUD continues to seek a legislative proposal to facilitate an expansion of supportive services programs to housing assisted by Project-Based Vouchers and Multifamily Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA). Additionally, HUD is continuing to seek a legislative proposal to allow the Jobs Plus financial/rent incentive to be paid from the rental assistance accounts (Public Housing Operating Fund, TBRA, PBRA) rather than the Jobs Plus grant. This will reduce the administrative burden for grantees and streamline and strengthen grant implementation. Finally, HUD has transitioned its grantee technical assistance portfolio to a new technical assistance provider that specializes in workforce-focused data analysis to assist programs with timely program improvements.

SUMMARY OF RESOURCES BY PROGRAM

(Dollars in Thousands)

Budget Activity	2023 Budget Authority	2022 Carry over Into 2023	2023 Total Resources	2023 Obligations	2024 Annualized CR	2023 Carry over Into 2024	2024 Total Resources	2025 President's Budget
Family Self-Sufficiency	125,000	116,161	241,161	114,993	125,000	135,007	260,007	125,000
Jobs-Plus Initiative	15,000	16,720	31,720	9,199	15,000	22,521	37,521	15,000
Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency	35,000	36,583	71,583	30,557	35,000	41,026	76,026	35,000
Total	175,000	169,464	344,464	154,749	175,000	198,554	373,554	175,000

a/ 2022 into 2023 Carryover includes \$2.7 million (FSS) in recaptured prior year unpaid obligations.

b/ 2023 into 2024 Carryover includes \$8.8 million (FSS) in recaptured prior year unpaid obligations.

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS AND GENERAL PROVISIONS

Appropriations Language Changes

The 2025 President's Budget includes the following continuing proposals:

- Jobs Plus Expansion beyond Public Housing: HUD requests account language authorizing the expansion of Jobs Plus eligibility to fund place-based communities within not only Public Housing, but also Project Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) developments and Project Based Voucher (PBV) developments.
- Jobs Plus Reduction of Grant Cost Burden: HUD requests a provision to allow the Jobs Plus financial and rent incentive to be paid from the housing assistance source accounts rather than the Jobs Plus grant. Corresponding language is included in the TBRA, PBRA, and Public Housing Fund accounts.

Legislative Proposals

The 2025 Budget supports the following continuing legislative proposal and will seek changes through the authorization process:

Universal Escrow Account: HUD requests language authorizing the Secretary to carry out a demonstration to examine the effectiveness of creating a savings account for families assisted by the Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher, and Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) programs. The demonstration would allow demonstration participants to automatically enroll families into the program.

The 2025 Budget supports the following new legislative proposal and will seek changes through the authorization process:

Permanent Exception to Mandatory FSS Program Requirements: Per the original 1990 FSS statute, many PHAs were required to implement FSS programs because they received funding for additional Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs), Certificates and Public Housing units between 1991 and 1998. Enforcing the mandate is time consuming. HUD's best records indicate that over 1,000 PHAs still have a mandate, however, less than half of those PHAs are currently running a program. The mandates were part of the original statute to build the program at its inception. In the 30 years since, the program has grown to include over 900 PHAs and has been expanded to Project Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) owners. The goal of implementing FSS widely has been met by PHAs and owners that are enthusiastic and resourceful. Tracking and enforcing the mandatory programs is no longer needed to meet the original intent. Current regulation allows HUD to provide regulatory exceptions to the mandate to individual PHAs that request it for up to five years at a time.

HUD requests Congress allow a permanent exception to the mandate by allowing for the possibility of permanent exceptions to the requirement and shifting the focus to program monitoring, provision of technical assistance, and increasing program outcomes for PHAs and PBRA owners voluntarily implementing FSS Programs.

APPROPRIATIONS LANGUAGE

The 2025 President's Budget includes the appropriations language listed below.

For activities and assistance related to Self-Sufficiency Programs, to remain available until September 30, 2028, \$175,000,000: Provided, That of the sums appropriated under this heading—

(1) \$125,000,000 shall be available for the Family Self-Sufficiency program to support family self-sufficiency coordinators under section 23 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437u), to promote the development of local strategies to coordinate the use of assistance under sections 8 and 9 of such Act with public and private resources, and enable eligible families to achieve economic independence and self-sufficiency;

(2) \$35,000,000 shall be available for the Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency program to provide for supportive services, service coordinators, and congregate services as authorized by section 34 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437z-6) and the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 4101 et seq.): Provided, That amounts made available under this paragraph may be used to renew Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency program grants to allow the public housing agency, or a new owner, to continue to serve (or restart service to) residents of a project with assistance converted from public housing to project-based rental assistance under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f) or assistance under section 8(o)(13) of such Act under the heading "Rental Assistance Demonstration" in the Department of Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Act, 2012 (Public Law 112-55), as amended (42 U.S.C. 1437f note); and

(3) \$15,000,000 shall be available for a Jobs-Plus Initiative, modeled after the Jobs-Plus demonstration: Provided, That funding provided under this paragraph shall be available for competitive grants to partnerships between public housing authorities, or owners or sponsors of multifamily properties receiving project based rental assistance under section 8 that, in partnership with local workforce investment boards established under section 107 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (29 U.S.C. 3122), and other agencies and organizations that provide support to help public housing residents, or tenants residing in units assisted under a project-based section 8 contract (including section 8(o)(13) of the United States Housing Act of 1937), obtain employment and increase earnings, or both: Provided further, That applicants must demonstrate the ability to provide services to residents, partner with workforce investment boards, and leverage service dollars: Provided further, That the Secretary may allow public housing agencies to request exemptions from rent and income limitation requirements under sections 3 and 6 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a, 1437d), as necessary to implement the Jobs-Plus program, on such terms and conditions as the Secretary may approve upon a finding by the Secretary that any such waivers or alternative requirements are necessary for the effective implementation of the Jobs-Plus Initiative as a voluntary program for residents: Provided further, That the Secretary shall publish by notice in the Federal Register any waivers or alternative requirements pursuant to the preceding proviso no later than 10 days before the effective date of such notice: Provided further, That the costs of any rent incentives as authorized pursuant to such waivers or alternative requirements shall not be charged against the competitive grant amounts made available under this paragraph.

Note. — A full-year 2024 appropriation for this account was not enacted at the time the Budget was prepared; therefore, the Budget assumes this account is operating under the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2024 and Other Extensions Act (Division A of Public Law 118-15, as amended). The amounts included for 2024 reflect the annualized level provided by the continuing resolution.