

Fair Market rents for 2015

<u>Studio</u>	<u>1 Bedroom</u>	<u>2 Bedroom</u>	<u>3 Bedroom</u>	<u>4 Bedroom</u>
\$750	\$864	\$1,109	\$1,381	\$1,627

FSS Program

What is the Section 8 Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS)?

The Section 8 Family Self-Sufficiency Program is a voluntary five-year program for families with Section 8 vouchers. The program helps families become financially independent. The main goal of the program is to help families get good jobs and earn enough money so they do not need public cash assistance. Families get education, job training, and other services.

The Family Self-Sufficiency Program is a HUD program that is run by public housing agencies (PHAs) in Massachusetts. PHA case managers help FSS families define their goals and set up a plan to achieve them. Goals may include a good job, homeownership, college, and/or starting a business.

The PHAs work with local agencies to help Section 8 FSS families get the services they need to reach their goals. In addition, for many FSS families, if the family's income and rent share go up during the program, the PHA puts money in a special FSS escrow account. The family gets the money when they finish the program.

How does the FSS program work?

- Local Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) run the Family Self-Sufficiency program. Families must have a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher to enroll in the program. The program is voluntary. Families can choose to join the program or not.
- FSS families meet with a case manager to define their goals and set up a five-year plan. The head of the family and the PHA sign a contract that states the family's goals and the steps they will take to reach them. The PHA helps the family get the services they need.
- For many FSS families, the PHA sets up a special FSS escrow account for the family. If the family's income and rent share increase during the program, the PHA puts money into the family's account. The money stays in the account and earns interest until the family finishes the program. If the family successfully completes the program, they get to keep the money. They can use the money to make a down payment on a house, buy a car, pay for college, or for any other purpose.
- Most PHAs allow families to borrow from their account if they need money to pay for education or other approved services during the program.
- To complete the program and get the money, the family must meet all the terms of their contract. The head of the family must have a job, and all members of the family must be off of public cash assistance for the last 12 months of the program.
- Families can end their FSS contracts at any time if they do not want to continue with the program. Families do not lose their Section 8 vouchers if they leave the FSS program. However, any money in their account goes to the PHA.

Am I eligible?

To be eligible for the Section 8 Family Self-Sufficiency program (FSS):

- You must have a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher
 - You must be motivated to become self-sufficient
 - Your public housing agency (PHA) must have a Family Self-Sufficiency program and agree to let you enroll
- Note: Not all PHAs have FSS programs. Space may be limited.
- You must sign a five-year contract of participation