

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) F.A.Q

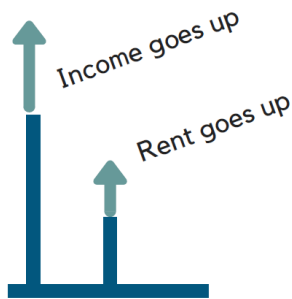
What is the Family Self-Sufficiency Program?

The FSS program can help you build a more stable financial future. As your earned income from work increases, your rent increase is saved in an escrow (savings) account that you will receive when you successfully complete the program. FSS is a five-year program.

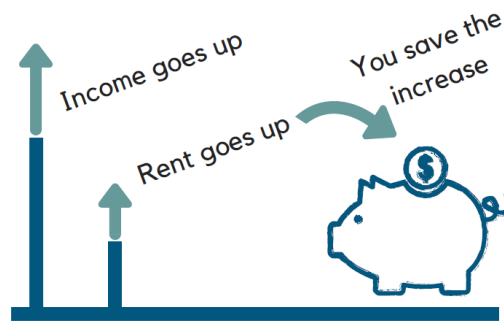
How does the FSS Savings account work?

When you enroll in the program the Shasta County Housing Authority sets up and manages an FSS savings account for you. An increase in your rent because of an increase in **earned** income will result in a deposit to your account each month.

Without FSS:



With FSS:



Do I have access to the savings account at any time?

You do not have access to the account during the program. Your FSS Coordinator will update you on the amount in your account, and how much is being contributed at least once a year.

Who manages the account?

The Shasta County Housing Authority manages the account.

Can I add to the savings account?

You cannot add to the account that the Housing Authority manages. However, if savings is a goal of yours discuss that with your FSS coach and make it part of your goals!

Can I use the savings account for emergencies?

You can request an interim disbursement during the program if you plan to use the money to make progress on one of your goals outlined in your contract. Approval of interim disbursements are at the discretion of your housing authority.

Do I have to stay on the program for the entire length of my contract?

You do not need to participate for the full length of the contract. However, you must complete all graduation requirements to receive the money in your savings. If you have completed all graduation requirements before your contract term is up, you may request an early graduation.

What are the graduation requirements?

There are three requirements to graduate from the program. First, you will need to be suitably employed at the time of graduation. Second, all household members will need to be free of cash welfare assistance at the time of graduation. Finally, you must complete the goals you set during the program.

What if I need more time to Successfully complete the program?

If you need more time to complete the program, you can request an extension of up to two (2) years depending on the circumstances.

What if I do not complete my goals during my contract?

To graduate and receive your savings, you will need to complete your goals. Since you will be in communication with your FSS coach through the length of your contract you will always be aware of where you are at with your goals and can adjust goals if needed as life circumstances change.

Am I eligible to join the program if I'm unemployed?

Yes, those who are not currently employed are allowed—and encouraged—to join the program. However, you must be willing to seek and obtain employment. **Please note that to receive your savings at the time of graduation you must be employed!**

Will I lose my housing assistance by joining the FSS program?

No. If you are still income eligible and in compliance with your family obligations at the time of graduation you will keep your housing assistance.

What happens if I lose my housing assistance while participating in the program?

If you lose or give up your housing assistance while enrolled in FSS, you can no longer participate in the program. Depending on the circumstances you may be eligible for early graduation.

If I am not working but have a member of my household who is working, does that income count toward my FSS escrow account?

Yes, any increase in earned income that affects your household rent will contribute to your FSS savings account. However, the contract holder is the one who must be employed to receive the savings account at the time of graduation. This also means any earned income in your household when you enroll in the program will be included in the starting income on your contract.

If my rent decreases is money taken out of my FSS savings account?

No, during the program money is only taken out of your savings account if you need and request an interim disbursement to make progress toward one of your goals. When your income changes and you recertify, your monthly savings credit will also change, but no money will be withdrawn from the account.

If you would like to apply, scan the code, and complete the brief application! If you have questions prior to applying, you may contact our office at 530-225-5160

