

Foundational Community Supports – Transition Assistance Program (TAP)

Program overview

Homelessness is traumatic and cyclical, putting people at greater risk for developing physical and mental health conditions, including substance use disorders. In 2020, more than 85,000 Medicaid recipients were staying in shelters, on the streets, in places unfit for habitation, or living doubled-up with other households across Washington (Department of Social and Health Services).

FCS enrollees across the state face financial obstacles to obtaining and maintaining places to call home, especially when from inpatient settings. Now, FCS supportive housing enrollees with behavioral health treatment needs can access a funding opportunity that aims to lower or remove financial barriers to housing stability.

The FCS Transition Assistance Program – or TAP – is a flexible funding resource in support of FCS supportive housing services. Administered by Amerigroup, FCS TAP provides the FCS supportive housing network with a flexible funding pool that can be drawn upon by FCS supportive housing providers when working with enrollees to lower or remove financial barriers to housing stability.

Background

FCS launched in January 2018 to offer housing and employment support services via targeted Medicaid benefits. These benefits assist Washington's most vulnerable and those with complex care needs by helping eligible individuals find and maintain housing and employment; ultimately, helping build a healthier Washington. FCS has a network of providers under contract through Amerigroup, FCS's third-party administrator (TPA). The FCS supportive housing program uses the evidence-based practices of Housing First and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) during service delivery.

Since the program's inception, over 20,000 unique individuals have enrolled.

FCS TAP enhances the FCS supportive housing program by covering housing-related costs. The funding aims to mitigate immediate barriers to affordable housing, support the housing search and obtainment process, and establish and maintain safe, affordable independent housing, with participant preferences paving the way forward.

Budget

The Washington State Legislature appropriated \$3,109,000 of the general fund to supply individuals enrolled in Foundational Community Supports with short-term housing and rental assistance subsidies during state fiscal year 2023.

Eligibility requirements

FCS TAP can be accessed by enrollees of FCS supportive housing services across the state who are seeking to transition into the housing of their choice. If an individual is actively receiving FCS-eligible Medicaid and they are authorized to receive FCS supportive housing services, eligibility for TAP is presumed.

Duration

Accessing FCS TAP funds requires an FCS supportive housing participant to be making a housing transition. FCS TAP offers FCS supportive housing enrollees up to \$5,000 in funding to be used throughout a year on approved expenditures. This is a rolling cap, so exactly one year after a TAP payment is made, that cost no longer counts towards the amount spent by the enrollee.

Allowable expenditures

TAP allows providers to automatically cover costs according to established categories listed on the [TAP Quick Reference Guide](#). Common financial barriers to affordable housing, such as costs for IDs and other documentation, application fees, credit check fees, and move-in expenses like first/last month's rent (if one month of rent is under 120% Fair Market Rent value for the area), deposits, and non-refundable fees can be covered by FCS TAP. Certain costs can be covered multiple times, such as the cost of an ID, while move-in costs and others can only be accessed once every 12 months.

While FCS TAP cannot pay ongoing rents, several months of rent costs may be covered to assist households as they generate employment income or identify longer-term rental resources to assist with housing costs.

Key partners

- Amerigroup
- FCS Provider Network
- Community Behavioral Health Providers
- Discharge Planners

To support effective referral streams from behavioral health inpatient settings and other institutional environments, The Health Care Authority's Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery encourages providers to build relationships and coordinate with discharge planners, community-based inpatient treatment facilities, Continuums of Care, shelters, and other entities serving individuals with behavioral health diagnoses. Developing these networks can bolster linkages with FCS supportive housing services and TAP funds to assist participants with making safe, secure, and affordable community transitions.

FY 2022 data

In SFY '22, TAP actively served FCS Supportive Housing enrollees for nearly two months. During this time, 128 expenditures were approved for 86 individuals across 20 FCS supportive housing providers working within Washington. The total amount of TAP funds spent during SFY '22 was \$87,623.96.

For more information

Scott Tankersley, Foundational Community Supports housing subsidy program manager,
Scott.Tankersley@hca.wa.gov, 360-725-5732