



Family Unification Program (FUP) and Fostering Youth to Independence (FYI) Template Letters Packet

Purpose of Tools:

Assisting young adults in securing affordable housing continues to be a challenging task. The tools in this packet can be used as a strategy among many to help your clients access affordable housing. Please note that these strategies aim to increase your county's use of FUP and FYI vouchers and likely will not result in immediate housing for your clients. Family Unification Program (FUP) and Fostering Youth to Independence (FYI) vouchers are a type of housing choice voucher that youth who are in or have exited foster care, and are under the age of 25 can access.

While not all Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) have FUP vouchers, almost all PHAs are eligible to request FYI vouchers as long as they are collaborating with the county child welfare agency. The tools included in this packet are template letters to support individual clients and systemic advocacy related to a county's use of FYI and FUP vouchers. The first letter asks the child welfare agency to refer a client for FUP and FYI vouchers. The second template can be used by a young person to request that the child welfare agency or probation officer refer them for an FYI or FUP voucher. The third letter should be directed at child welfare agency leadership to ask them to provide information on their efforts to work with the local PHAs and request FYI vouchers and FUP vouchers. We recommend using both of these strategies - individual client referrals and systemic inquiry - as a way to put pressure on the child welfare agency to take action to use housing resources that are available for eligible young people.

1. [Request to the Child Welfare Agency of Juvenile Probation Department to Make a Referral for a FYI or FUP Program Voucher to the Public Housing Authority.](#)
2. [Request from a Young Person to the Child Welfare Agency or Juvenile Probation Department to Make a Referral for a FYI or FUP Voucher to the Public Housing Authority.](#)
3. [Request to the Child Welfare Agency or Probation Department to Provide Information About the FYI or FUP Program.](#)



Instructions for use: This template can be used by an advocate or attorney to ask that the child welfare agency make a referral for a young person to the local Public Housing Authority for an FYI or FUP voucher. Please fill in any highlighted sections to include the relevant factual information for your situation.

REQUEST TO THE CHILD WELFARE AGENCY OR PROBATION DEPARTMENT TO MAKE A REFERRAL FOR A FYI or FUP VOUCHER TO THE PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY

Dear [Child Welfare of Probation Department Administrator] and [ILP Coordinator]:

I am the [advocate or lawyer] for [name of young person]. I am requesting that you make a referral to the local housing authority for a Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Program Voucher for this young person. If Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers are available in the county, I request that the young person be referred for a FUP voucher as well.

[Youth] is eligible for the FYI and FUP program. [She/he/they] is age [enter youth's current age, which must be at least age 18 and under age 25]; [will age out of foster care or has aged out, depending on the facts of your case]; and [is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless depending on your case]. The young person is receiving the following support services [describe any support services the youth is receiving, including any Chafee Independent Living services, behavioral health services or supports, workforce services, campus based supports, mentoring etc. If they are not receiving any services, delete this sentence].

[If the youth is still in foster care and aging out, add: I am requesting that the transition plan for the youth include making a referral for a FYI or FUP voucher and any other housing assistance that they are eligible for and that I be invited to the next transition planning meeting to discuss housing supports.]

Per PIH Notice 2021-26, Public Housing Authorities (PHA) that administer Housing Choice Vouchers may request FYI vouchers for eligible young people like [YOUTH'S NAME] as long as they are collaborating with the child welfare agency or probation department and that the child welfare agency is able to document the provision of services for the young person. The child welfare agency does not need to provide the services themselves. The PHA can request vouchers in increments as small as one at a time, making it possible for [name of child welfare agency or probation department] to request one voucher for [YOUTH'S NAME]. .



Because [YOUTH's NAME] is eligible for an FYI voucher I am happy to work with you to prepare the request to the PHA for a FYI voucher.

Please contact me within 7 business days to let me know your response to my request. I am happy to meet and talk further about how we can work together to support [YOUTH's NAME] in making a safe and stable transition to adulthood.

Sincerely,

cc: [Youth's attorney if in foster care or recently discharged]



***Instructions for use:** This template can be used by a young person to ask that the child welfare agency make a referral to the Public Housing Authority for an FYI or FUP housing voucher. Please input the information requested in the highlighted sections to fit your situation.*

REQUEST FROM A YOUNG PERSON TO THE CHILD WELFARE AGENCY OR PROBATION DEPARTMENT TO MAKE A REFERRAL FOR A FYI PROGRAM OR FUP VOUCHER TO THE PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY

Dear [Child Welfare or Probation Department Administrator]:

My name is []. I am requesting that you make a referral to the local housing authority for a Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Program Voucher for me for the reasons described below. If Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers are available in the county, I request that I be referred for a FUP voucher as well.

I am [enter your age age, which must be at least age 18 and under age 25] and I [will age out of foster care or have aged out, depending on your situation]. I am [homeless or at risk of becoming homeless depending on your situation].

I believe that I am eligible for an FYI voucher or FUP voucher and ask that you refer me to the Housing Authority right away. I am happy to work with you to prepare the request to the PHA for an FYI or FUP voucher.

Please contact me within 7 business days to let me know your response to my request. Please contact me [include the best way and times to get in contact with you] I am happy to meet and talk further about how we can work together so I can get into stable housing.

Sincerely,



Instructions for use: This template can be used by an advocate to ask that the child welfare agency launch or expand an FYI program. Please input the information requested in the highlighted sections to fit your situation.

REQUEST TO THE CHILD WELFARE AGENCY OR PROBATION DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT THE FYI OR FUP PROGRAM

Dear [Child Welfare or Probation Department Administrator] and [ILP Coordinator]:

My name is [full name] and I am an advocate for young people with experience in foster care. I am writing to request information about the Foster Youth to Independence Program (FYI). Finding affordable and safe housing continues to be a significant challenge for young people as they leave foster care. We were thrilled to find out that innovations in the Foster Youth to Independence Voucher Program in the last few years make it an important resource for providing housing stability for young people. Here are a few highlights:

- Not only can your agency work with a Housing Authority to potentially request as many as 100 vouchers per year, you can work with more than one Housing Authority to maximize the number of vouchers available to young people.
- By participating in the Family Self Sufficiency Program, a young adult's 3 year voucher can be extended an extra two years while they build up savings.
- Child welfare agencies and probation departments can provide support services or simply arrange for them or connect young people with community based services.

Given the critical nature of the FYI program, I am writing to request the following information:

1. Who is the main point of contact for the FYI program?
2. What is the referral process for the FYI program?
3. How many Housing Authorities are you working within the county?
4. How can my organization collaborate with you to expand the use of FYI and FUP vouchers?

[Please add any additional questions. This is a list to get you started.]

[If you or your agency is interested in playing a specific role, like making referrals to the child welfare agency or directly to the PHA, make that request here.]



Please contact me within 7 business days to let me know your response to my request. I can be reached at [include your contact information]. I am happy to meet and talk further about how my organization can collaborate to improve housing stability for young people through access to FYI vouchers.

Sincerely,