

Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Initiative

DMCPS and Community Development Authority of the City of West Allis

In Fall 2019, HUD announced the FYI Program, which provides housing vouchers to youth exiting the foster care system. DMCPS received approval from the SO to pursue partnerships with all 3 local public housing authorities (City of Milwaukee, County of Milwaukee, and City of West Allis) to leverage the most opportunities for housing vouchers for Milwaukee youth.

How will the MOU work between DMCPS and Community Development Authority of the City of West Allis?

As a broad overview: the vouchers are a partnership between public child welfare agencies (PCWA) and public housing authorities (PHA). Prior to PHAs receiving vouchers, PCWAs and PHAs must enter into a letter of intent or MOU adhering to certain items outlined in PIH Notice 2019-20. Each PHA can receive up to 25 FYI TPVs. A specific youth or specific youths must be identified before FYI TPVs are awarded to the PHA.

DMCPS IL Coordinator Responsibilities:

1. Identification of eligible youth
DMCPS will identify youth who are eligible to be referred to Community Development Authority of the City of West Allis to receive a housing voucher. This can happen through the youth's child welfare case manager, through a service provider, or through self-identification by the youth contacting the DMCPS IL Coordinator directly.
2. Maintenance of Referrals to Community Development Authority of the City of West Allis (if necessary)
If there are more youth interested in receiving the FYI vouchers than there are available, DMCPS will maintain the system of prioritization and determine which youth will be referred to Community Development Authority of the City of West Allis, as appropriate.
3. Referral for Case Management
DMCPS is responsible, as the PCWA, for providing case management services for all youth receiving the FYI voucher, per HUD requirements. None of the case management responsibilities lie with Community Development Authority of the City of West Allis. DMCPS will refer all youth to the Transition Regional Agency (TRA), a role currently filled by SaintA's YTA program, who are under the age of 21 (due to Chaffee-funding eligibility), and to the Milwaukee Continuum of Care (CoC) for those over the age of 21 for case management services.

Note: Provision of the FYI voucher cannot be contingent upon participation in case management services.

DMCPS will not provide any direct service to youth in any capacity for this program but will connect youth with the appropriate case management service, dependent upon their age/eligibility.

Benefits to Program in Milwaukee

When Milwaukee will be able to partner with Community Development Authority of the City of West Allis and other PHAs within this capacity, DMCPS youth will have access to up to 75 housing vouchers at any time. The rental assistance programs in Milwaukee are virtually inaccessible to Milwaukee youth

exiting foster care currently, due to the level of need in the community, long waiting lists, and apprehension to serve young people. This would be a direct link for these youth to receive rental assistance for a minimum of 36 months, with the opportunity to transition to the traditional program.

DMCPS' Supervised Independent Living (SIL) program is also anticipated to grow with the initiation of this program, as the higher rental allowances under the FYI program. Current SIL program structure rental caps are very low to allow for youth to continue to pay rent once the CHIPS Order is over, but if they were to be able to continue with the FYI program for 36 months, it would be less of a concern and youth would have access to a larger quantity of more appropriate apartments.