# Foundational Community Supports–Supported Employment

Chapter 30c describes the Supported Employment program offered through the Foundational Community Supports (FCS) of the Medicaid Transformation and the related rules, policy and procedures.

## *Ask the Expert*

If you have questions or need clarification about the content in this chapter, please contact:

Supported Employment Team mailbox: SupportedEmployment@dshs.wa.gov

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## BACKGROUND

The Medicaid Transformation is an agreement between the State and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) that contains multiple initiatives. The intent of Foundational Community Supports (FCS) – Supported Employment (SE), is to support individuals in obtaining and retaining employment in support of their broader health goals. Evidence strongly suggests that individuals with disabilities who are employed experience increased health status, such as:

- Psychological benefits which lead to decreases in mental health symptoms, smoking, and other health factors
- Increased success in recovery and rehabilitation processes including mental health, substance use disorders, and even smoking cessation
- Reduced health care costs

Supported Employment services are designed to be person-centered and individualized one-to-one supports to individuals interested in employment in the community. FCS creates a system of services which will provide pre-employment and post-employment services to an individual at any point in their pathway to employment. The services are not time-limited but are intended to support the individual for as long as there is an identified need.

## ADMINISTRATION OF FOUNDATIONAL COMMUNITY SUPPORTS

The FCS services are part of the Medicaid Transformation (MT). For more information on MT see Chapter 30a of the LTC Manual. The larger Demonstration, and FCS in particular, involves multiple state agencies including the Home and Community Services Division (HCS) of Home and Community Living Administration (HCLA). Due to the multiple agencies involved, the state has set up a single, statewide Third-Party Administrator (TPA) for the FCS services, which includes Supported Employment services.

The TPA is a contracted, non-state entity that provides administrative oversight of the benefit programs and services. The TPA is responsible for:

- Provider network development and maintenance
- Client eligibility determination
- Service Authorizations for services to providers
- Distribution of reimbursement payments
- Encounter data tracking

Wellpoint has been contracted with the state through the Health Care Authority and will be functioning as the TPA for the duration of MT.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Supported Employment services assist those individuals who want to work and meet FCS criteria to become employed in integrated community employment. Activities are intended to ensure successful employment outcomes through the utilization of collateral contacts, skills training, cueing, modeling and supervision as identified by the person-centered employment plan.

Individualized Supported Employment services include identifying career and occupational targets, developing ongoing relationships with prospective employers, assisting with the interviewing and hiring process, and once employed, support with maintaining employment. Coaching and skill-building of interpersonal relationships in the work setting as well as education for self-advocacy and support with the American with Disabilities Act are also included.

The focus is on obtaining competitive employment that reflects the interests and desires of the individual through:

- **Pre-employment services** — activities that assist an individual with obtaining employment.
- **Employment-sustaining services** — activities that support the individual in retaining and maintaining employment.

Pre-employment services support an individual's ability to prepare for and transition to competitive employment, including direct face-to-face contact with the client as well as collateral service.

**Pre-employment services** include the following:

- Prevocational/job-related discovery or assessment
- Person-centered employment planning
- Individualized job development and placement
- Job carving — defined as working with the client and employer to modify an existing job description so it contains one or more, but not all, of the tasks from the original job description when a potential applicant for a job is unable to perform all the duties identified in the job description
- Benefits education and planning — defined as counseling to assist the client in fully understanding the range of state and federal benefits he or she might be eligible for, the implications that work and earnings would have for continued receipt of these benefits, and the client's options for returning to work
- Transportation (only in conjunction with the delivery of an authorized service)

**Employment-sustaining services** include the following:

- Career advancement services — defined as services that expand opportunities for professional growth, assist with enrollment in higher education or credentialing and certificate programs to expand job skills or enhance career development, and assist the individual in monitoring his/her satisfaction with employment and determining the level of interest and opportunities for advancement with the current employer, and/or changing employers for career advancement
- Negotiation with employers — defined as services where a provider identifies and addresses job accommodations or assistive technology needs with the employer on behalf of the individual
- Job accommodations can include the following:
    - Adjusting work schedule to reduce exposure to triggering events (i.e., heavy traffic triggering symptoms of agoraphobia)
    - Providing a private area for individuals to take breaks if they experience an increase in symptoms
    - Access to a telephone to contact a support person if needed while at work
    - Adjusting job schedule to accommodate scheduled appointments
    - Small, frequent breaks as opposed to one long one
- Assistive technology can include the following:
    - Bedside alarms
    - Electronic medication reminders while at work or at home
    - Use of headset/iPod to block out internal or external distractions
- Job analysis — defined as gathering, evaluating and recording accurate, objective data about the characteristics of a particular job to ensure the specific matching of skills and amelioration of maladaptive behaviors.
- Job coaching
- Benefits education and planning — defined as counseling to assist the client in fully understanding the range of state and federal benefits he or she might be eligible for, the implications that work and earnings would have for continued receipt of these benefits, and the client's options for returning to work
- Transportation (only in conjunction with the delivery of an authorized service)
- Asset development — defined as services supporting clients' accrual of assets that have the potential to help clients improve their economic status, expand opportunities for community participation and positively impact their quality-of-life experience
    - Assets are defined as something with value owned by an individual, such as money in the bank, property and retirement accounts
- Follow along supports — defined as the ongoing supports necessary to assist an eligible client to sustain competitive work in an integrated setting of his or her choice.

- This service is provided for, or on behalf of, a client and can include communicating with the client's supervisor or manager, whether in the presence of the client or not (if authorized and appropriate). There is regular contact and follow-up with the client and employer to reinforce and stabilize job placement. Follow-along support and/or accommodations are negotiated with an employer prior to the client starting work or as circumstances arise.

Service providers will be engaged in individualized job development services that support individuals in searching for and securing a job in the community such as:

- Identifying and negotiating jobs.
- Building relationships with employers.
- Customized employment development, job analysis and job carving.
- Linking with community resources to support job search.

## ELIGIBILITY, INTAKE, REFERRAL AND SERVICE DELIVERY FLOW

Eligibility determination is completed by the TPA, Wellpoint, based on criteria established by the state in agreement with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the federal funding agency for MT. There are multiple sets of criteria for eligible clients, including an HCS/HCLA specific set.

To be determined eligible for FCS Supported Employment services by the TPA, a client must meet the following criteria:

- Be aged 16 or older
- Eligible for Apple Health (Medicaid)
- Desire to obtain employment

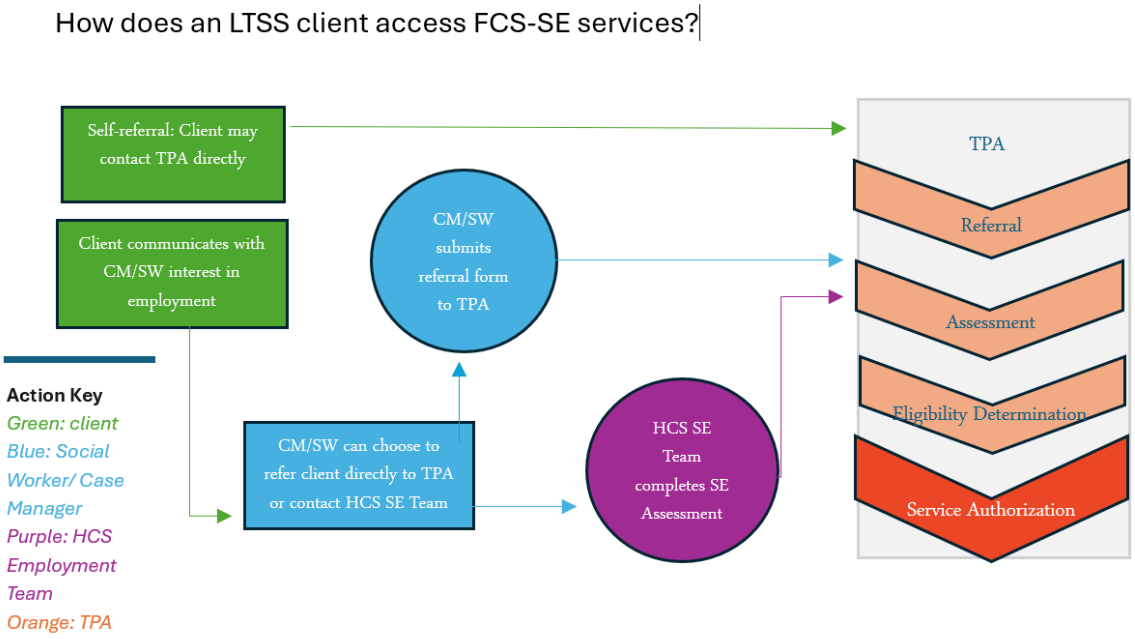
The client must also meet both the needs-based health and risk factor indicated below:

- **Health Factor:** An HCS/HCLA client meets the necessary health needs criteria by being financially and functionally eligible with a current CARE assessment identifying the need for assistance with 3 Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) and/or hands-on assistance with at least one ADL, which may include body care

- **Risk Factor:** Meets the necessary risk factor criteria by having an inability to obtain or maintain employment resulting from age, physical disability, or traumatic brain injury (TBI).

A more detailed description of needs-based criteria for FCS may be found in the FCS Quick Reference Guide. Intake and service delivery flow consists of identifying an individual interested in employment, assessing them for eligibility, referring them to the TPA for eligibility determination and assignment to a local employment provider to begin services. The intake and referral process for an individual can take a

number of paths including self-directed referral or assistance from HCS/AAA field staff and/or the HCS Employment team (see image below).




The most effective and quickest referral process for the client is to communicate the client's interest to the HCS Employment team. This process assures that the client will have a complete eligibility determination packet assembled and submitted to the TPA and facilitate a more rapid eligibility determination and assignment to a provider.

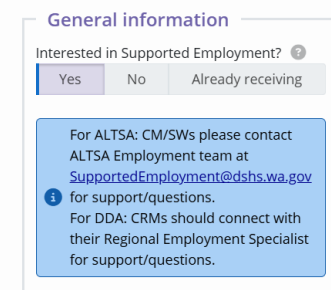
Ways to communicate a referral to the HCS Employment team:

- Contact the HCS Employment team through the SupportedEmployment@dshs.wa.gov email or 1-844-427-8256
- Contact one of the HCS Employment team directly through the contact information in the "Ask an Expert" section of this Chapter.

To indicate a client's interest in Supported Employment services in CARE:

- Select Client Details and go to their Profile Screen.
- Enter "Yes" to the Supported Employment question under General Information. A box will pop up with instructions on how to contact the HCS Employment team.

- Click on the link to SupportedEmployment@dshs.wa.gov and provide the client's name and one-piece identifying information, such as, ProviderOne number, ACES ID, or date of birth.




Clients may also be referred directly to TPA. Clients, their family or any support person, including HCS/AAA field staff, may contact the TPA directly through either phone or email to inquire about services and begin the assessment and eligibility determination process. Points of contact to begin the process are: phone – 1-800-451-2828; email – fcstpa@wellpoint.com.

More information for clients about the FCS services and how to apply can be found on Wellpoint's FCS website.

If a client is referred directly to TPA, the TPA will evaluate the individual for the eligibility criteria indicated above. For the needs-based health and risk factor criteria, the TPA will refer the client to an employment provider directly for supporting documentation and resubmission for a final eligibility determination.

Once a client is determined to be eligible for FCS services by the TPA, the TPA will assign the client to a local employment service provider and set up a Service Authorization in Provider One directly. Billing for services by providers will be through the TPA. The TPA will process billing and reimburse providers directly, then enter encounter data and billing information into Provider One directly.

HCS/AAA field staff and/or HCS Employment team will document each stage of the process from initial communication regarding FCS Supported Employment services with the client through the establishment of a Service Authorization with a provider in ProviderOne for FCS Supported Employment services through Service Episode Records (SERS).

## HOUSING & EMPLOYMENT STABILIZATION SERVICES FOR AN HCS/HCLA CLIENT

Housing and Employment Stabilization Services should be used when an HCS/HCLA client is enrolled in Foundational Community Supports (FCS) Supported Employment or has their employment support needs coordinated through HCS and requires additional assistance to obtain/maintain their job and the needed support is not able to be met through federal funding.. These services are designed to promote self-sufficiency and recovery by helping participants find and maintain stable housing and employment.

## How To Authorize Housing and Employment Stabilization Services

- Note in the Service Episode Record (SER) that the client is eligible for Housing & Employment Stabilization services and that you have Supervisory approval to authorize state only funds.
- Complete a SER outlining the service you are authorizing and/or the items you are purchasing and how they are necessary for the client's service plan.
- The HCS/AAA CM will need to authorize a Contracted Provider (i.e. Community Choice Guide) to make payments or/and purchases on behalf of the client.
  1) Complete Sustainability Goals to be shared with Provider. For Goal Short Description, enter "Employment". For Goal Description write a brief description of what services/items will be completed.
  2) The HCS/AAA CM will open RAC 3131- LTSS Housing Stabilization
  3) Use Service Code SA294,U4 (Housing Subsidy-Purchasing) to authorize the necessary goods and services.
     - For "Start" enter the date you authorized the Contracted Provider to make payment on a client's behalf.
     - For "End", enter the date that falls two weeks after the start date. For example, start date is March 3, 2025, and the end date would be March 17, 2025
     - For "# of Units" enter 1.
     - Unit type will be set to "Each".
     - For "Rate", enter the amount the Contractor was authorized to pay on behalf of the client.
     - Select reason code "Employment Stabilization"
     - For "Business status" select "Reviewing" status. Please do not put an authorization in "approved" status until you have received an invoice/receipt and the amount matches.
     - Once the invoice is received, update the start and end date, and verify the rate amount. If the rate doesn't match, please update the rate to match the invoice/receipt amount. Change "Business status" to "Approved".
     - When submitting an ETR, select "other" for both ETR/ETP category & type. Please note: an ETR will be required if the goods and services exceeds $5000
       - Note: If the amount Exceeds $500, this will generate an error message in CARE and will require the HCS/AAA CM to reach out to the Supported Employment Specialist to force the error.
  4) Submit the ETR to "Committee, Housing ETR" and email housingcommitteeetr@dshs.wa.gov to inform us about the ETR request.

5) Receipts for all purchases must be included in the participant's electronic case record (ECR). Attach all receipts/bids to the Packet Cover Sheet: Social Services Packet Cover Sheet (DSHS Form 02-615)

## How to Document Employment Stabilization Services in CARE:

Once the client is authorized for Employment Stabilization Services the HCS/AAA CM must:

- Add "Other" for Community Supports under Treatments
    - On the Medical Screen in CARE, choose the Program "Other"
    - Check "No" for Received in Last 14 days?
    - Check "Yes" for Need
    - Choose "Agency" for Provider
    - Choose "PRN" for Frequency
- For Comments, type: *"Employment Stabilization item(s) as identified to assist with the client's [return to/stabilization in] independent living."*
    - Add the Contracted Provider as a Paid Provider in the Care Planning section under the Supports Screen and assign the provider the task of "Other" (for Community Transition Services)

# SHORT-TERM RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT CLIENTS (STRA)

Short-Term Rental Assistance (STRA) supports are available for HCS clients receiving LTSS services and enrolled in FCS Supported Employment services that meet the program requirements. STRA are funded through the Health Related Social Needs (HRSN) program of the 1115 waiver funded Medicaid Transformation.

STRA can provide up to 6 months of rental and utilities assistance during the 1115 demonstration period for eligible clients. Demonstration period runs until June 2028. Utilities support can only be provided in months in which rental support is also provided.

**Eligibility for STRA:**

- Clients receiving Home and Community Long-Term Services Supports through CARE
- Has Federal Medicaid coverage (Apple Health)
- Enrolled in Foundational Community Supports Supported Employment services
- Experiencing chronic homelessness OR at risk of homelessness including
    - Exiting a publicly funded institution or system of care
    - Living in housing with characteristics associated with instability and an increased risk of homelessness

**STRA covered services:**

- Rent payments up to 150% of the Fair Market Rate (FMR) for their area
- Past due and/or future payments for a total of 6 months
- Renter's insurance (if required by the lease)
- Utilities can be paid only in months that rental assistance is received and include:
    - Landlord-paid utilities included in rent (non-duplicative of other HRSN utilities)
    - Recurring utilities owed directly to utility providers: garbage, water, sewer, recycling, internet, phone
    - Non-refundable utility set-up and restart costs

**How to refer a client to STRA:**

HCS and AAA case managers can submit an STRA referral through the Office of Housing & Employment SharePoint

- Select "Submit A Referral"
- Select "Supported Employment Short-Term Rent & Utility Payment"
- Complete the online form

The Management Bulletin (MB) H26-006 **Guidance on Planned Action Notices (PANs) Procedure for Health-Related Social Needs (HRSN) Funded Supportive Housing Programs** became effective March 4, 2026. In alignment with those rules a Planned Action Notice (PAN) is required whenever HRSN funds are used. Please see MB H26-006 for more information.

Resources for creating PANs for the STRA HRSN services are available. Please contact the Employment Unit for any guidance, support and questions.

## RESOURCES

Additional resources about the Foundational Community Supports (FCS) and Supported Employment program are available below and by contacting the Employment Unit at SupportedEmployment@dshs.wa.gov:

## Office of Housing and Employment website:

Office of Housing and Employment website

Supported Employment SharePoint

Supported Employment One-Pager_Digital

Supported Employment_Brochure_print

Benefit Brochure_PPTOffice of Housing and Employment SharepointMTP Community WorkSpace - Home

Medicaid Transformation Project (MTP) | Washington State Health Care Authority

HCS MTD intranet site for staff

Wellpoint TPA Provider Website with Resources

Wellpoint TPA Website for Clients

FCS Referral Form for Direct Referral to TPA

Supported Employment Assessment

FCS Quick Reference Guide

FCS Marketing Flyer - English

FCS Marketing Flyer - Spanish

### Housing & Employment Stabilization Services Chart:

### Housing Subsidy - Purchasing SA294u4

| Housing & Employment Stabilization Services (H&ES) These state funded services are intended to fill specific gaps to provide transitional or stabilizing supports for clients, who have received a housing or Supported Employment resource or had their housing/employment coordinated through HCS to sustain community living. | |
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| **Who is eligible for state H&ES?** | When an HCS client meets these qualifications:<br>**1.** Received a housing resource or had their housing coordinated through HCS; **or**<br>2. Enrolled with Supported Employment or had their employment coordinated through HCS; **and**<br>**3.** Are transitioning from a hospital, nursing facility, licensed assisted living facility, enhanced services facility, or adult family home to your own home, or are living in the community and need stabilization services to remain there; **and** |

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| | **4.** Do not have other programs, services, or resources to assist you with these costs; **and**<br>5. The needed support is not able to be met through federal funding |
| **What employment supports are covered under state H&ES?- This is some examples but not a fully inclusive list.** | 1. Bus pass<br>2. Cellphone<br>3. Chromebook /laptop computer or other device to connect to internet to support job development or when required for a job<br>4. Food Handlers card<br>5. Identification card<br>6. Clothes (interview clothes, first set of uniforms to begin work)<br>7. Other employment supporting licenses, credentials, certifications, services or items as needed<br>8. Etc. |
| **What is not covered under state H&ES?** | 1. Recreational or diversional items such as television, cable or DVD players.<br>2. Assistive Technology |
| **When do I need a provider contract?** | 1. A contracted provider (i.e. Community Choice Guide) will need to be authorized to complete purchases or/and payments on behalf of the client. |
| **How do I authorize state H&ES?** | 1. Note in the Service Episode Record (SER) that the client is eligible for Housing & Employment Stabilization services and that you have Supervisory approval to authorize state only funds.<br>2. Complete a SER outlining the service you are authorizing and/or the items you are purchasing and how they are necessary for the client's service plan.<br>3. Complete Sustainability Goals to be shared with Provider. For Goal Short Description, enter "Employment". For Goal Description write a brief description of what services/items will be completed.<br>4. The HCS/AAA CM will open RAC 3131- LTSS Housing Stabilization<br>5. Use Service Code SA294,U4 (Housing Subsidy-Purchasing) to authorize the necessary goods and services.<br>6. For "Start" enter the date you authorized the Contracted Provider to make payment on a client's behalf. |

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| | 7. For "End", enter the date that falls two weeks after the start date. For example, start date is March 3, 2025, and the end date would be March 17, 2025<br>8. For "# of Units" enter 1.<br>9. Unit type will be set to "Each".<br>10. For "Rate", enter the amount the Contractor was authorized to pay on behalf of the client.<br>11. Select reason code "Employment Stabilization"<br>12. For "Business status" select "Reviewing" status. Please do not put an authorization in "approved" status until you have received an invoice/receipt and the amount matches.<br>13. Once the invoice is received, update the start and end date, and verify the rate amount. If the rate doesn't match, please update the rate to match the invoice/receipt amount. Change "Business status" to "Approved".<br>14. When submitting an ETR, select "other" for both ETR/ETP category & type. Please note: an ETR will be required if the goods and services exceeds $5000<br>15. Submit the ETR to "Committee, Housing ETR" and email housingcommitteeetr@dshs.wa.gov to inform us about the ETR request.<br>16. Receipts for all purchases must be included in the participant's electronic case record (ECR). Attach all receipts/bids to the Packet Cover Sheet: Social Services Packet Cover Sheet (DSHS Form 02-615) |
| **When do I authorize this service?** | When an HCS client meets these qualifications:<br>1. Received a housing resource or had their housing coordinated through HCS; **or**<br>2. Enrolled with FCS Supported Employment or had their employment support needs coordinated through HCS; **and**<br>3. Are transitioning from a hospital, nursing facility, licensed assisted living facility, enhanced services facility, or adult family home to your own home, or are living in the community and need stabilization services to remain there; **and**<br>4. Do not have other programs, services, or resources to assist you with these costs; **and**<br>5. The needed support is not able to be met through federal funding |
| **Are ETRs allowed for state H&ES?** | **Yes.**<br>1. An ETR will be required if the total amount of goods & services exceeds $5000.<br>2. Select "other" for both ETR/ETP category & type. |

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| | 3. Submit the ETR to "Committee, Housing ETR" and email housingcommitteeetr@dshs.wa.gov to inform us about the ETR requested.<br>• Note: If the amount Exceeds $500, this will generate an error message in CARE and will require the HCS/AAA CM to reach out to the Supported Employment Specialist to force the error. |

| Short-Term Rental Assistance (STRA) supports are available for HCS clients receiving LTSS services and enrolled in FCS Supported Employment services that meet the program requirements. STRA are funded through the Health Related Social Needs (HRSN) program of the 1115 waiver funded Medicaid Transformation.<br><br>STRA can provide up to 6 months of rental and utilities assistance during the 1115 demonstration period for eligible clients. Utilities support can only be provided in months in which rental support is also provided. | |
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| **Who is eligible for STRA?** | When an HCS client meets these qualifications:<br>• Clients receiving Home and Community Long-Term Services Supports through CARE<br>• Has Federal Medicaid coverage (Apple Health)<br>• Enrolled in Foundational Community Supports Supported Employment services<br>• Experiencing chronic homelessness OR at risk of homelessness including<br>  • Exiting a publicly funded institution or system of care<br>  • Living in housing with characteristics associated with instability and an increased risk of homelessness |
| **What does STRA cover?** | • Rent payments up to 150% of the Fair Market Rate (FMR) for their area<br>• Past due and/or future payments for a total of 6 months<br>• Renter's insurance (if required by the lease)<br>• Utilities can be paid only in months that rental assistance is received and include:<br>  • Landlord-paid utilities included in rent (non-duplicative of other HRSN utilities)<br>  • Recurring utilities owed directly to utility providers: garbage, water, sewer, recycling, internet, phone<br>  • Non-refundable utility set-up and restart costs |

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| **How to make a referral to STRA?** | Submit an STRA referral through the Office of Housing & Employment SharePoint<br>• Select "Submit A Referral"<br>• Select "Supported Employment Short-Term Rent & Utility Payment"<br>• Complete the online form |
| **What happens after client is found eligible for STRA?** | Employment Unit will communicate eligibility determination to Spokane Housing Authority (SHA) and referring staff.<br>• SHA will coordinate with HCS/AAA Case Manager to compile all necessary documents to pay rent and landlord-paid utilities for period authorized<br>• Employment Unit will provide guidance to HCS/AAA Case Manager on completing any needed authorizations.<br>• HCS/AAA Case Manager will issue PANs following MB H26-006 |

## Forms:

FCS Referral Form for Direct Referral to TPA

## Related WACs:

FCS WACs

## REVISION HISTORY

| DATE | MADE BY | CHANGE(S) | MB # |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10/2018 | Michael Corcoran | Initial publication | |
| 6/2022 | Michael Corcoran | Updated information | |
| 5/2023 | Michael Corcoran | Updated information | |
| 6/2024 | Michael Corcoran | Updated Information | |
| 4/2025 | Michael Corcoran | Updated chapter format. Added information about SA294, U4- Housing and Employment Stabilization Services. Added information on How to document | |

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| | | Employment stabilization services in CARE. Added a chart demonstrating SA294, U4. | |
| 8/2025 | Michael Corcoran | Changed Chapter title and updated information | |
| 4/2026 | Michael Corcoran | Updated information. Added information regarding HRSN Short-Term Rental Assistance program. | |
| | | | |