

Bringing Families Home—DCFS Rapid Housing Project

Background: As established under WIC §16523, the Department of Children and Family Services implemented the county-wide Bringing Families Home Program (BFH) to reduce the number of families in the child welfare system experiencing or at risk of homelessness, to increase family reunification, and to prevent foster care placement. (Please note that this is not the same program as the Family Reunification Subsidy Program (FRHS), which has been discontinued.)

Who Qualifies?

Four Criteria must be met:

- 1) An open DCFS case that is in VFM, VFR, FR or FM. (Enhancement Services do not qualify)
- 2) Homeless or at risk for homelessness. (Self-attestation is acceptable.)
- 3) Income limit of 50% of the median income for Los Angeles County.
- 4) Voluntarily agrees to participate in the program.

How are cases referred?

The CSW can refer a parent for assessment by emailing **B6HomelessServices@dcfs.lacounty.gov**. Additionally, parents or third-party agencies (other than legal counsel) can directly email the program and DCFS staff will connect with the Case Carrying CSW. The BFH Team will then work with the CSW to determine qualification and appropriateness for the program. DCFS contracts with local service providers for each individual Service Provider Area.

What services are provided?

Case management and other supportive services as related to addressing housing barriers (e.g. Housing Navigation, Housing Stabilization, Eviction Prevention, Employment Services, etc.). The program also provides housing-related financial assistance on rental arrears, move-in costs, basic necessity furniture, and time-limited rental assistance with incremental decreases. Limited legal services are also available. Terms and conditions apply.

Limitations:

Ability to Pay: The approval process includes an assessment of a parent's long-term ability to pay for their chosen housing unit. BFH will not approve a housing choice if a parent is not likely to maintain payments long-term. Once a parent is connected to a BFH agency, the agency will assess the terms of rental assistance as assistance is individualized for each client. BFH is a time limited subsidy and not guaranteed for a specific length of time.

Ability to Find Housing: Parents should be proactive by searching for housing leads they find on their own as well as those provided by the contracted housing case manager, followed by agency case manager advocacy with the landlords. **The ongoing, severe lack of affordable housing in Los Angeles County is a primary cause of delays in re-housing. Unfortunately, this is one factor outside of DCFS control.**

Non-Minor Dependents with Children: May qualify if there is open court case as to their child(ren).

How Can I Know a Parent's Referral Status?

If a referral to BFH has been made, the CSW should be able to contact the referral email:

B6HomelessServices@dcfs.lacounty.gov in order to receive status updates. **As DCFS is a represented agency, inquiries from legal counsel or employees of law firms must be directed through the County Counsel who has been assigned to that case.** If the assigned County Counsel is unavailable, counsel may direct further inquiry to County Counsel's BFH Liaison email: **BringingFamiliesHome@counsel.lacounty.gov**. Please **CC** the assigned trial County Counsel.