

TO: Family Unification Program Referral Partners
FROM: Lily Sojourner, Erin Oalican & Amanda Churchill, Department for Children and Families
DATE: December 13, 2021
SUBJECT: **Family Unification Program Priority Changes**

The Department for Children and Families (DCF) has updated the priority for households referred for Family Unification Program (FUP) Vouchers with the Vermont State Housing Authority (VSHA) in conjunction with the launch of the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Initiative in Vermont.

The Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Initiative will provide new permanent vouchers for eligible youth. This FYI Initiative will be led by DCF Family Services, the Youth Development Program (YDP), and VSHA. For more information about this new voucher initiative, including referral instructions, please reach out to ydp@wcysb.org. The FYI Initiative replaces the need for FUP youth eligibility, as the FYI Initiative is targeted to serve this same population. DCF is therefore revising the FUP priority.

Effective immediately, the new Department for Children and Families priority for the Family Unification Vouchers is:

Eligible youth/families will be prioritized in the following order:

1. ***Involved with the Family Services Division & urgency factor score***
2. ***Urgency factor score***
3. ***Date of referral***

Eligible households get one point for each of the following urgency factors:

- ✓ ***Meets the AHS/HUD definition of homeless***
- ✓ ***Has had multiple episodes of homelessness***
- ✓ ***Has at least one child under the age of six***

This change, in conjunction with the availability of FYI vouchers for youth, will make more permanent housing vouchers available both to youth and FUP eligible families. The OEO FUP webpage has been updated to reflect this change. As always, please use it to access the most up to date referral and training resources for FUP. [Family Unification Program | Department for Children and Families \(vermont.gov\)](http://Family Unification Program | Department for Children and Families (vermont.gov))

Sincerely,

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