

GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED 2024-25 STATE BUDGET ELIMINATES SERVICES FUNDING FOR YOUTH WITH FEDERAL HOUSING VOUCHERS

The 2024-25 California state budget proposal released by the Newsom Administration in January eliminates the \$13.7 million ongoing investment in the Housing Navigation and Maintenance Program. Below are frequently asked questions about the program and the proposed elimination.

What is the Housing Navigation & Maintenance Program?

The Housing Navigation and Maintenance Program (HNMP) is administered by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to county child welfare agencies to provide housing navigation and services to assist youth, ages 18-24 with securing and maintaining housing, with priority given to current and former foster youth. Each county's most recent fiscal year allocation amounts can be found on HCD's [website](#).

Why was this program established, and how has it changed since its inception?

HNMP was established in 2019 (formerly named the Housing Navigators Program) with \$5 million in one-time funding, in response to the challenges youth in extended foster care face in securing housing. In 2022, the program was expanded to a \$13.7 million annual investment with the express purpose of serving youth exiting foster care and former foster youth who have been issued federal Housing Choice Vouchers through the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) or Family Unification Program (FUP).

What are FYI/FUP vouchers and how does HNMP assist in leveraging this federal funding?

The U.S. Department of Housing Urban Development (HUD) administers two Housing Choice Voucher programs for former foster youth ages 18 through 24—the Family Unification Program (FUP) and the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) program. Both provide up to 36 months of housing assistance administered by a Public Housing Authority, coupled with supportive services provided or secured by the county child welfare agency. While HUD provides funding for the rental subsidy (voucher), there is no designated funding for the services. This absence of services funding was identified by county child welfare agencies as the main obstacle to participating in this federal program. HNMP was expanded for this purpose, now providing counties with

funding to assist youth with FYI/FUP vouchers with identifying, securing, and maintaining housing with their federal voucher.

Why is HNMP important?

- **HNMP ensures youth can turn a housing voucher into actual housing:** HNMP helps youth cover the costs of security deposits and other move-in costs, assists youth with identifying and securing housing, and provides ongoing supportive services to help youth maintain stability once in housing. Without assistance, youth often struggle to lease up, and the housing search time can last several months or fail to result in actual housing.
- **HNMP helps California access \$22 million in federal housing assistance for youth:** The establishment and expansion of HNMP has contributed to a 54% increase in the number of FYI/FUP vouchers in California. As of October 2023, California had 1,341 FYI/FUP vouchers, receiving approximately \$22 million in federal funding. If HNMP is eliminated, losing the services funding which enables counties to fulfill their federal mandate, California risks losing much of this federal funding.
- **HNMP helps prevent foster youth from becoming homeless when they exit foster care:** FYI vouchers may be requested on-demand, on an as-needed basis for youth as they approach their exit from foster care. This new, unique request mechanism allows our state to prevent homelessness among transitioning foster youth before it occurs. Currently, very few jurisdictions utilize this on-demand process, however many jurisdictions are gearing up to incorporate this into their exit planning for foster youth. Losing HNMP now would halt this progress, preventing our state from tapping into a federal resource to prevent foster youth from exiting into homelessness.