



July 19, 2019

Policy Memorandum OCCRS 103-FY2019 Homeless Children and Families

Issuing Authority: *Michal Rhymen-Browne*
Assistant Commissioner

Purpose: It is the policy of the Office of Child Care and Regulatory Services (OCCRS) that children and families experiencing homelessness are a Priority Group for eligibility for the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) subsidies. OCCRS defines “homeless” in accordance with the federal McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987. Because of their Priority Group status, homeless children and families receive the following benefits from OCCRS- CCDF Lead Agency:

- They are not placed on a waiting list when in need of child care and are enrolled immediately once meeting the age requirements served;
- Homeless children are given a 3-month period after enrollment in a child care facility to become current with all immunization requirements;
- Co-payments for child care services are waived;
- Referrals to other supportive services available for children and families

The VI Department of Human Services (DHS) in collaboration with the Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority (VIHFA) is responsible for convening the Interagency Council on Homelessness to ensure that public policy is developed and maintained to end homelessness in the US Virgin Islands. DHS is an agency member of the V.I. Continuum of Care Council (CoC) which promotes communitywide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness. As a member, DHS must participate in the CoC managed Coordinated Entry System (CES) to ensure homeless individuals and families are assessed to determine prioritized need for referrals

to homeless prevention services, safe housing and support services available in the community. DHS participation in both Councils supports the goal of preventing homelessness and assisting those persons/families who are homeless to transition to independent or supportive living in a safe and affordable home environment.

This policy memorandum outlines the way DHS Office of Child Care Services prioritizes services for children and families experiencing homelessness.