



## Finance Committee Meeting

January 23, 2013

### Approve FSI Eligibility Criteria

Item IV.

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**Recommended Action:** To formalize and approve income eligibility and documentation retention guidelines for the Family Services Initiative

**Budget Impact:** None

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#### **Background:**

The Family Services Initiative (FSI) is a pilot project, initially funded in FY 11-12 in order to provide quality preventative services for families that are most at risk and in need. Families can access FSI services through the 2-1-1 Family Services Team, eligible JWB funded programs, or through appointed members from the Pinellas County School system. Families who access the FSI services are able to receive goods and/or services which are purchased to assist in establishing or maintaining the family's emotional and environmental stability, and to reduce or remove barriers to funded services.

In order to participate in the FSI, families must be residents of Pinellas County, have a minor child in the home (or are pregnant), and a valid Social Security number. Families are also required to self-report household size and income. The level of verification regarding these requirements currently varies from collecting and retaining all documents by the 2-1-1 Family Services Team to self-reporting through other points of access.

Staff recommend guidelines for income eligibility and documentation retention be established from the options provided below.

#### **Income Eligibility**

- Implement a 200% Federal Poverty Level income criteria (\$46,100 annual income for a family of four) for all FSI participants; exceptions to policy may only be overwritten by Level 3.

#### **Documentation Retention**

- Require documentation for eligibility criteria to be collected and retained for all FSI participants;
- Require documentation for eligibility criteria to be collected and retained for only FSI participants not currently enrolled in a JWB funded program; or
- No documentation retention requirement, participants will self-report.

Establishing income criteria and requiring documentation of eligibility to be collected enables JWB to target and serve the population most at risk and in need, mitigates the potential of fraud and misappropriation, and ensures accurate data are being collected. However, establishing additional criteria and requirements comes at a cost to the families by reducing our response time to help them in crisis situations.