

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program
February 3, 2015 NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA)
Frequently Asked Questions

Q. In the NOFA, it says that VA will provide funding for existing grantees seeking to renew their grants. How can applicants propose a new, initial program?

A. VA is not accepting applications for new programs. This funding round is only for existing grantees to request a renewal to their existing program. VA does not anticipate releasing another NOFA for new programs this year.

Q. The NOFA states that applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications electronically. Can applicants submit hard copies of the application?

A. The SSVF Program Office has recently converted to an online application process, allowing for more convenient application development and to provide applicants with the ability to save and return to unfinished applications, as well as track application submission history. Paper submissions are acceptable, if necessary, and can be requested at SSVF@va.gov. Should applicants elect to mail in the paper applications, instructions for submission are available in the NOFA. Please refer to the formatting and packaging requirements.

Q. In the NOFA, it says that applicants “can request funding that is equal to or less than their current award. If sufficient funding is available, VA may provide an increase of up to 2% from the previous award.” However, the NOFA states that applicants can seek to expand services to unserved areas and request an increase of up to 20% of the current award. How do applicants reflect this in the application?

A. The electronic application form will guide applicants through the process of requesting renewal funds for the existing grant program and will provide a separate section for applicants to request an expansion, with increased funding if applicable. Applicants can use the Microsoft Excel Budget Template for both award amounts. Expansion proposals and decreases to the amount of funding requested will not be considered a substantial change to the program. Unless proposing to expand into unserved areas adjacent to your current service area, NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS should be requested in your grant proposal. If funding is available, VA will provide increases of up to 2% during budget resolution calls. Do not include 2% increases into your existing budget.

Q. What if an applicant wants to submit an expansion proposal but the increased funding requested causes their budget to be over \$2 million?

A. Since there is no cap in the current NOFA, exceeding \$2 million is no longer an issue if the proposed expansion takes the grant north of that total. Further, all applicants with renewal grants can submit proposals for such expansions, even if their grant doesn't require renewal for 1-2 more years, since that submission is separate from their regular renewal.

Q. Can applicants proposing expansions use a subcontractor to provide those services?

A. Yes.

Q. The web link to the online application requires an email and password to access the form. How do I create an account?

A. All applicants will use this link to access the online application form. Click on the “New Applicant?” link to create an account. Once an account is established, applicants will use this link to return to incomplete applications which can be saved and finished later.

Q. My current grant award is for a multi-year project term. Do I need to apply for renewal funding using this online application?

A. No, existing multi-year SSVF grantees need not apply using this application form. To ensure the project term of your existing grant award, refer to the Project Period in Box 5 of your signed agreement with VA. The SSVF Program Office will contact you directly with instructions on how to confirm your intent to continue grant operations in the upcoming fiscal year, as well as how to submit your annual budget.

Q. My current grant award is for a multi-year project term but I would like to request an expansion of services to unserved areas. Is my program eligible for this option?

A. Yes, existing multi-year grantees are eligible to request an expansion of services to unserved areas, which will require the one-page narrative and budget submission that cannot exceed 20% of the current grant award. Instructions for this submission will be provided directly to grantees no later than February 12, 2015. The deadline for confirming intent to continue grant operations and to propose expansions is also 4:00 PM Eastern on March 17, 2015.

Q. The options to select “State” do not include Guam. How can we submit our application for Guam?

A. Guam was unintentionally missed on the coding of this field. The SSVF Program Office will update this coding table to include this as an option. However, should the coding table not reflect Guam as an option as you complete the application, please select another state for this application and the SSVF staff will correct the territory when retrieving applications.

Q. There is not an option to attach “other” documents or support letters. How can applicants ensure these materials are submitted with the application?

A. Until the online form is updated, applicants may attach letters of support as a single file in combination with another required attachment, such as the budget narrative. This will ensure that the support letters are included in the application during the scoring and evaluation process.