Department of Veterans Affairs Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program

Program Guide
Updated March 2021

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SSVF Response to the COVID-19 Public Health Crisis

The Supportive Services for Veteran Families program is currently operating under more flexible regulations due to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. The Stafford Act allows SSVF to provide greater flexibility in the types and amounts of services available to Veteran households while the national public health emergency is in place. Details of related guidance can be found on the SSVF website and will be communicated via weekly program emails, web broadcasts and SSVF Regional Coordinators. Guidance related to COVID-19 and the Public Health Emergency supersede the relevant portions of this SSVF Program Guide until further notice. SSVF Grantees will be instructed on how to transition back to normal program operations and guidelines as needed. Please review both this Program Guide and the related guidance on SSVF's Stafford Act flexibilities and submit questions to your Regional Coordinator or SSVF@va.gov.

SECTION I | INTRODUCTION

I. Introduction

A. Purpose of the Program Guide

The purpose of this Program Guide is to provide an overview of the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program. This Program Guide has force for oversight, auditing, monitoring and program review purposes, and is to be used by applicants to the SSVF Program, SSVF grantees, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) staff members, and other interested third parties involved in the SSVF Program. The Program Guide provides the following information:

1. Program Overview
2. Renewal Process
3. Technical Assistance
4. Participant Eligibility
5. Supportive Services
6. Program Operations
7. Fiscal Administration
8. Training and Evaluation
9. Reporting Requirements
10. Program Resources

The guidelines provided in this Program Guide are intended to be consistent with SSVF Program regulations (38 CFR Part 62), and other applicable laws, Executive Orders, OMB Circulars, and VA regulations. In the event of a conflict between this Program Guide and VA regulations, applicable laws, OMB Circulars, or Executive Orders, such regulations, laws, OMB Circulars, or Executive Orders shall control. Guidelines should not be construed to supersede, rescind, or otherwise amend such laws, Executive Orders, OMB Circulars, and regulations. Grantees are responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirements of the SSVF Program regulations, the supportive services grant agreement, and other applicable laws and regulations.

B. SSVF Program Description and Background

Section 604 of the Veterans' Mental Health and Other Care Improvements Act of 2008, Public Law 110-387, authorized VA to develop the SSVF Program. Supportive services grants will be awarded to selected private non-profit organizations and consumer cooperatives that will assist very low-income Veteran families residing in or transitioning to permanent housing. Grantees will provide a range of supportive services to eligible Veteran families that are designed to promote housing stability.

The statutory authority for the SSVF Program is found at 38 U.S.C. 2044. The implementing regulations are found at 38 CFR Part 62.

C. Definitions

Please refer to 38 CFR 62.2 and 38 CFR 62.10 for definitions of terms used in the SSVF Program. A summary of key definitions used within this Program Guide is provided below.

Applicant: An eligible entity that submits an application for a supportive services grant announced in a Notice of Fund Availability.

Area or community: A political subdivision or contiguous political subdivisions (such as a precinct, ward, borough, city, county, State, Congressional district or tribal reservation) with an identifiable population of very low-income Veteran families.

Consumer cooperative: See section 202 of the Housing Act of 1959 (12 U.S.C. 1701q).

Continuum of Care (CoC): Continuum of Care and Continuum refer to the group that is organized to carry out the responsibilities required under the Continuum of Care Program regulations, 24 CFR Part 578, composed of representatives of nonprofit homeless providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless Veterans, and homeless and formerly homeless persons. These organizations consist of the relevant parties in the geographic area.

Department of Defense (DD) Form 214: The Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty issued by the Department of Defense to each Veteran, identifying the Veteran's condition of discharge – honorable, general, other than honorable, dishonorable or bad conduct.

Dependent: For SSVF reporting purposes only, dependents are defined as children under the age of 18 at project entry. This reflects an alignment with the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) definition of "households with children and adults," and can now be tracked in and reported out of HMIS. (Note: a Veteran may identify adult dependents as part of their "household." These adult dependents may be served as part of the Veteran family, but for SSVF and HMIS reporting purposes, would not be reported as a "dependent.")

Eligible child care provider: A provider of child care services for compensation, including a provider of care for a school-age child during non-school hours, that: (1) is licensed, regulated, registered, or otherwise legally operating, under state and local law, and (2) satisfies the state and local requirements, applicable to the child care services the provider provides.

Eligible entity: (1) private non-profit organization, or (2) consumer cooperative.

Emergency housing: Temporary housing provided under 38 CFR 62.34(f) that does not require the participant to sign a lease or occupancy agreement.

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Emergency Housing Assistance: The provision of up to 45 days of temporary housing for a Veteran family with dependents (up to 72 hours for a single Veteran) that does not require the participant to sign a lease or occupancy agreement. The cost cannot exceed the reasonable community standard for such housing. Emergency housing is limited to short-term commercial residences (private residences are not eligible for such funding) not already funded to provide on-demand emergency shelter (such as emergency congregate shelters).

Extremely Low Income (ELI): An income category for a Veteran family whose annual income, in accordance with 24 CFR 5.609, does not exceed 30 percent of the area median income.

General Housing Stability Assistance: The provision of goods or payment of expenses not included in other sections but which are directly related to support a participant's housing stability, and are authorized under 38 CFR 62.34(e), which are not available through existing mainstream and community resources.

Grant and Per Diem Program (GPD): See website for complete details https://www.va.gov/homeless/gpd.asp.

Grantee: An eligible entity that is awarded a supportive services grant.

Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV): See website for complete details https://www.va.gov/homeless/hchv.asp.

Homeless: The “homeless” definition has the meaning given by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in 24 CFR 576.2. https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HEARTH_ESGInterimRule&ConPlanConformingAmendments.pdf. For an at-a-glance reference see: http://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/24/576.2

Homeless, “Literally”: The “literally homeless” definition is a more narrow definition than “Homeless” defined above. It is this “literally homeless” definition that is a critical requirement to qualify Veterans for SSVF rapid re-housing (consistent with the Emergency Solutions Grants program). This means every participant in SSVF rapid re-housing (category 2 and 3) is carefully qualified within the parameters of “literally homeless.” Note that a Veteran who is residing in what is commonly referred to as a “doubled up” or a “couch surfing” situation in permanent housing, or otherwise residing in permanent housing, would not fit the “literally homeless” definition below. Note that such persons would be considered category 1 and could qualify for homelessness prevention. Further, persons fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence are considered literally homeless and would be served as a rapid re-housing household.

As per HUD 24 CFR 576.2, “literally homeless” is defined as:

(1) An individual/family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:

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i. An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;
ii. An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals);
iii. An individual who is exiting an institution where s/he resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS): The information system designated by the Continuum of Care to comply with the HUD's data collection, management, and reporting standards and used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at-risk of homelessness. HMIS is a valuable resource because of its capacity to integrate and un-duplicate data across projects in a community. Aggregate HMIS data can be used to understand the size, characteristics, and needs of the homeless population at multiple levels: project, system, local, state, and national.

Household: All persons as identified by the Veteran, who together present for services, and identify themselves as being part of the same household.

Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH): See website for complete details https://www.va.gov/homeless/hud-vash.asp.

Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA): A NOFA is published in the Federal Register in accordance with 38 CFR 62.40, which announces the availability of funds for supportive services grants.

Occupying permanent housing: A very low-income Veteran family will be considered to be occupying permanent housing if the very low-income Veteran family:

(Category 1) Is residing in permanent housing and at risk of becoming literally homeless but for grantee's assistance;
(Category 2) Is literally homeless, and at risk to remain in this situation but for grantee's assistance, and scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days pending the location or development of housing suitable for permanent housing;
or
(Category 3) Is literally homeless after exiting permanent housing within the previous 90 days to seek other housing that is responsive to the very low-income Veteran family's needs and preferences.

Regarding above references to literally homeless: for specifics as to what circumstances do and do not constitute literal homelessness, see the definition: Homeless, Literally.

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Participant Household: A very low-income Veteran family occupying permanent housing who is receiving supportive services from a grantee.

Permanent Housing: Community-based housing without a designated length of stay where an individual or family has a lease in accord with state and Federal law that is renewable and terminable only for cause. Examples of permanent housing include, but are not limited to: a house or apartment with a month-to-month or annual lease term, or home ownership.[1]

Private non-profit organization: Any of the following:

(1) An incorporated private institution or foundation that:
   - i. Has no part of the net earnings that inure to the benefit of any member, founder, contributor, or individual;
   - ii. Has a governing board that is responsible for the operation of the supportive services provided under the SSVF Program; and
   - iii. Is approved by VA as to financial responsibility.

(2) A for-profit limited partnership, the sole general partner of which is an organization meeting the requirements of paragraphs (1)(i), (ii) and (iii) of this definition.

(3) A corporation wholly owned and controlled by an organization meeting the requirements of paragraphs (1)(i), (ii), and (iii) of this definition.

(4) A tribally designated housing entity (as defined in section 4 of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 4103)).

Rapid Re-housing: An intervention designed to help individuals and families quickly exit homelessness and transition to permanent housing. Rapid re-housing assistance is offered without grantee required preconditions such as employment, income, absence of criminal record, or sobriety. Support services are tailored to the unique circumstances of each individual participant household to facilitate a rapid transition to permanent housing. The three core components of rapid re-housing are identifying housing, providing rent and move-in financial assistance, and offering case management and related services. While a rapid re-housing program must have all three core components, it is not required that a single entity provides all three services nor that a household utilize them all.

State: Any of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, any territory or possession of the United States, or any agency or instrumentality of a State exclusive of local governments. The term does not include any public or Indian housing agency under the United States Housing Act of 1937.

Subcontractor: Any third-party contractor, of any tier, working directly for an eligible entity.

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[1] Note: Transition in Place (TIP) programs where the very low-income Veteran family maintains an independent lease with a landlord and maintains lease rights to the unit throughout TIP program enrollment and conclusion without exception are considered permanent housing.

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Supportive services: Any of the following provided to address the needs of a participant:

(1) Outreach services as specified under 38 CFR 62.30.
(2) Case management services as specified under 38 CFR 62.31.
(3) Assisting participants in obtaining VA benefits as specified under 38 CFR 62.32.
(4) Assisting participants in obtaining and coordinating other public benefits as specified under 38 CFR 62.33.
(5) Other services as specified under 38 CFR 62.34.

Supportive services grant: A grant awarded under the SSVF Program.

Supportive services grant agreement: The agreement executed between VA and a grantee as specified under 38 CFR 62.50.

Suspension: An action by VA that temporarily withdraws VA funding under a supportive services grant, pending corrective action by the grantee or pending a decision to terminate the supportive services grant by VA. Suspension of a supportive services grant is a separate action from suspension under VA regulations implementing Executive Orders 12549 and 12689, "Debarment and Suspension."

VA: Department of Veterans Affairs

VBA: Veterans Benefits Administration

Very low-income Veteran family: A Veteran family whose annual income, as determined in accordance with 24 CFR 5.609, does not exceed 50 percent of the median income for an area or community (current income limits can be found at: http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il.html).

Veteran: Veteran: A person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, regardless of length of service, and who was discharged or released there from. Veteran excludes a person who received a dishonorable discharge from the Armed Forces or was discharged or dismissed from the Armed Forces by reason of the sentence of a general court-martial. The length of service restrictions under 38 U.S.C. 5303A do not apply.

Veteran family: A Veteran who is a single person or a family in which the head of household, or the spouse of the head of household, is a Veteran.

VHA: Veterans Health Administration

Withholding: Payment of a supportive services grant will not be paid until such time as VA determines that the grantee provides sufficiently adequate documentation and/or actions to correct a deficiency for the supportive services grant. Costs for supportive services provided by

grantees under the supportive services grant from the date of the withholding letter would be reimbursed only if the grantee is able to submit the documentation or actions that the deficiency has been corrected to the satisfaction of VA.

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II. Program Overview

SECTION II | PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A. Goal of the Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program

The goal of the SSVF Program is to promote housing stability among very low-income Veteran families who reside in or are transitioning to permanent housing.

B. Eligible Participants

To become a participant household under the SSVF Program, the following conditions must be met:

1. ***A member of a "Veteran family":*** Either (a) a Veteran[2]; or (b) a member of a family in which the head of household, or the spouse of the head of household, is a Veteran. *(Note: The head of household should be identified by the Veteran family.)*

2. ***"Very low-income":*** Household income does not exceed 50 percent of area median income. Unless VA announces otherwise in the NOFA, the median income for an area or community will be determined using the income limits most recently published by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for programs under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f), which can be found at: http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il.html.

3. ***"Occupying Permanent Housing":*** A very low-income Veteran family is considered to be "occupying permanent housing" if they fall into one of three categories:

   (Category 1) Is residing in permanent housing and at risk of becoming literally homeless but for grantee's assistance;
   (Category 2) Is literally homeless, and at risk to remain in this situation but for grantee's assistance, and scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days pending the location or development of housing suitable for permanent housing; or
   (Category 3) Is literally homeless after exiting permanent housing within the previous 90 days to seek other housing that is responsive to the very low-income Veteran family's needs and preferences.

Regarding the above references to literally homeless: for specifics as to what circumstances do and do not constitute literal homelessness, see Section I.C. definitions: Homeless, Literally. Grantees must ensure that literally homeless participants qualify under this definition.

[2] See Section I.C. of this Program Guide for the definition of Veteran.

Note: There are time restrictions and limitations on uses of grant funds with respect to the categories of participants grantees may serve. The following table describes the three categories of "occupying permanent housing" as well as the time restrictions related to each.

Category of Occupying Permanent Housing	Time Restriction
Category 1: If a very low-income Veteran family is residing in permanent housing and is at risk of becoming *literally homeless* but for the grantee's assistance.	A grantee may continue to provide supportive services to a participant within Category 1 so long as the participant continues to meet the definition of Category 1.
Category 2: If a very low-income Veteran family is *literally homeless*, and at risk to remain in this situation but for the grantee's assistance, and is scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days pending the location or development of housing suitable for permanent housing.	A grantee may continue to provide supportive services to a participant within Category 2 so long as the participant continues to meet the definition of Category 2, even if the participant does not become a resident of permanent housing within the originally scheduled 90-day period.
Category 3: If a very low-income Veteran family is *literally homeless* after exiting permanent housing within the previous 90 days to seek other housing that is responsive to the very low-income Veteran family's needs and preferences.	A grantee may continue to provide supportive services to a participant within Category 3 until the earlier of the following dates: 1. The participant commences receipt of other housing services adequate to meet the participant's needs OR 2. 90 days from the date the participant exits permanent housing.

Grantees are required to certify the eligibility each participant at least once every three months, per 38 CFR 62.36(a), as described in Section V of this Program Guide.

C. Supportive Services Provided

Through the SSVF Program, VA aims to improve the housing stability of very low-income Veteran families. Towards this end, SSVF grantees provide a set of required SSVF services and have the option of providing additional SSVF services as outlined below.

Required SSVF Support Services

1. Outreach
2. Case management
3. Connection to VA benefits and programs

4. Connection to public benefits and mainstream, community resources
5. Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA)

Note that Section VI of this Program Guide provides specifics for each of these required SSVF support services. Details in Section VI include lists of the key benefits and community resources that are fundamental for each SSVF grantee to navigate in their local SSVF jurisdictions.

Optional SSVF Support Services

1. Complementary services from SSVF "public benefits" list (proposed to and approved by VA)
2. Other unique, grantee-designed services (proposed to and approved by VA)

Note that Section VI of this Program Guide provides specifics for each of these optional SSVF support services. Details include lists of common complementary services that some SSVF grantees optionally elect to provide themselves as a component of their direct service.

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D. Rapid Re-Housing Assistance

Grantees must use a minimum of 60 percent of the temporary financial assistance (TFA) portion of their supportive services grant funds to serve very low-income Veteran families who either (i) are homeless and scheduled to become residents of permanent housing within 90 days pending the location or development of housing suitable for permanent housing or (ii) have exited permanent housing within the previous 90 days to seek other housing that is responsive to their needs and preferences. The percentage of each Grantee's budget should also reflect the level of need as crafted in collaboration with their partners in the CoC and the VA. Frequently grantees will target use of TFA well in excess of 60 percent to meet the needs of homeless Veterans and ensure no gaps in the availability of rapid re-housing assistance. Determinations regarding the allocation of funds are announced in the SSVF Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA). NOTE: Grantees may request a waiver to decrease this minimum amount. See Exhibit G: The Rapid Re-Housing Waiver

E. Homelessness Prevention Assistance

For Veteran families who do not meet the housing categories (i) or (ii) for rapid re-housing assistance, grantees may use supportive services grant funds to provide prevention assistance to eligible households who also meet criteria for imminent risk of homelessness. While grantees must maintain the minimum use of 60 percent of TFA for Veteran households under rapid re-housing, grantees may utilize a minimum portion of TFA funds to provide prevention assistance to those most at risk of becoming literally homeless. Grantees must use Stage 1 of the SSVF Homelessness Prevention Screening Form to determine eligibility. In the event there are not sufficient resources to assist all eligible at-risk Veterans, Grantees must establish a threshold score.

F. SSVF Coordination with Local Continuums of Care (CoCs)

SSVF grantees are expected to be engaged with their local CoC to the fullest extent possible, including participating in the local Coordinated Entry Process (See Section H below). Grantees must work in close partnership with their local CoC to establish a community-wide plan to prevent and end homelessness among Veterans. SSVF grantees are expected to engage as active members in each and every CoC where they are approved to provide SSVF assistance. In particular, SSVF grantees are expected to formally participate in planning, design, and refinement of the CoC's local coordinated entry system. Grantees need to adhere to Program Guide for allowable costs associated with these activities. This system creates a centralized or coordinated means for all households experiencing homelessness to access homeless assistance services and matches them with the best fit shelter, housing and relevant services. See Section H for a more detailed description of VA's expectations for VA homeless program participation in Coordinated Entry.

SSVF grantees are responsible for ensuring that SSVF is formally integrated into this local CoC process and, where necessary, for taking a lead role in developing and implementing such processes for Veterans. This includes situations where a grantee's service area is covered by multiple CoCs, SSVF where providers are responsible for participating in each CoC's coordinated entry system and planning.

G. SSVF Coordination with VA Medical Centers

SSVF grantees work in coordinated partnership with their local Veterans Administration Medical Centers (VAMC). Each VAMC offers a range of housing programs including Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH), Grant and Per Diem Program (GPD), and Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV), which offers both outreach and emergency housing. The organizational structure for each VAMC can vary – it is up to the SSVF grantee to reach out to the VAMC so that regular contact is established with local homeless services. SSVF grantees should work with the local VA to focus on the following:

- Maintaining a current Veteran By-Name List (BNL), also referred to as a Master List
- Assign and track cases from the BNL to the appropriate services
- Supporting joint CoC/VA responsibilities to implement a Coordinated Entry System (CES)
- Case Conferencing to monitor service delivery to those enrolled in care

VA Regional Coordinators assigned to SSVF grantees, can help organize regular planning meetings with SSVF grantees that standardize processes for referrals both to SSVF grantees and from grantees to VAMCs, as well as help educate staff about accessing available services. Furthermore, through the SSVF Regional Coordinator, SSVF grantees can turn to their

Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Homeless Coordinator for assistance in service collaboration.

H. VA Homeless Program Expectations for Coordinated Entry Participation

The coordinated entry (CE) process is an approach to coordination and management of a crisis response system's resources that allows users to make consistent decisions from available information to efficiently and effectively connect people to housing and service interventions that will rapidly end their homelessness. Through coordinated entry, a CoC ensures that the highest need, most vulnerable households in the community are prioritized for housing and services first.

The VA Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management published a memo (https://www.hudexchange.info/news/hud-publishes-coordinated-entry-requirements-and-checklist-of-essential-elements/) in the fall of 2017, issuing guidance to VA medical center staff and staff of VA funded homeless assistance programs regarding their roles in supporting local Continuum of Care (CoC) coordinated entry (CE) systems (https://www.hudexchange.info/news/hud-publishes-coordinated-entry-requirements-and-checklist-of-essential-elements/) by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This guidance from the VA to the VA medical centers is meant to support community planning and CES efforts within CoCs by clearly outlining the expectations of VA medical center involvement. This guidance was updated in March 2020 in "VA Integration in Coordinated Entry: Troubleshooting Delays in Care". This document reviews alternative processes that may be used to ensure prompt access to care when CE may not be able to facilitate such access. This updated guidance can be found at https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/?page=/ssvf_university/community_coordination_and_plans.

In many ways, this guidance codifies what has already been occurring in local communities. Where new partnerships are needed, it provides the opportunity and framework for engagement. Within the guidance, VA recognizes that coordinated entry systems are a critical element in the collective and continued efforts to end Veteran homelessness and homelessness for all populations. The memo identified several key components of a successful coordinated entry system and responsibilities of key VA staff, in addition to all CoC partners, in supporting those components. Responsibilities include active participation in case conferencing meetings, providing necessary data to maintain up-to-date By-Name-Lists (BNL), consistent use of common assessment protocols defined by the CoC, dedication of a VA resources (housing units and service slots) to eligible veterans referred through the CoC's coordinated entry process, and data sharing of veterans' information for purposes of coordinated entry assessment, prioritization and referral. Refer to the memo and check list (https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/VA-Participation-in-Coordinated-Entry-Implementation-Assessment-Checklist.pdf), published concurrently with the memo, for more details about CES roles, responsibilities and compliance expectations.

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Coordinated entry requires concerted effort and engaged participation from all system partners, including VA homeless programs. Although initially challenging, transitioning the crisis response system from a set of independent agencies, including VA, and providers making project-specific decisions to one that puts participants first and ensures standardization in processes and consistency in decision-making ultimately results in more efficient and effective housing and service outcomes for everyone.

SSVF Grantees are expected to be fully integrated into the Coordinated Entry planning, implementation and operations for each of the CoC's in which they provide services. SSVF grantees are also expected to work with the local CoC and any relevant VAMCs to support coordination and integration of VA homeless programs into the Coordinated Entry Process, as described in the VA CE Memo noted above.

In many communities, the need for housing resources often exceeds the availability of these resources. For this reason, dedicating VA resources to the community's overall CE system is important because it helps CoCs to understand and account for the total portfolio of housing interventions in the community. This allows CoCs to use more dynamic prioritization methodologies whereby those who are most vulnerable or who have the most intense needs are prioritized for finite permanent housing resources, including rapid rehousing for highly vulnerable Veterans. Many CoCs now recognize that in some cases, permanent supportive housing (PSH) may be the ideal intervention for a given household but where that resource is not immediately available, rapid rehousing should be tried knowing that if PSH becomes available and is still needed, the people with the highest acuity would continue to be prioritized. This ensures that the most vulnerable and high need households are prioritized for some type of housing intervention, even if that housing intervention is less than ideal.

I. Housing First

VA policy supports a ''Housing First'' approach in addressing and ending homelessness. Housing First establishes assistance to exit homelessness directly into permanent housing and promoting housing stability as the primary intervention in working with people experiencing homelessness. The Housing First approach is informed by research demonstrating that a homeless individual or household's first and primary need is to obtain stable housing. Other issues impacting the household's ability to maintain their housing can and should be addressed as housing is obtained. Research supports this approach as an effective means to end homelessness. See resources at:
https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/?page=/ssvf_university/research_library.

Under a Housing First approach, housing is not contingent on compliance with support services other than those required by the funding source for the program. Instead, participants must comply with a standard lease agreement and are provided with services and supports that are necessary to help them maintain their housing successfully. Housing First is a low-barrier intervention: there are no prerequisites such as employment, minimum income, completion of behavioral health treatment or evidence of sobriety. In a Housing First approach, supportive

services focus on assisting program participants to obtain and retain housing, and to prevent a near-term return to homelessness. Research demonstrates that programs utilizing a Housing First approach promote high housing retention rates, low rates of return to homelessness, and reductions in the use of crisis services and institutions.

VA expects all SSVF grantees to use a Housing First approach in their program design and services. In keeping with Housing First, grantees place particular emphasis on assisting their program participants to meet their responsibilities as tenants, including paying the rent and complying with a standard lease agreement. Towards this end, SSVF program case managers must encourage regular meetings with their clients, including home visits, in order to deliver individualized services and support that promote housing retention and participant driven goals.

J. Extremely Low Income

The VA created a separate category for extremely low income (ELI) participants to allow grantees the flexibility to provide extended temporary financial assistance for participants whose annual income does not exceed 30 percent of the area median income (AMI). The intent is to allow grantees to effectively serve participants with significant financial vulnerability and to provide extended temporary financial assistance (for specific time limits for temporary financial assistance, see Section VI.F.).

Notes:

1. Once a participant household is categorized as ELI, that household retains this designation until program exit, as long as the household continues to meet all other SSVF eligibility requirements. In other words, an ELI household remains in the ELI category even if income exceeds 30 percent AMI at the point of recertification.
2. A participant household that enrolls in SSVF with income that exceeds 30 percent AMI but does not exceed 50 percent of AMI may also experience a decrease in their income and become ELI. At the point of recertification, such households will be eligible to receive the more extensive SSVF support services allowable under the ELI designation. This determination would be made by the grantee based on its own budgetary flexibility.
3. It is also important to remember that, in keeping with regulations that apply to all SSVF participants, any ELI participant household whose income exceeds 50 percent of AMI at the point of recertification would be exited from SSVF.

K. Victims of Domestic Violence

Any household fleeing a domestic violence situation is considered literally homeless and therefore enrolled as a rapid re-housing household. A participant household experiencing domestic violence receives special consideration in SSVF with regards to supportive services. This is a consideration designed for participants fleeing a domestic violence situation mid-stream during their SSVF participation such that the original participant household breaks apart. Under this policy, the victim of domestic violence (whether or not the victim is the Veteran), if forming a new participant household, will have the “tolling period” for SSVF’s temporary financial assistance reset back to the beginning. The “tolling period” refers to the limited timeline of

months for paying temporary financial assistance within a 12-month or 2-year period (for details, see Section VI.F.). For these newly formed households, that timeline begins again at zero months. Note that under these circumstances a new participant household may be created even without a Veteran in it.

L. Returning Home

Returning Home Initiative offers homeless Veteran households the option of returning to their community of origin or to a community where they have available supports to facilitate housing placement. The initiative provides the Veteran family reunification opportunities and affordable permanent housing with the family or other social support in their community of origin. SSVF identifies a social support willing to provide housing or an affordable independent housing option awaiting Veterans, Prior to supporting any move, SSVF work with Veteran and receiving community to confirm that adequate supports exist in the community where placement is made. This includes SSVF provider and VAMC in the receiving community, if indicated.

SECTION II | PROGRAM OVERVIEW

M. Rapid Resolution

Rapid Resolution is an intervention designed to assist Veterans upon contact with the crisis response system to attempt to avoid a homeless episode, or immediately after entry into the emergency shelter system with the goal of rapidly exiting the Veteran from homelessness. When a Veteran reaches out for assistance with a housing crisis, practitioners start the process of engaging them in a conversation that explores alternatives to becoming or remaining homeless and any potential assistance needed to access those alternatives. Assistance can include supportive services to mediate with a landlord, resolve conflicts or concerns with a family member, or connect to support networks in other places, and limited financial assistance. Through active listening, staff learn about the person's housing crisis and what their support network looks like. The conversation can be a deep exploration of social network relationships, potential safe housing alternatives, and community resources. After a safe place to stay is identified, whether it is for a night, or a few nights, or a longer period of time, staff can then provide the Veteran with services to address the other needs they have.

SSVF introduced Rapid Resolution as a newly allowable intervention in 2018. Effective Rapid Resolution conversations require staff to be skilled at mediation, negotiation and conflict resolution as well as active listening and creative problem-solving. Starting in the summer of 2019 SSVF has provided train-the-trainer workshops in these skills to SSVF program staff. Grantees should assess their progress in training staff on the core skills needed for Rapid Resolution and identify affordable web-based and in-person trainings to support Rapid Resolution.

N. Shallow Subsidy Initiative

The SSVF Shallow Subsidy initiative provides rental assistance to very low-income and extremely low-income Veteran households who are enrolled in SSVF's Rapid Rehousing services or SSVF's Homeless Prevention services. It is likely that most participants will have already received rental assistance (this is not a requirement), but remain rent burdened and require the longer-term, shallow subsidy rental assistance to maintain permanent housing. Under the SSVF Shallow Subsidy initiative, designated SSVF grantees will provide rental assistance payments directly to landlords on behalf of the Veteran household for up to two years without the need for program recertification. SSVF staff will also offer light touch case management services to participants to assist Veteran families in maintaining their housing stability.

The VA designated counties eligible to use the Shallow Subsidy are available on the SSVF website.

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SECTION II | PROGRAM OVERVIEW

III. Renewal Process

If funding is available, VA will announce renewal opportunities in a NOFA. If funding is available for renewals, a grantee may submit an application for grant renewal in accordance with any requirements set forth in the NOFA. To apply for renewal of a supportive services grant, the grantee's program must remain substantially the same (otherwise, the grantee should submit a new application instead of a renewal application). VA will use the criteria and selection process described in 38 CFR 62.24 and 38 CFR 62.25 to evaluate and award supportive services grant renewals. Additional information concerning the renewal process will be provided in the NOFA.

SECTION III | RENEWAL PROCESS

A. Accreditation and Renewal Awards

Grantees receiving renewal awards who have had an ongoing SSVF program in operation for at least one year may be eligible for a 3-year award. Grantees meeting outcome goals defined by the VA and in substantial compliance with their grant agreements (defined by meeting their targets and having no outstanding corrective action plans) and who, in addition, receive a 3-year accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) in Employment and Community Services: Rapid Rehousing and Homeless Prevention standards or a 4-year accreditation from the Council on Accreditation (COA) in Housing Stabilization and Community Living Standards or a 3-year accreditation in The Joint Commission's Behavioral Health Care: Housing Support Services Standards, are eligible for a 3-year grant renewal pending funding availability. If awarded a multiple year renewal, grantees may be eligible for funding increases as defined in NOFAs that correspond to years two and three of their renewal funding. Note that the cost of accreditation for an SSVF program (not an organization) can be an allowable cost if expenses are incurred according to the terms described in the NOFA. Costs to SSVF should be allocable to the SSVF portion of the accreditation. The approved budget template includes a budget line item (BLI) for accreditation. Accreditation costs must be included in this line item.

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SECTION III | RENEWAL PROCESS

IV. Technical Assistance

A. Introduction

Per 38 CFR 62.73, technical assistance will be available as necessary to eligible entities to assist them in meeting the requirements of 38 CFR Part 62. The technical assistance provided is designed to help eligible entities apply for supportive services grants under the SSVF Program and administer, develop, and operate supportive services programs. Grantees may be required to attend virtual or in-person training events as designated by the SSVF Program Office.

B. Pre-Award Technical Assistance

Pre-award technical assistance will be provided to prospective applicants in the form of a webinar providing an overview of the NOFA and other information available on the SSVF Program website. There is also a general email available for interested applicants. The goals of these efforts are to raise public awareness of the SSVF Program, provide interested parties with information about the SSVF Program, and assist prospective applicants in developing and submitting thorough applications that meet the requirements, goals, and objectives of the SSVF Program. Information on how to obtain technical assistance can be found on the SSVF Program's website: http://www.va.gov/homeless/SSVF.asp.

C. Post-Award Technical Assistance

SSVF understands that Rapid Re-Housing and Prevention interventions continue to evolve. Changes in community needs and evidence supporting particular approaches to care makes it essential that a robust program of training is available to SSVF grantees and their staff. All grantees are offered access to such training, though both in-person events and virtual mediums. National and regional in-person training is supplemented by a series of national webinars and on-demand virtual training available through SSVF Website (found at www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf) or the Housing Skills Practice Center learning management system. Grantees are expected to use these opportunities to support the training of their staff and work with newly hired staff to ensure that an appropriate program of training and orientation is provided to help them become proficient in their work.

SECTION IV | TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

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SECTION IV | TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

V. Participant Eligibility

Each participant household's file must include documentation verifying that the participant meets SSVF Program eligibility requirements and specifying the participant's category of "occupying permanent housing." Grantees with insufficient case file documentation may be found out of compliance with SSVF Program regulations during a VA monitoring visit. Grantees must develop policies and procedures that ensure appropriate documentation is obtained and included in participants' files. VA encourages grantees to use this Program Guide to help them ensure appropriate and sufficient information is collected, documented, and maintained in participant case files to document program compliance.

A. SSVF Eligibility Requirements

As described in Program Guide Section II.B, to become a participant household under the SSVF Program, the following conditions must be met:

1. ***A member of a "Veteran family":*** Either (a) a Veteran; or (b) a member of a family in which the head of household, or the spouse of the head of household, is a Veteran. (Note: The head of household should be identified by the Veteran family.)

2. ***"Very low-income" Household:*** income does not exceed 50 percent of area median income. Unless VA announces otherwise in the NOFA, the median income for an area or community will be determined using the income limits most recently published by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for programs under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f), which can be found at: http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il.html.

3. ***"Occupying Permanent Housing":*** A very low-income Veteran family is considered to be occupying permanent housing if it falls into one of three categories:

   - (category 1) Is residing in permanent housing and at risk of becoming literally homeless but for grantee's assistance;
   - (category 2) Is literally homeless and at risk to remain in this situation but for grantee's assistance and scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days pending the location or development of housing suitable for permanent housing; or
   - (category 3) Is literally homeless after exiting permanent housing within the previous 90 days to seek other housing that is responsive to the very low-income Veteran family's needs and preferences.

Regarding the above references to literally homeless: for specifics as to what circumstances do and do not constitute literal homelessness, see Section I.C. definitions: Homeless, Literally. Grantees must ensure that literally homeless participants qualify under this definition.

SECTION V | PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

B. Determining Veteran Household Status Eligibility

As discussed above, eligible participants will be part of a "Veteran family," meaning that the person to be served is either (a) a Veteran; or (b) a member of a family in which the head of household, or the spouse of the head of household, is a Veteran.

1. Verifying Veteran Status

It is VA's expectation that SSVF grantees are able to make an eligibility determination and enroll Veteran families the same day they are screened. Prompt enrollment will reduce the significant risks to health and safety faced by homeless and at-risk Veteran families. The term "Veteran" for purposes of SSVF means a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, regardless of length of service, and who was discharged or released therefrom. Veteran excludes a person who received a dishonorable discharge from the Armed Forces or was discharged or dismissed from the Armed Forces by reason of the sentence of a general court-martial. The length of service restrictions under 38 U.S.C. 5303A do not apply.

A bad conduct discharge can result from a General court-martial or a Special court-martial. Anyone with a bad conduct discharge from a General court-martial is ineligible, anyone with a bad conduct discharge from a Special court-martial is eligible. If the person served has documented evidence that their BCD was from a special court martial then the person would be considered a Veteran for the purposes of SSVF. Otherwise, they would not be eligible for SSVF until the appropriate character of discharge has been established.

To prove a participant's Veteran status, grantees should obtain at least ONLY ONE of the following documents:

- SQUARES 2.0 Printout
- Veteran Health Administration (VHA) Veteran's Identity card
- VA Veterans Choice Card
- VA Photo ID Card -
- Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) Statement of Service (SOS)
- VISTA printout from VHA healthcare provider
- VA Hospital Inquiry System (HINQS)
- VBA award letter of service connected disability payment or non-service connected pension
- NA Form 13038
- DD Form 214 Certificate of Release Discharge from Active Duty

SQUARES 2.0 allows any SSVF grantee user of the HMIS Repository to instantaneously determine Veteran status. The system functions by sending the personal identifiers for an individual client record as an electronic query to the VA Department of Defense Identity Repository (VADIR). VADIR then uses its standard match logic to determine whether the particular individual has a matching record of military service. SQUARES 2.0 offers detailed discharge status for the majority of inquiries, allowing instant determination of program eligibility

SECTION V | PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

and status of VHA enrollment. Although SQUARES 2.0 cannot be used as a substitute for VHA enrollment, programs such as SSVF and GPD that do not require VHA enrollment may use SQUAREs 2.0 as documentation for purposes of determining eligibility and is included in the list of approved documents to determine SSVF eligibility. To review the features and watch a tutorial on how to use SQUARES, please go to:

www.va.gov/homeless/SQUARES

If such documents proving eligibility are not immediately available, an Affidavit of Veteran Status signed by the Veteran can be used to allow grantees to temporarily enroll Veterans who are Pending Verification of Veteran Status and initiate supportive services. However, temporary financial assistance will not be provided until the grantee/Veteran can obtain documentation proving Veteran status. For further guidance on Pending Verification of Veteran Status, see Exhibit D.

If the Veteran is not in possession of his or her DD Form 214, the grantee should assist the Veteran in submitting an SF-180, Request Pertaining to Military Records, to confirm the individual's status. Information on how to submit this form can be found on the National Archives website: http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/.

PLEASE NOTE THAT A DD214 IS NOT REQUIRED FOR ENROLLMENT OR CONTINUED SERVICES IF ONE OF THE ABOVE FORMS OF VERIFICATION ARE OBTAINED.

Additional Helpful Links

- Applications for Veterans Choice Card: http://www.va.gov/opa/choiceact/
  - Eligibility information provided via hotline
- E-benefits enrollment: https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/
  - Download documents
- Online application for VHA service: https://www.1010ez.med.va.gov/sec/vha/1010ez
  - Eligibility confirmation will be mailed to the Veteran
- DD214 online: http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/
  - Put "Expedite: Homeless Veteran" in the comments section
- DD214 telephone application: call 314-801-0800 to request same day service
  - Form will be mailed to the Veteran

The Department of Veterans Affairs utilizes several methods of Veteran eligibility verification:

- The Health Eligibility Center (HEC) supports VA's health care delivery system by providing centralized eligibility verification and enrollment processing services.
- Hospital Inquiry System (HINQS) is used by VA Medical Centers to query VBA's compensation and pension Benefits Delivery Network (BND) to secure information on Compensation and Pension (C&P) entitlements and eligibility.

SECTION V | PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

- Veteran Information Solution (VIS) is a web-based application that provides a consolidated view of comprehensive eligibility and benefits utilization data from across VBA.

To request verification through an existing VIS or HINQS user, grantees can call a designated staff member at the local VA medical center with VIS access. Some facilities work out a call process with the VHA registration staff. Grantees unfamiliar with either of these processes may contact their SSVF Point of Contact at the local VA Medical Center or their SSVF Regional Coordinator for assistance.

2. Verifying Veteran Household Status

The SSVF Program defines a Veteran family as “a Veteran who is a single person or a family in which the head of household, or the spouse of the head of household, is a Veteran.” Grantees should document head of household status in the form of self-declaration or other documents deemed appropriate to document household composition. As noted previously, a household is defined as "All persons who together present for services and identify themselves as being part of the same household." Self-declarations or intake worker observations are acceptable. (Note: Proof of family status is not required but may serve as proof of household status.)

SECTION V | PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

C. Determining Income Eligibility

The SSVF Program defines an eligible very low-income Veteran family as one whose annual income, as determined in accordance with 24 CFR 5.609, does not exceed 50 percent of the median income for an area or community. Unless VA announces otherwise in the NOFA, the median income for an area or community will be determined using the income limits most recently published by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for programs under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f). Grantees must ensure that they are using the most current of these HUD established income limits. Towards this end, grantees should develop a process for checking annually for updates to HUD’s income limits. Adjustments may be made to the required income level based on family size and other mitigating factors listed in the NOFA. The grantee must establish the size of the Veteran family’s household to verify that the Veteran family meets the income eligibility requirement for their household size.

1. Area Median Income (AMI)

As indicated in the SSVF regulations, to be eligible to receive any type of SSVF assistance, a Veteran family must have a gross annual income that does not exceed 50 percent of AMI, (which is considered “very low-income”). In their grant application, grantees may have indicated they were targeting Veterans with even lower incomes, such as 30 percent of AMI or below. AMI is based upon income data for the state or local jurisdiction in which a household resides, and is dependent on the size of the household (i.e., number of household members). The AMI for each state and community can be found at: http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il.html. Please note this data set is updated annually and grantees are required to use the most recent data

posted by HUD. HUD hosts a site which allows agencies the ability to be notified of data releases, such as new income limits, via email. The site is as follows: http://www.huduser.org/portal/subscribe/subscribe.html

2. Income Definition

The SSVF income definition contains income "inclusions" (types of income to be counted) and "exclusions" (types of income that are not to be counted) for SSVF purposes. Annual income means all included amounts that go to, or are on behalf of, a household member over a 12-month period, based on income currently received by the household. Note that annual income is assessed both at entry to SSVF and at recertification. The online Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook and Exhibit A of this guide contain the complete definition of annual income inclusions and exclusions as published in the regulations and Federal Register notices. Annual income means all amounts that are not specifically excluded by regulation.

The following types of income must be counted (inclusions) when calculating annual income for SSVF eligibility purposes (see Exhibit A for details):

- Earned Income—Wages, Salaries, etc. for any adult member of the household (note: wages that are garnished are included as earned income)
- Self-Employment/Business Income
- Interest & Dividend Income
- Pension/Retirement Income
- Unemployment & Disability Income (excluding lump sum payments)
- Social Security payments made to a child of the household
- TANF/Public Assistance, including the portion of the grant designated for child(ren)
- Alimony and Child Support Income
- Armed Forces Income
- Veteran Benefits Administration Service Connection & Non-service Connection Benefit
- The Post 911 GI Bill Subsistence Payment (Housing Stipend)
- Chapter 11 Transition Assistance

Note that *gross* income is used for the income calculations that are discussed below. However, there is one exception where net income is substituted for gross. This exception is when a household receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), or Veteran Benefit Administration income benefits was overpaid by their public benefit office and, to rectify the overpayment, is subsequently receiving a monthly check with a deduction to it. Under this circumstance, the SSVF grantee uses net income to assess eligibility. In all other cases, gross income is used as outlined below. Furthermore, it is worth noting, as the question frequently arises, that garnishments or payments by the SSVF participant household for child support or owed to the Internal Revenue Service will not reduce the calculation of gross income.

SECTION V | PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

The following types of income are NOT counted (exclusions) when calculating current gross income for SSVF eligibility purposes (see Exhibit A for details):

- Earned income of participant household members under age 18 years
- Inheritance and Insurance Income
- Medical Expense Reimbursements
- Income of Live-in Aides
- Student Financial Aid, including G.I. Bill Student Financial Aid
- Armed Forces Hostile Fire Pay
- Self-Sufficiency Program Income
- Other Income (i.e. temporary, non-recurring or sporadic income)
- Reparations
- Income from full-time students (excluding head of household)
- Foster Care Income
- Adoption Assistance Payments
- Deferred and Lump Sum Social Security & SSI payments
- Deferred and Lump Sum from VA Disability Compensation (Service Connected Benefits)
- Income Tax and Property Tax refunds
- Home Care Assistance
- Veteran Health Administration Compensated Work Therapy (CWT
- Chapter 31 Program Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Subsistence Payment
- VA Aid and Attendance Benefit
- Federal stimulus payments made in response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Other Federal Exclusions

For a detailed list with an explanation of these inclusions and exclusions, see Exhibit A of this Program Guide.

Some types of excluded income, such as tax refunds, could be counted by grantees to be household assets. Grantees are required to include in the calculation of annual income any interest or dividends earned on assets held by the family. For additional information on determining income from assets, please see next subsection b: “Determining Income from Assets” section.

3. Income Calculation

After determining and documenting specific sources of current income that must be included in the income calculation for each household, grantees then calculate the household’s (not just the Veteran’s) annual income.

a. Annualizing Wages and Periodic Payments

When calculating income based on hourly, weekly, or monthly payment information, add the gross amount earned in each pay period for which there is documentation and divide by the number of pay periods. This provides an average wage per payment period. Depending on pay

SECTION V | PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

periods used by the employer or the schedule of periodic payments, the following calculations convert the average wage into annual income:

- Hourly Wage multiplied by hours worked per week multiplied by 52 weeks
- Weekly Wage multiplied by 52 weeks
- Bi-Weekly (every other week) Wage multiplied by 26 bi-weekly periods
- Semi-Monthly Wage (twice a month) multiplied by 24 semi-monthly periods
- Monthly Wage multiplied by 12 months

Grantees may choose between the following two methods of calculating annual income:

- Calculating projected annual income by annualizing current income, **OR**
- Using information available to average *anticipated* income from all known sources when the sources are expected to change during the year.

For example, a Veteran works as a teacher's assistant nine months annually and receives $1,300 per month. During the summer recess, the Veteran works for the Parks and Recreation Department for $600 per month. Grantees may calculate the Veteran family's income using either of the following two methods:

- Calculate Annual Income Based on Current Income: $15,600 ($1,300 x 12 months). If recertification falls during summer recess, the grantee would recalculate the Veteran family's income during the summer months at a reduced annualized amount of $7,200 ($600 x 12 months).

- Calculate Annual Income Based on Average Experience:

$11,700	($1300 x 9 months)
+ 1,800	($ 600 x 3 months)
$13,500	

Using the first method requires documentation of only one source of income; under the second method, the Veteran family's intake file would include documentation of both sources of income. If a household's periodic benefits and/or period of employment are capped, grantees should not annualize benefits/pay beyond the maximum level of benefit/pay that can be received. For example, a person receives $100 of unemployment per week, but unemployment is capped at $4,000 per year. The person's annualized unemployment benefits should be calculated at $4,000, and not $100 * 52 = $5,200. Another example, the person is employed for a quarter and will receive $500/week. The person's annualized pay should be calculated at $6,000 and not $500 * 52 = $26,000.

Furthermore, to the extent that there is certainty about expected income, future income should be taken into account when determining whether a household has other financial resources. Remember, grantees are encouraged to assess all circumstances and document that the household would become homeless or remain homeless but for the SSVF assistance. As such, case managers should carefully evaluate the circumstances and probability of future income.

For example, while a seasonal worker may expect to earn income during an upcoming season, if s/he has no promise of future employment, the potential of future employment should not be counted as a resource. In contrast, if a school teacher has a promise of future employment (by way of a renewed employment contract), the potential of future employment should be accounted for in the assessment of other financial resources. This is not to say that the school teacher in the example would be automatically determined ineligible. Rather, grantees should determine when the employment opportunity will take effect (i.e. when the income will be earned) and create financial assistance plans that account for an eligible Veteran family's financial resources.

Documentation as described in Exhibit B, of a Veteran family's annual income and the percent of AMI that income represents (not to exceed the SSVF maximum of 50 percent of AMI) must be maintained in the participant's file as documentation of eligibility.

b. Determining Income from Assets

Grantees are required to include in the calculation of annual income any interest or dividends earned on assets held by the family. When net family assets are $5,000 or less, use the actual income from assets. When family assets are more than $5,000, use the greater of:

- Actual income from assets; or
- A percentage of the value of such assets based upon the current passbook savings rate as established by HUD.[3] This is called imputed income from assets.

c. Summary of Asset Inclusions and Exclusions

Asset Inclusions	Asset Exclusions
A. Amounts in savings and checking accounts	1. Necessary personal property, except as noted in Inclusion I.
B. Stocks, bonds, savings certificates, money market funds and other investment accounts	2. Interest in Indian trust lands.
C. Equity in real property or other capital investments. Equity is the estimated current market value of the asset less the unpaid balance on all loans secured by the assets *and* reasonable costs (such as broker fees) that would be incurred in selling the assets.	3. Assets that are part of an active business or farming operation.

[3]Please contact your HUD field office in order to determine the applicable passbook savings rate. See http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=DOC_11847.pdf for more information.

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Asset Inclusions	Asset Exclusions
D. The cash value of trusts that may be withdrawn by the family.	4. NOTE: Rental properties are considered personal assets held as an investment rather than business assets unless real estate is the applicant's / tenant's main occupation.
E. IRA, Keogh and similar retirement savings, even though withdrawal would result in a penalty.	5. Assets not controlled by or accessible to the family and which provide no income for the family.
F. Some contributions to company retirement/ pension funds.	6. Vehicles especially equipped for the disabled.
G. Assets, which although owned by more than one person, allow unrestricted access by the applicant.	7. Equity in owner-occupied cooperatives and manufactured homes in which the family lives.
H. Lump sum receipts such as inheritances, capital gains, lottery winnings, insurance settlements, and other claims.	
I. Personal property held as an investment such as gems, jewelry, coin collections, antique cars, etc.	
J. Cash value of life insurance policies.	
K. Assets disposed of for less than fair market value during the two years preceding certification or recertification.	

NOTE: A key factor in whether or not to include an asset in the calculation of annual income is whether any member of the family has access to the asset.

Assets Calculation Example

Compare Actual Income from Assets to Imputed Income from Assets

Applicant has $7,900 in assets. (Assume passbook rate of 3.5 percent.)

Applicant actual income from assets is paid at 1.5% simple interest annually = $119.

Assets:	$ 7,900
HUD-determined passbook rate	x .035
Imputed income from assets	$ 277

Compare actual interest of $119 to imputed interest of $277. The actual interest of $277 (the greater of the two) will be used as income from assets in the calculation of annual income.

SECTION V | PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

d. Additional Guidance on Calculating the Value of Assets and Income from Assets

Contributions to Company Retirement/Pension Funds

While a participant is employed, count as an asset only amounts the participant could withdraw from a company retirement or pension fund without retiring or terminating employment.
After retirement or termination of employment, count as an asset any amount the employee elects to receive as a lump sum from the company retirement/pension fund.
Include in annual income any retirement benefits received through periodic payments.
In order to correctly include or exclude as assets any amount now held in retirement/pension funds for employed persons, the grantee must know whether the money is accessible before retirement.

Equity in Real Property

Real property includes land or real estate owned by the participant or participant household. Equity is the portion of the market value of the asset which is owned by the participant (the amount which would be available to the household if the property were to be sold). It is equal to the market value less any mortgage or loans secured against the property (which must be paid off upon sale of the property).

Calculate equity in real property as follows:

Market Value - Loan (Mortgage) = Equity

Calculate the cash value of real property as follows:

Equity - Expense to Convert to Cash = Cash Value

Expenses to convert to cash may include costs that would be paid to liquidate the asset, such as sales commissions, settlement costs, and transfer taxes.

Assets Disposed of for Less Than Fair Market Value

At initial certification or reexamination, grantees must ask whether a household has disposed of an asset for less than its market value within the past two years. If the family has, the grantee must determine the difference between the cash value of the asset at time of sale or other disposal and the actual payment received of for the asset.

Some of the types of assets that must be considered include cash, real property, stocks, bonds, and certificates of deposit. They must be counted if the household gave them away or sold them for less than the market value. *Note: generally, assets disposed of as a result of a divorce, separation, foreclosure, or bankruptcy are not considered assets disposed of for less than fair market value.*

VA does not specify a minimum threshold for counting assets disposed of for less than fair market value. A grantee may establish a threshold that will enable it to ignore small amounts such as charitable contributions. (HUD Handbook 4350.3, for multifamily subsidized housing,

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uses $1,000 as a threshold.) Verification of assets disposed of for less than fair market value is generally done by participant certification. Grantees need verify only those certifications that warrant documentation.

Valuing Assets

Because of the requirement to include the greater of the actual interest/dividend income earned or a percentage based upon a HUD published passbook rate when assets are greater than $5,000, the value of assets may affect the family's annual income.

Grantees must determine the market value of the asset and then calculate the cash value by subtracting the estimated expense required were the participant to convert the asset to cash.

Expenses to convert to cash include costs such as:

- Penalties for premature withdrawal (e.g., the 10% penalty paid when a retirement account is closed prior to retirement age, or a certificate of deposit is withdrawn prior to maturity);
- Broker and legal fees (e.g., a percentage of the value of the asset incurred in the sale of stocks, bonds, real estate, etc.); and
- Settlement costs incurred in real estate transactions (e.g. the typical percentage of sales price for settlement in the locality).

Note: Grantees must not require participants to dispose of assets in order to determine the costs to convert to cash. These amounts simply reflect a realistic estimate of costs, and by deducting them from the market value of the asset, the imputed income from the asset is based on an amount the participant would have in hand if they converted their assets to cash.

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Federal Tax Refunds Received within the Previous 12 Months

If Federal tax refunds received within the previous 12 months make up part of a household's cash assets, that part of the household's cash assets must not be counted among the household's financial resources when determining the household's eligibility or need for assistance under SSVF. See "Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010," Pub. L. No. 111-312, § 728, 124 Stat. 3296, 3317.

For example, if a household applying for SSVF assistance in July 2011 has $2,000 in total assets that includes a $500 federal income tax refund received in April 2011, no more than $1,500 of the household's total assets may be considered when determining whether the household has the financial resources and support networks needed to obtain immediate housing or remain in its existing housing or when determining the amount or type of assistance that household needs.

This exclusion does not apply to Federal tax refunds received prior to the previous 12 months or state tax refunds. If those tax refunds make up part of a household's cash assets, they are treated the same as the other cash assets.

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D. Determining Housing Status Eligibility

As with income eligibility, all participants applying for SSVF assistance must undergo a housing status eligibility determination. The results must be documented in the case file. This section provides detailed information on housing status eligibility.

1. Category 1 Eligibility (Homelessness Prevention)

Homelessness prevention assistance is intended for eligible Veteran families who are imminently at-risk of becoming literally homeless (e.g., entering an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation) ***but for*** SSVF assistance. Note that this includes Veteran families who may be living in a doubled-up housing situation and who are also imminently at risk of becoming literally homeless. Targeting SSVF assistance in this manner helps ensure limited SSVF resources are directed to Veteran families who have no other housing options and resources and there are no other community resources available to prevent literal homelessness.

To qualify under **Category 1**, a Veteran family must be "residing in permanent housing." This encompasses many different housing situations, including where a Veteran family is residing in (i) a leased unit, (ii) a house with a mortgage, (iii) a unit shared with others (i.e. doubled-up), or (iv) a hotel or motel not paid for by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals or by charitable organizations.

Veteran families who are applying for SSVF assistance must be assessed for

1) Eligibility (Stage 1), and

2) Targeting (Stage 2) using the VA's "SSVF Homelessness Prevention Screening Form"

Apart from meeting SSVF eligibility requirements for Veteran status and income, applicant families must minimally meet the following Stage 1 eligibility criteria to receive SSVF homelessness prevention assistance:

A. Be facing the imminent loss of their current primary nighttime residence (housing an individual or family owns, rents, or lives in with or without paying rent; housing shared with others; and rooms in hotels or motels paid for by the individual or family) within 30 days or less of applying for SSVF homelessness prevention assistance
B. Be at risk of becoming literally homeless but for SSVF assistance, meaning the Veteran family:
   - Has no other residence; AND
   - Has no resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, immediately available to prevent them from becoming literally homeless.

A Veteran family applying for homelessness prevention assistance must also be assessed and prioritized using VA targeting criteria included in "Stage 2" of the VA's "Homelessness Prevention Screening Form", Grantees must notify the VA, when the targeting score is changed and provide explanation of how this was determined within their community. Notification of Threshold score are submitted through the SSVF Grants Management System. Such changes should also be discussed with community stakeholders as part of the ongoing community planning.

Only those Veteran household who meet both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the 'Homelessness Prevention Screening Form' may be offered Temporary Financial Assistance; however, TFA does not always need to be offered to all households meeting these thresholds.

Veteran households who meet Stage 1 eligibility requirements but do not score at or above the established targeting threshold score should be identified as "Does Not Meet Targeting Threshold" in Stage 2. These households may receive only "Service Directed Housing Interventions (SDHI)" which do not include TFA. SDHI offers any or all of the supportive services available under SSVF, including outreach, case management, assistance with housing referrals or landlord interventions, legal assistance, and/or referrals for VA, public and community benefits and resources. These households receiving SDHI should be enrolled in the SSVF program and tracked within HMIS.

NOTE: Veteran households who are assessed and determined to be eligible for SSVF's Rapid Resolution services are exempt from Homeless Prevention screening criteria (Stage 2). For more information about Rapid Resolution grantees should contact their Regional Coordinator.

Grantees may initially provide SDHI to eligible Veteran families as part of a progressive engagement approach, whether or not they are allowed to receive SSVF TFA. While it may be

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that the initial service plan does not include TFA, the housing plan can evolve to include TFA at a later time once it is clear that SSVF TFA is necessary and the Veteran family meets SSVF criteria.

For further guidance regarding homelessness prevention screening and targeting thresholds please see Exhibit E of this Program Guide.

Those Veteran families that qualify under **Category 1** may require assistance to help them remain in their existing permanent housing or identify new housing that will better meet their needs and be more sustainable. For example, the Veteran family may imminently lose their housing and become literally homeless if rent arrears are not paid, and the grantee may assist that Veteran family to pay the arrears and develop a housing stability plan that will reasonably result in the Veteran family being able to afford the rent for that unit in the future. Alternatively, if that same Veteran family would not reasonably be able to afford that unit in the future, the grantee may assist the Veteran family to locate an alternate housing arrangement that is sustainable for the Veteran family.

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2. Categories 2 and 3 Eligibility (Rapid Re-Housing)

SSVF's rapid re-housing assistance is intended for eligible Veteran families who are literally homeless as per definition bulleted below. Persons qualifying as literally homeless include persons who at the time of application or reassessment lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including Veteran families who are:

- Staying in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground; **OR**
- Staying in a supervised publicly- or privately-operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals); **OR**
- Exiting an institution where s/he resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution: **OR**
- Are fleeing or attempting to flee a domestic violence situation

To qualify under **Category 2**, the Veteran family must ALSO be:

- Scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days pending the location or development of suitable permanent housing.
- Not otherwise be eligible under Category 1.

To qualify under **Category 3**, a Veteran family must also:

- Have exited from permanent housing in the last 90 days to seek other housing that is responsive to the Veteran family's needs and preferences; **AND**
- Not otherwise be eligible under Category 1.

E. Recertification of Eligibility

In order to ensure that SSVF programs fully evaluate participants' housing barriers, housing situation and eligibility for services, SSVF requires recertification at least once every 90 days. The one exception to this requirement is for those Veteran families receiving a Shallow Subsidy described in 38 CFR Part 62.34(a)(8) who are recertified once every two years. While the intent of SSVF is to provide a short-term intervention, it is acceptable and common for SSVF grantees to provide lengths of service that are either shorter or longer than three months. Determination of length and amount of assistance is based on a progressive assistance approach that requires ongoing assessment, evaluation and housing planning to overcome each Veteran household's barriers to obtaining and/or retaining permanent housing. A simple recertification step is required to determine whether the household is ready to exit the program or will require continued provision of services.

Grantees close out those cases where participants are assessed as no longer requiring or qualifying for SSVF assistance. Grantees recertify only those participant households that are both eligible for (see reassessment areas below) and in need of services to obtain or retain housing (see "But For" eligibility in 1.c. below). The recertification requirement applies to all participants regardless if temporary financial assistance is offered.

Note that, in situations where there is a break in assistance (e.g., the participant receives two months of assistance, is exited from the program, and later re-applies for assistance), the household must be reevaluated as if they were going through the initial certification process rather than a recertification.

1. Reassessment Areas

At recertification, the following areas should be reassessed by grantees:

a. **<u>Income Eligibility:</u>** At recertification, the participant's income must still not exceed 50 percent AMI. Given that the household's circumstances may have changed in the intervening months, grantees must recalculate and document household income as they did during the initial certification. If a household's income exceeds 50 percent AMI at the time it is reassessed, that household is no longer eligible for SSVF assistance.

b. **<u>Housing Status:</u>** At recertification, the participant's initial SSVF housing status (Category 1, 2, or 3) is simply carried over from their initial certification, *regardless of changes that have transpired since then*. For example, a participant enrolled as Category 2 upon initial certification will remain in this category at every recertification interval thereafter.

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c. **Assessing Continuing Need for Services:** At recertification, participants must still require SSVF services to reasonably assure the participant's housing stability. This means SSVF staff must again assess and document whether the participant, absent the help of SSVF, continues to lack the financial resources and support networks to either obtain new housing or remain in housing.

d. **Confirmation of Veteran Family Status:** At recertification, the grantee must confirm whether the participant remains part of a Veteran family. If the Veteran becomes absent from a household or dies while other members of the Veteran family are receiving supportive services, then services may continue to the remaining family members for a grace period established by the grantee. The grace period cannot exceed 1 year from the date of absence or death of the Veteran, and all other requirements for eligibility remain the same. The grantee is required to notify the Veteran's family member(s) of the duration of the grace period.

2. Adjusting Assistance at Reassessment

As explained above, the appropriate level of supportive services and temporary financial assistance, if given, should be based on a participant's specific housing barriers. During each reassessment, it is important for program staff to consider if circumstances have changed and how much assistance a household currently needs for housing stability. The intensity or duration of services or financial assistance can then be adjusted to be greater or less than expected at an earlier (re)assessment.

If a participant becomes ineligible to receive supportive services with SSVF funds during the recertification process, the grantee is required to provide the participant with information on other available programs or resources.

Each person who conducts a reassessment and eligibility screening should complete an *SSVF Staff Recertification of Eligibility for SSVF Assistance, for every participant case file.*

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F. Program Exits

The goal of the SSVF Program is to promote housing stability among very low-income Veteran families who reside in or are transitioning to permanent housing. VA understands that every household exit is different; however, SSVF grantees should strive to ensure that households being exited from SSVF into permanent housing are stable and have the resources/supports to sustain housing, at least in the near term. When it is determined that a participant household will soon be exiting SSVF, the grantee should review the final housing stability plan goals with the participant, review a final budget, review housing counseling elements such as lease requirements and home maintenance which contribute to housing stability, and make any last referrals to community resources. Grantees must utilize the SSVF Program Exit Checklist to ensure the appropriate exit steps have been carried out once it is determined a household is going to be exited. For Veterans who may be discharged for other reasons (e.g. reunited with family, jail, relocated, etc.), the grantee should develop internal policies and procedures for

exiting those households. In particular, the program must utilize the SSVF Program Exit Checklist and have clear expectations that staff will make numerous attempts, via various methods, to contact a person who has stopped responding to program requests to meet with the case manager. See "Releasing Participants from Program" under Program Operations for more information.

G. Case File Documentation Requirements

Grantees are responsible for maintaining case files for each participant household. This information must also be reflected in HMIS uploads where appropriate HMIS fields exist to capture this data. During the scheduled audit, case files will be inspected for the following forms:

	Homelessness Prevention	Rapid Re-Housing
Grantee Designed Forms	√	√
1. Intake Screening	√	√
2. Housing Stability Plan	√	√
3. Release(s) of Information	√	√
4. HMIS Release of Information	√	√
5. Grievance Procedure with Participant Signature	√	√
6. Case Notes	√	√
7. Program Agreement	√	√
Required SSVF Forms – Download from the SSVF website or find in Forms section		
1. SSVF Homelessness Prevention Screening Form	√	
2. Staff Certification of Eligibility for SSVF	√	
3. Critical Incident Report	as needed	
Official* SSVF Forms – Download recommended format from SSVF website or find in Forms		
1. Staff Recertification of Continued Assistance	as needed	
2. Pending Verification of Veteran Status	as needed	
3. Income Verification Template OR Self-declaration of Income**	√	√
4. Asset Income Calculation Worksheet	√	√
5. Literally Homeless Certification Template OR Domestic Violence Certification Form OR Self-declaration of Literal Homelessness**		√
6. Rent Reasonableness Checklist	√	√
7. Housing Habitability Standards	Required for new (different) units	
8. Emergency Housing Assistance Verification	As needed	
9. Exit Checklist	Required	

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* "Official" SSVF forms are recommended for SSVF grantees to use to fulfill requirements. However, grantees may create a form of their own design to fit the same purpose.
** Self-declaration formats are only to be used when third-party documentation cannot be obtained.

1. Eligibility Documentation Standards

Grantees are responsible for verifying and documenting the eligibility of all Veteran families prior to providing SSVF assistance. They are also responsible for maintaining this documentation in the SSVF participant case file once approved for assistance. Grantees with insufficient case file documentation may be found out of compliance with SSVF program regulations during VA monitoring. It is important for grantees to develop local policies and procedures to ensure appropriate documentation is obtained and included in SSVF participants' files.

For purposes of SSVF, VA allows various types of documentation, ranging from third–party written verification to participant self-declaration. Minimum acceptable types of documentation vary depending on the type of income or particular housing status and circumstance being documented. See Exhibit B for detailed documentation standards. General documentation standards, ***in order of preference***, are as follows:

a. **Written Third Party** — Verification in writing from a third party (e.g. individual employer, Social Security Administration, welfare office, emergency shelter provider, etc.) either directly to SSVF staff or via the Veteran family is most preferred. Third party verification of income, such as a deposit slip for a paycheck, might show income after deductions have been made; grantees must document gross income, before any deductions. Written third-party documentation may include completion of a standardized form, such as a verification of income statement.

b. **Oral Third Party** — Verification from a third party (e.g. individual employer, Social Security Administration, Welfare Office, etc.) provided over the telephone or in-person directly to SSVF staff who, in turn, create a written record in the case file. Oral third party verification is acceptable only if written third party verification cannot be obtained in time to resolve the housing crisis. SSVF staff must document reasons why third party written verification could not be obtained in the SSVF participant file.

c. **Participant Self-Declaration** — An affidavit of income and/or housing status as reported by the household is allowable but is only acceptable if written or verbal third party verification cannot be obtained. Self-declaration of housing status (e.g., eviction) should be rare. SSVF staff must document reasons why third party written, or oral verification could not be obtained in the SSVF participant file.

VA encourages grantees to carefully review what documentation is included in participant case files through periodic monitoring and be sure it is sufficient to document that the household meets all eligibility criteria. Remember, determining eligibility can be a multi-level process. Veteran families must meet ALL criteria and evidence of this must be present in the case file.

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2. SSVF Staff Certification of Eligibility for SSVF Assistance

The Staff Certification of Eligibility for SSVF Assistance Form should be maintained in each participant's file and is subject to review by VA. This form should be completed for each household deemed eligible for SSVF assistance. The form should be completed and signed by both the person determining eligibility and his or her supervisor for all households. While this form should be completed at intake, a Staff Recertification of Continued Assistance Form should be completed at the time of recertification.

3. Determining Acceptable Level of Documentation

VA expects that all grantees will make a conscientious and reasonable effort to use the highest documentation standard possible. Detailed tables outlining all acceptable forms of homelessness and income documentation are included in Exhibit B of this Program Guide and on the SSVF website.

To determine the highest documentation standard that is reasonable, each SSVF grantee should review their own existing resources (i.e., funding, capacity, pre-existing income verification process for other programs). Some grantees already utilize a third-party verification process for other funders that could be reasonably incorporated into the SSVF eligibility determination and documentation process. All grantees should attempt to meet the highest documentation standard possible within the agency resources.

Establishing a reasonable documentation standard also depends on the type of service provided. For example, the highest level of income documentation for one-time or emergency assistance may not be reasonable given the urgency of the participant's housing crisis and/or short-term nature of the assistance. It would not be reasonable to delay SSVF assistance if third party documentation cannot be obtained in time to allow assistance to be provided and literal homelessness averted. Rental assistance over multiple months and/or other ongoing assistance (i.e. case management) allows time to obtain a higher standard of documentation. The SSVF grantee is encouraged to provide a brief written description of efforts to obtain third-party documentation in the participant case file (e.g., in case notes, participant assessment form, or participant self-declaration).

The income and housing status documentation tables in Exhibit B of this Program Guide outline the minimum income documentation standards. While the highest level of documentation may not be possible or desirable in all cases, SSVF staff must clearly describe in participant case files each instance when a documentation standard is used that is lower than the most preferred, third-party standard, per the tables in Exhibit B of this Program Guide. This may be done as part of the client assessment or as part of other case file documentation (e.g., in case notes, on income verification form).

Grantees should note that ***self-declaration of housing status*** for participants who are at-risk of losing housing should be used ONLY in very limited circumstances. VA recognizes there may be some unusual cases where a third party is not able to provide documentation that a participant is at-risk of losing housing (e.g., host family refuses to provide). In these rare cases,

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grantees should clearly document the situation in the case file including all attempts to obtain verification of housing status in writing or orally. Efforts to obtain third-party documentation (written and oral), including the circumstances describing why third-party documentation was not received, must be clearly documented in the case file. Use of self-certification documentation without a written description of due diligence efforts to obtain third-party documentation in the case file may result in non-compliance with the SSVF Program.

4. Timeliness of Income Documentation

The definition of income for the SSVF program reflects a Veteran family's annual income at the time of application. Accordingly, documents and information collected to verify income should be recent and current at time of application for SSVF assistance.

5. Documenting Domestic Violence

As discussed earlier, for all participant households newly created under circumstances of domestic violence, SSVF resets the tolling period for receiving temporary financial assistance. For participants for whom this policy applies, grantees must certify a participant's domestic violence situation using the SSVF Domestic Violence Certification Form. Note that this form only requires third party verification, from a social worker or legal service provider for example, in cases where performing this due diligence does not jeopardize the safety of household members. Where safety might be jeopardized, this form allows participants to provide a self-certification as to their circumstances.

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VI. Supportive Services

A. Introduction

The primary aim of the supportive services of the SSVF Program is to help Veteran families who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness quickly regain stability in permanent housing after experiencing a housing crisis and/or homelessness. Grantees must use SSVF supportive services grant funds to provide supportive services to very low-income Veteran families that fall within one of the three categories of occupying permanent housing. Grantees will assist participant households by providing a range of supportive services designed to resolve the immediate crisis and promote housing stability. Grantees are required to provide the following supportive services:

- Outreach services
- Case management services
- Assistance in obtaining VA benefits
- Assistance in obtaining and coordinating other public benefits available in the grantee's area or community
- Temporary financial assistance

B. Outreach

1. Description of Services

Performing outreach is a critical component of grantees' programs. Outreach services must be customized to the target populations being served by the grantee (i.e., a plan to target very low-income Veteran families, who are literally homeless, or at imminent risk of becoming homelessness). Outreach plans also depend upon the area or community in which supportive services will be provided (e.g., urban vs. rural) and the available resources in those areas or communities. Grantee outreach should be comprehensive and targeted to all communities and CoCs listed in their resolution and ensure that historically underserved populations, such as persons of color, are included in targeting considerations. Grantees should maintain documentation of where outreach is conducted and how often it takes place. There are two parts to the provision of outreach services: identifying very low-income Veteran families and screening them to determine eligibility for supportive services provided by a grantee. Grantees should work with other SSVF grantees in their geography and other local CoC stakeholders to ensure outreach is coordinated and consistent with the CoCs overall outreach and coordinated entry policies. SSVF Grantees are expected to participate in planning, implementation and operation of the local CoC's Coordinated Entry (CE) process (which should account for SSVF and VA homeless programs in general) for Veterans and should align all outreach and referral activities, to the extent possible, with the local CE Policies and Procedures. See VA Homeless Program Expectations for Participation in Coordinated Entry section for more information.

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2. Identifying Veteran Families

Effective outreach should ensure that supportive services are provided to very low-income Veteran families who are "most in need" and who would otherwise be difficult to locate or serve. As part of providing outreach, grantees should:

- Develop relationships with local social services and public benefit agencies, shelters, and faith-based and community-based organizations serving low-income, at-risk, and homeless Veteran families;
- Develop relationships with local VA facilities, including Vet Centers and Veterans Benefit Administration (VBA) offices;
- Host local informational events; and
- Participate in Stand Down (or similar) events.

Maintaining contact with local organizations who serve Veterans will help grantees to identify additional participants. Such organizations are able to provide referrals, which will simplify the process of recruiting new participants to the grantee's program. The grantee should leverage the following sources to identify very low-income Veteran families in the area:

- Local VA facilities, including VBA Regional Offices and Vet Centers;
- Grant and Per Diem Programs (GPD);
- CHALENG network;
- Emergency shelters;
- Existing supportive housing programs;
- Department of Defense (DoD) Resources (e.g., Transition Assistance Program);
- VA Medical Center Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) / Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)/ Operation New Dawn (OND) Care Management Teams;
- State agencies;
- Local government; and
- Community agencies serving low-income populations, including but not limited to:
    - Board of Education (assistance in identifying children who have been absent from school);
    - Churches and other places of worship;
    - Domestic violence agencies (See Exhibit F for guidance on entering DV households into HMIS);
    - Groups assisting people in foreclosure;
    - Energy assistance agencies;
    - Housing courts;
    - Landlords;
    - Legal aid organizations;
    - Public Housing Authorities;
    - Rental agencies;
    - Food/clothing shelters; hot meals programs;
    - Day/Temporary labor programs;

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- Detoxification programs;
- Hospitals that offer uncompensated care; and
- Welfare offices.

3. Eligibility Screening and Evaluation

It is the expectation that SSVF grantees can screen and enroll eligible Veteran households on the same day they request services. Screening for eligibility must occur prior to the intake process. Grantees should develop screening tools to assist them in (a) confirming a very low-income Veteran family's eligibility for supportive services and (b) prioritizing those families in the greatest need. Grantees should develop written policies and procedures specific to their own program to clearly outline how they conduct screening of potential participant households and how program eligibility is determined and by whom.

It is important that grantees are able to quickly screen, assess, and assist the Veteran family as they are likely in crisis. Delays that occur between the first outreach encounter and service delivery can result in missed opportunities to mitigate the crisis or the Veteran may no longer be easily located. Grantees must also evaluate whether eligible participants will be best served by the SSVF Program rather than other available homeless assistance in the community. Note that an SSVF Program is one intervention available within a spectrum of care supported by VA and non-VA partners. Using the guiding principle of providing "the right service, at the right time, using the right amount of assistance," grantees should always assess if other interventions - whether less intensive or more - may better serve the Veteran being screened.

In screening Veteran families for homelessness prevention assistance, grantees must use VA's Homelessness Prevention Screening Form (see Exhibit E for instructions) to assist in identifying and then prioritizing those families who will imminently be literally homeless. This required SSVF form also assists in documenting the eligibility of persons applying for SSVF homelessness prevention assistance. This screening form should be completed by SSVF grantee staff using information obtained from the head of household. Screening forms should be supported by additional assessment and documentation of the eligibility conditions and targeting factors indicated. All screening forms should be signed and dated by the authorized SSVF staff person completing the form and their supervisor.

Grantee screening methods and targeting criteria should be consistent with and coordinated with the local CoC's Coordinated Entry policies.

For example, a CoC's coordinated entry policy may assign priority status to eligible Veteran families earning less than 30% area median income, chronically homeless and formerly chronically homeless Veteran families, and/or Veterans with one or more dependents. Programs should not screen out households based on lack of income, criminal history, or other perceived housing barriers.
Note that prioritization is only necessary to the extent that a grantee has insufficient funds to assist all Veterans in need of rapid re-housing services. Otherwise, assessments should help

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inform the level or duration of assistance only, and not dictate whether a household can be served.

Grantees should establish a file for each incoming participant that contains completed, signed and dated screening forms; documentation confirming the participant's eligibility for the SSVF Program; and an assignment for the participant to one of the SSVF Categories of Occupying Permanent Housing.

a. Participant Eligibility Verification and Documentation

Grantees are required to serve very low-income Veteran families occupying permanent housing as defined in 38 CFR 62.2 and 38 CFR 62.11(a). Staff should be familiar with SSVF Program eligibility requirements in order to determine a very low-income Veteran family's eligibility. See Section V of this Program Guide for detailed eligibility determination and documentation guidance.

b. New Participant Health Screening (Physical and Mental)

Some people experiencing a housing crisis or homelessness have acute or chronic health problems which may not have received medical attention. By coordinating the provision of health screenings of new participant households, grantees assist VA in ensuring the health and well-being of very low-income Veteran families. Although grantees do not provide health screenings directly, SSVF grantees do refer all new SSVF participants for health screenings. With participant agreement and consent, grantees are encouraged, to coordinate these screenings at intake. For the Veteran, this may mean connecting the Veteran to the local VA facility to ensure s/he receives medical care. For the Veteran's family members, this may mean identifying local community health resources that can assist non-Veteran household members. Screenings should assess, as appropriate, both the mental health and the general physical well-being of new participants. It is important to note that SSVF grant funds cannot be used to directly perform any indicated medical or psycho-social assessments and screenings. (If a grantee wishes to perform these services directly, the grantee must utilize an alternative funding source.)

c. Referral When Sufficient Resources are not Available

When there are not sufficient resources to accommodate additional participants at a given time, grantees should make efforts to refer eligible Veteran families to other programs run by VA and/or public or private entities that will provide the assistance they require. Grantees should have established relationships with local VA and other local homeless assistance and homelessness prevention programs to facilitate such referrals. Assistance from the VA can also be obtained by contacting the VA National Call Center at 877-424-3838.

d. Referral of Ineligible Veteran Families

If grantees encounter Veteran families who do not meet the eligibility requirements of the SSVF Program, they should make efforts to refer such Veteran families to another program that will provide them with the assistance and services they require. Veteran households who do not meet the eligibility requirements of the SSVF Program should be referred to other resources that

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will provide them with the assistance and services they require. Grantees are required to inform the Veteran household as to the reasons they were found ineligible, recommend alternative services to meet the household's needs and notify any applicable referral source a Veteran elects to contact. Grantees should inform the household of the agency's grievance policy should the determination be disputed. Staff should be familiar with area resources so that appropriate referrals can be made. Grantees should track these ineligible households internally identifying the reason they were found ineligible and where they were referred. Grantees will be asked to report on screened but not enrolled households, in the Quarterly Certification.

4. Eligible Expenses for Outreach

Outreach activities and costs are typically made up of direct outreach staff time. However, SSVF may pay for SSVF marketing materials, reference on page 84, to enhance conventional staff-driven outreach provided that all of the following terms are met before incurring such costs:

- Traditional staff-driven methods of outreach were tried but target numbers are still unmet.
- An assessment was performed to ensure chosen marketing method will be effective.
- A comparison was made between effectiveness of staff outreach versus marketing.
- Care was taken to market only the SSVF program itself and not the sponsoring agency.
- Marketing was designed to ensure effectiveness in connecting Veterans to SSVF
- Participation in outreach consortium/coordination driven by COC wide process. SSVF providers must be billed for the same type of services to the COC so that it meets the definition of being equitable and reasonable.

5. Housing Partnerships and Landlord Relationships

Developing and maintaining strong housing partnerships is key to a successful SSVF Program. Housing partners include private landlords, property management companies, public housing authorities, developers, and other entities that own or operate rental units. Housing units are considered broadly to encompass the private rental market, public subsidized housing, CoC Program housing, properties with low income or other tax credits, and local/state housing operating for the general public and/or targeted to relevant subpopulations, among others. Grantees should have written policies and procedures for housing partner recruitment and retention to both identify new housing opportunities for Veteran families and to provide support to landlords and tenants after move in. These policies should be part of a community-wide discussion and plan related to housing partnerships and how housing opportunities are targeted in the community. Policies should be consistent with Coordinated Entry procedures and other participating agencies whenever possible. Grantees should engage in proactive, persistent outreach activities that encourage landlords and community partners to learn about SSVF and work with the program. Through understanding the goals and the landlord-tenant supports offered by the program, some private landlords and property managers may lower tenant screening criteria and take a risk on participants who may have past evictions, credit issues, or other barriers to permanent housing.

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C. Case Management Services

1. Description of Services

To effectively assist participant households to obtain and retain permanent housing, grantees must provide Housing First, housing-focused case management services. SSVF is a crisis response program. The household is experiencing a specific crisis—the loss or imminent loss of their housing – and resolving that crisis is the goal of SSVF grantees. Case managers utilize a wide array of approaches to resolve or minimize each program participant's barriers to obtaining and retaining housing. Participant choice is paramount. While a case manager may identify an approach or helpful resource, utilizing these recommendations is voluntary. Therefore, it is essential that case managers assertively and positively engage with the Veteran household, assisting them to achieve housing they want and can sustain.

Because SSVF is a crisis response program, case managers must be knowledgeable about the impact of stress overload on people's memory and their ability to make and carry out plans, and control emotions in order to achieve goals. Accordingly, case managers focus on resolving the specific crisis: housing loss or imminent homelessness. Other personal issues or problems that do not directly affect housing can and should be addressed later, at the time, place and with the provider the household chooses. As an example, a person with a disability has no indication that the disability itself has resulted in any housing crisis or housing loss. However, that person has relatives who move into his apartment whenever he has stable housing. This lease violation has resulted in three evictions. The case manager's focus would not be the disability; it would be strategizing with the person about how to prevent the relatives from moving into his new housing. This may include role-playing a conversation with the relatives, actually mediating a family meeting, and identifying lease requirements that prohibit unauthorized tenants.

A frequent barrier to exiting homelessness and maintaining stable housing is a lack of savings and/or income. Assisting the program participant to obtain and retain housing often requires temporary financial assistance for housing start-up and/or a rental subsidy as a bridge to securing additional income. Assistance for eligible costs may be provided with SSVF grant funds and/or by referring the person to public benefits, VA benefits, and/or employment.

Overcoming other housing barriers will require case managers to assist the household to utilize community resources. Case managers must have current knowledge of the many resources that can help a very low-income or extremely low-income household to secure and retain housing. While the use of referrals is voluntary, many participants willingly participate in services that will help them keep their housing and avoid homelessness.

2. Intake

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a. Needs Assessment

Once the participant's eligibility has been confirmed, the case manager begins by identifying any emergency needs that must be immediately met. For literally homeless Veteran households, it is expected that the household will not spend any additional time in the street. This will generally require an intervention that may include Rapid Resolution, placement in a VA temporary housing program or emergency shelter. Refer to "Homeless Programs Office Policy Guidance on Accessing Emergency Housing – March 2021" found on the SSVF Emergency Housing Assistance tab at https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf. other emergency needs often related to medical issues; for example, a Veteran who is unable to obtain medications for diabetes or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, or a person who may have a significant injury or illness. These immediate needs are a priority.

Second, the case manager begins consulting with the participant to determine his/her housing barriers. This highly-specialized assessment identifies both Tenant Screening Barriers (TSB) and Housing Retention Barriers (HRB). TSBs include any elements of a person's income, credit, rental and criminal history that ***fail local landlords' tenant screening criteria*** and could cause the person's rental application to be rejected. For example, a person with three evictions or conviction for a drug-related offense would be denied housing by many private-market and subsidized housing managers. HRBs, on the other hand, have ***actually caused housing instability***. Examples: a loss of income that prevented a person from paying the rent, or a history of violating lease requirements by holding frequent, loud parties.

Assessing housing barriers combines discussions with the program participant and collecting records of the person's rental, credit and criminal history. Such records can be obtained through public databases or purchased from a rental screening company (an eligible expense for SSVF grant funds). Review of these records with the program participant focuses on the ways the person's history can affect their ***access to housing*** (due to landlord screening criteria) and ***avoiding future housing instability*** (by addressing any relevant patterns that have resulted in housing instability in the past so they are less likely to recur).

The assessment becomes the basis of creating plans to obtain and retain housing. Some program participants will have relatively few housing barriers beyond poverty-related blemishes on their credit and rental history. Others may lack essential knowledge, skills and supports necessary to fulfill their responsibilities as tenants.

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Some information on the program participant's housing barriers will also be required for HMIS data collection.

b. Housing Stability Planning

To maximize the effectiveness of services provided to or coordinated on behalf of the participant, the case manager will work with the participant household to develop individualized housing stability plans. Plans are based upon the household's strengths, housing barriers and priorities, as identified through the housing barrier assessment.

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Case managers, with the participant, establish reasonable milestones for obtaining greater housing stability. These milestones will become a set of actionable goals intended to address the participant's obstacles to housing stability. Goals should be appropriate, time oriented, and reasonable, with specific action steps to be taken by the program participant and by the case manager to achieve the objectives. The case manager should ensure that proposed goals and objectives are manageable and focused on the immediate needs of securing and sustaining housing; overly ambitious plan can easily overwhelm participants who are already suffering from stress overload. Participants should be given choice and control in the plan. Participants are more likely to remain engaged in activities have been collaboratively identified, with their case managers, as a means to support their housing stability.

After meeting emergency needs, initial plans focus on housing search, specifying the steps taken by the participant and the case manager to identify suitable housing and a strategy for approaching the landlord or property manager. Participants with high Tenant Screening Barriers will often need the active involvement of the Grantee staff to secure decent housing. Landlords may consider a household with high barriers to be too risky to accept as a tenant. The SSVF Grantee approaches landlords with incentives designed to minimize those perceived risks, such as home visits to reinforce lease compliance, a quick response to landlord concerns, a willingness to consider a double damage deposit, etc.

Landlord partnerships are essential to assure access to decent housing for every Veteran family, and every SSVF program must prioritize landlord recruitment and retention. This includes screening prospective landlord partners to assure they fulfill their responsibilities and crafting the kinds of incentives that will be attractive to prospective partners.

After the Veteran household secures housing, subsequent housing stability plans address how they will maintain their housing. Based on their Housing Retention Barriers, the plan's goals and action steps focus on assuring the household can fulfill their tenancy requirements: paying the rent, following the lease, caring for the unit and avoiding conflict with the landlord, other tenants and the police. Many tenants will have successful experience as renters and may need little help to fulfill their responsibilities. Their primary housing barrier may be financial and their housing stability plans would focus on securing additional benefits or employment income, reducing expenses, and/or obtaining free or reduced costs goods and services to maximize the income available to pay rent. But other Veterans may have a pattern of lease violations and would benefit from building additional knowledge and skills, setting boundaries for guests and children, etc.

Housing stability plans should use a progressive assistance approach. Participants are offered only as much assistance as needed and only as long as needed to end the housing crisis. Over time, the intensity and duration of services can be scaled up or increased only if and when the participant demonstrates a need for such increased assistance.

In some situations, the participant will have entered the program with a well-defined idea of their goals and the steps needed to resolve their housing crisis. In other situations, the participant

may not understand how the options available through SSVF might contribute to housing stability. The case manager should explain how housing barriers impact housing stability and the SSVF, VA and community services that are available to program participants. Referrals to other community and VA resources should be undertaken only with the agreement of the program participant.

The case manager and participant will monitor progress toward achieving the established goals, including requesting updates from the participant's other service providers, as necessary. The housing stability plans should be updated as action steps and goals are met. As participants' needs change, new goals and action steps should be developed. Regular communication with the participant's landlord may uncover additional assistance needed to maintain housing stability.

3. Role of Case Manager in Coordinating Provision of Supportive Services

The case manager is the participant's primary point of contact within the grantee's SSVF program. In addition to assisting the participant to assess his/her housing barriers and priorities, the case manager is responsible for coordinating the provision of supportive services, including Temporary Financial Assistance. The case manager will also provide and coordinate referrals for other supportive services not offered by the grantee (or provided more efficiently or effectively elsewhere). An effective case manager should be familiar with the area or community in which the program operates and actively cultivate a working knowledge and connections to relevant area resources such as affordable housing providers; emergency, medical and other care professionals; public benefits offices; employment training and job placement programs; affordable daycare; legal or credit counseling services; transportation, etc.

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D. Assistance in Obtaining VA Benefits

1. Description of Benefits/Services

As part of participant intake, the grantee should determine whether the participant household is already receiving services from VA. If the participant is already receiving services, the grantee's assessment should focus on what additional services the participant may need, want and be eligible for, and refer the participant to the appropriate VA office for assistance. If the participant is not already receiving services from VA, the grantee should make the participant aware of the services for which s/he may be eligible and offer to refer the participant to the nearest VA facility. Potential VA benefits and services may include, but are not limited to:

- Income Assistance;
- Vocational and rehabilitation counseling;
- Employment and training service;
- Educational assistance; and
- Health care services.

Income assistance, employment, training, and educational resources are especially important for the target population of the SSVF Program. Participants will need to establish regular incomes to support the program's primary goal of housing stability. Health care benefits will offer participants mental, behavioral and physical health services that are not currently being addressed. VA offers health care services at over 1,400 locations nationwide, including hospitals, clinics, community living centers, domiciliary care facilities, readjustment counseling centers, etc. A person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released there from under conditions other than dishonorable or was discharged or dismissed by reason of a General court-martial may qualify for VA health care.

2. Guidance on Linkages to Benefits/Services

If a participant has not yet enrolled in the VA health care system, the grantee should, with the Veteran's consent, provide assistance in the enrollment process. Additional information on VA healthcare and benefits can be found on the following VA websites: http://www.va.gov/health/index.asp and http://www.vba.va.gov/VBA/.

If necessary, the case manager should also help Veterans locate an accredited claims agent or attorney and other services to assist them in obtaining VA benefits. Although grantees will assist participants in obtaining available benefits from VA, grantees are not permitted to represent Veterans in benefit claims before VA unless the individual providing representation is an accredited claims agent or attorney.

3. Using Community Linkages to Enhance Effectiveness

Grantees should develop relationships with local VA facilities, State Veterans Affairs Offices and Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs). A list of State Veterans Affairs Offices can be found on the following VA website: http://www.va.gov/statedva.htm. VA also maintains a searchable database of VSOs that can be accessed online at: http://www.va.gov/vso/index.cfm?template=search.

Grantees who maintain lines of communication with VA facilities will be able to stay up-to-date about new benefits and services for which participants may be eligible and make or receive referrals as appropriate.

E. Assistance in Obtaining and Coordinating Other Public Benefits

1. Description of Services

Grantees are required to assist participant households to access both public benefits and mainstream community resources. The terms "public benefits" and "community resources" are defined broadly to include healthcare (medical, mental health, and substance abuse services) and daily living services, affordable housing, employment and vocational services, income support (from public benefits), legal services, transportation, personal financial planning and credit counseling, VA fiduciary and representative payee services, and childcare. The goals for

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connecting with these external programs are, first, to meet immediate housing-related and non-housing-related needs and, second, to avoid another housing crisis in the near term..

SSVF is a relatively short-term, crisis response program and Veteran households may want and need ongoing assistance to continue housing stability and achieve other personal goals. SSVF cultivates external supports that will outlast the short term, temporary nature of the SSVF. Indeed, given the time limited nature of SSVF, fostering these connections may be among the most lasting contributions SSVF has in the lives of participants. Grantees should therefore strive to strengthen each participant's ties to external resources to the extent that they will be maintained long after SSVF is no longer available to the Veteran. However, it is important to remember that all referrals are voluntary. Households who have recently experienced severe housing crises may be unwilling or unable to participate in additional services to address personal goals until a later point in time.

Assuring that Veteran households can access the resources to help maintain housing may be organized by the grantee using three possible approaches:

1. **Direct:** by grantee staff OR by subcontract to partner organization *(Note: SSVF funds cannot pay for direct provision of healthcare or daily living services).*
2. **Indirect:** refer out to external resources with grantee utilizing a conventional information and referral approach and building upon in-house knowledge of external resources.
3. Both: by grantee staff OR by subcontract to partner organization AND referred out to external resources with grantee utilizing a conventional information and referral approach and building upon in-house knowledge of external resources

a. Connection to Healthcare and Daily Living Services

Options for Grantee: 2: **Indirect only**

SSVF participants should be supported to access healthcare and daily living services from their local VA Medical Center and other healthcare providers. This includes primary care, mental health treatment, substance abuse services, daily living services (also known as home care), and other specialty health care that an individual participant needs and chooses to utilize. Grantees must cultivate strong relationships with their points of contacts at local VA Medical Centers and/or community based outpatient clinic and utilize those relationships to make and monitor referrals. For participants with a history of reluctance to seek care from VA settings, case managers leverage the trust established through their relationships with participants to support reestablishing connections.

Some Veterans and non-Veteran household members may be ineligible for VA healthcare. Accordingly, grantees must also identify non-VA healthcare resources. Grantees must also be able to assist participants in applying for Medicaid and/or subsidized insurance through local healthcare exchanges created by the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

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b. Connections to Affordable Housing via Housing Counseling

Options for Grantee: 1: **Direct**; 2. **Indirect**; 3 **Both**

SSVF participants must be supported in searching for appropriate housing. . Whether the grantee assigns specialized staff or utilizes subcontractors, this service should be delivered to all participants receiving rapid re-housing and those receiving homelessness prevention who require relocation to new housing. The term "housing counseling" is defined broadly, to include identifying an appropriate housing unit to securing the lease. Specific tasks include researching available market rate and subsidized housing units that match a participant's housing budget and needs; evaluating options that fit rent reasonableness; negotiating rents and lease terms (when possible) with landlords; appealing tenant selection decisions; assessing units using the Habitability Standards; providing deposits and first month's rent; signing leases; and devising move in plans. Depending on the program participant's experience and knowledge, Housing Counseling may also include educating the Veteran household on such things as local housing options, standard lease requirements, fair housing laws, landlord and tenant rights and relationships, reasonable accommodations, lead paint laws, home maintenance, and efficient use of home systems such as heat. It also involves advance work with participants to devise household budgets and plan a schedule for regular and timely rent payments.

To optimize Veteran access to decent housing opportunities, Housing Counseling services require that grantees build staff expertise on the availability of both affordable, private market rate units and publicly subsidized, affordable housing. For success in the private market, staff must cultivate a network of willing local landlords and their management companies as well as carry out efforts to maintain and expand that network over time. For success in the subsidized arena, staff must research, via information clearinghouses and online locators, housing programs dedicated to Veterans, to households exiting homelessness, to low and extremely low income households in general, and to special populations such as persons who are elderly or with disabilities. Furthermore, staff must be knowledgeable of admissions preferences established in any and all subsidized housing.

c. Connections to Employment and Vocational Services

Options for Grantee: 1: **Direct**; 2. **Indirect**; 3 **Both**

Where appropriate, SSVF participants should be supported to connect with services that foster workforce participation, job readiness, and job opportunities with the aim of maximizing income and thereby increasing housing stability. This effort could be carried out by an in-house employment specialist position. Alternatively, participants can be referred to such services through community resources, such as Goodwill Industries and Workforce Investment Act-funded local job centers, or VA-sponsored workforce development programs such as the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program. These programs may offer assistance with resume writing, job search, job interviewing, and job skill development. Grantees should also explore the availability of local job fairs, particularly those dedicated to Veterans, and local employers

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advertising new job development specifically for Veterans. Of note, refusal to participate in employment services should not be a barrier to access SSVF services nor a reason to terminate assistance..

d. Connections to Income Support (Public and VA Benefits)

Options for Grantee: 1: **Direct**; 2. **Indirect**; 3 **Both**

SSVF participants should be supported to obtain public benefits including Social Security Disability Income, Supplemental Security Income, Veteran Benefit Administration benefits, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. Such benefits can be an essential resource for maximizing participants' income and thereby increasing housing stability. For applications to the Veteran Benefits Administration, participants should be assisted via referrals to local Veteran service organizations or via direct application through the SSVF liaison for the local Veteran Benefit Administration Office in the grantee's jurisdiction.

For applications to the Social Security Administration, participants should be assisted by staff who are trained in the SSI/SSDI Outreach Access and Recovery Program (SOAR). SOAR is a federal interagency project, and the SOAR Technical Assistance Center is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). SOAR assistance is designed to increase access to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) for eligible adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and who have a mental illness, medical impairment, and/or a co-occurring substance use disorder. SOAR assistance is proven to increase the approval rate for those applying for benefits and shorten the time it takes individuals to receive them.

SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) directly contributes to promoting housing stability among very low-income Veteran families by increasing access to critical income supports. Every SSVF grantee should have a clear, formal relationship with SOAR-trained providers or train their own staff to provide SOAR assistance directly. Connecting Veterans with Social Security Administration (SSA) disability benefits is a critical step, particularly for those Veterans whose work activity is limited by disabling conditions.

SSVF grantees are encouraged to utilize the resources in the SOAR-SSVF Integration Toolkit to expand use of the SOAR model. The goal is that any Veteran with disabling conditions who is experiencing or at risk for homelessness is able to quickly connect with a SOAR provider for SSI/SSDI application assistance. It is the SSVF Program Office's expectation that all grantees utilize SOAR through either direct provision, a subcontract relationship, or through a specific Memorandum of Understanding that clearly outlines referral processes and expectations across partners.

e. Connections to Legal Services

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Options for Grantee: 1: **Direct**; 2. **Indirect**; 3 **Both**

Grantees are strongly encouraged to provide legal services to assist participants with issues that interfere with participants' ability to obtain or retain permanent housing or supportive services (38 CFR Part 62.33). When providing legal services directly, either through in-house counsel or by contract, the grantee must document the legal service being provided and the link between the legal issue and housing stability in the client file. Issues that fall under this category are legal in nature and have an impact on housing stability. Examples of common issues faced by homeless or at-risk Veterans include:

1. Eviction (threatening or pending)
2. Child support issues
3. Assistance in obtaining SSI and SSDI benefits and/or assistance with claims for those benefits
4. Landlord/Tenant issues (includes protecting tenant rights, addressing housing code violations, protecting security deposits, and providing lease reviews)
5. Outstanding warrants and/or court fees
6. Assistance in obtaining VA benefits and/or assistance with claims for those benefits
7. Driver's license reinstatement issues
8. Criminal records expungement
9. Debt collection (includes pursuing debt forgiveness and processing personal bankruptcies)
10. Discharge upgrade (if Veteran already enrolled on SSVF and current the upgrade is directly connected to the Housing Stability Plan.)

Service Models

SSVF-funded legal assistance can be provided directly by the Grantee or indirectly via referral. Below is a description of the three service models most commonly utilized:

1. In-House Counsel: Grantees may choose to hire licensed counsel as part of their SSVF staff to provide legal services to their program participants. This model constitutes direct service provision and costs acquired fall under the "Provision and Coordination of Supportive Services – Personnel" category of the budget.

2. Contract: Many Grantees elect to subcontract services out to a legal services provider (Private Attorney, Legal Aid Provider, etc.). This model constitutes direct service provision, operates on a flat fee or fee for service agreement, and is based on an anticipated volume of legal services that will be used by the grantee's participants. Costs acquired under this model fall under "Provision and Coordination of Supportive Services – Non-Personnel" category of the budget. Grantees are encouraged to include specific reporting requirements (services provided, length of service, etc.) in the contract as well as include subcontractor-led issue spotting training for case managers.

3. Referral/Informal Agreements: Pursuant to 38 CFR Part 62.33, Grantees must assist participants in obtaining legal services or coordinate the provision of legal services.

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Grantees may satisfy this requirement via referrals on an as-needed basis to community legal aid organizations, Legal Aid Clinics, and other entities (or attorneys) providing pro bono assistance. Informal coordinated referral agreements may also be made with these service providers as well as with local law schools and chapters of the American Bar Association. (http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/Legal_Aid_Society_of_Cleveland_Check_Issue_Spotting_Tool.pdf)

Allowable and Unallowable Costs

Grantees must ensure that legal services provided fall under the allowable cost category and are linked to housing stability. Below is a list of allowable and unallowable costs. However, due to the complexity of legal issues and the differing capacity of each Grantee and community, Grantees should always contact their Regional Coordinator with any questions/issues that should arise regarding allowable and unallowable costs.

Allowable Costs

1) Supportive services that promote housing stability
   a) Intake
   b) Consultation
   c) Representation
      i) Includes representation of participants before VA with respect to a claim for VA benefits, but only if individual is recognized for that purpose under 38 U.S.C. Chapter 59. For information on accreditation, please visit http://statesidelegal.org/va-accreditation.
2) Income Assistance paid under General Housing Stability Assistance
   a) Court filing fees. (e.g. fees associated with filing a written response to the landlord's compliant)
   b) Ad hoc fees associated with the provision of supportive services, including legal representation (e.g. fees associated with driver's license reinstatement)
3) Staff Training/Education

Unallowable Costs

1) Income Assistance
   a) Court-ordered judgments or fines. (e.g. Traffic tickets or speeding tickets).
   b) Family law issues related to Divorce or Child Custody
   c) Estate planning (wills, trusts, etc.)

* Please note that although unallowable costs cannot be provided with SSVF funds, these services may be provided via referral.

Additional Training, Tools, and Resources for Grantees

Grantees are encouraged to regularly visit the Legal Services section of the SSVF website (http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/official_guide/supportive_services) in order

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to build capacity in this area of service provision. The Legal Services section is always being updated and provides Grantees with access to available resources and templates, as well as examples of successful collaborations and best practices.

f. Connections to Transportation

Options for Grantee: 1: **Direct**; 2. **Indirect**; 3 **Both**

SSVF participants should be supported to connect with transportation on an as-needed basis, for housing stability purposes when the Veteran lacks access to a car or public transportation. Where available, grantees should help participants take advantage of subsidized transportation and free bus passes in their jurisdiction. These are typically offered for low income people who have disabilities or are elderly. Participants should also be connected to local shuttle services to VA Medical Centers, shuttles that typically leave from Veteran service organization sites. To supplement local transportation assistance, grantees have the option to provide transportation to participants themselves to transport participants to service appointments and housing search-related destinations. When transportation is provided , grantees must devise a written policy requiring that all drivers have a valid driver's license, cell phone access inside the vehicle, and training on agency transportation procedures. Such policies also must call for insurance for all vehicles used to transport participants. Note, in addition to the resource access approach outlined here, transportation may also be paid for directly by SSVF temporary financial assistance.

g. Connections to Personal Financial Planning and Credit Counseling Services

Options for Grantee: 1: **Direct**; 2. **Indirect**; 3 **Both**

Where appropriate and desired, SSVF participants should be supported to connect with services that improve their day-to-day finances and help achieve long-term budgeting and financial goals. These services may include individualized counseling or workshops that teach critical skills such as budgeting, setting up bank accounts, managing money in the long term, accessing a free credit report, and repairing credit. In particular, the National Foundation for Credit Counseling (www.nfcc.org) is an accredited, non-profit resource that can directly negotiate interest rates, package loans, and obtain the most favorite debt settlement terms, grantees should seek services for participants who need and want to resolve poor credit to reduce the negative influence such histories have on tenant selection and employment decisions. Community action agencies, adult education community centers, and non-profit workforce development organizations often provide financial education services and that may be helpful. . When desired, participants may also be assisted in opening personal savings and checking accounts. In addition, the cost of a class on financial literacy or personal credit may also be paid for directly by SSVF temporary financial assistance under the general housing stability assistance category. However, it is important to note that SSVF is a crisis response program and many people in crisis are less willing and able to acquire skills and information

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until they have recovered from stress overload. Financial literacy may be a goal that is best postponed for many Veterans.

h. Connections to VA Fiduciary and Representative Payee Services

Options for Grantee: 1: **Direct**; 2. **Indirect**; 3 **Both**

SSVF participants should be supported with the option of enlisting a VA fiduciary or representative payee arrangement on an as need basis. These arrangements may help participants who cannot manage their own financial affairs due to injury, disability, or age. Instead, a participant may choose to designate a VA fiduciary or representative payee to manage their Veteran Benefits Administration benefits, Social Security Disability Insurance, Supplementary Security Income, or other income on their behalf. The designated party then uses the individual's income to consistently pay for current and foreseeable needs including rent. Grantees should help participants who may need and want to explore the availability of this option.

i. Connections to Childcare Services

Options for Grantee: 1: **Direct**; 2. **Indirect**; 3 **Both**

SSVF participants should be supported to access childcare when needed by heads-of-household undertaking new tasks related to increasing housing stability. Childcare may be especially useful to participants engaged in a busy schedule of housing search visits or job interviews or in the initial weeks of new employment that has yet to yield sufficient savings to pay for childcare. To meet this need, grantees should research the availability of subsidized or free childcare for low income and homeless households in their jurisdiction. Ideally, grantees will find emergency childcare services that could bridge participants through a period of instability until more long-term arrangements can be secured that are affordable to the household. Note, in addition to the resource access approach outlined here, childcare may also be paid for directly by SSVF temporary financial assistance. Grantees can pay for childcare out of temporary financial assistance when no other free or reduced-cost options can be found for a participant in their community.

2. Using Community Linkages to Enhance Effectiveness

Grantees should actively develop linkages with community organizations to effectively connect participants to public benefits. In deciding whether to provide or to refer a participant for a needed service, the grantee must consider the availability of local offerings, as well as the grantee's own level of expertise in providing the service/benefit. A grantee who has not investigated the community's service/benefit offerings is unlikely to be able to maximize the cost-effectiveness of directly operating a new service.

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F. Other Supportive Services / Temporary Financial Assistance

1. Other Supportive Services

A grantee may propose additional supportive services in their SSVF grant application or by submitting a written request to modify the supportive services grant (in accordance with 38 CFR 62.60).

2. Eligible Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA)

Grantees may choose to provide TFA to participant households. However, not all households require such assistance. Supportive services grant funds should only be used as direct financial assistance when "but for" criteria are met. For homelessness prevention, TFA can only be provided when a participant meets or exceeds a grantee's approved targeting threshold score. The grantee must explore whether the household would become or remain literally homeless "but for" the provision of SSVF TFA. When grantees do choose to provide TFA, it should be provided to a participant as part of a plan to increase the participant's housing stability. Per 38 CFR 62.34, eligible forms of temporary financial assistance are:

- Rental assistance;
- Utility-fee payment assistance;
- Deposits (security or utility);
- Moving costs;
- Transportation (public transportation or car repair);
- General Housing Stability Assistance
- Emergency Housing Assistance; and
- Child care

SSVF financial and non-financial assistance should be delivered in a progressive assistance approach. Grantees should focus on the most critical threats to the participant's housing stability in providing the "minimum necessary" level of assistance, keeping in mind that SSVF funds for temporary financial assistance are limited. Providing unnecessary temporary financial assistance to one participant will limit the total number of participants grantees will be able to serve. As stated in the previous section VI. E. ("Assistance in Obtaining and Coordinating Other Public Benefits"), all participants should be referred to mainstream income supports and financial assistance sources for which they may qualify. By leveraging and utilizing public sources of emergency and ongoing financial assistance, grantees can minimize the temporary financial assistance payments made with SSVF grant funds. See the most recent NOFA for the maximum percentage of total supportive services grant funds that can be used for this purpose. Wherever possible, grantees should attempt to connect participants to community resources, such as the federal Emergency Food and Shelter Program, to obtain comparable assistance. Grantees should develop internal guidelines for the payment of temporary financial assistance and ensure that participants receiving temporary financial assistance as part of a housing stability plan are informed of such guidelines.

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a. Rental Assistance

Rental assistance includes the payment of rent; mobile home lot rent when the participant owns or rents the mobile home; and penalties or fees to help a participant remain in or obtain permanent housing. (Note: Where the rent includes utilities, the entire amount will be considered "rental assistance" and will be subject to the applicable conditions). Rental assistance payments can be provided for amounts that are currently due (including first month or prorated rent paid prior to or at move in) or are in arrears, and for the payment of penalties or fees that have been incurred by the participant and are required to be paid under an existing lease or court order. Such allowable fees are typically late rent fees that are paid directly to a landlord. Note that debts owed by the Veteran on former leases, related to housing where the Veteran no longer resides, are not an allowable TFA expense for rental assistance.

It may be beneficial to require participants to share in the cost of rent payment, within the limits of the household's current income, as a condition of receiving assistance. Grantees are also encouraged to negotiate with landlords and utility companies to waive fees, security deposits, and, where possible, accept partial payments to satisfy arrearages. In this way, grantees conserve SSVF grant funds for future use and also empower participants to share in the responsibility. Grantees should determine the level of assistance provided on a case-by-case basis, based on the minimum amount needed to prevent the program participant from becoming homeless or returning to homelessness in the near term. Grantees should also consider that formerly homeless households remain at higher risk for becoming homeless. If a household has remaining TFA eligibility after program exit, that resource may help prevent that household's homelessness at a later date.

Rental assistance may be provided to eligible participants using SSVF grant funds, with the following restrictions:

Restrictions on Rental Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.34(a))	
Payment	• Must be paid by the grantee directly to the third-party provider to whom rent is owed.
Rent Reasonableness	• Grantee must determine reasonableness of rent, penalties or fees prior to providing assistance by conducting a market study. • A market study involves documenting details of three comparable advertised rental units. Grantees may substitute a letter from the property manager of the unit under consideration that cites details of three comparables within the manager's portfolio. Note that citing Fair Market Rents (FMRs) is insufficient for market study purposes. • Must be completed for Veterans receiving financial assistance and either staying in or moving into a new housing unit. • Rent reasonableness is not required in SSVF files where participant are using a HUD-VASH voucher. However, for other subsidized housing placements (e.g. Housing Choice Voucher

Restrictions on Rental Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.34(a))	
	(aka Section 8)), rent reasonableness is required either from the administering agency (i.e. the PHA), or completed by SSVF staff. • Details documented for each comparable unit cited in the market study must include rent, location, number of bedrooms, and if utilities are included. • In general, the assisted unit must be comparable to rents charged during the same time period for similar units in the private, unassisted market. • In general, the assisted unit must not be in excess of rents charged by the property owner during same time period for other unassisted units. • Online platforms that assess rents for a specific area, such as Rent-o-meter, are only allowable as a tool to evaluate rent reasonableness if they examine all of the required elements listed above.
Shared Housing	• Rent charged for a participant must be proportional to the size of the participant's private space in comparison to other private space in the unit (i.e., excluding common space). • Participation in shared housing arrangement must be voluntary.
Cost-Sharing with Other Programs	• Rental assistance payments cannot be provided on behalf of participant households for the same period of time and for the same cost types that are being provided by any and all other Federal, State, or local subsidized affordable housing programs such as HUD-VASH, public housing, and other subsidized programs. This restriction includes a tenant's own portion of rent owed when in subsidized housing. SSVF may not pay the tenant's portion of rent under these circumstances. • When the cost type is different than what is paid by the housing subsidy, SSVF rental assistance may be used. This means SSVF may pay for a security deposit for a Veteran who is receiving HUD-VASH or receiving another form of subsidized rental assistance. Furthermore, SSVF may be used to pay rent arrears for a Veteran who is receiving HUD-VASH rental assistance or receiving other forms of subsidized housing. These costs are both considered a different cost type.
Assistance Limit	• Eligible for payments currently due or in arrears (Note: the number of months in arrears paid for through rental assistance counts towards the maximum allowable months of assistance). • Maximum of 10 months in a 2-year period. • Maximum of 6 months in a 12-month period. • Must be in compliance with rent reasonableness.

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Restrictions on Rental Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.34(a))	
Assistance Limit for Extremely Low Income Families[4]	• Maximum of 12 months in a 2-year period. • Maximum of 9 months in a 12-month period. • Must be in compliance with rent reasonableness.

As with all temporary financial assistance under the SSVF Program, rental assistance may only be provided if the payment of such assistance is necessary to enable the participant to obtain or retain permanent housing. TFA may be provided in consecutive or non-consecutive months. For example, a Veteran family may receive 3 months of rental assistance until they have financial resources to support full rent and then at a later date (while still enrolled) receive an additional month of assistance because the household's financial circumstance have changed. As a condition of assistance, the grantee must help the participant develop a reasonable plan to address the participant's future ability to pay rent. The grantee should assist the participant to implement such a plan by directly providing necessary supports or by helping the participant to obtain necessary public or private benefits or services or, where appropriate, employment. If the grantee determines that the rent is not reasonable or sustainable, the grantee should assist the participant in locating more affordable housing that meets the participant's needs or, if affordable housing is not readily available, attempt to connect the participant with a program that offers long-term rental assistance (e.g., HUD-VASH, CoC funded supportive housing programs, etc.). If necessary, the grantee should attempt to connect the participant with other short-term support if long-term support is not readily available.

Shared housing, two or more people who live in one permanent rental housing unit, sharing costs associated with maintaining housing such as rent and utilities, is another affordable housing option. In SSVF, the assisted Veteran must be listed on the lease (SSVF does not prescribe lease status for non-SSVF tenants) and their portion of the rent must be proportional to the amount of private space that Veteran has in relation to the other tenants. The overall size of the unit is dictated by the co-housing tenants' preferences, available income, and the cost of rent and utilities. While many tenants will want their own bedroom, they may, in some cases, voluntarily agree to share a bedroom. What is important to remember is that shared housing is permanent rental housing, in that the Veteran is on the lease and has full tenancy rights.

b. Utility Payment Assistance

Utility payment assistance includes the payment of utility costs (i.e. heat, electricity, water, sewer and garbage collection) to help the participant obtain or retain permanent housing. Utility assistance may consist of payments for multiple types of utilities, although cable, internet, telephone or cell phone services are not eligible expenses. Utility assistance can be provided for amounts that are currently due or are in arrears. Where amounts in arrears are too great to be eliminated through SSVF assistance, grantees to explore options that might include a

[4] See Extremely Low Income definition in Section I. C. Definitions

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negotiated reduction in the amount owed; developing a repayment plan; including the utility payment in the rent (so the utility is in the landlord's name). A grantee may choose to require participants to share in the cost of utility-fee payments, to the extent possible within the household's current income, as a condition for receiving assistance.

Note that SSVF may use TFA to pay outstanding utility arrears pertaining to a previous rental situation if situation if that utility debt prevents the participant household from obtaining utilities in a new housing arrangement. This debt may only be paid directly to the third party, the utility company.

Utility payment assistance may be provided to eligible participants using supportive services grant funds, with the following restrictions:

Restrictions on Utility Payment Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.34(b))	
Payment	• Payment must be made by the grantee directly to a utility company. • Participant, legal representative or a member of the household must have an account in his/her name with a utility company or proof of responsibility to make payments.
Cost-Sharing with Other Programs	• Payments for utilities cannot be provided on behalf of participants for the same period of time and for the same cost types that are being provided through another Federal, State, or local program.
Assistance Limit	• Maximum of 10 months utility payments in a 2-year period • Maximum of 6 months utility payments in a 12-month period • Arrears may be paid up to, but not exceed, the maximum allowable months of assistance. In other words, each month of payment past due is counted individually towards the maximum number of allowable months. • For example, Jeff owes $900.00 in utilities accrued over 9 months with $100.00 owed each month. The SSVF program may pay up to $600.00 for debt accrued over 6 months. Note: Utility assistance may consist of payments for multiple types of utilities. For example, over a 2-year period, a grantee could assist a participant with 10 months of assistance for gas, electricity, and water, provided the payments cover the same ten months.
Assistance Limit for Extremely Low Income Families[5]	• Maximum of 12 months utility payments in a 2-year period • Maximum of 9 months utility payments in a 12-month period

[5] See Extremely Low Income definition in Section I. C. Definitions

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As with all temporary financial assistance payments made under the SSVF Program, utility payment assistance necessitates the development of a reasonable plan to address the participant's future ability to make utility payments. The grantee should assist the participant to implement such a plan by providing necessary assistance directly or by helping the participant to obtain any necessary public or private benefits or services. In the creation of the plan, grantees must consider that many regions have seasonal fluctuations in the cost of utilities.

c. Deposits

Deposit payment assistance includes the payment of security or utility deposits to help the participant obtain permanent housing. Deposit payment assistance may be provided on behalf of eligible participants using SSVF grant funds. This assistance does not count towards the monthly assistance restrictions for both rent and allowable utilities. The following restrictions apply:

Restrictions on Deposit Payment Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.34(c))	
Payment	• Payment must be made by the grantee directly to the third party to whom the security or utility deposit is owed.
Cost-Sharing with Other Programs	• Payments for deposits cannot be provided on behalf of participants for the same period of time and for the same cost types that are being provided for by any and all other Federal, State, or local subsidized affordable housing programs such as rapid re-housing programs that pay for security deposits. • When the cost type is different than what is paid by the housing subsidy, SSVF deposit payment assistance may be used.
Assistance Limit	• Maximum of one security deposit during a 2-year period • Utility deposit assistance is limited to one time during a 2-year period. In cases where water and power are not included in the rent and are billed separately, deposits can be paid on each utility.

A grantee may choose to require participants to share in the cost of a deposit payment as a condition for receiving assistance, if the household's income allows. A deposit amounted no more than two months' rent is typically considered to be the maximum reasonable level. Grantee must adhere to state laws, in areas that prescribe maximum deposits.

Deposit payment assistance may only be provided if the payment of such assistance will directly allow the participant to obtain permanent housing. The grantee must work with the participant to develop a reasonable plan to stabilize housing so that additional deposits are not needed, and should assist the participant to implement a housing stability plan by directly providing necessary assistance or by helping the participant to obtain necessary public or private benefits or services.

Grantees have discretion to determine how to handle security deposits if and when an assisted household moves from the assisted unit (assuming the landlord has not retained the deposit to pay for damages incurred by the tenant). The grantee may recover the security deposit (in

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which case it must be treated as program income) or the grantee may allow the Veteran family to keep the deposit and use it towards their next unit.

d. Moving Costs

Moving costs payment assistance includes costs necessary to help the participant obtain permanent housing. Moving costs may include reasonable costs such as truck rental; hiring a moving company; or short-term storage fees for a maximum of 3 months or until the participant is in permanent housing, whichever is shorter. Note: A one-time moving cost for truck rental means one episode of moving to permanent housing; a rental truck may be needed to move a participant's belongings to storage unit and then move those belongings again once permanent housing is secured. Relocation expenses are an allowable use, when a solid housing stability plan is in place. Moving costs payment assistance may be provided on behalf of eligible participants using supportive services grant funds, with the following restrictions:

Restrictions on Moving Costs Payment Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.34(d))	
Payment	• Payment must be made by the grantee directly to a third party.
Cost-Sharing with Other Programs	• Payments for moving costs cannot be provided on behalf of participants for the same period of time and for the same cost types that are being provided through another Federal, State, or local program.
Assistance Limit	• Maximum of cost of one move to permanent housing during a 2-year period.

e. General Housing Stability Assistance

General Housing Stability Assistance refers to the provision of goods or payment of expenses not included in other SSVF categories but which are directly related to supporting a participant's housing stability. All such expenses relate to a participant's ability to gain or keep employment or permanent housing. Such assistance is offered only when it is not available through existing mainstream resources. Note that this assistance must be paid directly to a third party (not to a participant).

<u>Four Classes of Housing Stability Assistance</u>

There are four classes of Housing Stability Assistance expenses, outlined below, that can be authorized up to a maximum of $1,500 per participant household during any 2-year period.

(1) Expenses associated with gaining or keeping employment:

Eligible items include but are not limited to uniforms, tools, driver's license fees, license/certification costs required for employment, documentation acquisition fees such as for Social Security Number or birth certificate, document court filing fees, and short term training leading to employment, where other funding is not available.

(2) Expenses associated with moving into permanent housing:

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Eligible items include but are not limited to furniture delivery costs, furniture bank fees, bed frames, conventional mattresses, air mattresses, box springs, bedding (sheets, pillowcases, and pillows), basic kitchen utensils, and cleaning supplies.

(3) Expenses necessary for securing appropriate permanent housing:

(4) Eligible items include but are not limited to fees for rental applications, background checks, housing inspections, credit score checks, credit counseling, criminal background check, tenancy screening reports, financial literacy class, document court filing fees, and documentation acquisition such as for Social Security Number or birth certificates, items necessary for life or safety provided on a temporary basis to address an emergency.

Eligible items include food, baby formula, diapers, and winter clothing. These items are allowable up to $500 per participant household in a 2-year period and are included in the overall $1,500 cap.

Brokers Fee

(1) Reasonable amount for a realtor broker's fee. This may be paid once during a 2-year period. The reasonableness of this fee must be determined based on the condition of the local housing market.

Items that cannot be funded under General Housing Stability Assistance are: phone cards, gift cards of any kind, and furniture (except beds). Major appliances are also generally non-eligible with the rare exception of circumstances when the VA allows such an item for an individual case.

Restrictions on General Housing Stability Assistance	
Payment	• Payment must be made by the grantee directly to a third party.
Cost-Sharing with Other Program	• Payment under General Housing Stability Assistance cannot be provided on behalf of participants for the same period of time and for the same cost types that are being provided through another Federal, State, or local program.
Assistance Limit	• Items in the four classes add up to a maximum total of $1,500 per participant household during any 2-year period. Items for life and safety add up to a maximum of $500 within the overall $1,500 limit. • Realtor broker fees are once in a 2-year period and are not included in this $1,500 limit.

f. Emergency Housing Assistance

Emergency Housing Assistance is a category of assistance that allows SSVF programs to provide temporary housing for eligible literally homeless participants who are awaiting permanent housing if no other shelter is available. As SSVF resources must be focused on securing and sustaining placement in permanent housing, grantees are expected to exercise

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great care in committing resources to emergency housing, ensuring no alternative VA resources (such as Grant and Per Diem or Healthcare for Homeless Veterans residential contract housing) or community resources exist.

Emergency housing may be provided to a short-term commercial residences, not already funded to provide on-demand emergency shelter, that does not require the participant to sign a lease or occupancy agreement (private residences are not eligible). Note that the *Emergency Housing Assistance Verification* is used to confirm eligibility.

If permanent housing, appropriate shelter beds, and transitional housing are not available and subsequent rental housing has been identified generally but is not immediately available for move-in by the participant, then a grantee may place a participant in emergency housing, subject to the following limitations:

Limitations:

- Placement for a single Veteran may not exceed 72 hours, unless the grantee can certify that shelter beds and transitional housing are still unavailable at the end of 72 hours. Extensions beyond the 72 hours may not exceed 45 days.
- Placement for a Veteran and his or her spouse with dependent(s) may not exceed 45 days.
- A participant may be placed in emergency housing only once during any 2-year period, beginning on the date the grantee first pays for emergency housing.
- The cost of the emergency housing must be reasonable in relation to the costs charged for other available emergency housing considering the location, quality, size, and type.
- At least one viable option for a permanent housing unit must be identified for the participant who is temporarily receiving emergency housing assistance.

Emergency Housing Assistance (EHA) may also be provided by the SSVF grantee under 38 CFR 62.34(f) to offer transition in place when a permanent housing voucher, such as one offered through HUD's Housing Choice Voucher Program (aka. Section 8), is available from any source, but access to the permanent housing voucher is pending completion of the housing inspection and administrative processes necessary for leasing. In such circumstances, the EHA payment cannot exceed what would otherwise be paid when the voucher is utilized. Note that the *Emergency Housing Assistance Verification* is NOT used for this request.

Restrictions on Emergency Housing Assistance	
Payment	• Payment must be made by the grantee directly to a third party.
Cost-Sharing with Other Programs	• Payments for emergency housing assistance cannot be provided on behalf of participants for the same period of time and for the same cost types that are being provided through another Federal, State, or local program.
Assistance Limit	• Maximum of 45 days for Veterans with spouse and/or dependents.

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Restrictions on Emergency Housing Assistance	
	• Maximum of 72 hours (extensions for up to 45 days) for a single Veteran. • No more than once in a 2-year period for all participants.

g. Transportation Assistance

A grantee may provide transportation assistance if it will enhance housing stability. For example, a participant may require assistance with transportation to a job interview or a medical appointment. Because the use of public transportation is generally less expensive than the use of private vehicles and may be more sustainable in the long-term, grantees should consider providing public transportation tokens or vouchers before offering financial assistance for personal vehicles. If sufficient public transportation options are not locally available, a grantee may provide car repair or maintenance assistance on behalf of a participant. The following table outlines restrictions applicable to temporary transportation financial assistance:

Restrictions on Transportation Payment Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.33(d))	
Payment	• Payment must be made by the grantee directly to a third party.
Cost-Sharing with Other Programs	• Payments for transportation cannot be provided on behalf of participants for the same period of time and for the same cost types that are being provided through another Federal, State, or local program.
Assistance Limit	• No financial limit on amount of public transportation assistance for participants • No time limit on public transportation assistance • Maximum of $1,200 car repairs/maintenance in a 2-year period on behalf of a participant

The provision of money or gift cards to a participant to pay for gasoline is not permitted with SSVF funds. However, in rural areas with limited to no public transportation, the issuance of Gas Vouchers may be allowable under the conditions listed below:

1. A gas voucher is allowable as transportation cost only towards needs directly related to housing stability and is incorporated in the participant's Housing Plan.
2. Payment must be made by the grantee directly to a third party. For example, the grantee may make arrangements with a local gas station by pre-paying for gasoline only, require gas station to view identification of participant prior to approval of any gasoline purchase, and provide grantee with receipts for all gasoline purchases.

As with all temporary financial assistance payments made under the SSVF Program, the provision of transportation assistance requires the development of a housing stability plan. The grantee should consider a participant's unique situation, as well as the area's transportation options in creating such a plan, weighing the costs and benefits of different options. If the grantee cannot help the participant develop a reasonable plan to address the participant's future

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ability to pay for transportation, supportive services grant funds should not be used to provide transportation assistance. In that case, transportation assistance should be limited to the grantee's efforts to connect the participant with a program offering long-term assistance.

h. Child Care Assistance

A grantee may make payments on behalf of a participant to an "eligible child care provider" providing child care services. Such child care payments should only be provided by the grantee if the assistance will improve a participant's housing stability (e.g., if the provision of child care assistance will allow the participant to obtain or maintain employment). The following table outlines restrictions applicable to child care assistance payments:

Restrictions on Child Care Assistance Payment (per 38 CFR 62.33(h))	
Payment	• Payment must be made by the grantee directly to an "eligible child care provider." An "eligible child care provider" is a provider of child care services for compensation, including a provider of care for a school-age child during non-school hours, that: (1) is licensed, regulated, registered, or otherwise legally operating under state and local law, and (2) satisfies the state and local requirements applicable to the child care services the provider provides.
Cost-Sharing with Other Programs	• Payments for child care cannot be provided on behalf of participants for the same period of time and for the same cost types that are being provided through another Federal, State, or local program.
Assistance Limit	• Maximum of 10 months in a 2-year period, per child in household • Maximum of 6 months in a 12-month period, per child in household *(Note: Household may include multiple children)* • Begins on the date grantee first pays for child care on behalf of participant • Child care assistance can be provided for children under the age of 13, unless a child has a disability. Child care assistance can be provided for children with a disability under the age of 18.
Assistance Limit for Extremely Low Income Families[6]	• Maximum of 12 months in a 2-year period, per child in household • Maximum of 9 months in a 12-month period, per child in household

As with all temporary financial assistance payments made under the SSVF Program, the provision of child care assistance requires the development of a reasonable housing stability

[6] See Extremely Low Income definition in Section I. C. Definitions

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plan to address the participant's future ability to pay for child care. Grantees should assist the participant to implement such a plan by providing any necessary assistance or helping the participant to obtain any necessary public or private benefits or services.

3. Restrictions on Payments

Temporary financial assistance payments cannot be paid to the participant and must be paid directly to a third party on behalf of a participant. In order to prevent temporary financial assistance from consuming a disproportionate amount of grant funds, VA has set a limit in the NOFA of a maximum allowable percentage of funds used for temporary financial assistance. Additionally, timing and other restrictions on the use of eligible temporary financial assistance can be found in 38 CFR 62.33 and 38 CFR 62.34. Grantees may choose to impose additional limitations on such assistance. *Please see Section VIII.E for a list of ineligible activities, including costs associated with temporary financial assistance.*

4. Documentation Required

Grantees must maintain records that justify the provision of temporary financial assistance. Program Guide Section VIII.C outlines the case file documentation required to verify the eligibility of a temporary financial assistance payment.

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VII. Program Operations

A. Participant Agreements

Prior to providing SSVF assistance to a participant household, grantees enter into a written agreement between their agency and each participant household. This agreement describes the grantee's SSVF grant program and any conditions or restrictions on the receipt of supportive services by the participant. Agreements should not require sobriety, income limits, participation in supportive services or other unnecessary requirements as a condition of assistance. Participant agreements and conditions should be fully disclosed to potential participants and acknowledged in writing by both parties.

B. Participant Fees

Grantees may not charge a fee to participant households for providing supportive services that are funded using funds from a supportive services grant. Note: this prohibition does not prevent grantees from requiring participants to cost-share, with a grantee, any expenses for which temporary financial assistance is provided.

C. Participant Safety and Critical Incident Reports

A critical goal of the SSVF Program is to ensure the safety of all participant households, supportive service coordinators, and their staff. Grantees are required to develop a comprehensive plan to maintain the safety of participants and staff and the confidentiality of the program's participants and their records. In developing a plan, VA recommends that grantees:

- Establish goals and objectives that reduce and eliminate accidents, injuries, and illnesses related to administering supportive services to participants;
- Develop plans and procedures for evaluating the safety program's effectiveness, both at the program office and in the field;
- Develop priorities for remedying the identified factors which cause accidents, injuries and illnesses;
- Ensure that patient records are secured with all such information password protected;
- Conduct adequate safety and health training for officials at different levels, including supervisory employees, employees responsible for conducting participant home visits and/or habitability inspections (see Habitability Standards section below), employee representatives and other employees;
- Ensure that all staff, students, and volunteers receive initial and annual training on how to respond to critical incidents; and
- Develop a clear written procedure for following-up on any incidents that may occur to ensure that the program evaluates how they responded and to ensure any party involved was connected to any services needed.

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If a grantee becomes aware of a health or safety issue related to the participant, including unsafe accommodations, the grantee must report the issue to the appropriate authorities. Grantees are expected to comply with all applicable laws. If a participant's actions pose a health or safety risk to that participant or another person, the grantee must notify the police or another appropriate authority. The SSVF Program Office requires that grantees to only submit the most serious of Critical Incidents, such as Suicides, Homicides, and Staff Improprieties including allegations of criminal activity by agency and subcontractor staff. All incidents that receive negative media attention must be reported to the SSVF Program Office. Grantee should notify the SSVF Program Office about any reportable critical incident i as soon as possible, but within a timeframe not to exceed 48 hours after the grantee has been made aware of the situation. All SSVF grantee staff must be trained annually in S.A.V.E, a Suicide Prevention training from the VA. Staff should first attempt to request in-person training from their locally certified S.A.V.E. trainer, either a VAMC Suicide Prevention Coordinator or Homeless Program Staff Point of Contact (POC). A list of local Suicide Prevention Coordinators may be found at: https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/local-resources. If in-person training is unavailable, all staff should view the S.A.V.E training webinar on Suicide Prevention at this link: https://psycharmor.org/courses/s-a-v-e/ or the SSVF Annual Suicide Prevention Webinar on the SSVF website.

The SSVF Critical Incident process is used for the purpose of reporting serious incidents to VA leadership. If a Grantee is uncertain as to whether the Critical Incident requires SSVF Program Office notification, they should contact the SSVF Regional Coordinator. Critical Incidents are reported to the SSVF Program the Critical Incident form on the SSVF Website. Please note that the form should not contain any Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and Veterans should be identified only by their HMIS ID.

D. Habitability Standards

Grantees using SSVF grant funds to provide rental assistance, payments of utilities fees, security deposits or utilities deposits, (as defined under 38 CFR 62.34) on behalf of a participant moving into a new (different) housing unit will be required to conduct initial and any appropriate follow-up inspections of the housing unit into which the participant will be moving. Grantees assisting a participant to move into a new housing unit should ensure the housing unit meets the conditions set forth in 24 CFR 583.300(b). Inspections should occur no later than three (3) working days after the housing unit has been identified to the SSVF grantee, unless the alternative inspection method outlined below is used to meet requirements. The habitability inspection does not need to be performed by a certified inspector. Note: Proof of inspections is not required where participants are using a HUD-VASH or Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher. The inspection would have already been completed by the PHA in both instances.

The habitability standards requirement can be met through an alternative inspection method. If a prior inspection was completed on a property/unit, this will be sufficient to fulfill the Habitability Standards requirement if all of the following criteria are met:

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- The inspection was conducted pursuant to the requirements of a Federal, State, or local housing program (including, but not limited to, the Home investment partnership program under title II of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act or the low-income housing tax credit program under section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986);
- If the inspection was not conducted pursuant to the requirements of a Federal housing program, the public housing agency has certified to the Secretary that such standard or requirement provides the same (or greater) protection to occupants of inspected dwelling units;
- Pursuant to the inspection, the property was determined to meet the requirements regarding housing quality or safety applicable to properties assisted under such program; and
- The inspection was conducted within the past 2 years.

E. Notification to Participants

Before providing SSVF assistance to a participant household, grantees must notify the participant that the supportive services and assistance offered will be paid for, in whole or in part, by VA, through a federal grant award. Grantees must review the range of supportive services available to the participant household through the grantee's program and any conditions or restriction of receipt of supportive services by the participant household. To ensure that Veteran families receiving supportive services under the SSVF Program are receiving quality services, the grantee must give a VA-designated satisfaction survey to each participant within 30 days of the participant's pending exit from the grantee's program.

F. Conflict of Interest

For many agencies, board members oversee a variety of aspects of business. Many of these board members have ties to the community or other businesses outside of the SSVF agency. For that reason, it is required that organizations operating SSVF grants get signed conflict of interest statements from their board members on an annual basis. (If an agency gathers conflict of interest statements on a timetable exceeding one year, there must be a written internal policy for how often these forms are collected.) The purpose of the conflict of interest forms are to identify any personal or professional affiliations for which the board member may be involved which could have the potential to influence or compromise a decision made by the agency. The agency can identify these potential conflicts and recuse the board member from specific board decisions as needed.

G. Confidentiality

Grantees are required to maintain confidentiality of records kept on participant households. Grantees and subcontractors must comply with all applicable federal and local laws to assure

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the confidentiality and security of participant's physical and electronic records. Furthermore, grantees must ensure the security of records such that computer systems are equipped with technologies to prevent unauthorized use (such as encryption, strong passwords, and biometrics). Grantees must keep participant information private and are required to obtain signed releases of information for any third-party that the grantee speaks to on the client's behalf when discussing personal information such as name and other details.

Grantees that provide family violence prevention or domestic violence treatment services must establish and implement additional procedures to protect participants by ensuring the confidentiality of:

(1) Records pertaining to any individual provided services, and
(2) The address or location where the services are provided.

The SSVF Program Office conducts annual reviews of grantee programs that include an assessment of policies and procedures for protecting client information. Many SSVF grantees utilize a combination of physical and electronic document management procedures, as well as conduct mobile office outreach and services. It is important that grantees assess their privacy and security policies at least once per year in order to ensure the highest level of protection of client information. Grantees utilizing or transitioning to electronic case file management systems, should ensure systems access is available for VA audits and other monitoring activities. Audit and monitoring activities should be given unrestricted access (read-only) to participant case files and related documents.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) protocols include standards for the privacy and security of information entered into HMIS. These standards were developed by HUD based on Health Insurance and Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) standards for securing and protecting client information. HUD has defined baseline standards that are required of any and all organizations (such as Continuum of Care staff, a homeless assistance provider, Veteran service organization, or HMIS software company) that record, use, or process personal protected information on homeless clients for an HMIS. Some communities have elected to adopt additional laws, protocols or policies to further enhance the privacy and security of information collected through HMIS. Agencies that participate in HMIS, including SSVF grantees, must comply with the baseline HUD standards and must also comply with any additional federal, state and local laws that require additional confidentiality protections. Grantees are required to enter data into HMIS for all members of the household receiving SSVF services. The only exception to this is for grantees who are victim service providers as defined by the Violence Against Women Act. Grantees must get a signed release of information specific to HMIS data elements from the participant prior to putting personal data into HMIS.

Under no circumstances should clients' personally identifiable information (such as names, social security numbers, dates of birth, SSN) be sent to anyone else over unencrypted email. This includes sending information internally or to the SSVF HMIS Technical Assistance Team.

For additional context on this policy and secure ways to work with the SSVF HMIS Technical Assistance Team, see the SSVF Data Security Policy of the VA Data Guide.

H. Veterans Rights

SSVF Grantees are required to display the Veterans Rights Poster. The poster must be visible to all Veterans who are served by SSVF. Locations that the Veterans Rights poster can be displayed include check-in desk, offices where Veterans are screened, Case worker offices, and other areas where Veterans interact with SSVF staff. Future audit, FOFA and other programmatic reviews will ensure each grantee is in compliance with the requirement. Failure to display the poster to each potential Veteran will result in corrective action.

The poster specifically address that each Veteran has the right…

- to be treated equally, professionally, and with respect, regardless of your gender, legal history, ability/disability, age, sexuality, race, ethnicity, housing status, or any other protected class
- to be assessed for available services as a Veteran with your Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) issued photo identification (ID), whether or not you have your DD214.
- to access or be directly referred to services you need for which you are eligible and that are available within your local community.
- to have your phone number and general location with a time you can be reached requested so you can receive a text message, phone call, or in-person follow-up within a reasonable time, and to assist you with applying for a subsidized Universal Services Administration Lifeline phone plan, when needed.

Each poster much provide a Grantee POC to contact if there are any questions or concerns.

I. Releasing Participants from Program

A grantee may establish reasonable requirements related to participant dismissals or terminations due to serious program rule infractions on the part of the participant or family. However, those requirements must be clearly communicated (in advance, in writing) to all participant households and a copy of the requirements must also be provided to VA. In the event a participant violates a grantee's program requirements, a grantee may stop providing assistance to the participant. Grantees may also resume assistance to a participant whose assistance was previously suspended. In terminating assistance to a participant, the grantee must first provide a formal process that recognizes the rights of individuals receiving assistance to due process in the termination decision. This process, at a minimum, must consist of:

(1) Written notice to the participant containing a clear statement of the reasons for termination,
(2) A review of the decision, in which the participant is given the opportunity to present written or oral objections before a grantee's staff member other than the staff member (or a subordinate of that staff member) who made or approved the termination decision, and

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(3) Prompt written notice of the final decision to the participant including completion of a Program Exit Checklist.

The SSVF Program fully endorses use of a Housing First approach and encourages grantees to target assistance to those Veterans in most need. As such, dismissal or termination policies should avoid unnecessarily terminating assistance due to program violations, unless in extreme cases. Unless basic SSVF Program requirements are not being met, grantees should not otherwise terminate assistance due to program rule infractions if such termination can be avoided. Such instances provide an opportunity for further proactive, progressive service delivery. For example, terminating assistance solely because a Veteran is using substances, refuses treatment or is not fully implementing their housing plan would not be consistent with a Housing First approach.

J. Grievance and Appeals Policy and Procedures

Grantees are required to establish an internal policy for processing and reviewing participant grievances and complaints. This policy should be presented to the participant household upon enrollment for services. Grantees are also required to establish a policy that allows for participant appeals to a rejection for services. The appeals policy requires the agency to provide the participant with the reason for rejection and the right to appeal it to agency supervisory staff. The policy must also include a review process and a timeframe established for such review. The appeals policy should be presented to the participant at the initial intake appointment.

The SSVF Program Office recognizes the positive and professional manner in which SSVF grantees are responding to Veteran complaints or grievances. In rare instances, it might not be possible to resolve disagreements or grievances within your program or local community. In these rare cases, Veterans can submit complaints or grievances to the SSVF program office at SSVF@va.gov. Grievances received by the SSVF Program Office will be processed internally and require grantees to respond to a request for information from the SSVF Regional Coordinator. Please note that SSVF Regional Coordinators do not provide direct assistance to Veterans as part of the grievance process.

K. Subcontractor Management

Grantees may subcontract to one or more third-party venders for a variety of services as determined by their program and outlined in their grant agreement. Each subcontracted relationship must have an Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place prior to any services being provided by the third party. Each Agreement/MOU must include descriptions of the type of activities that the subcontractor will perform, statement about amending the agreement, identify the period of performance, and must be signed by both parties. Additionally, the grantee must outline either in the Agreement/MOU, or in a separate policy and procedure, a description of how the subcontractor will be managed by the grantee and a description of the monitoring practices (i.e. how often, in what format).

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Grantees are responsible for ensuring that subcontractors are held to the same standards as the SSVF grantee regarding compliance with the Final Rule and OMB circulars. Grantees are responsible for the monitoring and oversight of subcontractors and must provide documentation of this monitoring and oversight during the grantee annual monitoring review. Grantees must assess subcontractor performance a minimum of quarterly and conduct an official on-site monitoring review of each subcontractor at least annually. Additionally, each subcontractor, regardless of the type of services provided, must maintain their own policies and procedures detailing the services that they will perform for the contract. The subcontractor must provide their SSVF policies and procedures for the grantee that will be reviewed during the annual VA audit.

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VIII. Fiscal Administration

A. Overview of HHS PMS Disbursement Platform

Supportive services grant funds are disbursed via the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Payment Management System (PMS). PMS is an internet-based system supported by staff from the HHS Division of Payment Management (DPM). Current HHS Payment Management System account users will use their existing username and password to access the SSVF grant account.

1. PMS Registration

Registration in the PMS is required for new grantees to draw down supportive services grant funds. To become registered users in the system, Grantees should visit the PSC website to request access (https://pmsapp.psc.gov/mps/app/userrequest). As part of the online access process, grantees need to upload SF-1199A. The SF-1199A provides the grantee's banking information to have funds electronically transmitted to grantee's banking institution. Users of the PMS are required to annually self-certify that they are authorized to use PMS and that they will use it in accordance with federal rules and regulations. The process for completing the annual self-certification is provided by the PMS PSC (https://pms.psc.gov/support/user-self-certification.html).

Finalizing PMS Registration

To complete the PMS registration, the SF-1199A must be sent uploaded to the PMS system after user access is granted. Once received by the PMS, grantee registration takes approximately one to three weeks to finalize. Once registered, the grantee will be sent a temporary password for PMS access via certified mail and can access the system to submit draw down requests, track past draw down transactions, and view the grantee's remaining available funds. Grantees can have up to six (6) user accounts. The SSVF grant funds are categorized in the HHS Payment Management System as Type B accounts. Email is the primary source of communication with PMS and assigned Liaisons. Grantees must ensure PMS users keep email addresses current to receive timely information.

2. Change of PMS Information

If a grantee changes its financial institution or banking account number, a new SF-1199A must be uploaded to the PMS website and the PMS liaison will make the updates to the organization's HHS PMS account. Grantees must also inform their SSVF Regional Coordinator of this change. To add new users or modify contact information for an existing PMS user, the grantee must access the same user access link noted above to update an existing user or add/delete users.

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B. Grant Draw Down Process

1. Overview of Disbursement

Grantees may draw down supportive services grant funds prospectively via the internet-based PMS in accordance with any restrictions laid out in the NOFA. Draw down requests are submitted and processed online via the request functions of the PMS platform. Once a draw down request is submitted, disbursement is completed by electronic funds transfer to the grantee's bank account the following business day. Grantees have three days to expend the funds that are drawn down from the HHS system. If funds are not expended within three days, a grantee must contact the VA to plan for paying interest on those funds.

Grantees must spend 90 percent of grant funds on supportive services, including Temporary Financial Assistance. The SSVF grant program allows grantees to spend a maximum of 10 percent for administrative costs. Although there is only one account to draw from, it is incumbent on the grantee to track all expenditures according to the submitted and approved budget on file with the SSVF Program Office.

To meet obligations for spending of SSVF funds and to ensure effective and efficient grant expenditure, grant draw downs are limited to the following quarterly maximums:

- Q1 – minimum 15%, maximum 35%
- Q2 – minimum 40% maximum 60%
- Q3 – minimum 65% maximum 80%
- Q4 - 100%

Grantees may request an exception to these maximum quarterly draw down limitations from the SSVF Regional Coordinator. Additionally, per the SSVF grant agreement, grantees must also meet the minimum quarterly draw down percentage milestones. If, during the grant year, VA determines that grantee spending is not meeting the minimum percentage milestones below, VA may elect to recoup projected unused funds and reprogram such funds to provide supportive services in areas with higher need. Please refer to "Funding Sweeps" for additional information related to quarterly spending milestones.

2. Payment Requests

Grantees must access PMS via the DPM website (https://pms.psc.gov/) to draw down SSVF Program grant funds. The PSC offers a New User Guide (https://pms.psc.gov/training/pms-user-guide.html) with step by step instructions on how to log in to the PMS online platform and how to make a request for payment. Additionally, PMS hosts Grant Recipient webinar training sessions for PMS users on a monthly basis. These two-hour sessions offer an overview of PMS, how to complete a payment request, how to perform account inquiries, how to run report requests, and how to correctly complete the Federal Financial Report (FFR). Registration requests for these trainings must be sent to PSC at least two days in advance of the event (https://pms.psc.gov/resources_and_training/grtraining.html).

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To make changes to payments or drawdown requests that have been processed, grantees must contact the VA PSC Liaison Accountant to request any reversals to previously approved payments. Any corrections made to the SSVF account will appear on the summary page report.

C. Eligible Expenses

Payment of SSVF grant funds up to the amount specified in the SSVF grant agreement will be made only for appropriately documented eligible expenses that are allowable, allocable, and reasonable costs of operating a program under the Supportive Services grant. . Eligible expenses must be in accordance with the applicable Federal Cost Principles set forth in OMB Circular A-122, Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations, codified at 2 CFR Part 235, 2 CFR 200 Subpart E Cost Principles. Additionally, expenses must be eligible per the grantee's approved SSVF budget and within budget limitations. Ineligible expenses are those costs charged by a grantee that VA determines to be unallowable based on applicable Federal cost principles, the SSVF Program regulations or the Supportive Services grant agreement. The following Sections 1 and 2 outline expenses that are eligible under the supportive services requirements of the SSVF Program.

1. Administrative Costs (10% Maximum)

Under the SSVF Program, a minimum of 90% of supportive services grant funds must be used to provide and coordinate the provision of supportive services to very low-income Veteran families who are occupying permanent housing. A maximum of 10% of supportive services grant funds may be used for administrative costs. Per Section 62.70 of the 38 CFR Part 62, administrative costs are defined as all direct and indirect costs associated with the management of the program. These costs include the administrative costs, both direct and indirect, of subcontractors. SSVF requires grantees to provide support documentation (payroll records, invoices, receipts etc.) for all costs and expenses associated with the administration of the SSVF grant.

Administrative costs should be placed in the Administrative section of an SSVF program budget. An approved Indirect Cost Rate is not considered adequate support or source documentation for costs listed in the Administrative section of the budget. Grantees are required to have a detailed breakout of these administrative costs along with any supporting documents for those expenses for auditing and oversight. Title 2 CFR 200.302 requires the financial management system of each non-Federal entity provide “records that identify adequately the source and application of funds for federally-funded activities. These records must contain information pertaining to Federal awards, authorizations, obligations, unobligated balances, assets, expenditures, income and interest and be supported by source documentation.”

Interim MACA Guidance (January 2021)

While SSVF does not allow or adhere to any indirect cost rate or ratio approved by other federal agencies, SSVF does recognize the administrative efforts to ensure compliance requirements are satisfied and has decided to allow the use of a Modified Admin Cost Approach (MACA) that

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is similar to the Simplified Allocation Method, Multiple Allocation Base Method, or the Special Indirect Cost Rates as referenced in 2 CFR 200 Subpart F Audit Requirements Appendix IV – Indirect (F&A) Cost Identification and Assignment, and Rate Determination for Nonprofit Organizations. This approach is not tied to an existing Indirect Cost Rate and can be scaled up or down depending each organizational structure.

Grantees who do not elect to use the Modified Admin Cost Approach, will need to ensure adequate support for administrative cost are properly accounted for and all supporting document are available (payroll records, invoices, receipts etc.) to satisfy the traditional administrative cost review/test procedures.

All expenses approved for use with the MACA must be detailed and listed within the approved budget on file with the SSVF Program Office. A single line item listing a general/generic "Administrative Expenses" is no longer acceptable and any administrative cost charged to SSVF must be listed by line item to be considered as an approved budget line item. The SSVF Application Budget "Administrative Expenses" section will highlight the approach the grantee elects to follow for their administrative costs for the given award period. Grantees will have the opportunity to select the traditional or MACA approach.
The traditional approach requires grantees provide support documentation (payroll records, invoices, receipts etc.) for all costs and expenses associated with the administration of the SSVF grant.

For MACA, approved expenses are limited to General Administration and General Expenses (GA/GE) that are allowable and reasonable per existing guidance. GA/GE must support and benefit the efforts and mission of SSVF activities within the organization.
GA/GE include overall general executive and administrative offices of the organization and other expenses of a general nature which do not relate solely to any major function of the organization. Examples of this category include central offices, such as the director's office, the office of finance, human resources/personnel, business services, budget and planning, safety and risk management, general counsel, and management information systems.
Administrative cost charged to SSVF via the MACA must be reasonable and properly supported by an objective, quantitative and auditable method of allocating administrative costs that adequately define "Allocation Basis" and "Drivers" that will produce an equitable result in consideration of relative benefits. A spreadsheet is available for use or reference in developing the organizations' MACA Summary highlighting the organizational data, administrative expenses, and drivers used.

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Under MACA, additional information may be required, depending on the "Drivers" used to determine reasonableness of the ratios used. For example – to determine the percentage of overall expenses to SSVF expenses, the audit team will require GL detail for the entire organization and not just SSVF GL detail to determine reasonableness and accuracy of the driver ratios used for administrative costs.

Grantees electing to participate in either the traditional method for charging administrative costs or the MACA method, must have a written policy that highlights the grantees approach to be: (1) reasonable and consistently applied; (2) supported by accurate and current data; (3) appropriate to the particular cost being distributed; (4) one which results in an accurate measure of the benefits provided to each activity of the organization; and (5) updated in the event of significant changes in operational or fiscal environment that the MACA will be re-evaluated to ensure existing drivers and calculations remain relevant.

Specific internal controls must be in place, as demonstrated through policy, procedure and practice, to ensure administrative cost are not allocated to indirect cost that have been charged to SSVF as a direct cost (double-charging of expenses).

Through periodic audits of SSVF activities, an analysis of allocation methodologies and related drivers will be conducted to ensure the administrative cost charged to SSVF are reasonable and in proportion to other expenses for shared cost centers and or other federal funding activities. Noncompliance or apparent deviation from the intent and reasonable use of the MACA, could result in an enhanced audit approach requiring additional review and testing, amounts in question being subject to recoupment, and the ability to participate in the alternative approach may be limited or withdrawn and the traditional approach requiring all support documentation (payroll records, invoices, receipts etc.) for all costs and expenses associated with the administration of the SSVF grant be retained and available for detailed review. The alternative approach must still conform to the requirements that all administrative cost are allowable, allocable, and reasonable costs of operating a program under the Supportive Services grant. The grantee's CFO, or comparable title/position must certify (annually) that the MACA used by the grantee is in accordance with this guidance and other applicable cost principles to be provided at the time of the audit.

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2. Provision and Coordination of Supportive Services (90% Minimum)

a. Outreach

Eligible expenses associated with providing outreach services may include costs such as outreach staff time, promotional materials limited to business cards, flyers and pamphlets. The expenses must directly connect to the overall SSVF Grantee comprehensive outreach plan. Items must DIRECTLY contribute to the effectiveness of reducing homelessness or housing placement/prevention. Grantees are encouraged to leverage non-SSVF funding for items that they see as beneficial to the outreach process.

SSVF expenses can be used to create outreach (hygiene) kits when grantee staff are conducting direct outreach to Veterans living on the streets, encampments, vehicles or other unsheltered homeless situations. These outreach kits should typically include items that will assist with basic needs of homeless Veterans. SSVF Grantees are encouraged to solicit donations, volunteer community groups or use other funds to create outreach kits. If this is not possible then SSVF funds are allowable on a limited basis. As with any purchase bulk

purchases that will extend past the current grant year are unallowable as is increasing cost to branding items with the SSVF logo unless it is supported by a lower cost. Typically, a kit can include one or two of the following items:

- Pair of cotton socks
- Pair of underwear
- Travel size first aid kit
- Razor
- Deodorant
- Handwipes
- Bug repellent
- Sunscreen, lip balm

Major outreach events such as Stand Downs, County and/or Local engagements should limit outreach materials to items such as pamphlets or informational cards/flyers for community stakeholder's education and referrals. Items such as outreach kits should only be provided to veterans for active engagement into the SSVF program. Other items not defined in an outreach kit or as defined below are not allowable.

Ineligible items include trucker hats, beanies, gloves, scarves, flashlights, sweatshirts, hoodies, jackets, key chains pins, lanyards, pens and buttons.
Any article of clothing for employee identification used during outreach is required to meet the criteria for "Uniforms" as per the Uniformed Guidance (2 CFR 200). Clothing for outreach must be evaluated to ensure who is receiving the clothing and how is it contributing to outreach activities for Veterans or staff (Identify SSVF and reflect the number of employees dedicated to SSVF activities).

b. Advertising, Marketing, and Public Relations
As these costs do not directly provide benefit to homeless and at-risk Veteran households, expenditures in this area must be carefully planned and targeted to maximize their impact and value.

The term "advertising costs" refers to the costs of advertising media and corollary administrative costs. Advertising media include magazines, newspapers, radio and television, direct mail, exhibits, electronic or computer transmittals, and the like. The only allowable advertising costs are those that are solely for:
The recruitment of personnel required by the non-Federal entity for performance of a Federal award.

- The procurement of goods and services for the performance of a Federal award.
- The disposal of scrap or surplus materials acquired in the performance of a Federal award except when non-Federal entities are reimbursed for disposal costs at a predetermined amount.

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- Program outreach and other specific purposes necessary to meet the requirements of the Federal award.

Grantees must ensure care was taken to advertise or market the SSVF program itself and if combining with other agency programs, that the appropriate allocation methods are applied and documented to support expenses. The advertising and marketing must directly connect to the overall SSVF Grantee comprehensive outreach plan.
The term "marketing materials" include business cards, flyers, pamphlets, and brochures.
SSVF may pay for SSVF advertising and or marketing materials to enhance conventional staff-driven outreach provided that all of the following terms are met before incurring such costs:

- Traditional staff-driven methods of outreach were tried but target numbers are still unmet.
- An assessment was performed to ensure chosen marketing method will be effective.
- A comparison was made between effectiveness of staff outreach versus marketing.
- Care was taken to advertise or market the SSVF program itself and if combining with other agency programs, that the appropriate allocation methods are applied and documented to support expenses.
- Marketing was designed to ensure effectiveness in connecting Veterans to SSVF.
- Grantees must develop a "SSVF Cost-Benefit Analysis for Advertising and Marketing" packet to document compliance efforts and address the requirements for both Advertising and Marketing listed above.
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Grantee's must retain a copy of the marketing materials or an example of the applicable media used with the "SSVF Cost-Benefit Analysis for Advertising and Marketing" packet.
The term "public relations" includes community relations and means those activities dedicated to maintaining the image of the non-Federal entity or maintaining or promoting understanding and favorable relations with the community or public at large or any segment of the public. The only allowable public relations costs are:

- Costs specifically required by the Federal award.
- Costs of communicating with the public and press pertaining to specific activities.
- Accomplishments which result from performance of the Federal award (these costs are considered necessary as part of the outreach effort for the Federal award).
- Costs of conducting general liaison with news media and government public relations officers, to the extent that such activities are limited to communication and liaison necessary to keep the public informed on matters of public concern, such as notices of funding opportunities and financial matters, etc.
- Unallowable advertising and public relations costs include the following:
- All advertising and public relations costs other than as specified in the paragraphs on reasonableness and unallowable costs under Compensation below.
- Costs of meetings, conventions, convocations, or other events related to other activities of the entity including:
    - Costs of displays, demonstrations, and exhibits.

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- Costs of meeting rooms, hospitality suites, and other special facilities used in conjunction with shows and other special events.
- Salaries and wages of employees engaged in setting up and displaying exhibits, making demonstrations, and providing briefings.
- Costs of promotional items and memorabilia, including models, gifts, and souvenirs.
- Costs of advertising and public relations designed solely to promote the non-Federal entity.

i. Compensation — personal services

Compensation for personal services includes all remuneration, paid currently or accrued, for services of employees rendered during the period of performance under the Federal award, including but not necessarily limited to wages and salaries. Compensation for personal services may also include fringe benefits. Costs of compensation are allowable to the extent that they satisfy the specific requirements of this part, and that the total compensation for individual employees:

- Is reasonable for the services rendered and conforms to the established written policy of the Non-Federal entity consistently applied to both Federal and non-Federal activities.
- Follows an appointment made in accordance with a non-Federal entity's laws and/or rules or written policies and meets the requirements of Federal statute, where applicable.

Reasonableness: Compensation for employees engaged in work on Federal awards will be considered reasonable to the extent that it is consistent with that paid for similar work in other activities of the non-Federal entity. In cases where the kinds of employees required for Federal awards are not found in the other activities of the non-Federal entity, compensation will be considered reasonable to the extent that it is comparable to that paid for similar work in the labor market in which the non-Federal entity competes for the kind of employees involved.

Professional activities outside the non-Federal entity: Unless an arrangement is specifically authorized by a Federal awarding agency, a non-Federal entity must follow its written non-Federal-entity-wide policies and practices concerning the permissible extent of professional services that can be provided outside the non-Federal entity for non-organizational compensation. Where such non-Federal-entity-wide written policies do not exist or do not adequately define the permissible extent of consulting or other non-organizational activities undertaken for extra outside pay, the Federal government may require that the effort of professional staff working on Federal awards be allocated between:

- Non-Federal entity activities, and
- Non-organizational professional activities. If the Federal awarding agency considers the extent of non-organizational professional effort excessive or inconsistent with the conflicts-of-interest terms and conditions of the Federal award, appropriate arrangements governing compensation will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

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Special considerations: Special considerations in determining allowability of compensation will be given to any change in a non-Federal entity's compensation policy resulting in a substantial increase in its employees' level of compensation (particularly when the change is concurrent with an increase in the ratio of Federal awards to other activities) or any change in the treatment of allowability of specific types of compensation due to changes in Federal policy.

Incentive compensation: Incentive compensation to employees based on cost reduction, or efficient performance, suggestion awards, safety awards, etc., is allowable to the extent that the overall compensation is determined to be reasonable and such costs are paid or accrued pursuant to an agreement entered into in good faith between the non-Federal entity and the employees before the services were rendered, or pursuant to an established plan followed by the non-Federal entity so consistently as to imply, in effect, an agreement to make such payment.

Nonprofit organizations: For compensation to members of nonprofit organizations, trustees, directors, associates, officers, or the immediate families thereof, determination must be made that such compensation is reasonable for the actual personal services rendered rather than a distribution of earnings in excess of costs. This may include directors' and executive committee members' fees, incentive awards, allowances for off-site pay, incentive pay, location allowances, hardship pay, and cost-of-living differentials.

Timecards-Employee Hours: Must conform to non-Federal entity's written policies, be reasonable and meet the Standards for Documentation of Personnel Expenses:

- Be supported by a system of internal control which provides reasonable assurance that the charges are accurate, allowable, and properly allocated.
- Be incorporated into the official records of the non-Federal entity.
- Reasonably reflect the total activity for which the employee is compensated by the non-Federal entity, not exceeding 100% of compensated activities.
- Encompass both federally assisted, and all other activities compensated by the non-Federal entity on an integrated basis but may include the use of subsidiary records as defined in the non-Federal entity's written policy.
- Comply with the established accounting policies and practices of the non-Federal entity.
- Support the distribution of the employee's salary or wages among specific activities or cost objectives if the employee works on more than one Federal award; a Federal award and non-Federal award; an indirect cost activity and a direct cost activity; two or more indirect activities which are allocated using different allocation bases; or an unallowable activity and a direct or indirect cost activity.

Budget estimates alone do not qualify as support for charges to Federal awards, but may be used for interim accounting purposes. All payroll documentation must approved by a responsible official of the organization. Overtime, as defined, is only allowable with prior approval by the awarding agency. However, the SSVF Program Office will not pre-approve

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overtime authorizations but grantees should ensure that they meet the below guidelines along with having sufficient documentation to support any overtime pay exception.

Overtime, extra-pay shift, and multi-shift premiums: Premiums for overtime, extra-pay shifts, and multi-shift work are allowable only with the prior approval of the awarding agency except:

- When necessary to cope with emergencies, such as those resulting from accidents, natural disasters, breakdowns of equipment, or occasional operational bottlenecks of a sporadic nature.
- When employees are performing indirect functions, such as administration, maintenance, or accounting.
- In the performance of tests, laboratory procedures, or other similar operations which are continuous in nature and cannot reasonably be interrupted or otherwise completed.
- When lower overall cost to the Federal Government will result.

j. SSVF Travel Costs Related to Training

Travel is allowable as a direct program cost only when such travel will provide a direct benefit to the SSVF program and grant award. Travel costs have a high audit profile and are routinely examined by auditors and other government stakeholders to determine the reason and scope of the travel. Grantees must be prudent with all funds and must be aware of the perception related to travel costs, grantees should be thoughtful when determining the number of employees to send to each training or conference. Conferences should be directly related to the goal of ending Veteran Homelessness. One example would be sending several staff to national conferences focusing upon ending homelessness. Grantees should cost share training cost with other programs/funding streams within their agency Grantees should assess currently resources, like the LMS site (Learning.tacinc.org), or local VA resources like the SAVE training for Suicide Prevention before expending funds on external training. The use of teleconferences should be considered for any meeting before travel funds are used. The grantee/traveler are required to document in their files how the travel directly benefits/relates to the SSVF grant and project. All travel and training expense must adhere to Federal Travel Regulations. Staff travel Per-Diem expense reimbursement is allowable if it meets the reimbursement standards. As a reminder, a budgeted line item for Training/Conference expense for non-VA mandated training cannot exceed 1% of grant award.

Please note, grantees must attend VA-mandated training sessions. Trainings will be conducted by VA and its technical assistance providers. Information on training, including eligible training expenses, will be emailed to grantees. It is also expected that grantees will provide training for case managers and staff who will provide supportive services to very low-income Veteran families. VA mandated training will be provided at no-cost to grantees. In rare instances, VA may also strongly encourage external training that is considered mission critical. An example of this is mediation training to support SSVF's Rapid Resolution initiative. In such circumstances, VA will not apply the 1% cap to such training costs.

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k. Case Management

Eligible expenses include those associated with providing case management services such as case manager salaries and other program (non-administrative) staff time. These expenses may include the costs associated with training and supervising case management staff. The time associated with case managers entering participant records into HMIS can also be budgeted in this section.

l. Assistance in Obtaining VA Benefits

Grantees are required to assist participants in obtaining VA benefits such as vocational and rehabilitation counseling, employment and training service, educational assistance and health care services. This supportive service is a component of each participant's ongoing needs assessment and, as it is primarily a referral service, does not involve specific expenses beyond non-administrative staff time for the case manager. Documentation supporting these efforts should be referenced within the participants case notes and the Supportive Services Referrals Tracking Tool (Section XIII. Forms M. Supportive Services Referrals Tracking Tool page 206).

m. Assistance in Obtaining and Coordinating Other Public Benefits

Grantees are required to assist participants to obtain, and coordinate the provision of public benefits that are being provided by Federal, State, local, or tribal agencies, or any eligible entity in the area or community served by the grantee. Services included in this section are referrals for health care services, referrals for daily living services, personal financial planning services, transportation services, income support services, fiduciary and representative payee services, legal services, child care services and housing counseling. At a minimum, these services will involve the time of the case manager who provides and coordinates referrals. Professional services are also an eligible expense (e.g., legal services, real estate services). In some cases, grantees may be able to directly provide necessary supportive services; however, it may sometimes be more cost-effective for grantees to provide a referral for participants to obtain a service in the community. Costs involved with administering these services, such as administrative staff time and supplies, are included in the program's administrative costs. Documentation supporting these efforts should be referenced within the participants case notes and the Supportive Services Referrals Tracking Tool (Section XIII. Forms M. Supportive Services Referrals Tracking Tool page 206).

n. Temporary Financial Assistance

A temporary financial assistance payment made on behalf of a program participant must help the participant remain in permanent housing or obtain permanent housing and meet all other requirements set forth in 38 CFR 62.33 and 38 CFR 62.34. Temporary financial assistance must be reasonable and must be provided as part of a plan to address the participant's future ability to pay their own expenses. Outside of such a plan, temporary financial assistance payments are not an eligible use of SSVF Program funds.

Temporary financial assistance payments should augment the grantee's program by supporting the housing stability of participants and should not consume a disproportionate amount of grant funds. Grantees must ensure that temporary financial assistance payments do not exceed the

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percentage of total grant funds established in the NOFA. Temporary financial assistance must comply with the limitations set out in 38 CFR 62.33 and 62.34. Eligible temporary financial assistance restrictions and suggested documentation are shown in the table below (further restrictions may be set forth in the NOFA).

Temporary financial assistance must be paid directly to a third party on behalf of a participant. Temporary financial assistance must never be paid directly to a participant. Grantees should exercise due diligence to ensure that each payment is made to a legitimate third party vendor. This can be done through gathering W-9s for vendors, checking tax assessor databases to verify the true owner of a property, gathering property management agreements, or others. Grantees must also assure that suitable internal checks are in place to prevent payments to vendors where a conflict of interest exits; for instance, referrals should not be steered to vendors who have familial relationships to employees or board members of the grantee.

Temporary Assistance	Associated Restrictions	Suggested Documentation
Child Care services	• Provided by "eligible child care provider." • Max. 10 months in a 2-year period, per child • Max. 6 months in a 12-month period, per child **Extremely Low Income**[7] • Max. 12 months in a 2-year period, per child • Max. 9 months in a 12-month period, per child	• Copy of invoice for services • Receipt of payment
Transportation services	• No restrictions on public transportation • Max. $1,200 in car repair in 2-year period	• Copy of bill for services • Receipt of payment
Rental assistance	• Eligible for payments currently due or in arrears (*Number of months in arrears paid for with rental assistance counts towards the max. allowable months of assistance*). • Penalties or fees (e.g. application fees) must be reasonable and must directly allow participant to obtain/ remain in permanent housing. • In compliance with rent reasonableness[8] • Max. 10 months in a 2-year period.	• Copy of payment demand from landlord/ management company, clearly identifying participant and unit • Document indicating participant's portion of rent • Receipt of payment • Signed lease

[7] See Extremely Low Income definition in Section I.C. Definitions

[8] Rent reasonableness means the total rent charged for a unit must be reasonable in relation to the rents being charged during the same time period for comparable units in the private unassisted market and must not exceed rents charged by the property owner during the same time period.

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Temporary Assistance	Associated Restrictions	Suggested Documentation
	• Max. 6 months in 12-month period. **Extremely Low Income**[9] • Max. 12 months in a 2-year period • Max. 9 months in 12-month period	• W9 from landlord required for payment • Required Habitability Standards inspection (if new/different unit)
Utility payment assistance	• Eligible for payments currently due or arrears • Participant, legal representative or a member of the household must have an account in his/her name with a utility company or proof of responsibility to make payments. • Max. 10 months in 2-year period • Max. 6 months in 12-month period **Extremely Low Income** • Max. 12 months in 2-year period • Max. 9 months in 12-month period	• Copy of utility bill, itemized by month • Proof that participant is responsible for payment • Receipt of payment • Required Habitability Standards inspection (if new/different unit)
Security deposits/ Utility deposits	• Security deposit assistance limited to one time during a 2-year period • Utility deposit assistance limited to one time during a 2-year period • Approved deposits do not count towards maximum rental assistance limitations.	• Written statement from landlord/management or utility company that deposit is required. In cases where water and power are not included in rent and are billed separately, this is to be included in the statement from landlord/t. • Signed lease or utility agreement • Required Habitability Standards inspection (if new/different unit) • Receipt of payment
Moving costs	• Max. of cost of one move to permanent housing during a 2-year period	• Copy of receipts for: moving costs, short-term storage fees • Receipt of payment

[9] See Extremely Low Income definition in Section I.C. Definitions

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Temporary Assistance	Associated Restrictions	Suggested Documentation
	• Short-term storage for a max. of 3 months or until participant is in permanent housing, whichever is shorter	
General Housing Stability Assistance	• Max. of $1,500 per participant household for "four classes" during 2-year period • Max. of $500 per participant household for items for life/safety (falls within $1,500 max) • Broker fees allowable once in a 2-year period	• Copy of bill or invoice • Copy of receipts for allowable expenses
Emergency Housing Assistance	• Max. 45 days for Veteran with dependents • Max. 72 hours for single Veterans - extension in limited circumstances up to 45 days. • May be used once during 2-year period • At least one viable option for a permanent housing unit must be identified for participant who is receiving this assistance. • No space available at community shelter • Cost must be reasonable	• Copy of invoice and receipt • Emergency Housing Assistance Verification Form

Payments cannot be made on behalf of the participant for the same period and for the same cost types that are being provided for the same participant through another Federal, State or local subsidy program.

Grantees should maintain records that justify the provision of temporary financial assistance payments. Such records should include the details and documentation of the payment as well as the participant's housing stability plan. The plan provided must justify the provision of the temporary financial assistance in terms of the urgency of the assistance at the time of payment, as well as the participant's plan to pay the costs for housing in the future.

o. Other Supportive Services

In accordance with grantees' grant agreements or otherwise approved by VA, other supportive services may be provided.

D. Financial Close Outs

All SSVF grant funds must be expended by the end of the contract year. Any remaining funds will be returned to the Department of the Treasury. SSVF grantees will have 45 days from the end of the agreement term to finalize programmatic and financial close outs. Subcontractors are held to the same standards as the SSVF grantee regarding compliance with the Final Rule and

OMB circulars. Grantees are responsible for the monitoring and oversight of subcontractors, as well as maintaining appropriate financial and program performance documentation.

Grantees must submit all required final reports no later than 45 days after the end of the grant term.

Under 38 CFR 62.71, grantees are required to comply with VA reporting procedures. For SSVF, grantees are required to complete the Federal Financial Report (FFR) or (SF-425). Grantees must complete this report within the Payment Management System. The Federal Financial Report (FFR or SF-425) is a single form that consolidates the Financial Status Report and the Federal Cash Transaction Report and the PMS has a FFR subsystem that allows users to complete the report electronically. SSVF grantees may access the FFR Financial Status Report by logging in to the PMS online platform with their SSVF PMS account number. The SSVF grant funds are categorized in the HHS Payment Management System as Type B accounts. SSVF grantees are not required to submit quarterly cash transaction reports and, therefore, VA requires SSVF grantees to file the Federal Financial Status Report (FSR) on an annual basis, within 45 days of the close of the grant. Please note in past years, SSVF grants required the submission of an FSR for each SSVF subaccount (Administrative Costs (ADM), Supportive Services Costs (SER), and Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA)), however starting in FY19 there will only be one account with one corresponding FSR to complete. Grantees must ensure the FFR FSR is submitted in PMS on time. If PMS does not receive your report by the due date (within 45 days of grant end date), funds may not be released for any SSVF grants related to the grantee's account until the report is completed. For SSVF, the reporting period end date shall be the end date of the project or grant period. Grantees who receive an extension from the SSVF program office shall use 45 days from the date the extension ended.

Additional annual reports, such as the Closeout Certification and Financial Expenditure Report, shall be submitted no later than 45 days after the project or grant period end date. The VA's SSVF Program Office will provide instructions to SSVF grantees regarding annual reports.

E. Documentation Required

Grantees must use adequate financial management systems that follow generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and provide adequate fiscal control and accounting records, including cost accounting records supported by documentation. Grantees' financial management systems must comply with the requirements of 38 CFR 49.21. Grantees must also maintain all back up documentation and invoices to support the costs paid with SSVF funds. This pertains to all funds drawn down under Services, TFA, and Admin. This documentation will be reviewed during the scheduled audit.

Grantees must maintain financial policies and procedures specific to the practices within their agency. Policies should include, but not be limited to, written procedures for: recording financial transactions, approving financial transactions, ensuring separation of staff duties around

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financial transactions, record retention, secure storage of files, and maintaining a chart of accounts.

F. Ineligible Activities

SSVF grantees are encouraged to read OMB Circular A-122, Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations, to 2 CFR 200 Subpart E. Supportive services grant funds may not be used to pay for any of the following items (Note: this list of ineligible activities is not exhaustive):

- Mortgage costs or costs needed by homeowners to assist with any fees, taxes, or other costs of refinancing;
- Construction or rehabilitation of buildings;
- Credit card bills or other consumer debt;
- Extensive car repairs for participant households (beyond the eligible $1,200 in repairs/ maintenance);
- Car payments for participants;
- Car or vehicle purchases by the agency for SSVF activity
- Medical or dental care and medicines for Mental health, substance use, or other therapeutic interventions designed to treat Axis I or II diagnostic conditions in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5th Addition;
- Home care and home health aides typically used to provide care in support of daily living activities (Note: This includes care that is focused on treatment for an injury or illness, rehabilitation, or other assistance generally required to assist those with handicaps or other physical limitations.);
- Food, water and beverages including food provided at staff and other meetings or trainings (except as a qualified emergency supply);
- Appliances and food, water, or other items purchased for staff use (refrigerators, water dispensers, coffee makers, microwave ovens, ovens, etc.)
- Pet care, including additional deposit for pet;
- Entertainment activities;
- Direct cash assistance to program participants;
- Purchase of gift cards for program participants;
- Court-ordered judgments or fines. Note that late rent fees are an allowable expense.
- Court-ordered fees that are related to a court order/adjudication;
- Petty cash for program staff or
- Gift cards of any kind

No bulk purchases of items are allowed, unless each item is necessary for a specific identified Veteran family at the time of purchase. Any TFA purchases made must be tied directly to an eligible SSVF Veteran family. For example, an agency cannot buy bulk household goods with SSVF funds to be provided to Veterans as needed. An agency would have to purchase items with other agency funds, and reimburse themselves as SSVF Veteran family needs arise, or buy each item as needed.

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Funds may not be released directly to the participant. All funds are to be issued to a third party such as a landlord or utility company.

G. Funding Sweeps

VA regularly reviews grantee expenditures to ensure that funds are being used in a manner consistent with programs goals and regulations. It is expected that grantee spending will be consistent across quarters as significant variance, particularly lower than expected spending, may indicate either a lower demand for services or difficulty in managing funds. Per the SSVF grant agreement, if, during the grant year, the VA determines that grantee spending is not meeting the level expected at key milestones indicated below, VA may elect to recoup projected unused funds and reprogram such funds to provide supportive services in areas with higher need. Reductions will be calculated based on the total amount of payment requests submitted in PMS by 5:00 p.m. **Eastern Time** on the last business day of the quarter. Should VA elect to recoup unspent funds, reductions in available grant funds would take place the second business day following the end of the quarter. VA expects grantees to use these targets as guidelines. Grantees may offer, or VA may request, that unspent funding be returned for use in other areas.

i. By the end of the first quarter of the grantee's supportive services annualized grant award period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds is fewer than 15% of total supportive services grant award. (During this same period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds may not exceed 35 percent of the total supportive services grant award.)
ii. By the end of the second quarter of the grantee's supportive services annualized grant award period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds is fewer than 40% of total supportive services grant award. (During this same period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds may not exceed 60 percent of the total supportive services grant award.)
iii. By the end of the third quarter of the grantee's supportive services annualized grant award period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds is fewer than 65% of total supportive services grant award. (During this same period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds may not exceed 80 percent of the total supportive services grant award).

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IX. Training and Evaluation

A. SSVF Program Staff Training and Mentor Program

The SSVF Program Office Website and the Housing Skills Practice Center offer a broad introduction to the SSVF program. Each SSVF grantee is expected to share the orientation materials with new program staff as part of their organization's onboarding process. New staff should read all materials in their entirety and review the resources and materials. Grantees should confirm that new staff has read required all the required materials during their annual certification process. Further directions may be provided to grantees for using the Housing Skills Practice Center Learning Management System for onboarding and other required training needs.

The SSVF Program Office offers a Mentor Program, which identifies “Mentor Sites” that have effectively developed interventions that successfully meet VA’s goals of preventing and ending homelessness. Mentor Sites work with new grantees or grantees who have turnover in leadership and need to accelerate their skill development and knowledge acquisition of the SSVF Program. Mentor Sites will provide experiential, rather than didactic training, as the latter will continue to be offered through VA’s technical assistance provider. Grantees are encouraged to have a program manager spend a week at their assigned Mentor Site to observe how that program organizes and delivers SSVF services. It is hoped that by shadowing key Mentor Site SSVF staff, grantees will be better able to apply formal training and quickly organize effective and productive services upon return to their home agency.

In addition, grantees must attend VA-mandated training sessions. Trainings will be conducted by VA and its technical assistance providers. Information on training, including eligible training expenses, will be emailed to grantees. It is also expected that grantees will provide training for case managers and staff who will provide supportive services to very low-income Veteran families. VA mandated training will be provided at no-cost to grantees. In rare instances, VA may also strongly encourage external training that is considered mission critical. An example of this is mediation training to support SSVF’s Rapid Resolution initiative. In such circumstances, VA will not apply the 1% cap to such training costs.

B. Ensuring Adequate Fiscal and Operational Controls

The HHS Payment Management System systematically manages the disbursement of SSVF Program funds. The HHS Payment Management System provides the SSVF Program Office with electronic financial reports to ensure effective management of program activities, as well as timely and accurate financial reporting.

SSVF Grantees expending $750,000 or more in federal awards during their fiscal year has met the audit requirements of 2 CFR 200 for that fiscal year in accordance with the provisions of Subpart F—Audit Requirements and must have a single audit or program-specific audit

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(previously A-133) conducted for that year. The single audit is then submitted to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse with 9 months of the end of the fiscal year. Grantees that are not over the $750,000 threshold requiring a single audit cannot use SSVF fund for an audit and are not required to complete a single audit.

VA's Office of Business Oversight (OBO) will ensure grant accountability by performing fiscal audits for selected SSVF Program grantees. These audits will include an evaluation of costs to confirm compliance with applicable OMB circulars, the SSVF Program Final Rule and NOFA. The Payment Data Inquiry within the HHS Payment Management System lists all account transactions for the organization and can be customized by date and specific grant account. The report can be printed and provided to auditors.

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X. Reporting Requirements

A. Goals

The reporting requirements in 38 CFR 62.71 have been designed to provide VA with the information required to assess the outcomes associated with grantees' programs. VA anticipates grantees' programs will assist in reducing the number of Veteran families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Grantees should strive to meet the goals and expectations laid out in their grant agreement, resolution, and budget, including but not limited to: services provided, geographic regions served, projected households to be served, staffing plans, and others. It is the responsibility of the grantee to contact the VA with any requests for grant agreement amendments, program changes, and/or budget changes.

B. Reporting Process

1. HMIS

Grantees are required to enter data on all participants into HMIS.[10] SSVF grantees are required to either enter directly, or export, SSVF client and household data into the HMIS database(s) for each CoC(s) that they serve with their grant. CoCs utilize this data to track outcomes and gain a full understanding of the landscape of homelessness for their service region. HMIS data is also used to track and help assess grantee performance

The VA Data Guide[11] provides comprehensive guidance on HMIS setup for SSVF grants, data collection and data quality requirements, reporting, and other data-related topics to assist grantees and sub-grantees with meeting data collection requirements. Grantees should develop a Data Quality Plan to include completeness, timeliness, and accuracy of HMIS data. The plan should also identify details around staff responsibility including: timelines for data entry and HMIS Repository uploads, and ongoing quality assurance procedures. If a grantee's HMIS does not allow for data fields included in the VA Data Guide, the grantee should reach out to their HMIS administrator.

On a monthly basis, grantees will upload client-level SSVF data from the HMIS system in which SSVF Program data are managed to a secure SSVF Data Repository ("Repository") managed by VA. Monthly uploads are required within the first three days of each month to be considered on time. Modified, corrected and late uploads are accepted by the 9th day of each month, unless otherwise notified by VA or SSVF HMIS Technical Assistance staff

[10] Only programs whose primary mission is to serve victims of domestic violence are prohibited by VAWA from entering client data into HMIS. All other SSVF grantees are required to collect and enter data for 100% of SSVF participants into HMIS.

[11] SSVF HMIS resources can be found at https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/?page=/official_guide/homeless_management_info_system

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(ssvfhmis@abtassoc.com). Each upload of SSVF data to the Repository will contain a complete data set reflecting grant period-to-date program activity. The end date will always be the date on which the grantee is generating the report.

The format for the upload of SSVF Program data to the Repository is the HUD HMIS Comma-Separated Value (CSV) Format.[12] A subset of the complete set of CSV files will be required. The VA Data Guide includes detailed information on the files required as well as specific data quality requirements for relevant fields.

Data exported from HMIS should be packaged in a ZIP or RAR file prior to upload to the Repository. For detailed specifications, upload instructions, data quality standards, and data use and disclosure descriptions, please read the most recent VA Data Guide available on the SSVF website:

https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/?page=/official_guide/homeless_management_info_system

2. SSVF Grants Management System

The SSVF Program Office utilizes an online grants management solution that allows for a streamlined and standardized process for managing all SSVF grant data, from application receipt, review, award, grant oversight, and grant completion. In an effort to automate paper-driven tasks, to improve methods for tracking grantee compliance with guidelines and regulatory expectations, and to allow grantees more time applying their expertise to service provision, all grantees are required to utilize the Grants Management System,

C. Process of Program Remediation

The Office of Business Oversight (OBO) conducts monitoring visits and audits on behalf of the SSVF Program Office. Additionally, grantees may be selected to receive an internal fiscal audit. Based on these oversight mechanisms, coupled with the assessment of grantee reporting requirements, monitoring procedures may result in a recommendation that grantees develop a management improvement plan or, in cases where there are findings or concerns, the grantee may be required to submit a corrective action plan. It is the responsibility of the grantee to contact the VA for any matters related to allegations of impropriety and to immediately address any and all allegations through the use of the appropriate VA mechanism.

1. Corrective Actions

In accordance with 38 CFR 62.60(b), if a grantee's actual SSVF grant expenditures vary from the amount disbursed for a given quarter or actual SSVF activities vary from the grantee's program description provided in the grant agreement, VA may require that the grantee initiate,

[12] For complete documentation of the current HUD HMIS CSV format, see http://www.hudhdx.info/VendorResources.aspx.

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develop and submit to VA for approval a Corrective Action Plan (CAP). Such variances in activities are measured according to targets established in the grant agreement, requirements for the use of temporary financial assistance, and mandated SSVF data reporting requirements. The CAP must identify the expenditure or activity source that caused the deviation, describe the reason(s) for the variance, provide specific proposed corrective action(s), and provide a timetable for accomplishment of the corrective action. After receipt of the CAP, VA will send written notification to the grantee indicating that the CAP is approved or disapproved. If disapproved, VA will make helpful suggestions to improve the proposed CAP and request resubmission, or take other actions in accordance with 38 CFR Part 62.

2. Allegations of Impropriety

Any and all allegations of impropriety by the grantee, VA employees, or participant households must be addressed immediately and documented through use of the appropriate VA mechanism (i.e., SSVF Program Office or Office of Inspector General (OIG).

i. Information about actual or possible violations of criminal laws related to VA programs, operations, facilities, or involving VA employees, where the violation of criminal law occurs on VA premises, will be reported.
ii. Criminal matters involving felonies must be immediately referred to VA.

3. Withholding and Suspension of Funds

In accordance with 38 CFR 62.80, when a grantee fails to comply with the terms, conditions, or standards of the Supportive Services grant, VA may, with 7 days notice to the grantee, withhold further payment, suspend the SSVF grant, or prohibit the grantee from incurring additional obligations of Supportive Services grant funds, pending corrective action by the grantee or a decision to terminate. VA will allow all necessary and proper costs that the grantee could not reasonably avoid during a period of suspension if such costs meet the provisions of the applicable Federal Cost Principles.

4. Funding Recovery and Appeals Process

VA will recover any SSVF grant funds that are not used in accordance with 38 CFR Part 62. The recovery of funds process, as described in 38 CFR 62.80, is as follows:

i. VA issues a notice of intent to recover Supportive Services grant funds to the grantee. The notice outlines the aspects of the grantee's program that are not in compliance with 38 CFR Part 62 and indicates that VA will recover SSVF grant funds if the grantee cannot provide documentation to VA demonstrating why Supportive Services grant funds should not be recovered.
ii. The grantee has 30 days upon receipt of the notice to submit documentation to VA demonstrating why Supportive Services grant funds should not be recovered.
iii. The SSVF Program Office reviews the response from the grantee for adequacy and may, if necessary, request additional information.
iv. If the response is adequate, VA will not take action to recover funds.

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v. If the response is not adequate or it is determined that Supportive Services grant funds were not used in accordance with 38 CFR Part 62, VA may on 7 days notice to the grantee, withhold further payment, suspend the SSVF grant, or prohibit the grantee from incurring additional obligations of SSVF grant funds, pending corrective action by the grantee or a decision to terminate.

5. Supportive Services Grant Termination

A Supportive Services grant may be terminated in accordance with 38 CFR 62.80 if any of the following three conditions applies:

i. By VA, if a grantee materially fails to comply with the terms and conditions of an SSVF grant award and of 38 CFR Part 62.
ii. By VA with the consent of the grantee, in which case VA and the grantee agree upon the termination conditions, including the effective date and, in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated.
iii. By a grantee upon sending to VA written notification of grant termination, including the reasons for such termination, the effective date, and, in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated. (Note: If VA determines that the remaining portion of the SSVF grant will not accomplish the purposes for which the grant was made, VA may terminate the grant in its entirety if any of the other conditions for termination are met.)

6. De-obligation of Funds

VA may de-obligate all or a portion of the amounts approved for use by a grantee if:

i. The activity for which funding was approved is not provided in accordance with the approved application and the requirements of 38 CFR Part 62;
ii. Such amounts have not been expended within a 1 year period from the date of the signing of the supportive services grant agreement; or
iii. Other circumstances set forth in the SSVF grant agreement authorize or require de-obligation.

At its discretion, in accordance 38 CFR 62.80, VA may re-advertise in a NOFA the availability of funds that have been de-obligated or award de-obligated funds to applicants who previously submitted applications in response to the most recently published NOFA.

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XI. Program Resources

The following tables identify online resources that may useful to grantees developing and operating supportive services programs. VA does not take any responsibility for the content contained in these resources. It is up to the reader to determine what is appropriate.

The resources are divided into the following categories *(Note: There is some overlap in resources across categories):*

A. Program Development and SSVF Website
B. Program Operations
    1. Outreach
    2. Case Management
    3. Assistance in Obtaining VA Benefits
    4. Assistance in Obtaining and Coordinating Other Public Benefits
C. Sample Forms
D. Miscellaneous

SECTION XI | PROGRAM RESOURCES

SECTION XI | PROGRAM RESOURCES

A. Program Development and SSVF Website

In 2013, the SSVF Program Office launched the SSVF website – a collection of program information, guidance, and training resources for grantees. Grantees can access information regarding program development, as well as other resources for SSVF program operations such as those listed below. http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvfuniversity.asp

B. Program Operations

1. Outreach

Organization	Program / Resource	Description	Resource Link
National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH)	Homelessness Prevention Program	A guide published by the National Alliance to End Homelessness that helps organizations to develop a homelessness prevention program or improve an existing prevention program.	https://endhomelessness.org/resource/homelessness-prevention-creating-programs-that-work/
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	Research Materials – Average Fair Market Rents	Average fair market rents, as published in the Federal Register.	http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/fmr.html
HUD	Research Materials – Annual Household Income Calculation	Provides guidance on calculating annual household income.	https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2079/cpd-income-eligibility-calculator/

2. Case Managements

Organization	Program / Resource	Description	Resource Link
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	HUD Sponsored Local Homeless Assistance Programs	Identifies local support organizations that administer a range of services including shelter, food, counseling, and job skills programs to homeless persons.	https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/homeless

Organization	Program / Resource	Description	Resource Link
HUD	HUD Approved Housing Counseling Agencies	List of HUD sponsored housing counseling agencies that can provide advice on buying a home, renting, defaults, foreclosures, and credit issues.	https://apps.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hcc/hcs.cfm
National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH)	Homelessness Prevention Program	A resource guide published by the National Alliance to End Homelessness that helps organizations to develop a homelessness prevention program or improve an existing prevention program.	https://endhomelessness.org/resource/homelessness-prevention-creating-programs-that-work/

3. Assistance in Obtaining VA Benefits

Organization	Program / Resource	Description	Resource Link
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)	Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents & Survivors	Summary of Federal Benefits Available to Veterans, Dependents & Survivors, 2011 Edition.	http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp

4. Assistance in Obtaining and Coordinating Other Public Benefits

Organization	Program / Resource	Description	Resource Link
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	HUD Sponsored Local Homeless Assistance Programs	Identifies local support organizations that administer a range of services including shelter, food, counseling, and job skills programs to homeless persons.	https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/homeless
National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH)	Homelessness Prevention Program	A resource guide published by the National Alliance to End Homelessness that helps organizations to develop a homelessness prevention program or improve an existing prevention program.	https://endhomelessness.org/resource/homelessness-prevention-creating-programs-that-work/
U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)	Funding Opportunities and Resources	Listing of several community examples to help identify Federal funding opportunities and resources available to organizations that aim to prevent homelessness.	https://www.usich.gov/solutions/

Organization	Program / Resource	Description	Resource Link
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)	Programs and Initiatives	Summary of Homeless programs and initiatives available to homeless Veterans.	http://www.va.gov/homeless/

C. Sample Forms

Organization	Program / Resource	Description	Resource Link
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)	Verifying Veteran Status	A military Veteran may use VA's online military personnel records request system, eVetRecs, to request verification of Veteran status. Grantee may also complete and submit the Standard Form 180 (SF 180) to verify Veteran status. Verification will come in the form of a copy of the Veteran's DD Form 214.	http://www.archives.gov/veterans/
Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	Payment Management System (PMS) Forms	To be registered in PMS for grant fund draw down, the grantee must have SF 1199A and Primary Contact Information forms on file with HHS.	https://pms.psc.gov/ (Under "Grant Recipient Info", click on "Forms")
Public Research Advocates	SOAR Technical Assistance Center	PRA runs the national SOAR Technical Assistance center, which promotes SOAR and related to training opportunities.	https://soarworks.prainc.com/

D. Miscellaneous

Organization	Program / Resource	Description	Resource Link
Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)	Research Materials – Chronic Homelessness and Health Care	Access to supportive housing research that focuses on chronic homelessness and health care issues.	http://www.csh.org/resources/
U.S Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)	Tools	Links to research studies and technical assistance materials produced by the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness as well as its member agencies, and national organizations.	https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	Research Materials	Publications relating to housing and supportive services for people with special needs and the homeless. Topic areas focus on affordable and fair housing, homeownership, housing finance, community and economic development, supportive services, as well as other related issues.	http://www.huduser.org/portal/taxonomy/term/38
Supportive Housing Network of New York (SHNNY)	Research Materials – Homelessness Factsheet	Links to studies, reports, and publications relating to homelessness and supportive housing.	http://shnny.org/research-reports/research

Organization	Program / Resource	Description	Resource Link
University of Pennsylvania	Article: Evaluating a Community-Based Homelessness Prevention Program: A Geographical Information System Approach	This article discusses the application of the Geographic Information System (GIS), which can assist social service providers to assess the extent to which their program was properly implemented in accordance with its principles and goals. The GIS also helps providers identify geographical areas in its region that have unmet service needs.	http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1041&context=spp_papers
USICH	Homelessness: Programs and the People They Serve	Report discusses homeless assistance providers and the characteristics of homeless persons whom they serve. The survey used in this study was designed to provide up-to-date information about the homelessness assistance providers, the characteristics of those people who use these services and how this population has changed in metropolitan areas since 1987.	http://www.huduser.org/portal/publications/homeless/homeless_tech.html

SECTION XI | PROGRAM RESOURCES

XII. Exhibits

Exhibit A: Income Inclusion and Exclusion Tables

1. Income Inclusions

This table presents SSVF income inclusions and can be found in Exhibit 5-2 of HUD's Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook. The following types of income must be counted when calculating annual income for purposes of determining SSVF eligibility:

General Category	Description
1. Earned Income	The full amount, before any payroll deductions, of wages and salaries, overtime pay, commissions, fees, tips and bonuses, and other compensation for personal services.
2. Self Employment/ Business Income	The net income from operation of a business or profession. Expenditures for business expansion or amortization of capital indebtedness shall not be used as deductions in determining net income. An allowance for depreciation of assets used in a business or profession may be deducted, based on straight line depreciation, as provided in Internal Revenue Service regulations. Any withdrawal of cash or assets from the operation of a business or profession will be included in income, except to the extent the withdrawal is reimbursement of cash or assets invested in the operation by the family.
3. Interest & Dividend Income	Interest, dividends, and other net income of any kind from real or personal property. Expenditures for amortization of capital indebtedness shall not be used as a deduction in determining net income. An allowance for depreciation is permitted only as authorized in paragraph (2) of this section. Any withdrawal of cash or assets from an investment will be included in income, except to the extent the withdrawal is reimbursement of cash or assets invested by the family. Where the family has net family assets in excess of $5,000, annual income shall include the greater of the actual income derived from net family assets or a percentage of the value of such assets based on the current passbook savings rate, as determined by HUD.
4. Pension/Retirement Income	The full amount of periodic payments received from social security, annuities, insurance policies, retirement funds, pensions, lotteries, disability or death benefits, and other similar types of periodic receipts, including a lump-sum payment for the delayed start of a periodic payment (but see No. 13 under Income Exclusions) (e.g., SSDI).

General Category	Description
5. Unemployment & Disability Income	Payments in lieu of earnings, such as unemployment, worker's compensation, and severance pay (but see No. 3 under Income Exclusions).
6. TANF/Public Assistance	a. TANF/Public assistance received by the household. b. The amount of reduced TANF/Public assistance income that is disregarded specifically because the family engaged in fraud or failed to comply with an economic self-sufficiency or work activities requirement. c. If the TANF/Public assistance payment includes an amount specifically designated for shelter and utilities that is subject to adjustments by the TANF/Public assistance agency in accordance with the actual cost of shelter and utilities, the amount of TANF/Public assistance income to be included as income shall consist of: i. The amount of the allowance or grant exclusive of the amount specifically designated for shelter or utilities; plus ii. The maximum amount that the TANF/Public assistance agency could in fact allow the family for shelter and utilities. If the family's TANF/Public assistance is ratably reduced from the standard of need by applying a percentage, the amount calculated under this paragraph shall be the amount resulting from one application of the percentage; (e.g., TANF, AFCD, SSI, and general assistance available through state welfare programs).
7. Alimony and Child Support Income	Periodic and determinable allowances, such as alimony and child support payments, and regular contributions or gifts received from persons not residing in the dwelling.
8. Armed Forces Income	All regular pay, special pay, and allowances of a member of the Armed Forces (whether or not living in the dwelling) who is head of the family, spouse, or other person whose dependents are residing in the unit (but see paragraph (7) under Income Exclusions).
9. G.I. Bill Housing Stipend	The monthly housing stipend received by a Veteran from VA while they are attending school under the G.I. Bill.

2. Income Exclusions

This table presents SSVF income exclusions and can be found in Exhibit 5-2 of HUD's Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook. The following types of income are not counted when calculating annual income for purposes of determining SSVF eligibility:

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General Category	Description
1. Earned Income of Children	Earned income from employment of household members under the age of 18 years (including foster children).
2. Income from Foster Care	Payments received for the care of foster children or foster adults (usually individuals with disabilities, unrelated to the tenant family, who are unable to live alone).
3. Inheritance and Insurance Income	Lump-sum additions to family assets, such as inheritances, insurance payments (including payments under health and accident insurance and worker's compensation), capital gains and settlement for personal or property losses (except as provided in number 5 of Income Inclusions).
4. Medical Expense Reimbursements	Amounts received by the family that are specifically for, or in reimbursement of, the cost of medical expenses for any family member.
5. Income of Live-in Aides	Income of a live-in aide (as defined in 24 CFR 5.403).
6. Student Financial Aid	The full amount of student financial assistance paid directly to the student or to the educational institution. Note: includes G.I. Bill Student Financial Aid.
7. Armed Forces Hostile Fire Pay	The special pay to a family member serving in the Armed Forces who is exposed to hostile fire.
8. Self-Sufficiency Program Income	a. Amounts received under training programs funded by HUD. b. Amounts received by a person with a disability that are disregarded for a limited time for purposes of Supplemental Security Income eligibility and benefits because they are set aside for use under a Plan to Attain Self-Sufficiency (PASS). c. Amounts received by a participant in other publicly assisted programs that are specifically for, or in reimbursement of, out-of-pocket expenses incurred (special equipment, clothing, transportation, childcare, etc.) and which are made solely to allow participation in a specific program. d. Amounts received under a resident service stipend. A resident service stipend is a modest amount (not to exceed $200 per month) received by a resident for performing a service for the PHA or owner, on a part-time basis, that enhances the quality of life in the development. Such services may include, but are not limited to, fire patrol, hall monitoring, lawn maintenance, resident initiatives coordination, and serving as a member of the PHA's governing board. No resident may receive more than one such stipend during the same period of time.

General Category	Description
	e. Incremental earnings and benefits resulting to any family member from participation in qualifying state or local employment training programs (including training not affiliated with a local government) and training of a family member as resident management staff. Amounts excluded by this provision must be received under employment training programs with clearly defined goals and objectives, and are excluded only for the period during which the family member participates in the employment training program.
9. Other Non-Recurring Income	Temporary, non- recurring, or sporadic income (including gifts).
10. Reparations	Reparation payments paid by a foreign government pursuant to claims filed under the laws of that government by persons who were persecuted during the Nazi era.
11. Income from Full-time Students	Annual earnings in excess of $480 for each full-time student 18 years old or older (excluding the head of household or spouse).
12. Adoption Assistance Payments	Adoption assistance payments in excess of $480 annually per adopted child.
13. Social Security & SSI Income	Deferred periodic amounts from SSI and Social Security benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts.
14. VA Disability Compensation Income	Deferred periodic amounts from VA Disability Compensation (Service Connected Benefits) that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts.
15. Income Tax and Property Tax Refunds	Amounts received by the family in the form of refunds or rebates under state or local law for property taxes paid on the dwelling unit.
16. Home Care Assistance	Amounts paid by a state agency to a family with a member who has a developmental disability and is living at home to offset the cost of services and equipment needed to keep this developmentally disabled family member at home.
17. Other Federal Exclusions	Amounts specifically excluded by any other federal statute from consideration as income for purposes of determining eligibility or benefits under a category of assistance programs that includes assistance under any program to which the exclusions of 24 CFR 5.609(c) apply, including:

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General Category	Description
	• The value of the allotment made under the Food Stamp Act of 1977; • Payments received under the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (employment through VISTA, Retired Senior Volunteer Program, Foster Grandparents Program, youthful offender incarceration alternatives, senior companions); • Payments received under the Alaskan Native Claims Settlement Act; • Income derived from the disposition of funds to the Grand River Band of Ottawa Indians; • Income derived from certain sub-marginal land of the United States that is held in trust for certain Indian tribes; • Payments or allowances made under the Department of Health and Human Services' Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program; • Payments received under the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act of 1980 (25 U.S.C. 1721); • The first $2,000 of per capita shares received from judgment funds awarded by the Indian Claims Commission or the U.S. Claims Court and the interests of individual Indians in trust or restricted lands, including the first $2,000 per year of income received by individual Indians from funds derived from interests held in such trust or restricted lands; • Amounts of scholarships funded under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, including awards under the Federal work study program or under the Bureau of Indian Affairs student assistance programs; • Payments received from programs funded under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1985 (Green Thumb, Senior Aides, Older American Community Service Employment Program); • Payments received on or after January 1, 1989, from the Agent Orange Settlement Fund or any other fund established pursuant to the settlement in the In Re Agent Orange product liability litigation, M.D.L. No. 381 (E.D.N.Y.); • Earned income tax credit refund payments received on or after January 1, 1991, including advanced earned income credit payments; • The value of any child care provided or arranged (or any amount received as payment for such care or reimbursement for costs incurred for such care) under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990;

General Category	Description
	• Payments received under programs funded in whole or in part under the Job Training Partnership Act (employment and training programs for Native Americans and migrant and seasonal farm workers, Job Corps, state job training programs and career intern programs, AmeriCorps); • Payments by the Indian Claims Commission to the Confederated Tribes and Bands of Yakima Indian Nation or the Apache Tribe of Mescalero Reservation; • Allowances, earnings, and payments to AmeriCorps participants under the National and Community Service Act of 1990; • Any allowance paid under the provisions of 38 U.S.C. 1805 to a child suffering from Spina Bifida who is the child of a Vietnam Veteran; • Any amount of crime victim compensation (under the Victims of Crime Act) received through crime victim assistance (or payment or reimbursement of the cost of such assistance) as determined under the Victims of Crime Act because of the commission of a crime against the participant under the Victims of Crime Act; and • Allowances, earnings, and payments to individuals participating in programs under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

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Exhibit B: Documentation Standards

Standards and procedures for documenting eligibility related to income and housing status are further detailed in the tables on the following pages. Documentation requirements are organized according to the following:

1. **Income Documentation Standards**
2. **Housing Options / Resources Eligibility Documentation (for all participants)**
3. **Occupying Permanent Housing Category 1 Eligibility Documentation**
4. **Occupying Permanent Housing Category 2 Eligibility Documentation**
5. **Occupying Permanent Housing Category 3 Documentation**

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1. Income Documentation Standards

Standards and procedures for documenting eligibility related to income are further detailed in the tables on the following pages. While VA has established standards for various types of income, VA recognizes that in some instances only participant self-declaration may be possible. This method should be used only as a *last resort* when all other verification methods are not possible or reasonable. When using participant self-declaration, grantees should document why a higher verification standard was not used and include this in the case file.

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
Wages and Salary, etc.	Yes	Copy of most recent paystub(s)	• Obtain copy(ies) of most recent pay stub(s) from participant. • Include copy(ies) in participant file.
		OR	
		Written verification of income.	• Mail, fax or email written verification of income request directly to the employer(s). • Obtain signed and dated verification of income from employer(s). At a minimum, written verification should include the following: o Name of employer and participant name o Pay amount and frequency o Average hours worked per week o Amount of any additional compensation o Contact information for authorized employer representative o Signed and dated by authorized employer representative • Include verification of income in participant file.
		OR *(if written third party documentation cannot be obtained)*	
		Oral verification of income.	• Contact the employer(s) by phone or in person to obtain oral verification of income. • Document oral verification of income. At a minimum, oral verification should include the following: • Name of employer and participant name

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Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
			• Date of hire • Pay amount and frequency • Average hours worked per week • Amount of any additional compensation • Contact information for authorized employer representative • Signed and dated by SSVF staff who obtained oral verification • Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file.
		OR *(if written documentation or oral third party verification cannot be obtained)*	
		Self-declaration of income. .	• Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: o Source of income o Income amount and frequency o Signed and dated by SSVF participant • Grantee should document attempt to obtain third party verification (written or oral) and sign self-declaration of income. • Include self-declaration of income in participant file.
Self-Employ-ment / Business income[13]	Yes	Copy of most recent federal or state tax return showing net business income	• Obtain copy of most recent federal or state tax return from the participant. • Include copy in participant file.
		OR *(if written documentation cannot be obtained)*	

[13] It can be a challenge for Grantees to obtain 3rd party verification of self-employment income. When 3rd party verification is not available, the Grantee should always request a notarized tenant declaration that includes a perjury statement.

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
		Self-declaration of income.	• Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: • Source of income • Income amount and frequency • Signed and dated by SSVF participant • Grantee should document attempt to obtain third party verification (written or oral) and sign self-declaration of income. • Include self-declaration of income in participant file.
Interest and Dividend Income	Yes	Copy of most recent interest or dividend income statement	• Obtain copy(ies) of most recent interest or dividend income statement from participant. • Include copy(ies) in participant file.
		OR	
		Copy of most recent federal or state tax return showing interest, dividend or other net income	• Obtain copy of most recent federal or state tax return from the participant. • Include copy in participant file.
		OR *(if written documentation cannot be obtained)*	
		Self-declaration of income.	• Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: o Source of income o Income amount and frequency o Signed and dated by SSVF participant • Grantee should document attempt to obtain third party verification (written or oral) and sign self-declaration of income.

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
			• Include self-declaration of income in participant file.
Pension/ Retire-ment Income	Yes	Copy of most recent payment statement or benefit notice from Social Security Administration (SSA), pension provider, or other source	• Obtain copy(ies) of most recent benefit notice, pension statement or other payment statement from participant. • Include copy(ies) in participant file.
		OR *(if written documentation cannot be obtained)*	
		Written verification of income.	• Mail, fax or email verification of income request directly to the Social Security Administration, pension provider or other source. • Obtain signed and dated verification of income from income source. At a minimum, written verification should include the following: o Name of income source o Income amount and frequency o Contact information for authorized income source representative o Signed and dated by authorized income source representative • Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file.
		OR *(if written third party documentation cannot be obtained)*	
		Oral verification of income.	• Contact the source(s) by phone or in person to obtain oral verification of income. • Document oral verification of income. At a minimum, oral verification should include the following: o Name of income source o Income amount and frequency

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
			o Contact information for authorized income source representative o Signed and dated by SSVF staff who obtained oral verification • Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file.
		OR *(if written documentation or oral third party verification cannot be obtained)*	
		Self-declaration of income.	• Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: o Source of income o Income amount and frequency o Signed and dated by SSVF participant • Grantee should document attempt to obtain third party verification (written or oral) and sign self-declaration of income. • Include self-declaration of income in participant file.
Unem-ployment and Disability Income	Yes	Copy of most recent unemployment, worker's compensation, SSI, SSDI, or severance payment statement or benefit notice	• Obtain copy(ies) of most recent payment statement(s) and/or benefit notice(s) from participant. • Include copy(ies) in participant file.
		OR	
		Written verification of income.	• Mail, fax or email verification of income request directly to the unemployment administrator, worker's compensation administrator, or former employer. • Obtain signed and dated verification of income from income source. At a

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
			minimum, written verification should include the following: o Name of income source, and participant name o Income amount and frequency o Contact information for authorized income source representative o Signed and dated by authorized income source representative • Include verification of income in participant file.
		OR *(if written third party documentation cannot be obtained)*	
		Oral verification of income.	• Contact the source(s) by phone or in person to obtain oral verification of income. • Document oral verification of income. At a minimum, oral verification should include the following: o Name of income source, and participant name o Income amount and frequency o Contact information for authorized income source representative o Signed and dated by SSVF staff who obtained oral verification • Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file.
		OR *(if written documentation or oral third party verification cannot be obtained)*	
		Self-declaration of income. .	• Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: o Source of income o Income amount and frequency

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
			o Signed and dated by SSVF participant • Grantee should document attempt to obtain third party verification (written or oral) and sign self-declaration of income. • Include self-declaration of income in participant file.
TANF/ Public Assist-ance	Yes	Copy of most recent welfare payment statement or benefit notice	• Obtain copy(ies) of most recent benefit notice(s) or payment statement(s) from participant. • Include copy(ies) in participant file.
		OR	
		Written verification of income.	• Mail, fax or email verification of income request directly to the welfare administrator. • Obtain signed and dated verification of income from income source. At a minimum, written verification should include the following: o Name of income source, and participant name o Income amount and frequency o Contact information for authorized income source representative o Signed and dated by authorized income source representative • Include verification of income in participant file.
		OR *(if written third party documentation cannot be obtained)*	
		Oral verification of income.	• Contact the source(s) by phone or in person to obtain oral verification of income. • Document oral verification of income. At a minimum, oral verification should include the following: o Name of income source, and participant name o Income amount and frequency

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
			o Contact information for authorized income source representative o Signed and dated by SSVF staff who obtained oral verification • Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file.
		OR *(if written documentation or oral third party verification cannot be obtained)*	
		Self-declaration of income.	• Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: o Source of income o Income amount and frequency o Signed and dated by SSVF participant o Grantee should document attempt to obtain third party verification (written or oral) and sign self-declaration of income. • Include self-declaration of income in participant file.
Alimony, Child Support Payments	**Yes**	Copy of most recent alimony and/or child support or other contributions or gift payment statements, notice, or order	• Obtain copy(ies) of most recent payment statement(s), notice(s) or order (e.g. court ordered child support) from participant. • Include copy(ies) in participant file.
		OR	
		Written verification of income.	• Mail, fax or email verification of income request directly to the child support enforcement agency, court liaison, or other source. • Obtain signed and dated verification of income from income source. At a minimum, written verification should include the following:

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
			o Name of income source, and participant name o Income amount and frequency o Contact information for authorized income source representative o Signed and dated by authorized income source representative • Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file.
		OR *(if written third party documentation cannot be obtained)*	
		Oral verification of income. .	• Contact the source(s) by phone or in person to obtain oral verification of income. • Document oral verification of income. At a minimum, oral verification should include the following: o Name of income source, and participant name o Income amount and frequency o Contact information for authorized income source representative o Signed and dated by SSVF staff who obtained oral verification • Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file.
		OR *(if written documentation or oral third party verification cannot be obtained)*	
		Self-declaration of income.	• Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: o Source of income o Income amount and frequency o Signed and dated by SSVF participant o Grantee should document attempt to obtain third party verification

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
			(written or oral) and sign self-declaration of income. • Include self-declaration of income in participant file.
Armed Forces Income	**Yes**	Copy of pay stubs, payment statement, or other government issued statement indicating income amount	• Obtain copy(ies) of most recent payment stub(s), statement(s), or other government issued statement from participant. • Include copy(ies) in participant file.
		OR	
		Written verification of income.	• Mail, fax or email verification of income request directly to the appropriate armed services representative. • Obtain signed and dated verification of income from income source. At a minimum, written verification should include the following: o Name of income source, and participant name o Income amount and frequency o Contact information for authorized income source representative o Signed and dated by authorized income source representative • Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file.
		OR *(if written third party documentation cannot be obtained)*	
		Oral verification of income.	• Contact the source(s) by phone or in person to obtain oral verification of income. • Document oral verification of income. At a minimum, oral verification should include the following: o Name of income source, and participant name

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
			o Income amount and frequency o Contact information for authorized income source representative o Signed and dated by SSVF staff who obtained oral verification • Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file.
		OR *(if written documentation or oral third party verification cannot be obtained)*	
		Self-declaration of income.	• Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: o Source of income o Income amount and frequency o Signed and dated by SSVF participant • Grantee should document attempt to obtain third party verification (written or oral) and sign self-declaration of income. • Include self-declaration of income in participant file.
No Income Reported	**N/A**	Self-declaration of income.	• Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: o Statement indicating “no current income” o Signed and dated by SSVF participant • Have participant sign a self-declaration of no income but seek a third-party verification of job loss or public benefit income loss if possible. • Include self-declaration of income in participant file.

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2. Housing Options/Resources Eligibility Documentation

Note: Grantees are encouraged to assess and document other housing options and resources for all SSVF participants.

Housing Options and Resources	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
Other Subsequent Housing Options	Assessment form or other documentation (e.g., case notes) of housing options by SSVF case manager or other authorized SSVF staff	• Assess with participant all other appropriate (i.e., safe, affordable, available) subsequent housing options. • Verify that no other appropriate subsequent housing options are available. • *Assessment Form or Other Documentation Should* o Be documented by SSVF case manager or other authorized staff. o Include assessment summary or other statement indicating that participant has no other appropriate housing options. o Be signed and dated by SSVF case manager or other authorized SSVF staff. • Include assessment indicating no other subsequent housing options in participant case file.
Financial Resources and Support Networks	Assessment form or other documentation (e.g., case notes) of financial resources and support networks by SSVF case manager or other authorized SSVF staff.	• Assess with participant all financial resources AND support networks (i.e., friends, family or other personal sources of financial or material support) • Verify that participant lacks financial resources and support networks to obtain other appropriate subsequent housing or remain in their housing. • *Assessment Form or Other Documentation Should* o Be documented by SSVF case manager or other authorized staff. o Include review of current account balances in checking and savings accounts held by participant household. o Include assessment summary or other statement indicating that participant lacks financial resources and support networks to obtain other appropriate subsequent housing or remain in their housing. o Be signed and dated by SSVF case manager or other authorized SSVF staff • Include assessment indicating insufficient financial resources and support networks in participant case file.

3. Occupying Permanent Housing Category 1 Eligibility Documentation

Occupying Permanent Housing Category 1 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation *(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
Rented by Participant *Potential loss of housing due to* ***non-payment of rent***	Copy of formal, written notice that terminates housing, or eviction letter from landlord/lessor that notifies the participant that they must leave the unit in 30 days or less. AND Copy of written lease Oral lease (if all that exists) *only* to verify housing status	• Obtain a copy of formal written notice that terminates housing, or eviction letter (typed or handwritten) AND copy of lease. Note: Applicants who have only received a verbal notice from landlord and applicants who are only behind on utilities and have not received a formal written eviction notice are not eligible for SSVF HP assistance. • Lease should identify the payee, the SSVF participant as tenant, the terms of the agreement (dates of tenancy, monthly amount due, etc.), and be current, signed by both parties and dated. • Documentation of SSVF staff conversation with current landlord if all that exists at time is an oral lease. This option for an oral lease documentation is only allowable when local housing law confirms that tenants' rights are protected without a written lease. Grantees must research local housing law in their jurisdictions. Please see note below regarding on-going financial assistance. • Note that a written lease is required for on-going financial assistance. If a written lease does not exist, one should be executed before on-going financial assistance can be provided. Self-declaration and third party verification of a pre-existing oral agreement cannot be used as a substitute when providing on-going financial assistance. • Include any documentation related to non-payment of rent in participant file.
Rented by Participant OR	Copy of notice indicating building in which participant is renting or otherwise	• Obtain copy of foreclosure notice (may include notice from landlord/property manager, court, published in local newspaper or other print or on-line public record documentation) AND copy of lease. • *Lease Should:*

Occupying Permanent Housing Category 1 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation *(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
Other Housing Occupied by Participant without Paying Rent (including housing shared with friends or family) *Potential loss of housing due to* ***foreclosure on rental property***	residing is being foreclosed on within 30 days AND Copy of written lease Oral lease (if all that exists) *only* to verify housing status OR Copy of written lease between the owner and host family/friend	o Identify the payee, SSVF participant (or host family/friend) as tenant, the terms of the agreement (dates of tenancy, monthly amount due, etc.), and be current, signed by both parties and dated. • If oral lease, documentation of SSVF staff conversation with current landlord if all that exists at time is an oral lease. Please note written lease required for on-going financial assistance. • *Foreclosure Notice Should:* o Identify the building or unit where SSVF participant is the leaseholder or is otherwise residing o Indicate that housing is being foreclosed on o If written notice to participant be signed and dated by the landlord or property manager. • Include notice and copy of lease in participant file.
Other Housing Occupied by Participant without Paying Rent (including housing shared with friends or family) *Potential loss of housing due to* ***housing termination***	Copy of notice that terminates housing, or eviction letter from host family or friend who owns or rents the housing that notifies the participant that they must leave within 30 days AND Copy of written lease between the owner and	• Obtain copy of notice that terminates housing or eviction letter (typed or handwritten) AND copy of lease. • *Lease Should:* • Identify the payee, the SSVF host family/friend as tenant, the terms of the agreement (dates of tenancy, monthly amount due, etc.), and be current, signed by both parties and dated. • If oral lease, documentation of SSVF staff conversation with current landlord if all that exists at time is an oral lease. Please note written lease required for on-going financial assistance. • *Eviction Letter Should:* o Identify the SSVF participant and unit where SSVF participant is residing o Indicate that participant must leave owner's/renter's housing

Occupying Permanent Housing Category 1 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation *(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
by host family/friend	host family/friend; oral lease if all that exists *only* for verification of housing status	o Be signed and dated by the host owner/renter • Include eviction letter and copy of lease in participant file. • Documentation of SSVF staff conversation with current host regarding verbal eviction if all that exists at time is an oral lease. Please note written lease required for on-going financial assistance.
Rented by Participant OR **Other Housing Occupied by Participant without Paying Rent (including housing shared with friends or family)** *Potential loss of housing due to* ***uninhabitable conditions***	Copy of notice from landlord/property manager, public health, code enforcement, fire marshal, child welfare or other government entity that housing is condemned AND Copy of written lease; oral lease if all that exists *only* for verification of housing status	• Obtain copy of notice (may include notice published in local newspaper or government jurisdiction's website) AND copy of lease. • *Lease Should:* o Identify the payee, the SSVF participant (or host family/friend) as tenant, the terms of the agreement (dates of tenancy, monthly amount due, etc.), and be current, signed by both parties and dated. • If oral lease, documentation of SSVF staff conversation with current landlord if all that exists at time is an oral lease. Please note written lease required for on-going financial assistance. • *Notice Should:* o Identify the building or unit where SSVF participant is the leaseholder or is otherwise residing o Indicate that housing is condemned (i.e., unfit for human habitation) o If written notice, be signed and dated by the landlord, property manager, public health, code enforcement, fire marshal, child welfare or other government entity. • Include notice and copy of lease in participant file.
Owned by Participant	Copy of deed or mortgage and if applicable, copy of foreclosure	• Obtain copy of deed or mortgage and if applicable, foreclosure notice. • *Foreclosure Notice Should:* o Be on financial institution letterhead

Occupying Permanent Housing Category 1 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation *(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
Potential loss of housing due to ***non-payment of mortgage and/or foreclosure on owner-occupied property***	notice from lending institution indicating foreclosure within 30 days	o Identify the SSVF participant and residence where SSVF participant is the homeowner o Indicate that participant must leave their housing o Be signed and dated by financial institution • Include documentation in participant file.

4. Occupying Permanent Housing Category 2 Eligibility Documentation

Occupying Permanent Housing Category 2 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation *(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
Sleeping in an Emergency Shelter	Written documentation or oral third-party verification that the Veteran family is scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days.	• Obtain letter from future landlord / housing provider OR SSVF staff certification that housing will be developed or located within 90 days or letter to the file.
	AND	
	HMIS record of shelter stay.	• Obtain HMIS record showing shelter stay concurrent with SSVF project entry date. • Include HMIS record in SSVF participant file.

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Occupying Permanent Housing Category 2 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation *(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
	OR *(if HMIS record cannot be obtained)*	
	Written literal homeless certification.	• Obtain signed and dated SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or standard Homeless Certification from shelter provider. This is a form that, at a minimum, contains the following: o Name of the shelter program o Include statement verifying Emergency Shelter program is in the local CoC inventory or otherwise recognized by the CoC. o Statement verifying current shelter occupancy of SSVF participant o Signed and dated by authorized shelter provider representative • Include SSVF Literally Homeless Certification in file.
	OR *(if HMIS record and SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)*	
	Emergency shelter provider letter.	• Obtain letter from emergency shelter provider. • *Letter Should:* o Be on shelter provider letterhead o Identify shelter program o Include statement verifying current shelter occupancy of SSVF participant, including most recent entry and exit (if applicable) dates. o Be signed and dated by shelter provider • Include emergency shelter provider letter in participant file.
	OR *(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)*	

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Occupying Permanent Housing Category 2 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation *(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
	Self-declaration of literal homelessness.	• Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration from participant. • Grantee should document attempt to obtain written third party verification and sign self-declaration forms. • Include self-declarations in participant file.
Place Not Meant for Human Habitation (e.g., cars, parks, abandoned buildings, streets/sidewalks)	Written documentation that the Veteran family is scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days.	• Obtain letter from future landlord / housing provider OR SSVF staff certification that housing will be developed or located within 90 days or letter to the file.
	AND	
	Written literal homeless certification.	• Obtain signed and dated SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or standard Homeless Certification from homeless street outreach provider (may include other third-party referral source, such as a local law enforcement agency). This is a standardized form that, at a minimum, contains the following: o Name of the outreach program o Statement verifying current living situation of SSVF participant o Signed and dated by authorized outreach provider representative • Include Literally Homeless Certification in file.
	OR *(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)*	
	Homeless street outreach provider or referral source letter.	• Obtain letter from homeless street outreach provider or referral source (e.g. local law enforcement agency). The letter may be from the SSVF-funded rapid re-housing provider if the provider also provides outreach to persons on

Occupying Permanent Housing Category 2 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation *(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
		the street as part of engagement and admission activities. • *Letter Should* o Be on outreach provider or referral agency letterhead o Identify outreach program or referral agency o Include statement verifying current homeless status of SSVF participant o Be signed and dated by outreach provider or referral agency • Include letter in participant file.
	OR *(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)*	
	Self-declaration of literal homelessness.	• Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration from participant. • Grantee should document attempt to obtain written third party verification and sign self-declaration forms. • Include self-declarations in participant file.

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Occupying Permanent Housing Category 2 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation *(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
Hospital or Other Institution	Written documentation that the Veteran family is scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days.	• Obtain letter from future landlord / housing provider OR SSVF staff certification that housing will be developed or located within 90 days or letter to the file.
	AND	
	Letter from hospital or other institution	• Obtain letter from hospital or other institution. • Letter Should: o Be on hospital or other institution letterhead o Include statement verifying current hospital/institution stay of SSVF participant o Include hospital/institution admission and discharge dates verifying that stay has been for 90 days or less o Be signed and dated by hospital/institution representative • Include hospital/institution letter in participant file.
	AND *(to verify literal homeless status prior to hospital or other institution admission)*	
	HMIS record of shelter stay *(if previously sleeping in emergency shelter).*	• Obtain HMIS record showing shelter stay. • HMIS record should indicate shelter stay immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) hospital/institution admission date. • Include HMIS record in SSVF participant file.
	OR *(if HMIS record cannot be obtained)*	

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Occupying Permanent Housing Category 2 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation *(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
Hospital or Other Institution	Written literal homeless certification.	• Obtain signed and dated SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or standard Homeless Certification from shelter provider or homeless street outreach provider. • Certification should verify literal homelessness (residing in shelter or place not meant for human habitation) immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) hospital/institution admission date. • Include Literally Homeless Certification in file.
	OR *(if HMIS record or SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)*	
	Emergency shelter provider or homeless street outreach provider letter *(if previously sleeping in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation).*	• Obtain emergency shelter provider letter. • *Letter Should:* o Be on shelter provider letterhead o Identify shelter program o Include statement verifying shelter stay immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) hospital/institution admission date. o Be signed and dated by shelter provider • *Include* documentation in SSVF participant file.
	(if HMIS record, SSVF Literally Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained)	
	Self-declaration of literal homelessness.	• Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration from participant. • Self-declaration should verify literal homelessness (residing in shelter or place not meant for human habitation) immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) hospital/institution admission date. • Grantee should document attempt to obtain written third party verification and sign SSVF Self-Declaration forms.

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Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation *(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
		• Include self-declarations in participant file.
Transitional Housing	Written documentation that the Veteran family is scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days.	• Obtain letter from future landlord / housing provider OR SSVF staff certification that housing will be developed or located within 90 days or letter to the file.
	AND	
	Written literal homeless certification.	• Obtain signed and dated SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or standard Homeless Certification from transitional housing provider. This is a standardized form that, at a minimum, contains the following: o Name of the transitional housing program o Statement verifying current transitional housing occupancy of SSVF participant. o Statement indicating the SSVF participant is graduating from or timing out of the transitional housing program o Statement verifying the SSVF participant was residing in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately prior to transitional housing admission o Signed and dated by authorized transitional housing provider representative • Include Literally Homeless Certification in file.
	OR *(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)*	

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Occupying Permanent Housing Category 2 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation *(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
	Transitional housing provider letter.	• Obtain letter from transitional housing provider. • *Letter Should:* o Be on transitional housing provider letterhead. o Identify transitional housing program. o Include statement verifying current transitional housing program is in the local CoC inventory or otherwise recognized by the CoC. o Include statement verifying current transitional housing occupancy of SSVF participant. o Include statement verifying that SSVF participant is graduating from or timing out of transitional housing program. o Include statement verifying SSVF participant was residing in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately prior to transitional housing admission. o Be signed and dated by transitional housing provider. • Include transitional housing provider letter in participant file.
	OR *(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained)*	
	Self-declaration of literal homelessness.	• Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration from participant. • Self-declaration should verify literal homelessness (residing in shelter or place not meant for human habitation) immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) transitional housing admission date. • Grantee should document attempt to obtain written third party verification and sign SSVF Self-Declaration forms.

Occupying Permanent Housing Category 2 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation *(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
		• Include self-declaration in participant file.
Fleeing/ Attempting Flee a Domestic Violence Situation	Self-declaration	• Self-report by client of actively fleeing or attempting to flee a domestic violence situation.

5. Occupying Permanent Housing Category 3 Eligibility Documentation

Occupying Permanent Housing Category 3 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation *(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
Sleeping in an Emergency Shelter	Written documentation or oral third party verification of the participant's exit from permanent housing within 90 days.	• Obtain letter from prior landlord / housing provider / friend / family member or SSVF staff certification or letter to the file.
	AND	
	HMIS record of shelter stay.	• Obtain HMIS record showing shelter stay concurrent with SSVF project entry date. • Include HMIS record in SSVF participant file.
	OR *(if HMIS record cannot be obtained)*	
	Written literal homeless certification.	• Obtain signed and dated SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or a standard Homeless Certification from shelter provider. This is a standardized form that, at a minimum, contains the following:

Occupying Permanent Housing Category 3 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation** ***(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
		o Name of the shelter program o Statement verifying current shelter occupancy of SSVF participant o Signed and dated by authorized shelter provider representative • Include Literal Homeless Certification in SSVF participant file.
	OR *(if HMIS record and SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)*	
	Emergency shelter provider letter.	• Obtain letter from emergency shelter provider. • *Letter Should:* o Be on shelter provider letterhead o Identify shelter program o Include statement verifying emergency shelter program is in the local CoC inventory or otherwise recognized by the CoC. o Include statement verifying current shelter occupancy of SSVF participant, including most recent entry and exit (if applicable) dates. o Be signed and dated by shelter provider • Include emergency shelter provider letter in participant file.
	OR ▪ *(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)*	
	Self-declaration of literal homelessness.	• Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration from participant. • Grantee should document or attempt to obtain written third party verification and sign self-declaration forms. • Include self-declarations in participant file.
Place Not Meant for Human Habitation (e.g.,	Written documentation of the participant's	• Obtain letter from previous landlord/ housing provider/ friend / family member or SSVF staff certification or letter to the file.

Occupying Permanent Housing Category 3 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation *(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
cars, parks, abandoned buildings, streets/sidewalks)	exit from permanent housing within 90 days.	
	AND	
	Written literal homeless certification.	• Obtain signed and dated SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or standard Homeless Certification from homeless street outreach provider (may include other third-party referral source, such as a local law enforcement agency). This is a standardized form that, at a minimum, contains the following: o Name of the outreach program o Statement verifying current living situation of SSVF participant o Signed and dated by authorized outreach provider representative • Include Literally Homeless Certification in file.
	OR *(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)*	
	Homeless street outreach provider or referral source letter.	• Obtain letter from homeless street outreach provider or referral source (e.g. local law enforcement agency). The letter may be from the SSVF-funded rapid re-housing provider if the provider also provides outreach to persons on the street as part of engagement and admission activities. • *Letter Should* o Be on outreach provider or referral agency letterhead o Identify outreach program or referral agency o Include statement verifying current homeless status of SSVF participant o Be signed and dated by outreach provider or referral agency • Include letter in participant file.
	OR	

Occupying Permanent Housing Category 3 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation *(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
	(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)	
	Self-declaration of literal homelessness.	• Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration from participant. • Grantee should document attempt to obtain written third party verification and sign self-declaration forms. • Include self-declarations in participant file.
Hospital or Other Institution	Written documentation of the participant's exit from permanent housing within 90 days.	• Obtain letter from previous landlord / housing provider/friend /family member or SSVF staff certification or letter to the file.
	AND	
	Letter from hospital or other institution	• Obtain letter from hospital or other institution. • Letter Should: o Be on hospital or other institution letterhead o Include statement verifying current hospital/institution stay of SSVF participant o Include hospital/institution admission and discharge dates verifying that stay has been for 90 days or less o Be signed and dated by hospital/institution representative • Include hospital/institution letter in participant file.
	AND *(to verify literal homeless status prior to hospital or other institution admission)*	
	HMIS record of shelter stay *(if previously sleeping in emergency shelter).*	• Obtain HMIS record showing shelter stay concurrent with SSVF project entry date. • HMIS record should indicate shelter stay immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) hospital/institution admission date.

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Occupying Permanent Housing Category 3 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation *(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
Hospital or Other Institution		• Include HMIS record in SSVF participant file.
	OR *(if HMIS record cannot be obtained)*	
	Written literal homeless certification.	• Obtain signed and dated original SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or standard Homeless Certification from shelter provider or homeless street outreach provider. • Certification should verify literal homelessness (residing in shelter or place not meant for human habitation) immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) hospital/institution admission date. • Include Literally Homeless Certification in SSVF participant file.
	OR *(if HMIS record or SSVF Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)*	
	Emergency shelter provider or homeless street outreach provider letter *(if previously sleeping in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation).*	• Obtain emergency shelter provider letter. • *Letter Should:* o Be on shelter provider letterhead o Identify shelter program o Include statement verifying shelter stay immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) hospital/institution admission date. o Be signed and dated by shelter provider • *Include documentation in SSVF participant file.*
	OR *(if HMIS record, SSVF Literally Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained)*	
	Self-declaration of literal homelessness.	• Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration from participant. • Self-declaration should verify literal homelessness (residing in shelter or place not meant for human habitation) immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) hospital/institution admission date.

Occupying Permanent Housing Category 3 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation** ***(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
		• Grantee should document attempt to obtain written third party verification and sign SSVF Self-Declaration of Housing Status forms. • Include self-declarations in participant file.
Transitional Housing	Written documentation of exit from permanent housing within 90 days.	• Obtain letter from previous landlord / housing provider /friend/family member or SSVF staff certification or letter to the file.
	AND	
	Written literal homeless certification.	• Obtain signed and dated SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or standard Homeless Certification from transitional housing provider. This is a standardized form that, at a minimum, contains the following: o Name of the transitional housing program o Statement verifying current transitional housing occupancy of SSVF participant. o Statement indicating the SSVF participant is graduating from or timing out of the transitional housing program o Statement verifying the SSVF participant was residing in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately prior to transitional housing admission o Signed and dated by authorized transitional housing provider representative • Include Literally Homeless Certification in file.
	OR *(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)*	
	Transitional housing provider letter.	• Obtain letter from transitional housing provider. • *Letter Should:*

Occupying Permanent Housing Category 3 Eligibility Documentation		
Living Situation	**Acceptable Types of Documentation** ***(in order of preference)***	**Documentation Standards**
		o Be on transitional housing provider letterhead. o Identify transitional housing program. o Include statement verifying current transitional housing program is in the local CoC inventory or otherwise recognized by the CoC. o Include statement verifying current transitional housing occupancy of SSVF participant. o Include statement verifying that SSVF participant is graduating from or timing out of transitional housing program. o Include statement verifying SSVF participant was residing in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately prior to transitional housing admission. o Be signed and dated by transitional housing provider. • Include transitional housing provider letter in participant file.
	OR *(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained)*	
	• Self-declaration of literal homelessness.	• Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration from participant. • Self-declaration should verify literal homelessness (residing in shelter or place not meant for human habitation) immediately prior to (i.e., the day before or same day as) Transitional Housing admission date. • Grantee should document attempt to obtain written third party verification and sign SSVF Self-Declaration of Housing Status forms. • Include self-declarations in participant file.

Exhibit C: Collaborative Delivery of GPD/HUD-VASH/HCHV/SSVF Services

1. Background

The VA has a variety of resources available to serve homeless Veterans. These resources must be deployed in an efficient and coordinated manner to support the VA's goal of ending homelessness among Veterans. Housing First is the guiding approach to the delivery of these services, so it is critical that program resources are employed as supports to housing placement, not barriers. The ability of program staff to screen and assess effectively, will allow Veterans to access the intervention appropriate to their needs.

2. VA Programs

HUD-VASH Rapid- Rehousing Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) Only

The Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program provides supportive services and financial assistance to very low income Veterans and their families who are literally homeless or at risk of becoming literally homeless. SSVF's primary goal is to support Veterans who "but for" SSVF assistance will become or remain literally homeless. The purpose of the Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) referral packet ("the packet") is to provide one-time assistance for TFA (typically security deposit). The packet cannot be used for supportive services that would require ongoing SSVF case management, such as legal help with benefits or employment assistance; these cases must be referred to SSVF for intake. SSVF is able to help address barriers to housing that may involve any family member. Prior to referring a Veteran household to SSVF for TFA only, it is important to assess whether additional services may be needed to support a family's ability to successfully maintain their housing placement. This is particularly true in instances when services are needed by non-Veteran family members. For instance, non-Veteran family members may need health insurance or help boosting household income through employment or benefits counseling. Legal services may also be available through SSVF grantees. These services may only be available through SSVF and would require the SSVF grantee to meet with the Veteran household and engage them in case management.

The packet must be used by HUD-VASH staff when seeking one-time TFA for literally homeless Veteran households who would remain homeless "but for" SSVF assistance. Eligible TFA includes Security Deposits and Utility Deposits; additional types of TFA may be requested and provided on a case by case basis. The packet does not apply to Homelessness Prevention Assistance. SSVF grantees are not required to serve Veterans with HUD-VASH vouchers and will only do so at their discretion. The packet has been uploaded to the SSVF website and can be found at: http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/official_guide/forms

SSVF and VHA Homeless Programs HUD-VASH, GPD and HCHV

SSVF provides rapid rehousing and homelessness prevention services with the primary intention of those services resulting in sustainable permanent housing opportunities for Veterans. The SSVF Program Office recognizes there are certain instances where other VHA Homeless Programs interact with, and support, Veterans with housing stability. There are

circumstances in which multiple VHA Homeless Programs must coordinate to provide adequate housing support; however, this is a targeted practice.

The intentional use of SSVF as a transitional subsidy while awaiting final HUD-VASH enrollment is not allowable and is inconsistent with PL-110-387 which created SSVF and 38 CFR 62 which govern its operations. VA funds major national initiatives through the Grant and Per Diem (GPD) and Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Contract Residential Services to meet the needs of Veterans who need transitional housing services. When transitional or temporary housing is needed, staff is expected to work with available GPD and HCHV resources. SSVF cannot be used as a planned, transitional housing intervention with the intention of bridging HUD-VASH participants awaiting vouchers or the completion of housing inspections or other administrative needs. SSVF grantees should not house a Veteran with the sole intention of transitioning that Veteran to a HUD-VASH subsidy.

There are two important exceptions when SSVF resources may be used as a transition into HUD-VASH.

1. It is acceptable for Veterans to be housed with SSVF assistance and then be transferred to HUD-VASH as part of a progressive engagement approach, but in these situations the initial intent was to permanently house Veterans using SSVF. Progressive engagement is a strategy to enable service delivery systems to effectively target resources by starting with a small amount of assistance and then adding more assistance as needed. In progressive engagement, every effort is made by SSVF to support a successful tenancy with SSVF alone; the decision to use HUD-VASH is based on reassessment that occurs after SSVF enrollment and a progressive set of support has been offered or exhausted, and where that assessment demonstrates that SSVF resources will not be sufficient for the Veteran to maintain the tenancy without permanent supportive housing. It is critically important to raise the potential need for HUD-VASH with your local HUD-VASH team as soon as it becomes apparent that this level of assistance may be necessary. It will take time for HUD-VASH to assess the household's eligibility and further must determine whether a voucher will be available. See HUD FAQ 530 for restrictions and information related to eligibility across RRH and PSH projects. These situations should be rare and, where possible, only occur within the context of the local community's Prioritization policies.

2. In the event suitable transitional housing is unavailable through GPD, HCHV or community resources while awaiting permanent housing placement, a Veteran household may be enrolled in SSVF to utilize authority available under 38 CFR 62.34(f), Emergency Housing Assistance (Section VII of the SSVF Program Guide). Such assistance is most typically, but not always, targeted to families with dependent children who cannot be served by most GPD or HCHV programs. SSVF Emergency Housing Assistance is subject to significant restrictions including a maximum stay of 45 days and the knowledge that permanent housing will be available prior to the end of that 45 day period. In addition, those seeking such assistance must meet SSVF enrollment eligibility criteria.

HUD-VASH and SSVF Homelessness Prevention Services

All Homelessness Prevention Veterans must be screened using the Homelessness Prevention Screening tool (information about prevention screening can be found at https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/official_guide/participant_eligibility. Based on the screening, the SSVF grantee may:

- Accept the referred household into services and provide temporary financial assistance (TFA);
- Accept the referred household into service, but limit services to SSVF specific case management (such as legal services or assistance for family members);
- Decline enrollment and refer back to HUD-VASH.

If enrolled in SSVF, a condition for enrollment is the development of a written plan must be developed by the HUD-VASH case worker, working in coordination with the SSVF grantee that will lead to a path of sustainability for the Veteran in their current housing. This plan must include clear targets for rent repayment/relief and include a revised rent amount if required to sustain current housing. It may also include requirements for money management classes, treatment for substance abuse disorders, credit counseling, resolution of outstanding legal issues, and other appropriate interventions.

If a HUD-VASH referral is for a current resident in rental or utility arrears, it is strongly recommended that the Veteran must have a third party financial representative who can ensure that over the intermediate term, rent will be paid. The third party financial representative arrangement should continue until the Veteran meets agreed upon targets demonstrating their ability to resume control over their finances.

SSVF Supportive Service for HUD-VASH, HCHV, or GPD (non-TFA)

An appropriate collaboration with an SSVF grantee may include the delivery of non-temporary financial assistance services when such services are not available to HUD-VASH, HCHV, or GPD participants. In such instances, the assessment must document the need for such services to support housing stability and chart notes must also document the lack of available community resources to meet identified needs. Common examples include:

- SSVF legal services, or
- Targeted case management services for non-Veteran family members.

3. What is Bridge Housing?

Bridge Housing employs a Housing First model to provide low barrier access to temporary housing while a Veteran waits for permanent placement. VA has adopted a Housing First approach because research showed it is more effective than traditional strategies used to assist homeless persons. When a Veteran has been admitted to a GPD Bridge Housing program or HCHV Contract Residential Services a Veteran must have been offered and accept a permanent housing intervention (e.g., SSVF, admission in HUD-VASH case management, Housing Coalition/CoC) to be considered Bridge Housing. Bridge Housing is used to provide

safe, temporary housing when a Veteran is not able to immediately enter the permanent housing (voucher issuance is not the same as entry into permanent housing). Though length of stay in Bridge Housing can and should be individually determined based on Veteran need, in general it is not expected to exceed 90 days.

Veterans who are participating in a Bridge Housing should still receive blended case management with SSVF grantees at a minimum providing assistance for housing search and move-in assistance as necessary.

4. SSVF Coordination with VA Medical Centers

SSVF grantees work in coordinated partnership with their local Veterans Administration Medical Centers (VAMC). Each VAMC offers a range of housing programs including HUD-VASH, GPD, and HCHV (Health Care for Homeless Veterans offers both outreach and emergency housing). The organizational structure for each VAMC can vary – it is up to the SSVF grantee to reach out to the VAMC so that regular contact is established with local homeless services. SSVF grantees should work with the local VA to focus on the following:

- Maintaining a current Veteran By-Name List (BNL)
- Assign and track cases from the BNL to the appropriate services
- Supporting joint CoC/VA responsibilities to implement a Coordinated Entry System (CES)
- Case Conferencing to monitor service delivery to those enrolled in care

VA Regional Coordinators assigned to SSVF grantees, can help organize regular planning meetings with SSVF grantees that standardize processes for referrals both to SSVF grantees and from grantees to VAMCs, as well as help educate staff about accessing available services. Furthermore, through the SSVF Regional Coordinator, SSVF grantees can turn to their Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Homeless Coordinator for assistance in service collaboration.

Exhibit D: Guide for Pending Verification of Veteran Status (PVVS)

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1. Issue

As per 38 CFR 62.2, enrolling participant households in SSVF requires that grantees verify Veteran status to determine program eligibility. This entails a documentation collection process that can take weeks. The VA recognizes that the crisis nature of SSVF services often means that Veteran families require immediate intervention.

2. Resolution

At the time of screening, SSVF grantees may make a determination of Pending Verification of Veteran Status. This determination allows for the immediate provision of supportive services, other than temporary financial assistance (TFA).

3. Process and Restrictions

1. TFA cannot be offered during the period of Pending Verification of Veteran Status. TFA can only be offered once Veteran status is confirmed.
2. Pending Verification of Veteran Status must be documented by an affidavit of eligibility signed by the participant.
3. Until Veteran status is confirmed, Pending Verification of Veteran Status must be re-certified at least once every three months. If participant is found to be ineligible for SSVF, the participant must be discharged with appropriate community referrals.
4. Upload client data in HMIS, as required for all SSVF clients, and include in monthly reports.
5. Service data will count towards program outcomes and final service numbers, regardless of final determination of Veteran Status.

Exhibit E: Homelessness Prevention Eligibility Screening Instructions

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The ***SSVF Homelessness Prevention (HP) Screening Form*** is designed to help staff assess, document, and determine whether a Veteran household applying for SSVF homelessness prevention assistance is:

1) Eligible for SSVF homelessness prevention assistance (i.e., "Stage 1"), and;
2) A priority for SSVF homelessness prevention assistance in the event there are not sufficient resources to assist all eligible Veterans (i.e., "Stage 2").

This companion guide describes the two stages of screening required for all persons applying for SSVF homelessness prevention assistance (i.e., Category 1 of persons occupying permanent housing). The screening form must be completed by SSVF grantee staff for each applicant household, using information obtained from the Veteran head of household. Questions included on the form are intended to be a starting point for a discussion between program staff and the applicant household regarding program eligibility and targeting criteria for homelessness prevention assistance.

SCREENING FOR STAGE 1: VA SSVF HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for SSVF homelessness prevention assistance, a household must be screened for and meet each of the VA eligibility conditions described below.

Condition 1. Veteran Status: Applicant household must either be a Veteran or a member of a family in which the head of household, or the spouse of the head of household, is a Veteran. A Veteran is defined as "a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, regardless of length of service, and who was discharged or released there from. Veteran excludes a person who received a dishonorable discharge from the Armed Forces or was discharged or dismissed from the Armed Forces by reason of the sentence of a general court-martial. The length of service restrictions under 38 U.S.C. 5303A do not apply."

Condition 2. Very Low-Income Status: Applicant household gross annual income must be not exceed 50% of area median income based on the income limits most recently published at: http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il.html.

Condition 3. Imminently At-Risk of Literal Homelessness: Applicant household must (1) be imminently losing their primary nighttime residence, (2) have no other residence, and (3) not have sufficient resources or support networks (e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks) immediately available to prevent them from becoming literally homeless.

Determining Imminent Risk: Apart from being a qualified Veteran with very low-income, applicants must also be imminently at-risk of literal homelessness. This means that every Veteran who meets Stage 1 eligibility will become literally homelessness in 30 days or less "but for" SSVF assistance (i.e., an applicant has no other housing options and resources and there

are no other community resources available to prevent literal homelessness). SSVF is not an eviction prevention program. It is intended to prevent Veterans and their families from losing all housing and ending up in emergency shelter or on the street. Some Veterans who apply for SSVF Homelessness Prevention assistance may be losing their housing, but they have another safe and appropriate housing option – including temporary options – where they can stay while they work to obtain their own housing. Or, an applicant may have another resource they can use to maintain current housing or obtain new housing. Such Veterans would not be considered at imminent risk of literal homelessness and would not be eligible for SSVF Homelessness Prevention assistance.

Sections 3A through 3C of the screening form include questions to determine whether a household is at imminent risk of literal homelessness within 30 days of applying for assistance and is, therefore, eligible for SSVF homelessness prevention services. Staff should use these questions as a starting point and ask additional questions to better understand an applicant's current circumstances and options. SSVF staff should seek to determine whether the household has safe, viable, immediate housing options and resources to keep them from becoming literally homeless.

- ***3A: Imminent Housing Loss***. This section explores whether a Veteran household has a place to stay tonight and whether they must in fact leave their current housing arrangement within 30 days. Staff should explore whether the Veteran household could avoid literal homelessness by negotiating directly with their landlord. Staff should also seek to determine if the Veteran household is in immediate need of assistance to ensure they have a safe and appropriate place to stay in the near term. **Note:** Applicants who are losing their housing because they are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence are eligible for SSVF Rapid Re-Housing assistance and should instead be screened for RRH assistance.

- ***3B: Other Housing Options & Resources.*** This section explores whether the Veteran household has other friends, family or close support networks that could assist them in avoiding literal homelessness. SSVF staff should engage in a conversation with the Veteran regarding potential support and use this information to determine whether the household has other housing options and resources available to them. Staff should be particularly mindful of any inappropriate, unsafe, or otherwise unhealthy relationships the Veteran household is reluctant or refuses to pursue and not assume such options are viable to prevent the household's homelessness.

- ***3C: Financial Resources.*** This section explores whether the Veteran household has financial resources to pay for their immediate housing costs. This may include their own resources, community resources, or financial assistance they are eligible for and is available in time to prevent literal homelessness. This section should still be discussed for planning purposes even if the primary reason for the household losing their current housing is not related to financial need.

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Condition 4: Other Program Eligibility Conditions: This is an optional section for additional Grantee Eligibility Requirements that must have been approved by VA SSVF Program Office. Note that the option to add an additional program eligibility condition under Stage 1 is for the purposes of prioritizing a specific subpopulation of Veteran households that was included in the approved SSVF grant agreement. For example, an SSVF grantee may have entered into an agreement with VA to serve SSVF eligible households under Rapid Re-housing and/or Homelessness Prevention but is targeting to serve 30% of those households served to be "young Veterans under age 25 with dependent children." Adding program eligibility conditions specifically for homelessness prevention services is to support this prioritization of the targeted subpopulation during the Stage 1 screening.

Understanding Stage 1 VA SSVF HP Eligibility Disposition:
Veterans who do not meet Stage 1 eligibility requirements should be identified as "NOT ELIGIBLE" on the form and offered information and referral, including a "warm hand off" referral, to other assistance as needed and desired. The household should also be recorded under the "screened but not enrolled" applicants that grantees track outside of the HMIS reporting requirements for SSVF households.

A Veteran household that meets all of the VA eligibility conditions listed in Stage 1 should be identified as "ELIGIBLE" on the form and qualifies for, at a minimum, SSVF "Service Directed Housing Intervention" (formerly Light Touch) homelessness prevention services, which are interventions other than temporary financial assistance. These households should next be screened for Stage 2 Targeting.

STAGE 2: TARGETING
All applicants who meet Stage 1 eligibility must then be screened using the targeting conditions and threshold point system described in Stage 2. Points have been assigned to factors based on research and practical experience. Stage 2 screening provides grantees with a standardized tool for determining how to prioritize eligible Veteran households for SSVF Homelessness Prevention assistance based on:

1) urgency of the applicant's current ho using situation, and
2) other barriers and vulnerabilities that m ay impact their ability to quickly secure housing and resolve literal homelessness independently, if they are not assisted and become literally homeless.

Stage 2 screening is critical when an SSVF Program does not have sufficient resources or capacity to provide homelessness prevention services to every Veteran household that meets Stage 1 eligibility and is imminently at-risk of literal homelessness. As a reminder, the grantee's established "targeting threshold" score and any additional eligibility conditions in Stage 1 must have been proposed to and approved by VA within the grants management system. Grantees must notify the VA when the targeting score is changed and provide explanation of how this was determined within their community. Notification of Threshold scores are submitted through the grants management system.. Such changes should also be discussed with community stakeholders as part of the ongoing community planning.

Understanding Stage 2 Targeting Disposition:
Veteran households that meet Stage 1 eligibility and score at or above the approved threshold score should be identified as **"Meets Targeting Threshold"** in Stage 2.

Veteran households that have met both Stage 1 and Stage 2 requirements may receive the full range of SSVF homelessness prevention services, including any TFA. These Veteran households should be enrolled in the SSVF program and tracked within HMIS. The VA expects grantees to use a progressive approach to the delivery of services. This means that even if a household passes both the Stage 1 eligibility and Stage 2 targeting requirements of a given SSVF program TFA should not automatically be offered. Grantees should aim to provide the least intensive and costly intervention possible and only use more intensive services or the provision of TFA when absolutely necessary to prevent a household from becoming literally homeless.

Veteran households who meet Stage 1 eligibility requirements but do not score at or above the established targeting threshold score should be identified as **"Does Not Meet Targeting Threshold"** in Stage 2. These households may receive only "Service Directed Housing Interventions (SDHI)" which do not include TFA. These households receiving SDHI should be enrolled in the SSVF program and tracked within HMIS.

CERTIFYING THE VA SSVF HP SCREENING
Information recorded in the screening form must be supported by additional documentation, as indicated in the SSVF Program Guide (e.g., proof of income). Forms must be signed and dated by the head of household, by the authorized SSVF staff person completing the form, and by an SSVF program supervisor. The completed form and additional documentation must be kept in the program participant's case file. The form is available in a fillable document, which may be completed electronically, printed, and maintained within the program participant's case file. However, the form may also be printed and completed manually by the SSVF program staff. The screening form is available at www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp within the Participant Eligibility section.

Exhibit F: SSVF Domestic Violence Guidance for HMIS Reporting

1. What is the policy on entering information about SSVF participant households that are victims of domestic violence into HMIS?

Programs whose primary mission is to serve victims of domestic violence are prohibited by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) from entering client data into HMIS. All other SSVF grantees are required to collect and enter data for 100% of SSVF participants into HMIS. Grantees who perceive this SSVF requirement to be in conflict with state law, local law, or local HMIS policy must contact their Regional Coordinators with documentation of the specific law and/or policy. VA will review and, when possible, take additional action to facilitate the entry of this data into HMIS. If there is any doubt about a conflict, grantees should contact their Regional

Coordinators immediately rather than waiting until a participant with a history of domestic violence requests SSVF assistance.

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2. Why does VA require grantees to enter information about victims of domestic violence into HMIS?

National-level counts of SSVF participants and tracking of outcomes are based on HMIS data. Only clients for whom data is entered into HMIS and successfully uploaded to the Repository can be counted by VA as having been served by your program.

3. What steps can grantees take to ensure the security of HMIS data?

It is the responsibility of the grantee to take precautions to protect the client information of all of those served. Grantees should always adhere to their local HMIS policies, procedures and protocols and work with the Continuum of Care to ensure consistency in applying these practices. Information in HMIS tends to be more secure than information in paper files. There are basic information security practices that you should follow to keep all personally identifying information secure:

2. Protect any computer that stores or accesses identifying information about any client – which includes accessing HMIS or data exported from HMIS for upload to the Repository – with a username and password.
3. Do not share the username and password for your computer or your HMIS account with anyone, and do not keep them written down in a place where anyone else could find them.
4. Log out or lock your computer when you are not at your desk.
5. The only VA-approved method of transmitting exported HMIS data for SSVF clients is by upload to the Repository; exported files may not be emailed.

4. Are there special safeguards grantees can implement for data related to victims of domestic violence?

If there is reason to believe that an abuser has or could gain access to HMIS data, contact your Regional Coordinator, who will work with you to develop a plan to enter data without compromising your participant's safety; it may be appropriate to delay data entry until after the participant has been discharged. In addition, although data required by VA for SSVF participants does not include an address or other contact information, some HMIS applications have the capacity to track such data, as well as information about employers, etc. In instances where there is reason to believe that an abuser may have access to HMIS data, none of that additional information should be entered into HMIS.

Exhibit G: The Rapid Re-housing Waiver

1. What is the Rapid Re-housing Waiver?

The rapid re-housing waiver, when approved by VA, allows an SSVF grantee to lower the amount of temporary financial assistance (TFA) dedicated to rapid re-housing (RRH) below the minimum of 60 percent of TFA allocation. If approved by the VA for a waiver, an SSVF grantee is authorized to spend an increased proportion of TFA on homelessness prevention up to the approved level.

2. What three circumstances warrant a waiver request by an SSVF grantee?

Grantees may request a waiver under one of three eligible circumstances:

1. **The SSVF grantee's continuum of care (CoC) reached the goal** of ending Veteran homelessness and has a letter from the federal partners documenting this status. As a result, the number of literally homeless Veterans requiring rapid re-housing TFA has been significantly reduced in this community.
    - ***a.*** *Grantees in this circumstance may apply to reduce RRH TFA to no less than* ***30 percent.***
2. **The SSVF grantee operates in a rural area** where Veterans fitting the literally homeless definition required for SSVF rapid re-housing are few such that there are insufficient numbers of Veterans to support a 60 percent commitment of RRH TFA. The VA anticipates this to be a rare circumstance given grantees' advance awareness of the SSVF NOFA's explicit commitment to 60 percent rapid RRH TFA.
    - ***a.*** *Grantees in this circumstance may apply to reduce RRH TFA to no less than* ***40 percent.***
3. **The grantee is one of multiple SSVF grantees in one CoC** and for reasons of strategic coordination, one SSVF grantee will request to become the exclusive provider of SSVF prevention assistance. As the designated prevention provider, this grantee will require a waiver.
    - ***a.*** *Grantees in this circumstance may apply to reduce RRH TFA to no less than* ***40 percent.***

3. What are the grantee's planning steps in advance of requesting a waiver?

Grantees considering a waiver will work closely with CoC partners to analyze the local SSVF RRH TFA needs and evaluate the merits of a waiver request. The SSVF grantee will coordinate closely with the authorized CoC decision making body, not independently, to assess the need for such a waiver and plan for a waiver request following the steps outlined below:

1. Coordinate with the CoC decision making body to evaluate the need for a waiver.
2. Categorize the CoC's need for a RRH waiver into one of three eligible circumstances described above.
3. Schedule a meeting with your VA SSVF Regional Coordinator to discuss plans to request a waiver.
4. Complete the waiver requirements outlined below and submit to the VA SSVF Regional Coordinator.

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4. What are the required materials for the waiver packet?

Grantees will apply for a RRH waiver on an individual grantee basis with a packet including the following information:

1. A completed *SSVF/ Rapid Re-housing Request Cover Page*
2. A letter from your CoC lead addressed to the SSVF program office endorsing the waiver request that follows the format outlined in this Exhibit.
3. *Interagency Review Team Approval Letter* – this is ONLY required for applicants under circumstance #1 whereby the CoC achieved an end to Veteran homelessness and received approval from the federal partners through the Interagency Review Team.

The RRH Waiver request Form is available on the SSVF Website. In addition, there is a Companion Guide and recording considering RRH Waiver for your Community.

5. How will an application for a RRH waiver be reviewed and approved?

The VA will conduct a comprehensive review of each grantee's RRH waiver application packet.

The VA's review will be conducted in the following manner:

1. The VA SSVF Regional Coordinator will review the application packet and inform the local VA Network Homeless Coordinator that a waiver is under consideration.
2. The SSVF Program Office Waiver Committee will review the submission in conjunction with any other available data/information about the CoC and arrive at a decision.

The VA SSVF Program Office will inform the SSVF grantee regarding the results of the review and the decision regarding the waiver applicant on an individual grantee basis.

Exhibit H: Important Federal Policies

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1. Eligibility of Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Household for HUD funded permanent supportive housing (PSH)

In June 2013, HUD issued guidance on Eligibility of Rapid Rehousing (RRH) Households for HUD funded permanent supportive housing (PSH). In general, when individuals and families are placed in permanent housing, they are no longer considered homeless. However, program participants that receive rapid-re-housing assistance, including rapid re-housing participants in the SSVF program maintain their homeless status for the purpose of eligibility for HUD funded PSH programs funded through the Continuum of Care (CoC) Program or HUD-provided that they meet other eligibility requirements for those programs. Program participants maintain their homeless status during the time period in which they are receiving the rapid re-housing assistance. In addition, program participants receiving rapid re-housing who met the definition of chronically homeless upon entry into the project may also maintain their status as chronically homeless during the period in which they are receiving rapid rehousing assistance. Therefore, these individuals and families remain eligible for PSH units that have been dedicated to serve the chronically homeless. The guidance memo is available on the SSVF website at https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/?page=/official_guide/supportive_services.

2. Routine Use #30 VHA -Disclosure of Veteran information

Routine Use #30 states that VA may disclose relevant healthcare and demographic information to health and welfare agencies, housing resources, and community providers, consistent with good medical-ethical practices, for Veterans assessed by or engaged in VA Homeless Programs for purposes of:

1. Coordinating care;
2. Expediting access to housing;
3. Providing medical and related services;
4. Participating in coordinated entry processes;
5. Reducing Veteran homelessness;
6. Identifying homeless individuals in need of immediate assistance; and
7. Ensuring program accountability by assigning and tracking responsibility for urgently-required care.

This routine use provides legal authority for VHA Homeless Program staff to disclose pertinent Veteran information, excluding 38 U.S.C. 7332-protected information **without a formal data sharing agreement or prior signed, written authorization** from the Veteran **if** the requirements of the legal authority are followed.

VHA does NOT have legal authority to share health information protected under 38 U.S.C 7332 (any information related to the diagnosis of infection with HIV or sickle cell anemia, or the diagnosis of and treatment for drug abuse, alcohol abuse or alcoholism) with community partners UNLESS a signed, written authorization is obtained from the Veteran. If a Veteran is being treated for, or has any of these diagnoses, this information or any information that would imply these diagnoses cannot be shared without the Veteran's signed authorization, including information such as, the name of a residential treatment facility that would infer the Veteran is being treated for substance abuse.

This legal authority supports effective and efficient collaboration between VA and outside agencies by allowing disclosure of information documented in the Homeless Operations Management and Evaluation System (HOMES) for the purpose of improving timeliness and access to necessary services for Veterans in the homeless continuum.

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Exhibit I: History of Revisions Made to the Program Guide

SECTION XII | EXHIBITS

1. Revisions made for the March, 2021 Version

1) Page 12: Clarified CoC Coordination costs must be eligible
2) Page 13: Add reference to 2020 VA Integration to Coordinated Entry guidance
3) Page 17: Clarified two year Shallow Subsidy allowable without recertification. Removed reference to previous NOFA
4) Page 19: Clarified Accreditation costs must be allocable to the SSVF portion of the accreditation
5) Page 21: Clarified some in person and virtual trainings may be required via the SSVF website, webinars or the Housing Skills Practice Center.
6) Page 25: Clarified that a DD214 is not required if one or more of the other approved Veteran status documents are obtained
7) Page 28: Clarified that federal stimulus payments in response to COVID-19 are not considered part of the households income for eligibility determination
8) Page 37: Clarified that SSVF recertification must occur every 90 days, rather than “every three months”
9) Page 38: Clarified that the SSVF Program Exit checklist is required, not optional
10) Page 39: Clarified that case file documentation should be reflected in HMIS where such documentation is a required data collection element in HMIS
11) Page 39: Removed reference to Participant Satisfaction Survey
12) Page 43: Added emphasis for outreach to historically underserved populations
13) Page 45: Added expectation that SSVF grantees have capacity to screen and enroll Veterans on the same day services requested
14) Page 49: Added emphasis on rapidly assisting unsheltered Veterans with immediate safe housing option, including but not limited to, Rapid Resolution connections and emergency housing. Added reference to March 2021 SSVF Emergency Housing Guidance.
15) Page 74: Clarified submission process for Critical Incident Reports
16) Page 76: Clarified conflict of interest and confidentiality needs for electronic records
17) Page 77: Added new section focused on Veterans Rights
18) Page 83: Added CFR references and provided clarification related to administrative costs. Included January 2021 MACA guidance
19) Page 85: Replaced Outreach and Marketing with September 2020 amended changes
20) Page 90: Added clarification to overtime pay requirements
21) Page 89: Added clarification on documentation of required supportive services
22) Page 96: Added “Appliances for food, water, or other ineligible activities (refrigerators, water dispensers, coffee makers, microwave ovens, ovens, etc.)” to ineligible costs
23) Page 99: Added reference to the SSVF website and Housing Skills Practice Center Learning Management System to be used for suggested and required training needs
24) Page 102 and throughout: Removed references to GIFTS and replaced with “SSVF Grants Management System”. Clarified use of Grant Management System throughout.
25) Page 102: Removed reference to Participant Satisfaction Surveys
26) Page 171: Added Squares 2.0 Printout as eligible Veteran status documentation
27) 172: Added Squares 2.0 to Affidavit of Eligibility form
28) Throughout: Changed “monitoring references” to “annual audit”

2. Revisions made for the December 1, 2019 Edition

1) Addition of links to DUSHOM Coordinated Entry Memo and Checklist (Section III, pg. 13)
2) Addition of Returning Home Initiative Overview (Section III, pg. 16)
3) Addition of Rapid Resolution Overview (Section III, pg. 16)
4) Addition of Shallow Subsidy Overview (Section III, pg. 16)
5) Updated Guidance related to Verifying Veteran Status (Section V, pg. 24)
6) Clarification of Recertification Requirements for those receiving Shallow Subsidy (Section V, pg. 36)
7) Clarification of Need to Use Program Exit Checklist (Section V, pg. 38)
8) Addition of Exit Checklist requirement (Section V, pg. 39)
9) Addition of requirements related to S.A.V.E Suicide Prevention Training (Section VII, pg. 73)
10) Additional guidance related to Program Exit Checklist (Section VII, pg. 76)
11) Addition information regarding PMS Registration (Section VIII, pg. 78)
12) Additional information regarding Disbursements (Section VIII, pg. 79)
13) Clarification of eligible Outreach Expenses (Section VIII, pg. 81)
14) New guidance related to Training and Travel related costs (Section VIII, pg. 85)
15) Additional Guidance related to Fiscal Controls (Section IX, pg. 94)
16) Clarification regarding HMIS – HOMES Upload Requirements (Section X, pg. 98)
17) Added requirements of proof of registration for Satisfaction Surveys (Section X, pg. 99)
18) Clarification of Recertification Requirements when Pending Veteran Status (Section XII, pg. 154)
19) Guidance related to Homelessness Prevention Companion Guide (Section XII, pg. 155)
20) Addition of Exhibit H “Important Federal Policies”

3. Revisions made for the December 1, 2018 Edition

1) Updated Definition of Veteran (Section I.C., pg. 6)
2) Revised Coordination with CoCs narrative (Section II.F., pg. 12)
3) Added ‘VA Homeless Program Expectations for Coordinated Entry Participation’ section (Section II.H., pg. 13)
4) Removed home visit language (Section II.I., pg. 14)
5) Revised Post-Award technical assistance description and clarified new staff training requirements (Section IV.C., pg. 19)
6) Updated Veteran definition description (Section V.B.1., pg. 22)
7) Updated SQUARES information (Section V.B.1., pg. 23)
8) Updated Homeless Prevention Eligibility Description and added Rapid Resolution eligibility guidance (Section V.D.1., pg. 32-33)
9) Clarified SSVF Program Exit Checklist requirement (Section V.F., pg. 36)
10) Clarified expectation of contacting Veteran households prior to exit (Section V.F., pg. 36)
11) Removed documentation checklists (Section V.G., pg. 37)
12) Added Coordinated Entry expectations (Section VI.B.1., pg. 40)
13) Updated Legal Services description and unallowable costs (Section VI.E.1.e., pg. 52 and 54)

14) Updated Suicide Prevention description and requirements (Sections VII.C., pg. 69)
15) Updated PMS Registration and Information instructions (Section VIII.A.1 and 2., pg. 75-76)
16) Updated PMS Account Information, quarterly requirements and closeout allowable actions (Section VIII.B.1., pg. 76)
17) Changed Administrative Costs description (Section VIII.C.1., pg. 77)
18) Clarified report due date (Section VIII.D., pg. 86)
19) Added ineligible activities (Section VIII.E., pg. 86-87)
20) Clarified training requirements (Section IX.A., pg. 93)
21) Updated Definition of Veteran and matched HP Companion Guide (Section XII. Exhibit E., pg. 151)
22) Updated RRH waiver process (Section XII. Exhibit G., pg. 157)
23) Removed Self-Declaration of Housing Status Form (formerly Section XIII)

4. Revisions made for the March 2018 Partial Update

1) Updated Definition of Veteran (Section I.C., pg. 6)
2) Clarified Homelessness Prevention Threshold Score expectations (Section II.E, p.10)
3) Updated Definition of Veteran (Section V.B.1., pg. 20)
4) Changed HP Form version reference (Section V.D, p.30)
5) Updated HP Screening Instructions (Section XII. Exhibit E, p. 139)
6) Updated HP Screening Form (Section XIII.E, p. 160)

5. Revisions made for the October 1, 2017 Edition:

1) Updated Definition of Veteran (Section I.C., pg. 6)
2) Added prevention service description to overview (Section II.E, pg. 10)
3) Updated SSVF Coordination with VA Medical Center guidance (Section II.F., pg. 10)
4) Clarified household file expectations (Section V., pg. 19)
5) Updated Definition of Active service (Section V.B.1., pg. 20)
6) Clarified court martial distinctions Veteran Status (Section V.B.1., pg. 20)
7) Added additional documentation options for Veteran Status (Section V.B.1., pg. 21)
8) Added income exclusion for VA disability lump sum and prospective amounts (Section V.C.2., pg. 24)
9) Added guidance on changing threshold score (Section V.D.1., pg. 30 - 31)
10) Added description of Service-Directed Housing Intervention (SDHI) (formerly “Light Touch Services”) (Section V.D.1., pg. 31)
11) Added guidance on recertification (Section V.E., pg. 32)
12) Added program exit guidance (Section V.F., pg. 34)
13) Clarified documentation standard guidance (Section V.G.3., pg. 36)
14) Clarified outreach and documentation guidance (Section VI.B.1., pg. 38)
15) Clarified guidance on for non-eligible households (Section VI.B.3.d., pg. 42)
16) Added Housing Partnership/Landlord Relationship guidance (Section VI.B.5., pg. 42)
17) Clarified guidance on housing stability plan (Section VI.C.2.b., pg. 43 - 44)
18) Added guidance on SOAR/SSVF relationships (Section VI.E.1.d., pg. 48)

19) Clarified General Housing Stability Assistance allowable and unallowable costs (VI.E.1.e., pg. 50)
20) Added guidance on rent reasonableness (Section VI.F.2.a., pg. 54)
21) Added guidance on shared housing (Section VI.F.2.a., pg. 56)
22) Added guidance on allowable relocation costs (Section VI.F.2.d., pg. 58 - 59)
23) Added allowability of criminal background check and tenancy screening (Section VI.F.2.e, pg. 60)
24) Clarified allowable EHA expenses (Section VI.F.2.f., pg. 61)
25) Added language to prohibit barriers (VII.A., pg. 65)
26) Changed Critical Incident expectations, reportable events and documentation requirements (Section VII.C., pg. 66)
27) Clarified when inspections are required (VII.D., pg. 66)
28) Clarified Veteran notification guidance (VII.E., pg. 67)
29) Added section on Conflict of Interest (Section VII. F., pg. 67)
30) Added guidance regarding obtaining release of information (Section VII.G., pg. 68)
31) Revised releasing participant guidance (Section VII.H., pg. 68 - 69)
32) Clarified grievance and appeal procedure regarding how to reach SSVF Program Office (Section VII.I., pg. 69)
33) Added section on subcontractor management (Section VII.J., pg. 69 - 70)
34) Updated Financial procedures (Section VIII.A, pg. 71)
35) Added allowable financial variance guidance (VIII.B.1., pg. 72)
36) Clarified how expenses are determined eligible (Section VIII.C., pg. 73)
37) Clarified documentation requirements for administrative charges (VIII.C.1., pg. 73 - 74)
38) Added guidance on payroll documentation and overtime authorizations (VIII.C.2.c., pg. 77)
39) Updated travel and training request procedure (Section VIII.C.2.d., pg. 77 - 78)
40) Added guidance related to paying third party vendors (Section VIII.C.2.h., pg. 79)
41) Clarified allowability of application fees (Section VIII.C.2.h., pg. 80)
42) Updated Financial Close-Outs procedure (Section VIII.D., pg. 82)
43) Updated Financial record keeping guidance (Section VIII.E. pg. 83)
44) Removed reallocation costs from ineligible list (Section VIII.F., pg. 83)
45) Added guidance on allowability and procedures for bulk purchases (Section VIII.F., pg. 84)
46) Revised Funding Sweep guidance (VIII.G., pg. 84)
47) Added guidance regarding training new staff (Section IX.A., pg. 86)
48) Added guidance related to participating in each CoCs HMIS (Section X.B.1., pg. 88)
49) Added guidance related to Data Quality Plan (Section X.B.1., pg. 88)
50) Updated guidance on Participant Satisfaction Survey (Section X.B.4., pg. 90)
51) Revised Collaborative Delivery of HCHV/GPD/HUD-VASH/SSVF Services, Section XII.Exhibit C., pg. 135 - 137)
52) Added description of Service-Directed Housing Intervention (SDHI) (formerly “Light Touch Services”) (Section XII.Exhibit E., pg. 139 and 141)
53) Clarified RRH Waiver process (Section XII. Exhibit G., pg. 145 - 146)
54) Revised HP Screening Form (Section XIII. E., pg. 160)

55) Removed Critical Incident Form – s (formerly Section XIII.R)

6. Revisions made for the October 1, 2016 Edition:

1) Adjusted definition of "Continuum of Care" based on HUD definition (pg. 2)
2) Removed guidance that ELI determination is only made at program entry (pg. 3 and pg. 12)
3) Added that Persons Fleeing Domestic Violence as eligible under Rapid Re-housing assistance (pg. 3)
4) Updated description of expectations for SSVF to coordinate with local Continuum(s) of Care (pg. 10)
5) Added guidance related to serving Victims of Domestic Violence (pg. 12)
6) Updated information related to CARF and COA Accreditation (pg. 14)
7) Clarified Category 1 Homelessness Prevention Eligibility Guidance (pg. 28 - pg. 30)
8) Updated guidance related to Continuing Assessment of Participant Needs (pg. 31 - pg. 32)
9) Updated Self-Certification Documentation standards to align with HUD (pg. 35)
10) Added that prioritization is only necessary in RRH when RRH capacity is insufficient to meet community need (pg. 38)
11) Updated Critical Incident Report description based on most recent guidance (pg. 61)
12) Updated HMIS guidance to reflect data security expectations (pg. 63)
13) Added guidance related to SSVF Travel Costs Related to Training, per most recent guidance (pg. 74)
14) Updated HMIS guidance related to monthly upload timelines (pg. 84)
15) Updated guidance noting need for formal written notice for homelessness prevention eligibility (pg. 113-115)
16) Removed eligibility for utility only households in homelessness prevention (pg. 113)
17) Exhibit E: Replaced with most recent Homelessness Prevention Eligibility Screening Instructions
18) Exhibit F: Updated to reflect guidance that victims of domestic violence be categorized as rapid re-housing
19) SSVF Eligibility Self Certification Form: Updated to reflect adjusted guidance for victims of domestic Violence
20) SSVF Homelessness Prevention Screening Disposition Form: Replaced with new Homelessness Prevention Screening Form as of October 1st
21) Domestic Violence Certification Form: Added reference to rapid re-housing enrollment

7. Revisions made for the May 1, 2016 Edition:

1) Added SSVF Coordination with VA Medical Centers (pg.10)
2) Clarified Extremely Low Income policy for income fluctuations (pg.12)
3) Clarified Verifying Veteran Status period of service (pg.18)
4) Added SQUARES description for Veteran status inquiries (pg.18)
5) Updated types of income that must be counted for calculating income (pg.21)
6) Clarified use of gross income (pg.21)
7) Updated types of income that are not counted for calculating income (pg.21)

8) Updated guidance on connections to legal services (pg.44)
9) Clarified policy on rental assistance for debts owed on former leases (pg.49)
10) Updated requirements related to comparable units for rental assistance (pg.50)
11) Clarified policy on utility assistance for debts owed related to former leases (pg.52)
12) Clarified Housing Stability Assistance to pay for bedding (pg.55).
13) Updated Section VIII. Fiscal Administration (pg.65-66, 70-74)
14) Updated Section X. Reporting Requirements (pg.83-87)
15) Clarified Category I Eligibility Documentation (pg.112)
16) Added Exhibit G: Rapid Re-housing Waiver (pg.135-136)
17) Added all copies of all forms with SSVF VA website live links (pgs.141-188)

8. Revisions made for the March 26, 2015 Edition:

1) Updated and added to Definitions for emergency housing, emergency housing assistance, extremely low income, homeless, literally homeless, occupying permanent housing, permanent housing, rapid re-housing, and Veteran
2) Updated Occupying Permanent Housing
3) Added segment on Extremely Low Income
4) Added Veteran Choice Card to documentation options for Veteran Status
5) Updated Helpful Links
6) Updated Case File Documentation Requirements with an addition of Emergency Housing Verification
7) Added segments on Families Fleeing Domestic Violence and Documenting Domestic Violence
8) Expanded Case Management Services - Description of Services
9) Expanded Assistance in Obtaining and Coordinating Other Public Benefits - Description of Services
10) Clarified use of online platforms for rent reasonableness in Restrictions on Rental Assistance
11) Updated time limits for Temporary Financial Assistance used for rental assistance, utility payment assistance, deposit payment assistance, moving cost payment assistance, transportation assistance, and childcare assistance
12) Added Extremely Low Income category for Temporary Financial Assistance used for rental assistance, utility payment assistance, and childcare payment assistance
13) Updated specifics of General Housing Stability Assistance
14) Updated specifics of Emergency Housing Assistance
15) Updated maximum for car repair in Transportation Assistance
16) Updated Habitability Standards
17) Expanded Confidentiality
18) Updated and streamlined summary chart of Temporary Financial Assistance
19) Updated Ineligible Activities with clarification on mortgage costs, construction, rehabilitation, extensive car repairs, and court-ordered judgments or fines
20) Updated live links in Program Operations charts
21) Revised name of Homeless Verification to Literally Homeless Verification
22) Updated live links throughout guide

23) Revised minor wording for clarification purposes throughout guide

9. Revisions made for the October 31, 2014 Edition:

1) Modified formats throughout Program Guide for readability.
2) Shifted order of sections V and VI for readability
3) Added “literally homeless” definition
4) Clarified summary of Supportive Services Provided
5) Categorized Temporary Financial Assistance as “Required”
6) Added summaries of Rapid Re-housing, Coordination with CoCs, Housing First
7) Added Accreditation and Renewal Awards
8) Clarified Recertification of Eligibility
9) Clarified Case File Documentation Requirements
10) Added Eligible Expenses for Outreach
11) Clarified Eligible Temporary Financial Assistance
12) Clarified Restrictions on Rental Assistance
13) Clarified Restrictions on Deposit Payment Assistance
14) Clarified General Housing Stability Assistance
15) Clarified Confidentiality security of records
16) Added Grievance and Appeals Policy and Procedure
17) Clarified Finalizing PMS Registration and Change of PMS Information
18) Clarified Overview of Disbursement
19) Updated Reporting Process for HMIS
20) Clarified Exhibit C:Section 2.3)
21) Added Exhibit G: History of Revisions to Program Guide

10. Revisions made for the March 31, 2014 Edition:

1) Removed all references to Veteran Healthcare Administration eligibility as a requirement for SSVF eligibility
2) Addition of Exhibit F: Domestic Violence Guidance for HMIS Reporting
3) Addition of Federal Financial Report (FFR) guidance

11. Revisions made for the March 20, 2014 Edition:

1) Changed “Presumptive Eligibility” to “Pending Verification of Veteran Status” to more accurately identify the group
2) Exhibit C: Collaborative Delivery of GPD/HUD-VASH/SSVF Services added
3) Exhibit D: Guide for Pending Verification of Veteran Status added
4) Exhibit E: Homelessness Prevention Eligibility Screening Instructions added

12. Revisions made for the March 4, 2014 Edition:

1) Eligibility language adjusted to ensure consistency with new guidance (Veterans Health Administration) and documentation requirements
2) Electronic survey methods and guidelines clarified
3) Clarification regarding restrictions and uses of Emergency Housing Assistance

4) Clarification regarding restrictions and uses of Emergency Supplies, a subcategory of General Housing Stability Assistance
5) Removal of medical supplies in some areas in order to bring entire guide in line with current policy
6) Removal of current Exhibits B, C and D (samples, tools, and templates). All samples and tools will, as of this publishing, be on the SSVF website, Exhibits A1, A2, A3 reassigned as Exhibits A, B, and C, respectively

13. Revisions made for the December 19, 2013 Edition:

1) Clarification of Veteran eligibility status, including updated forms and resources for determining SSVF eligibility
2) Further defined eligible homeless status conditions (i.e.: staying at a shelter or place not meant for human habitation)
3) Clarification of maximum TFA expenditures as related to total Supportive Service Grant Award (50%)
4) Addition of Homelessness Prevention Eligibility Screening Disposition Form and Instructions with guidance on eligibility and threshold screening requirements

14. Revisions made for the October 22, 2013 Edition:

1) Medical supplies removed as an allowable expense
2) Clarification on presumptive eligibility guidelines and documentation
3) Updated HPRP vs. SSVF comparison to clarify previous changes in allowable activities

15. Revisions made for the August 26, 2013 Edition:

1) Clarification of allowable mobile lot rent payments, rental assistance limitations, specification of gas voucher payments and utility arrear payments
2) Added new Housing Stability Assistance financial assistance category
3) Added new Emergency Housing Assistance category and incorporated this type of assistance as a subcategory of Housing Stability Assistance
4) Provided further guidance on Veteran eligibility status and documentation
5) Clarified that W-9s from landlords are required prior to any rental assistance payments

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SECTION XII | EXHIBITS

XIII. Forms

A. SSVF Pending Verification of Veteran Status Form

Link to form

Issue:

As per 38 CFR 62.2, enrolling participants in SSVF requires that grantees verify Veteran status to determine program eligibility. For some families who are unable to produce Veteran status at initial screening, the documentation collection process can take weeks, during which time Veteran families in crisis are waiting for critically needed services. In addition to the implications for extended homelessness, this delay in services can result in potential participants becoming lost to contact. To prove a participant's Veteran status, grantees should obtain at least ONE of the following:

- SQUARES 2.0 printout
- VHA ID Card
- VISTA Print Outs
- VBA letter verifying award of a service connected disability benefit (any percentage)
- Veteran Information Solution (VIS) or Hospital Inquiry System (HINQ) from local VAMC section - VBA Statement of Service
- DD214
- NA Form 13038
- VA Photo ID Card

Resolution:

At the time of screening, SSVF grantees may make a determination of Pending Verification of Veteran Status. This determination will allow the grantee to immediately begin delivering case management services to the Veteran family until Veteran status is able to be documented.

Process and Restrictions:

1. Temporary financial assistance (TFA) cannot be offered during the period of Pending Verification of Veteran Status. TFA can only begin once eligibility is confirmed.
2. Pending Verification of Veteran Status must be documented by an affidavit of eligibility signed by the participant.
3. Until eligibility is confirmed, Pending Verification of Veteran Status must be re-certified every 3 months. If the participant is ultimately found not to be eligible for SSVF, the participant must be discharged with appropriate community referrals.
4. Upload client data in HMIS, as required for all SSVF clients, and include in monthly reports. If no persons in the household are Veterans, grantees may delete those records from HMIS, if desired.
5. Service data will count towards outcomes and final service numbers regardless of final determination of Veteran status.

Affidavit of Eligibility

SSVF Agency/Program Number:	SSVF Case Manager Name, Phone and Email:
Veteran Information	
Name:	
Date of Birth:	Gender:
Phone:	Email:
If Known, Additional Information (Branch of Service, Date of Service, Character of Service, etc.):	
Date of Initial pending verification of Veteran status:	
Veteran Status Determination is Pending: Request for the following documentation has been submitted – check all that apply:	
☐ SQUARES 2.0 ☐ VHA ID Card ☐ VBA letter ☐ VISTA Printout ☐ DD214 ☐ Statement of Service ☐ VIS/ HINQ * ☐ NA Form 13038 ☐ VA Photo ID Card *(November 2017 and after)*	
SSVF Agency Staff Name and Signature:	
II. Date of Recertification (must be within 3 months of Initial pending verification of Veteran status Date):	Status of request for document:
SSVF Agency Staff Name and Signature:	
Name of Veteran:	

I am being accepted as a client of Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program (SSVF) on Pending Verification of Veteran Status. While my income and housing status have been determined eligible, confirmation of Veteran Status is pending.

I affirm that I meet the conditions of an eligible participant consisting of a "Veteran family," meaning that the person/family to be served is either (a) a Veteran; or (b) a member of a family in which the head of household, or the spouse of the head of household, is a Veteran and I am pending determination of Veteran status.

I further acknowledge that the following restrictions to services have been explained to me:

1. Temporary financial assistance (TFA) cannot be offered during the period of Pending Verification of Veteran Status. TFA can only begin once eligibility is confirmed. I can receive other types of assistance in the form of case management until my Veteran status is verified and determined eligible for SSVF.
2. Pending Verification of Veteran Status must be documented by this affidavit signed by the Veteran.
3. The period of Pending Verification of Veteran Status must be re-certified every 3 months from the date of this affidavit. If I am ultimately found not to be eligible for SSVF, my family members and I will be discharged from the program and referred to appropriate community referrals.

I have received a copy of this Affidavit for my records:

Name of Veteran or Head of Veteran Household (print):

Veteran or Head of Veteran Household Signature **Date:**

Name SSVF Agency Representative (print):

Name of SSVF Agency Representative Signature **Date:**

**Maintain this documentation in client file.*

If Veteran Status is Determined Ineligible or Inconclusive, Client Referrals Include:	
☐	Referral Source:
☐	Referral Source:
☐	Referral Source:

B. SSVF Literally Homeless Certification

Link to form

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program
LITERALLY HOMELESS CERTIFICATION
(Note: this form is used only for Rapid Re-housing i.e. SSVF categories 2 and 3)

SSVF Applicant Name:
Instructions: This form is to certify, via a third party, that the above named applicant is currently "literally homeless" as defined in the SSVF Program Guide's description of eligibility for SSVF Rapid Re-housing. The third party completing this form must check one box below, provide a description, and sign and date this form.

I certify that the person name above and any household members with that person (check only one):

☐ Is living in a car, park, abandoned building, bus/train station, airport, camping ground, or other place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation, or am fleeing or attempting to flee a domestic violence situation.

Description of where applicant is staying:

Agency/Program Name:

Authorized Agency Representative Signature **Date:**

☐ Is staying in an emergency shelter OR a transitional housing program for people who are homeless (coming from streets or shelter) OR a hotel or motel that is paid for by a charity or government program.

Shelter, Transitional Housing, or Hotel/Motel Name:
Location:
If Motel/Hotel: Name of Charity/Program Paying for Stay:

Authorized Agency Representative Signature Date:

☐ Is exiting an institution where they have been staying for 90 days or less AND they stayed in an emergency shelter OR a place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation **immediately prior** to entering that institution.

Name of Institution:
Location:
Date of Admission:
Description of Unsheltered Location:
Shelter Name:

Location:

Authorized Agency Representative Signature **Date:**

SECTION XIII | FORMS

C. SSVF Literally Homeless Self-Certification

Link to form

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program
LITERALLY HOMELESS SELF-CERTIFICATION
(Note: this form is used only for Rapid Re-housing i.e. SSVF categories 2 and 3)

SSVF Applicant Name:

Instructions: Complete this self-certification if third party documentation (i.e., written or oral verification) cannot be obtained from an appropriate third party. SSVF applicants may self-certify their current "literally homeless" status per one of the categories below and as defined in the SSVF Program Guide. SSVF staff should review this form with applicants and assist in completing, as needed. Applicants must sign and date this form.

I certify (check only one):

☐ I (we) am living in a car, park, abandoned building, bus/train station, airport, camping ground, or other place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation, or am fleeing or attempting to flee a domestic violence situation.
Description of where you are staying:

☐ I (we) am staying in an emergency shelter OR a transitional housing program for people who are homeless OR a hotel or motel that is paid for by a charity or government program.

Shelter, Transitional Housing, or Hotel/Motel Name:
Location:
If Motel/Hotel: Name of Charity/Program Paying for Stay:

☐ I am exiting an institution where I have been staying for 90 days or less AND I stayed in an emergency shelter OR a place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation immediately prior to entering that institution.

Name of Institution:
Location:
Date of Admission:
Description of Unsheltered Location:
Shelter Name:
Location:

SSVF Applicant Signature **Date:**

D. SSVF Homelessness Prevention Screening Form

Link to Form

SCREENING DATE (e.g., 10/01/2018)

APPLICANT HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD (Identify Veteran member of household)

OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS (attach an additional page as needed)

SECTION XIII | FORMS

STAGE 1: VA ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility Condition 1: Veteran Status	
Did you serve active *service* military, naval, or air service?	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NOT SURE
Were you discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable or discharged?	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NOT SURE
[Staff Note: Bad Conduct discharges are not the same as dishonorable, and as such, are eligible. Furthermore, for Veterans with multiple discharges, the best discharge status may be used for SSVF eligibility.]	
SSVF STAFF DISPOSITION: Is an applicant an eligible Veteran (as defined above)? **If "NO", STOP: APPLICANT NOT CURRENTLY ELIGIBLE**	☐ YES ☐ NO
Documentation obtained? **If "NO" AND DOCUMENTATION PENDING, CONTINUE. Please refer to the SSVF Program Manual for further guidance.**	☐ YES ☐ NO
Eligibility Condition 2: Very Low Income Status	
Household size (all adults/children):	[ ]
Total Annual Gross Income from All Sources:	$
50% of Area Median Income for Household Size:	$

SSVF STAFF DISPOSITION: Is gross annual income less than 50% Area Median Income for household size (grantee may set lower income threshold)? **If "NO", STOP: APPLICANT NOT CURRENTLY ELIGIBLE**	☐ YES ☐ NO
Documentation obtained?	☐ YES ☐ NO

Eligibility Condition 3: Imminently At-Risk of Literal Homelessness

3A) Imminent Housing Loss	**Next, we need to know some details about your current housing situation so we can understand how best to assist you.** *[Staff Note: applicants who are losing their housing because they are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence are eligible for SSVF Rapid Re-Housing assistance and should instead be screened for RRH assistance.]*

Can you tell me about the place you stayed last night? Is this the primary place you stay or is there somewhere else you normally stay? If there is somewhere else you normally stay, can you tell me about that place?

Identify the primary place where applicant is staying (check only one):

- ☐ Hotel or motel paid for without emergency shelter voucher
- ☐ Staying or living in a family member's room, apartment or house
- ☐ Staying or living in a friend's room, apartment or house
- ☐ Rental by client, no ongoing housing subsidy
- ☐ Rental by client, with HUD-VASH subsidy
- ☐ Rental by client, with other ongoing housing subsidy
- ☐ Permanent housing for formerly homeless persons (e.g., CoC Program funded unit)
- ☐ Owned by client, no ongoing housing subsidy
- ☐ Owned by client, with ongoing housing subsidy
- ☐ Hospital or other residential non-psychiatric medical facility*
- ☐ Long-term care facility or nursing home*
- ☐ Jail or prison*
- ☐ Residential project or halfway house with no homeless criteria*
- ☐ Psychiatric hospital or other psychiatric facility*
- ☐ Substance abuse treatment facility or detox center*
- ☐ Other (describe):

*If staying in institution, determine if stay there is 90 days or less and if previously in emergency shelter, Safe Haven, or on the street. Such individuals are considered literally homeless and should instead be screened for SSVF RRH assistance.

[Staff Note: applicants staying in emergency shelter, including hotel/motel paid for with emergency shelter voucher, a Safe Haven, transitional housing (including GPD), or in a place not meant for habitation (e.g., a vehicle, an abandoned building, bus/train/subway station/airport or anywhere outside) are considered literally homeless and should be screened for SSVF RRH assistance.

Do you have to leave this place (or the place your normally stay)?	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A

[Staff Note: briefly describe reasons why applicant has to leave current place they are staying and obtain copy of any written documentation.]
If yes, what is causing you to have to leave? How long can you continue to stay there?

Identify why applicant must leave the primary place they are staying (check only one):

- ☐ Court-ordered eviction notice to vacate rental unit
- ☐ Formal written notice from landlord to vacate rental unit (e.g., 30 day Notice to Quit*)
- ☐ Written or verbal notice from family, friend or host to leave doubled-up housing
- ☐ Exiting an institution or system of care (e.g., hospital, jail, treatment facility, etc.)
- ☐ Insufficient resources to continue to pay for hotel or motel
- ☐ Other (describe):

**Applicants who have only received a verbal notice from landlord and applicants who are only behind on utilities and have not received a formal written eviction notice are not eligible for SSVF HP assistance.*

By what date must the applicant leave the primary place they are staying? *[Staff note: must be within 30 days of date of application to be eligible for SSVF HP assistance]*	/ /
Have you tried asking for an extension on your rent payment or otherwise negotiating a way to stay in your current housing?	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A
If yes, what was the result of this conversation? If no, is this an option for you?	
May I contact your current [landlord, host family/friend, other] to see if we can negotiate a solution so you can continue to stay there OR stay there while you find another place to live?	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A
<u>SSVF STAFF DISPOSITION:</u> Is applicant imminently losing their current primary nighttime residence? **If "NO", STOP: APPLICANT NOT CURRENTLY ELIGIBLE**	☐ YES ☐ NO
Documentation obtained?	☐ YES ☐ NO

3B) Other Housing Options & Resources	**We would like to know if you have any other safe and appropriate place to stay – either permanently OR while you look for other housing. We would also like to know if you have family, friends or others you know that may be able to help you financially.**

[**Staff Note**: Discuss and record below a summary related to each of the following potential housing options and sources of assistance: 1) family members or relatives; 2) close or trusted friends; and 3) faith-based group or network applicant associates with. Where appropriate, ask if a potential housing option can be contacted by you to help secure housing. Attach additional notes as necessary.]

Do you have a safe, appropriate place where you could live if you lose your current home? Let's talk about different types of options and whether any of these might be available to you as a safe, appropriate place to live either permanently or while you seek other housing on your own. Let's start with family members and relatives…

Would you be willing to contact them OR may I contact them to find out if they can provide you with a place to stay, financial help or other assistance to keep you from becoming homeless? This might include family, trusted friends or other groups (faith-based, social, etc.) that might be able to help ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NOT SURE

If YES, who should be contacted?

Name	Relationship to you	Phone number or e-mail

SSVF STAFF DISPOSITION: Briefly summarize efforts and discussion related to other possible housing options and resources and whether applicant lacks other safe/appropriate housing options (either permanent or one they can access while seeking other housing) and resources sufficient to avoid literal homelessness.

Does applicant have other safe/appropriate housing options and/or resources sufficient to avoid literal homelessness? **If "YES", STOP. APPLICANT NOT CURRENTLY ELIGIBLE.**	☐ YES ☐ NO
3C.) Financial Resources	**We would like to find out if you have any funds or if there is other assistance immediately available to you and that you could access to help you keep your current housing or immediately find other housing.**
Approximately how much money would you need to pay immediately in order to keep your housing OR obtain other housing?	$
Do you have any funds or other assistance immediately available to you and that you could access to help you keep your current housing or immediately find other housing?	☐ YES ☐ NO
Approximately how much money do you currently have available in savings, assets or other accounts?	$
Do you have enough money to pay for your current housing costs, including any rent or utility arrears?	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NOT SURE
Are there other community resources you've applied for, such as other eviction prevention programs, emergency financial assistance programs, utility assistance programs, or other local emergency assistance programs?	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NOT SURE

If you have no other financial resources and are unsure if there are other community resources that could help we may be able to refer you to other resources that would be more appropriate than SSVF.

Can we help provide information about other resources? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If YES, identify each resource:

Resource	Potential Assistance Available	Disposition (e.g. information & referral provided, contacted and not available; etc.)

SSVF STAFF DISPOSITION: Briefly summarize efforts and discussion related to financial resources and whether other (non-SSVF) financial resources are available to avoid literal homelessness. If they will lose housing regardless of their own financial resources or other financial assistance, explain.

Does applicant have enough financial resources to avoid literal homelessness? **If "YES", STOP: APPLICANT NOT CURRENTLY ELIGIBLE**	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A (Housing loss occurring regardless of financial resources

Eligibility Condition 4 (Optional): Other Program Eligibility Conditions

Additional Grantee Eligibility Requirements
(as identified in SSVF grantee's VA approved *Grantee Screening Criteria and Targeting Threshold Plan*)

	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A
	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A
	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A
	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A
SSVF STAFF DISPOSITION: Does applicant meet other grantee eligibility conditions approved by the VA? **If "NO", STOP: APPLICANT NOT CURRENTLY ELIGIBLE.**	☐ YES ☐ NO

Stage 1: Eligibility Disposition

ELIGIBLE: Meets all eligibility requirements above	☐ YES, CONTINUE TO STAGE 2
NOT ELIGIBLE: Does not meet one or more eligibility requirements	☐ NO

STAGE 2: TARGETING

TARGETING CRITERIA Use the following criteria to identify if the eligible applicant household is also a priority for SSVF homelessness prevention assistance. Check each condition that is true for the Veteran applicant.	**CHECK IF APPLICABLE**	**POINT VALUE**	**TOTAL POINTS** (enter value for each box that is checked)
URGENCY OF HOUSING SITUATION (May indicate more urgent need for homelessness prevention assistance)			
Referred by Coordinated Entry or a homeless assistance provider to prevent the household from entering an emergency shelter or transitional housing or from staying in a place not meant for human habitation.	☐	**5**	
Current housing loss expected within… (select only one)			
0-6 days	☐	**5**	
7-13 days	☐	**4**	
14-21 days	☐	**3**	
POTENTIAL BARRIERS AND VULNERABILITIES (May impact ability to quickly secure housing and resolve literal homelessness independently if household is not assisted and becomes literally homeless)			
***Current* household income is $0 (i.e., not employed, not receiving cash benefits, no other current income)**	☐	**5**	
***Annual* Household Gross Income Amount (select only one)**			
0-14% of Area Median Income (AMI) for household size	☐	**4**	
15-30% of AMI for household size	☐	**3**	
Sudden and significant decrease in cash income (employment and/or cash benefits) AND/OR unavoidable increase in non-discretionary expenses (e.g., rent or medical expenses) in the past 6 months	☐	**3**	
Major change in household composition (e.g., death of family member, separation/divorce from adult partner, birth of new child) in the past 12 months	☐	**3**	
Rental Evictions within the Past 7 Years (select only one) *[Staff Note: only include formal eviction actions (i.e., Notice to Quit) taken by a landlord due to lease non-compliance and that ultimately resulted in loss of rental housing]*			
4 or more prior rental evictions	☐	**5**	
2-3 prior rental evictions	☐	**4**	
1 prior rental eviction	☐	**3**	

TARGETING CRITERIA Use the following criteria to identify if the eligible applicant household is also a priority for SSVF homelessness prevention assistance. Check each condition that is true for the Veteran applicant.	**CHECK IF APPLICABLE**	**POINT VALUE**	**TOTAL POINTS** (enter value for each box that is checked)
Currently at risk of losing a tenant-based housing subsidy or housing in a subsidized building or unit	☐	**3**	
History of Literal Homelessness (street/shelter/transitional housing) (select only one)			
4 or more times or total of at least 12 months in past three years	☐	**5**	
2-3 times in past three years	☐	**4**	
1 time in past three years	☐	**3**	
Head of household with disabling condition (physical health, mental health, substance use) that directly affects ability to secure/maintain housing	☐	**3**	
Criminal record for arson, drug dealing or manufacture, or felony offense against persons or property	☐	**4**	
Registered sex offender	☐	**5**	
At least one dependent child under age 6	☐	**3**	
Single parent with minor child(ren)	☐	**3**	
Household size of 5 or more requiring at least 3 bedrooms (due to age/gender mix)	☐	**3**	
POLICY PRIORITIES			
Any Veteran in household served in Iraq or Afghanistan	☐	**3**	
Female Veteran	☐	**3**	
		TOTAL POINTS	

Stage 2: Targeting Disposition	
Meets Targeting Threshold VA Approved Targeting Threshold Score [ ]	☐Continue with SSVF program intake OR other referral if no capacity
Does Not Meet Targeting Threshold	☐ Reference HP Screening Form Instructions regarding “Service-Directed Housing Interventions”

Applicant Certification

By signing below, I certify that the information provided above is correct, so far as I know and understand, and that I do not have other housing options or sufficient resources or support networks (e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks) immediately available to prevent my household from becoming literally homeless.

Veteran Name:

Veteran of Head of HH Signature:

Date:

SSVF Staff Certification

By signing below I certify that I have worked with the Veteran household to identify housing resources and solutions and believe, based on the information presented, that the Veteran household is eligible for SSVF services and will become literally homeless unless SSVF assistance is provided. Further, I certify that all supporting documentation required for SSVF enrollment has been obtained and verified and is contained in the participant's case file.

SSVF Staff Name:

SSVF Staff Signature:

Date:

SSVF Supervisor Approval

SSVF Staff Signature:

Date:

Veteran Head of HH Signature **Date:**

SSVF Staff Signature **Date:**

E. SSVF Income Verification

Link to form

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program
VERIFICATION OF INCOME

SSVF Participant Name:

Instructions for Employer/Payment Source Representative: This is to certify the income received by the above-named individual for purposes of participating in the SSVF Program. This information will be used only to determine the eligibility status and level of benefit of the household. **Complete only the selected section below that includes an authorization to release information.**

Please return this form to:

Name & Title: Phone:
Address: Fax:
Email:

☐ Employment Income

SSVF Participant Release: I hereby authorize the release of the following employment information.

SSVF Participant Signature Date:

Employer representative to complete this section:
The person named above is employed by since .
He/she is paid $ on a basis and is currently working an average of hours per .
Additional compensation please specify (if any):
Probability of continued employment:

Authorized Employer Representative Signature Date:

Name, Title:
Address and Phone:

☐ Payments and/or Benefit Income (complete one form for each distinct source of income for person named above)

CIRCLE ONE:	Social Security/SSI	Pension/Retirement	TANF
	Public Assistance	Unemployment Compensation	Workers Compensation
	Alimony Payments	Foster Care Payments	Child Support Payments
	Armed Forces Income	Other (pls specify):	

SSVF Participant Release: I hereby authorize the release of the following payment and/or benefit information.

SSVF Participant Signature **Date:**

Payment source representative to complete this section:
Payments or benefits in the amount of $ are paid on a basis.
The expected duration of the payments or benefits is .

Authorized Employer Representative Signature Date:

Name, Title:
Address and Phone:

SECTION XIII | FORMS

F. SSVF Self-Declaration of Income

Link to form

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program
SELF-DECLARATION OF INCOME

SSVF Participant Name:

This is to certify the income status for the above named individual. Income includes but is not limited to:

- The full amount of gross income earned before taxes and deductions.
- The net income earned from the operation of a business, i.e., total revenue minus business operating expenses. This also includes any withdrawals of cash from the business or profession for your personal use.
- Monthly interest and dividend income credited to an applicant's bank account and available for use.
- The monthly payment amount received from Social Security, annuities, retirement funds, pensions, disability and other similar types of periodic payments.
- Any monthly payments in lieu of earnings, such as unemployment, disability compensation, SSI, SSDI, and worker's compensation.
- Monthly income from government agencies excluding amounts designated for shelter, and utilities, WIC, food stamps, and childcare.
- Alimony, child support and foster care payments received from organizations or from persons not residing in the dwelling.
- All basic pay, special day and allowances of a member of the Armed Forces excluding special pay for exposure to hostile fire.

Check only one box and complete only that section.

☐ I certify, under penalty of perjury, that I currently receive the following income:

Source:	Amount:	Frequency:
Source:	Amount:	Frequency:
Source:	Amount:	Frequency:

SSVF Participant Signature **Date:**

☐ I certify, under penalty of perjury, that I do not have any income from any source at this time.

SSVF Participant Signature **Date:**

SSVF Staff Verification

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I understand that third-party verification is the preferred method of certifying income for SSVF assistance. I understand self-declaration is only permitted when I have attempted to but cannot obtain third party verification.

Documentation of attempt made for third-party verification:

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SSVF Staff Signature **Date:**

G. SSVF Asset Income Calculation Worksheet

Link to form

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program
ASSET WORKSHEET

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Instructions: Please complete if household currently has assets. Include assets for all household members. Amounts listed in worksheet should match attached backup documentation.

Head of Household:

ASSETS INCLUDE:

1. Current amounts in savings accounts and the average balance for the last six months for checking accounts. Also include cash held at home or in a safe deposit box.
2. Cash value of revocable trusts. A revocable trust can be changed by the grantor at any time and is therefore counted as an asset.
3. Equity in real property or other capital investments. Equity is the estimated current market value of the asset less the unpaid balance on all loans secured by the asset and reasonable costs (such as broker fees) that would be incurred in selling the asset.
4. Stocks, bonds, savings certificates, money market funds and other investment accounts.
5. IRA, Keogh and similar retirement savings accounts, even though the withdrawal would result in a penalty.
6. Some contributions to company retirement/pension funds. Include contributions while an individual is employed, count only the amount the family can withdraw without retiring or terminating employment. After retirement or terminating, count as an asset any amount the employee elects to receive as a lump sum.
7. Surrender value of whole life or universal insurance policy.
8. Personal property held as an investment (such as gems, jewelry, coin collections, antiques, etc).
9. Lump sum receipts such as inheritances, lottery winnings, capital gains, insurance settlements and other lump sum amounts.
10. Assets disposed of for less than fair market value during the two years preceding certification or re-certification. The amount counted as an asset is the difference between the cash value and the amount actually received.
11. Assets, which although owned by more than one person, allow unrestricted access by the applicant.

TYPE OF ASSET	TOTAL VALUE	FEES OR PENALTIES	CASH VALUE (TOTAL VALUE MINUS PENALTIES)	INTEREST RATE	ACTUAL ASSET INCOME (MULTIPLY CASH VALUE BY INTEREST RATE)
TOTALS:				N/A	
Imputed value = CASH VALUE x % = (Passbook rate)				USE IMPUTED IF TOTAL **CASH VALUE** IS OVER $5000 AND GREATER THAN ACTUAL ASSET INCOME	

Total Actual Asset Income =	USE ACTUAL IF TOTAL **CASH VALUE** IS UNDER $5000 OR GREATER THAN IMPUTED VALUE

Name of SSVF Agency Representative Signature **Date:**

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H. SSVF Income Calculation Worksheet

Link to form

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program
INCOME ELIGIBILITY CALCULATION WORKSHEET

To be eligible for SSVF, households must be at or below 50% of the Area Median Income (and meet other SSVF eligibility requirements. Grantees may use this sample worksheet to determine whether an applicant household meets the SSVF income eligibility threshold. A copy of this worksheet should be kept in the SSVF participant case file. For additional information on SSVF eligibility requirements and documentation standards, see the SSVF Program Guide.

Household Member Number	Household Member Name	Age of Household Member
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
Total Household Members (household Size)		
50% of Area Median Income (AMI) for Household Size		$

Household Member Number/ Name	Sources of Household Income	Gross Documented Current Income Amount	Frequency of Income	Number of Payments per Year	Annual Gross Income (gross income amount X # of payments per year)
	Earned Income (for ADULT house hold members only)	$			$

	Earned Income (for ADULT house hold members only)	$			$
	Earned Income (for ADULT house hold members only)	$			$
	Self-employment/ business income	$			$
	Self-employment/ business income	$			$
	Interest & Dividend Income	$			$
	Income from Assets	$			$
	Pension/Retirement Income	$			$
	Pension/Retirement Income	$			$
	Unemployment & Disability Income	$			$
	Unemployment & Disability Income	$			$
	TANF/Public Assistance	$			$
	TANF/Public Assistance	$			$
	Alimony, and Child Support	$			$
	Alimony and Child Support	$			$
	Armed Forces Income	$			$
	Armed Forces Income	$			$
	Other (specify):	$			$
	Other (specify):	$			$
	Total Annual Gross Income from all Sources				$
	50% of Area Median Income for Household Size				$
	Variance (If less than AMI, then household is income eligible)				$
	Is the household at or below 50% Area Median Income?				☐ Yes – Income Eligible
					☐ No – Not Income Eligible

I. Staff Certification of Eligibility for SSVF Assistance

Link to form

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program
STAFF CERTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SSVF ASSISTANCE

Purpose: This form serves as documentation that: (1) the SSVF participant named below meets all eligibility criteria for SSVF assistance; (2) this eligibility determination is based on true and complete information; (3) neither the staff member making this determination nor his or her supervisor are related to the program participant through family, business or other personal ties; and (4) this eligibility determination has not resulted from, nor will result in, any financial benefit to the staff member making this determination, his or her supervisor, or anyone related to them.

Instructions: This form must be completed for each SSVF participant upon the determination of his or her eligibility for SSVF assistance. This form must be signed and dated by the SSVF staff person who makes this determination and that person's supervisor and must be kept in the participant's case file. This form will remain valid, unless a different staff person re-determines the SSVF participant's eligibility, in which case a new form will be required.

Name of SSVF participant:
Names of family members in household*:

**All family members in household that will benefit from SSVF assistance should be listed.*

Required certifications: Each person signing below certifies to the following: (1) To the best of my knowledge, the SSVF participant named above meets all requirements to receive assistance under the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program. (2) To the best of my knowledge and ability, all of the information used in making this eligibility determination is true and complete. (3) I am not related to the SSVF participant through family, business or other personal ties. (4) To the best of my knowledge, neither I nor anyone related to me has received or will receive any financial benefit for this eligibility determination. (5) I understand that fraud is investigated by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Inspector General, and may be punished under Federal laws to include, but not limited to, 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 18 U.S.C. 641. (6) I understand that if any of these certifications is found to be false, I will be subject to criminal, civil and administrative penalties and sanctions.

SSVF Staff Signature **Date:**

SSVF Supervisor Signature **Date:**

J. Staff Recertification of Eligibility for SSVF Continued Assistance

Link to form

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program
STAFF RECERTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SSVF ASSISTANCE

Purpose: This form serves as documentation that: (1) the SSVF participant named below meets all eligibility criteria for SSVF recertification; (2) this eligibility determination is based on true and complete information; (3) neither the staff member making this determination nor his or her supervisor are related to the program participant through family, business or other personal ties; and (4) this eligibility determination has not resulted from, nor will result in, any financial benefit to the staff member making this determination, his or her supervisor, or anyone related to them.

Instructions: This form must be completed for each SSVF participant upon the recertification of his or her eligibility for SSVF assistance. This form must be signed and dated by the SSVF staff person who makes this determination and that person's supervisor and must be kept in the participant's case file. This form will remain valid, unless a different staff person re-determines the SSVF participant's eligibility, in which case a new form will be required.

Name of SSVF participant:
Names of family members in household*:

**All family members in household that will benefit from SSVF assistance should be listed*

Required certifications: Each person signing below certifies to the following: (1) To the best of my knowledge, the SSVF participant named above meets all requirements for recertification under the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program. (2) To the best of my knowledge and ability, all of the information used in making this eligibility determination is true and complete. (3) I am not related to the SSVF participant through family, business or other personal ties. (4) To the best of my knowledge, neither I nor anyone related to me has received or will receive any financial benefit for this eligibility determination. (5) I understand that fraud is investigated by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Inspector General, and may be punished under Federal laws to include, but not limited to, 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 18 U.S.C. 641. (6) I understand that if any of these recertifications is found to be false, I will be subject to criminal, civil and administrative penalties and sanctions.

SSVF Staff Signature **Date:**

SSVF Supervisor Signature **Date:**

K. Domestic Violence Certification

Link to form

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program
SSVF Domestic Violence Certification form
Third Party OR Self-Verification Form

SSVF Participant Name:

The goal of the category **Families Fleeing Domestic Violence** is to ensure safety for all participants assisted through the SSVF Program. A participant household experiencing domestic violence receives special consideration in SSVF with regards to supportive services. This is a consideration designed for participants fleeing a domestic violence situation mid-stream during their SSVF participation such that the original participant household breaks apart. Under this policy, the victim of domestic violence (whether or not the victim is the Veteran), if forming a new participant household, will have the "tolling period" for SSVF's temporary financial assistance reset back to the beginning. The "tolling period" refers to the limited timeline of months for paying temporary financial assistance within a 12-month or 2-year period (for details, see Section VI.F.). For these newly formed households, that timeline begins again at zero months. Note that, under these circumstances, a new participant household may be created even without a Veteran in it. Furthermore, any household fleeing a domestic violence situation is considered literally homeless and enrolled as a Rapid re-housing household.

When certifying the situation that the household is facing, it is important for SSVF providers to ensure safety of the affected family at all times. Note that this form only requires third party verification (e.g. statement from a social worker, police report, legal service provider), in cases where performing this due diligence does not jeopardize the safety of household members. If third party verification is not available, it is acceptable for participants to provide a self-certification as to their circumstances.

Check only one:

☐ I am in a household that is currently enrolled in the SSVF Program, and I am fleeing a domestic violence situation. I have attached third party verification attesting to my situation OR have completed the certification below signed by a third party with knowledge of my current circumstances.

Third Party Certification:

I certify that I have direct knowledge of the situation the above named household is facing and can attest to the fact this person/household is fleeing a domestic violence situation

Agency/Program Name:

Relationship to Participant:

Authorized Representative Name:

Authorized Representative Signature **Date:**

☐ I am in a household that is currently enrolled in the SSVF Program and I am fleeing a domestic violence situation. As my safety would be jeopardized by gathering third party documentation, I am self-certifying to the fact that I am fleeing a domestic violence situation.

I certify that the information above and any other information I have provided to the SSVF Program is true, accurate and complete.

SSVF Participant Signature **Date:**

SSVF Staff Certification

I understand that third-party verification is the preferred method when certifying that participant is fleeing a domestic violence situation. Due to the high-risk nature of the situation, due diligence to gather third party documentation was completed only to the extent that it did not jeopardize the safety of household members.

SSVF Staff Signature **Date:**

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L. SSVF Housing Stability Plan Template

Link to form

CREATING A REASONABLE HOUSING PLAN
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR VETERAN FAMILIES (SSVF) PROGRAM

It is the policy of the VA to support a "Housing First" model in the approach to addressing and ending homelessness. Housing First establishes housing stability as the primary intervention in working with homeless persons.

I. Any SSVF Housing Stabilization Plan should have several key characteristics:
- The ultimate goal is to obtain and/or retain permanent housing.
- If the household is living in a situation that jeopardizes their safety, such as on the streets, the initial Plan must focus on immediate resolution of the crisis.
- If the household is at imminent risk of losing housing that they can and should keep, the initial Plan must focus on preserving that housing.
- Intermediate goals are designed to achieve milestones that are necessary to obtain or retain permanent housing.
- Program participants have input and final decision for all goals, actions steps and timelines.
- Action steps to achieve goals are clear, simple-to-understand, measurable, and can be accomplished within a relatively short period of time.
- Case manager and/or participant responsibility is designated for each action step.
- A target date is set for completion (or review) of the steps and the overall Plan.

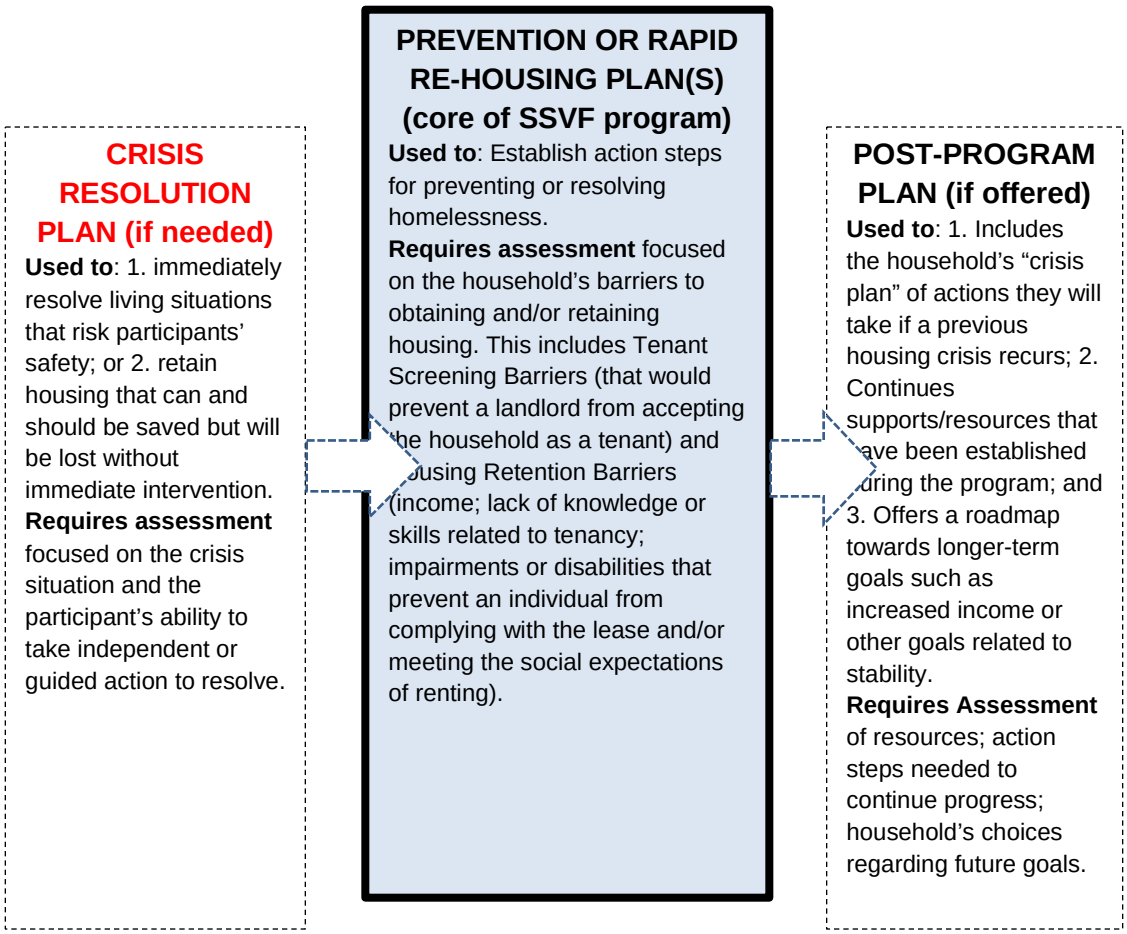
The overarching goal in all SSVF Housing Plans is always stabilizing permanent housing, but this may require several intermediate goals and frequent updating of the action steps before that final goal is achieved. Thus there would rarely be one single Plan that guides household and case manager's efforts throughout participation in the SSVF program. The following progression of the Housing Stabilization Plan(s) may be used as a general guide for programs as they follow the participant from: 1) Immediate crisis resolution, to 2) Short-term planning for preventing or resolving homelessness (prevention or rapid re-housing), to 3) Follow-up or post-program planning. All SSVF programs will not necessarily utilize all three stages of Housing Stabilization Plans for every participant. The number and sequence of Plans/revisions will depend upon the household's situation and the SSVF grantee's program design, but will normally fall into three stages:

1. **Crisis Resolution Plan** Not all households will need a Crisis Resolution Plan but for some participants, the first and (until resolved) only goal may be focused on resolving an immediate crisis that jeopardizes safety, such as:
   - A family with small children is living in their car, in dangerously cold weather.
   - A Veteran is facing domestic violence if she does not leave her home; she has no safe alternatives.

2. **Short-Term Prevention or Rapid Re-Housing Plan** When a participant is safe, the Housing Stabilization Plan will focus on homelessness prevention or rapid re-housing goals,

the core of the SSVF program. While permanent housing is the ultimate goal, intermediate objectives may be necessary. An intermediate goal for a homeless participant may be "move into subsidized SRO unit." Once explored in more detail, the SRO may have a waiting list — so another intermediate goal must be selected (such as "obtain efficiency, with shallow rent subsidy, while waiting for subsidized SRO unit to become available"). These intermediate goals, once achieved, help the household progress toward the final goal. So this stage may include more than one revision of the Housing Stabilization Plan.

3. **Post-Program/ "Aftercare" Plan** Finally, many SSVF programs help program participants plan for continued housing stability after leaving SSVF and all offer assistance in connecting households to ongoing community resources. The Post-Program Plan would usually include these additional referrals. The case manager will generally have limited or no responsibility (depending upon program design) for action steps once the household exits the program.



Program participants will generally be in agreement with goals that are clearly designed to resolve their immediate housing problems. They may be less interested in longer-term goals; nearly everyone experiencing a crisis will focus on the issues that are immediately threatening to his or her physical and emotional health—and that of their children. Once housed, most

people are willing and able to shift their attention to other important housing-related goals, such as increasing their income. But not everyone will be willing or able to work on longer-term goals.

Action steps are harder for most people who are facing imminent or current homelessness to initiate. Not only are they under stress and focused on "survival" needs; in most cases they also lack knowledge of the resources that might assist them or the steps necessary to secure those resources. SSVF staff have critical connections to landlords; know how to obtain public and VA benefits; have the ability to mediate tenancy issues, etc. The Plan's action steps will include those activities that must be completed by program participants and those the case manager will achieve.

II. What makes a Housing Plan "reasonable"?

- **A Housing Stabilization Plan assists a household to quickly re-gain the sense of safety that accompanies having a home. It does not require that the household accept help now, from this program, to resolve other life problems that may be unrelated to their immediate housing crisis (or at least be perceived by the household as unrelated).**

  It is not reasonable to assume that all people in crisis are willing and able to quickly move beyond resolution of the immediate problem and into longer-term life changes. It is also not reasonable to expect that they can quickly achieve a higher level of self-sufficiency than they ever experienced previous to the crisis. While some households can and do make this level of progress, they are the exception. It is more likely that once a household regains immediate stabilization, they have more interest in obtaining the tools and community resources to help them with future challenges. They also have new insight about longer-term possibilities and the obstacles to their own goals. People nearly always move forward at the time and pace that works for them. While encouragement may help them advance more quickly, pressure to achieve too much, too fast, may have the opposite effect.

- **The number of goals and action steps do not exceed the participant's willingness and ability. This means that not all participants are expected to be able to achieve the same goals or accomplish the same number or complexity of action steps.**

  It is not reasonable, or even possible for most people to simultaneously make numerous changes in behaviors that are strongly ingrained. People can change, but their ability to do so depends upon genetics; their experiences with success; the rewards they have experienced in their environment; "secondary reinforcement" by their family/friends, and other factors. Setting a goal of changing even one set of behaviors is challenging. To make things worse, trying to change one behavior may actually reduce the ability to simultaneously change another behavior. Plans that set goals requiring changes in ingrained behaviors will be most effective if the target changes are smaller, if success is more easily achieved, especially at first, and if changes are sequential rather than simultaneous.

In most cases, it is preferable to include only action steps that can be accomplished within the time period between face-to-face meetings. If a participant sees his/her case manager weekly during the initial stages of the program, the action steps should be those that can be taken within a week. The frequency of visits and Plan updates will depend on the SSVF program's caseload size and the degree to which the participant's situation and personal challenges limit his/her ability to take organized action.

- **Income goals and timelines take into consideration both the individual's income history, abilities and challenges, and the current state of his/her community's housing and job markets. In many cases, a focus on decreasing expenses (including housing) and maximizing benefits will be more realistic intermediate goals. "Curing" poverty, particularly long-term poverty, is not a reasonable goal for a short-term program like SSVF.**

  Increasing income is an effective approach to longer-term housing stability, but a significant increase in income is often not realistic. Smaller increases-- in number of hours worked or an increase in a disability benefit may be more reasonable goals. Unemployed participants, especially those with limited education or skills, those over 50 years old, and those with impairments that limit their ability to work--especially in communities with few jobs--may find their income will actually be lower in a new job. This reality means that every effort must be made to decrease all possible household expenses, including moving to less expensive housing. In-kind resources and subsidies (rent, utilities, child care) can also make it more feasible to pay the rent even when monthly income cannot be increased. And even though the waiting lists are long for subsidized housing units or rental vouchers, households should apply for any and all rental subsidies for which they are eligible.

SSVF Reasonable Plan Template

Participant Name: **Date:**

Case Manager Name:

Purpose of this Plan:

☐ Crisis Plan to assure safety ☐ Rapid Re-Housing ☐ Prevention of Homelessness

☐ Follow-up Plan for Longer-Term Housing Stability

Goals:		
Action Steps	**Person Responsible**	**Target Date for Completion or Review**
Next Review and Plan Update (Date/Place):		

SSVF Participant Signature **Date:**

Case Manager Signature **Date:**

M. Supportive Services Referrals Tracking Tool

Link to form

Supportive Service	Already Connected	Date Referred	Connected	Notes
Health Care Services				
VA Medical Center				
Vet Center				
Community Mental Health Provider				
Community Medical Provider				
Daily Living Services				
Home Healthcare				
Personal Financial Planning				
Credit Counseling				
Financial Workshop				
Transportation Services				
DAV				
Shuttle Services				
Public Transportation				
Income Support Services				
Worksource				
HVRP				
Goodwill				
VRAP				
VBA				
SSI				
WIC				
SNAP				
Department Social Services				
Fiduciary/Payee Services				

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Supportive Service	Already Connected	Date Referred	Connected	Notes
SSI Payee Services				
VA Fiduciary Services				
Legal Services				
Pro-bono legal services				
Childcare				
Childcare provider list				

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N. Emergency Housing Assistance (EHA) Verification for Families

Link to form

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program

Emergency Housing Assistance Verification *for Households with Dependents*

SECTION XIII | FORMS

The goal of **emergency housing assistance (EHA)** is to ensure household safety in the case where shelter beds, transitional housing, or other resources are not available (see criteria 1 below) and subsequent rental housing has been identified generally (see criteria below) but is not immediately available for move-in by the participant. Emergency housing is temporary housing provided under 38 CFR 62.34(f) in a short-term commercial residence (private residences are not eligible) not already funded to provide emergency shelter and which does not require the participant to sign a lease or occupancy agreement. For households with dependents, EHA allows the provision of up to 45 days of temporary housing for participant households with at least one dependent child under the age of 18. EHA costs cannot exceed the reasonable community standard for such housing (i.e., cost of hotel must be similar to other basic hotel accommodations available in the community). A participant household may be placed in emergency housing only once during any 2-year period, beginning on the date that the grantee first pays for emergency housing on behalf of the participant.

Criteria Defined

1. **Shelter beds, transitional housing, or other resource are not available** means that the household is either not eligible for or has exhausted all other available emergency shelter, transitional housing, and other temporary housing (e.g., family/friends) and no other resource is available (personal or from other assistance programs) to pay for temporary or permanent housing tonight. This also means that no shelter or other resource is available at any point while EHA is provided by SSVF.
2. **Identified Generally** means a permanent housing unit(s) has been reviewed by SSVF program staff and the Veteran family, and at least one permanent housing unit is a viable option for the household. EHA can be used if the identified unit is not immediately available for move-in, but will be available before the end of the period during which the participant household is placed in emergency housing. (A signed lease is not required prior to placement in permanent housing.) No EHA will be available beyond the 45 day limit regardless of whether the Veteran family chooses to obtain that permanent housing within the limited timeframe.

Due to the time-limitation on this category, SSVF staff and Veteran families need to work together closely in order to ensure housing is obtained prior to the end of EHA.

SSVF Participant Certification

Number of children under 18 in household:

I, (print name) certify to the following conditions (check all that apply):

☐ My household includes at least one dependent under the age of 18.

☐ My household has no viable option for shelter tonight and our only choice is to sleep in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g., car, street).

☐ I have exhausted all other temporary housing options including emergency shelter beds, transitional housing, or other resource available (e.g., staying with family or friends) and have no other resources available to me to pay for temporary or permanent housing tonight.

☐ I understand the emergency housing is only available for up to 45 days.

Head of Household Signature **Date:**

SSVF Staff Certification

I, (print name)certify to the following conditions (check boxes):

☐ All other shelter options and housing resources have been explored and are not available.

☐ Description of attempts at other shelter options/housing resources and explanation of why EHA is the only available resource for shelter:

☐ The cost of the temporary emergency housing is reasonable for the community standard.

☐ Description of how staff confirmed cost of EHA was reasonable (e.g., called area hotels for quotes):

☐ Permanent Housing has been identified generally, as defined above.

I certify that this EHA will allow for this household to move from emergency housing into permanent housing based on the following: (List all considerations made when approving this EHA request and any relevant written evidence to support these considerations. Written evidence should be maintained in the client file.)

1.	**Reasoning** (e.g., client has acceptance letter from apartment complex):	
	Written evidence (e.g., letter in the file):	
2.	**Reasoning:**	
	Written evidence:	
	Reasoning:	

3.	Written evidence:	

SSVF Staff Signature **Date:**

SSVF Supervisor Signature **Date:**

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To be Filled Out Following Completion of EHA Payment Period

Date Household Entered Emergency Housing:

Date Household Exited Emergency Housing:

Total Number of Days of EHA Assistance: Days

Did the household move directly from Emergency Housing to Permanent Housing?

☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If permanent housing was not obtained, attach a separate sheet detailing the reasons and circumstances that prevented permanent housing from being obtained.

O. Emergency Housing Assistance (EHA) Verification for Single Veterans

Link to form

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Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program

Emergency Housing Assistance Verification

For Single Veteran Households

The goal of **emergency housing assistance (EHA)** is to ensure household safety in the case where shelter beds, transitional housing, or other resources are not available (see criteria 1 below) and subsequent rental housing has been identified generally (see criteria below) but is not immediately available for move-in by the participant (see criteria 2 below). Emergency housing is temporary housing provided under 38 CFR 62.34(f) in a short-term commercial residence (private residences are not eligible) not already funded to provide emergency shelter and which does not require the participant to sign a lease or occupancy agreement. For single Veteran participant households, EHA allows the provision of up to 72 hours of EHA. EHA costs cannot exceed the reasonable community standard for such housing (i.e., cost of hotel must be similar to other basic hotel accommodations available in the community). A participant household may be placed in emergency housing only once during any 2-year period, beginning on the date that the grantee first pays for emergency housing on behalf of the participant.

Criteria Defined

1. **Shelter beds, transitional housing, or other resource are not available** means that the household is either not eligible for or has exhausted all other available emergency shelter, transitional housing, and other temporary housing (e.g., family/friends), and no other resource is available (personal or from other assistance programs) to pay for temporary or permanent housing tonight. This also means that no shelter or other resource is available at any point while EHA is provided by SSVF.
2. **Identified Generally** means a permanent housing unit(s) has been reviewed by SSVF program staff and the Veteran, and at least one permanent housing unit is a viable option for the household. EHA can only be used if the identified unit is not immediate available for move-in, but will be available before the end of the period during which the participant is placed in emergency housing which should not exceed 72 hours (a signed lease is not required prior to placement in permanent housing). No EHA will be available beyond the 72 hour limit unless the grantee can certify that appropriate shelter beds and transitional housing are still unavailable at the end of the 72 hour period. In the rare circumstance that EHA is extended, certification of continued assistance must be documented per requirements outlined in this form.

Due to the time-limitation on this category, SSVF staff and Veteran families need to work together closely in order to ensure housing is obtained prior to the end of EHA.

SSVF Participant Certification

I, (print name) **certify to the following conditions (check all that apply):**

☐ I have no viable option for shelter tonight and my only choice is to sleep in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g., car, street).
☐ I have exhausted all other temporary housing options including Grant and Per Diem (GPD) residences, Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) residential programs, staying with family and friends, emergency shelters, etc. and have no other resources available to me to pay for temporary or permanent housing tonight.
☐ I understand the emergency housing assistance is only available for up to 72 hours.

Head of Household Signature **Date:**

SSVF Staff Certification

I, (print name)certify to the following conditions (check boxes):

☐ All other shelter options and housing resources have been explored and are not available.

☐ Description of attempts at other shelter options/housing resources and explanation of why EHA is the only available resource for shelter:

☐ The cost of the temporary emergency housing is reasonable for the community standard.

☐ Description of how staff confirmed cost of EHA was reasonable (e.g., called area hotels for quotes):

☐ Permanent Housing has been identified generally, as defined above.

I certify that this EHA will allow for this household to move from emergency housing into permanent housing based on the following: (List all considerations made when approving this EHA request and any relevant written evidence to support these considerations. Written evidence should be maintained in the client file.)

1.	**Reasoning** (e.g., client has acceptance letter from apartment complex):	
	Written evidence (e.g., letter in the file):	
2.	**Reasoning:**	
	Written evidence:	
	Reasoning:	

3.	Written evidence:	

SSVF Staff Signature **Date:**

SSVF Supervisor Signature **Date:**

Does the single Veteran household require additional assistance beyond the 72 hour EHA limitation?

☐ Yes (Complete certification on this page)

☐ No (Complete final completion box on Page 4)

SSVF Staff Certification of Additional EHA Assistance

If it is necessary to extend EHA beyond the 72 hour limit, the additional certification below must be completed. This cannot be completed prior to original placement in emergency housing and must be completed before additional assistance beyond the original 72 hours is provided. Additional assistance cannot exceed 45 days.

If permanent housing or alternative temporary shelter (e.g., emergency shelter, transitional housing) was not obtained by the end of the first 72 hours, detail the reasons and circumstances that prevented permanent housing or alternative shelter from being obtained.

If additional EHA assistance is being used for the single Veteran household, outline the efforts taken by the staff to certify that <u>this is the only safe option</u> for the Veteran household. *Must document all efforts to find alternative housing. Include efforts to obtain shelter or entry into programs for which the participant may be eligible. Third party verification is strongly encouraged including copies of email attempts at finding emergency shelter, phone logs, etc.*

If additional EHA assistance is being used, explain the new situation that will allow the Veteran to move directly from emergency housing into permanent housing or alternative temporary shelter (e.g., emergency shelter, transitional housing) by the end of the extended period.

I, (Staff member) certify that the information I have outlined above is true, accurate, and complete.

For the reasons given above, I also certify that to the best of my knowledge there are no other housing or alternative shelter options available and EHA will be extended for a period of days.

SSVF Staff Signature **Date:**

SSVF Supervisor Approval **Date:**

To be Filled out Following Completion of EHA Payment Period

Date Household Entered Emergency Housing:
Date Household Exited Emergency Housing:
Total Number of Days of EHA Assistance: Days

Did the household move directly from Emergency Housing to Permanent Housing?
☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Did the household move to an alternative placement such as GPD or other residential program?
☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Please indicate the type of housing/name of program or shelter where the participant moved:

If permanent housing was not obtained, detail the reasons and circumstances below that prevented permanent housing from being obtained:

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P. SSVF General Housing Stability Assistance (GHSA) Form

Link to form

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program
General Housing Stability Assistance (GHSA) Expense Tracker Form

SSVF Participant Name:

GHSA Categories $1,500 per participant household during any 2-year period		
Item/Purchase	**Amount**	**Date**
Expenses associated with gaining or keeping employment Eligible items include but are not limited to uniforms, tools, driver's license fees, license/certification costs required for employment, documentation acquisition fees such as for Social Security Number or birth certificate, document court filing fees, and short term training leading to employment where other funding is not available.		
Expenses associated with moving into permanent housing Eligible items include but are not limited to furniture delivery costs, furniture bank fees, bed frames, conventional mattresses, air mattresses, box springs, basic kitchen utensils, and cleaning supplies.		
Expenses necessary for securing appropriate permanent housing Eligible items include but are not limited to fees for rent applications, background checks, housing inspections, credit score checks, credit counseling, criminal background check, tenancy screening reports, financial literacy class, document court filing fees, and documentation acquisition such as for Social Security Number or birth certificates.		
Expenses necessary for a participant's life or safety on a temporary basis - $500 limit Eligible items include food, baby formula, diapers, and winter clothing.		

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Total		
New Total		

Broker Fees

Reasonable amount for a realtor broker's fee. This may be paid once during a 2-year period. The reasonableness of this fee must be determined based on the condition of the local housing market.

Broker Name/Agency	Amount	Date
Total		

Explanation of how it was determined that cost is reasonable:

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Q. Rent Reasonableness Checklist

Link to form

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program
Rent Reasonableness Checklist
Source: HUD HOME Program

	Proposed Unit	Unit #1	Unit #2	Unit #3
Address				
Number of bedrooms				
Square feet				
Type of unit/construction				
Housing condition				
Location/accessibility				
Amenities				
Unit:				
Site:				
Neighborhood:				
Age in years				
Utilities (type)				
Unit rent				
Utility allowance				
Gross rent				
Handicap accessible?				

Certification:

A. Compliance with Payment Standard

Proposed Contract Rent + Utility Allowance = Proposed Gross Rent

Approved rent does not exceed applicable payment standard of $.

B. Rent Reasonableness

Based upon a comparison with rents for comparable units, I have determined that the proposed rent for the unit :

☐ **is reasonable**
☐ **is not reasonable**

Name:

Signature **Date:**

R. Housing Habitability Standards Checklist

Link to form

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program
Housing Habitability Standards Inspection Checklist

About this tool

The standards for housing unit inspections under SSVF are the HUD housing habitability standards. These standards apply only when an SSVF participant household is receiving rapid re-housing financial assistance or moving into a new (different) unit in association with homelessness prevention. Inspections must be conducted prior to initial occupancy.
The habitability standards are different from the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) used for other HUD programs. In contrast to HQS inspections, the habitability standards do not require a certified inspector. As such, SSVF program staff may conduct the inspections, using a form such as this one to document compliance.

Instructions: Mark each statement as 'A' for approved or 'D' for deficient. The property must meet all standards in order to be approved. A copy of this checklist should be placed in the client file.

Approved or Deficient	Element
	1. *Structure and materials*: The structures must be structurally sound so as not to pose any threat to the health and safety of the occupants and so as to protect the residents from hazards.
	2. *Access*: The housing must be accessible and capable of being utilized without unauthorized use of other private properties. Structures must provide alternate means of egress in case of fire.
	3. *Space and security*: Each resident must be afforded adequate space and security for themselves and their belongings. Each resident must be provided with an acceptable place to sleep.
	4. *Interior air quality*: Every room or space must be provided with natural or mechanical ventilation. Structures must be free of pollutants in the air at levels that threaten the health of residents.
	5. *Water Supply*: The water supply must be free from contamination.
	6. *Sanitary Facilities*: Residents must have access to sufficient sanitary facilities that are in proper operating condition, may be used in privacy, and are adequate for personal cleanliness and the disposal of human waste.
	7. *Thermal environment*: The housing must have adequate heating and/or cooling facilities in proper operating condition.
	8. *Illumination and electricity*: The housing must have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and to support the health and safety of residents. Sufficient electrical sources must be provided to permit use of essential electrical appliances while assuring safety from fire.

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Approved or Deficient	Element
	9. *Food preparation and refuse disposal*: All food preparation areas must contain suitable space and equipment to store, prepare, and serve food in a sanitary manner.
	10. *Sanitary condition*: The housing and any equipment must be maintained in sanitary condition.
	11. *Fire safety*: Both conditions below must be met to meet this standard.
	a. Each unit must include at least one battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detector, in proper working condition, on each occupied level of the unit. Smoke detectors must be located, to the extent practicable, in a hallway adjacent to a bedroom. If the unit is occupied by hearing-impaired persons, smoke detectors must have an alarm system designed for hearing-impaired persons in each bedroom occupied by a hearing-impaired person. b. The public areas of all housing must be equipped with a sufficient number, but not less than one for each area, of battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detectors. Public areas include, but are not limited to, laundry rooms, day care centers, hallways, stairwells, and other common areas.

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(Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Docket No. FR-5307-N-01, Notice of Allocations, Application Procedures, and Requirements for Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Grantees under the Recovery Act)

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I certify that I am not a HUD certified HQS inspector and I have evaluated the property located at the address below to the best of my ability and find the following:

☐ Property meets all of the above standards.
☐ Property does not meet all of the above standards.

Therefore, I make the following determination:

☐ Property is approved.
☐ Property is not approved.

Veteran Name:

Street Address:

Apartment: City: State: Zip:

Evaluator's Signature Date:

Please Print. Name:

CBO Executive Director Initial: