Grant and Per Diem Operational Webinar

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National Director, GPD

Chelsea Watson, MSPH
Deputy Director, GPD

Tuesday, January 12, 2021 at 2pm Eastern/11am Pacific

Recording Link: https://veteransaffairs.webex.com/veteransaffairs/ldr.php?RCID=e459a781d249c290394b88dbb5951498
Password: Homeless1!
GPD Operational Call Agenda

• Announcements
  – Funding Opportunity Updates
  – Revised Isolation Option information on website
  – Operational Requirement
    – SQUARES
    – Smart Simple update
• VA OIG Review
• Office of Business Oversight
• VA Vaccination Uptake Study
• Legislation Update
• Q&A
Announcements

- Case Management Renewal NOFA – Published 12/17/2020
  - Deadline 2/18/2021 at 4pm eastern
  - Only open to existing grantees
  - Copy of NOFA on GPD website
- Capital Grant – coming soon
  - Existing transitional housing only
  - Goal to increase individual living units
- Special Need – Anticipate up to $5 million – coming soon
  - Open to eligible entities
Options for Social Isolation Under the COVID-19 Emergency: GPD Updates

- Removed 9/30/20 end date
- Clarified when Change of Scope requests and inspections are required
- Provided direct links to Change of Scope guidance and video technologies

*Options for Social Isolation Under the COVID-19 Emergency can be found on the [GPD Provider website](http://gpdprovider.com)*
Grant Operational Deadline

- 38CFR61: Subpart C—Per Diem Payments § 61.30 Per diem—general. (a) General. VA may provide per diem funds to offset operating costs for a program of supportive housing or services. VA may provide: (1) Per diem funds to capital grant recipients; or (2) Per diem only (PDO) funds to entities eligible to receive a capital grant, if the entity established a program of supportive housing or services after November 10, 1992. (b) Capital grant recipients. Capital grant recipients may request per diem funds after completion of a project funded by a capital grant and a site inspection under § 61.80 to ensure that the grantee is capable of providing supportive services. (c) Per diem only applicants. PDO awards to entities eligible to receive a capital grant must provide supportive housing or services to the homeless veteran population within 180 days after the date on the notification of award letter, or VA will terminate the PDO payments. (Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501, 2012)

- By March 30, 2021 each grant must pass inspection and be actively serving Veterans, or VA will terminate the grant.

- For projects that have multiple program models and not all program models operational, the program model(s) not operational within 180 days of the start of the grant award will be terminated.
SmartSimple Grants Management System (GMS)

• Friday, January 8th – an automated email from the SmartSimple system sent to grantee points of contact providing username and temporary password as part of our migration into the new system.

• If your organization has not seen the email, check your junk/spam folders. The email will be coming from either hmlsgrants-va@mod.udpaas.com or VAHomelessGrants@va.gov.
  • We request that you add both emails to your safe senders list

• Brief webinar to guide you through the process to access the SmartSimple platform.
  • Play recording (19 mins)
  • Recording password: Homeless1!
OIG Review of VA Transitional Housing

- OIG reviewed VA transitional housing programs administered by the Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) and Grant and Per Diem (GPD) programs
  - Report access [VA Transitional Housing Report Summary](#)
- Assess the measures taken by the Veterans Health Administration’s (VHA) Homeless Program Office (HPO), medical facilities, and service providers to mitigate veterans’ risks of COVID-19 exposure while in transitional housing
  - 6 VA Medical Centers
  - 14 Service Providers (10 HCHV, 4 GPD)
- Reviewed streamlined communication process from HPO
– Measured compliance of service providers (grantees/contractors) with six Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) interim guidelines
  • Used extra cleaning procedures, including disinfectant;
  • Implemented new screening procedures such as temperature check and screening questions to regularly assess veterans for symptoms of COVID-19;
  • Isolated or had plans to isolate veterans suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19;
  • Had sufficient soap, hand sanitizers, cleaning supplies, and face coverings or masks;
  • Were notified by medical facility staff of veterans who could be at high risk of complications from COVID-19 or otherwise identified these veterans and encouraged them to take extra precautions; and
  • Maintained at least six feet of space between veterans in sleeping and eating areas.
OIG Review of VA Transitional Housing

- Review resulted in four (4) recommendations
  - Issue guidance to medical facility staff on how the COVID-19 At-Risk Veteran Report should be used to help service providers identify high-risk veterans and educate those veterans on the need for extra precautions.
  - Ensure medical facility staff are monitoring and assisting with the service providers’ implementation of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance, including updates.
  - Identify service providers that have not fully implemented the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s six-feet social-distancing guidelines, particularly for sleeping and meal areas, and encourage them to implement alternative measures or use VA options to help mitigate space limitations.
  - Monitor the availability of personal protective equipment at service providers’ residences, and help develop contingency plans in the event of a prolonged pandemic or surge.
Office of Business Oversight

- **Upcoming Fiscal Reviews:**
  - **Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard, Inc.** - 700 E. Fee Avenue Melbourne, FL 32901 - January 19-21, 2021
  - **LA Family Housing** - 7843 Lankershim Blvd, North Hollywood, CA 91605 - January 19-21, 2021
  - **The Poverello Center, Inc.** - 1110 W. Broadway Street Missoula, MT 59802-3918 - February 2-4, 2021

- **CAARES ACT Oversight**

- **SF-425’s**
  - **Office of Management and Budget (OMB) SF-425 Federal Financial Report Instructions, Page 3, states**, "Annual reports shall be submitted no later than 90 days after the end of each reporting period."
  - Grantees should be aware that late SF-425 reports may impact the program office’s decision to continue the grant.
  - OBO will be contacting all grantees who have not submitted their SF-425 timely.
COVID-19 Vaccination Uptake Study

June Gin, PhD, Research Health Scientist
Michelle Balut, MPH, Research Project Manager

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**Aim of the Study**: to understand Veterans in VA Homeless Programs’ willingness to receive the COVID-19 vaccine (their opinion of it, how receptive they are, and how likely they are to get vaccinated).

If your GPD site is willing to participate, we would **ask you to invite Veteran residents to participate in a 15-minute phone interview**.

Note: Veteran participation is completely voluntary and confidential, and anything they share with us will be only reported in aggregate and excerpted form—they will remain anonymous.

We would also like to interview a member of your leadership team (30-minute phone interview) to get a broader view of how the GPD Veterans feel about getting vaccinated and some of the challenges to vaccination.
If you are interested in participating (or would like more information), please contact Ms. Michelle Balut at michelle.balut@va.gov by January 29, 2021.

We will provide all invitation and recruitment materials (email language, printable flyers, etc.) for you to use in inviting your Veteran residents to volunteer for this study.

Thank you!
Legislative Update
Applicable to GPD

• Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 Sections 4201-4208 relate to VA homeless programs
  • Several portions of the legislation relate to GPD
  • Authorities fall into two categories
    • Time limited authority
    • Program changes
## Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 – GPD Focused

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Time limited*</th>
<th>Summary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4201 - Limit on Rates for Per Diem Payments</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Establishes maximum rate for per diem payments to be three times the authorized rate for State Homes for Domiciliary Care</td>
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<td>4201- Modification of Funding limits for grants</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Eliminates matching funds requirement for those applying for VA capital grants for construction, renovation, or acquisition of a facility to provide transitional housing for homeless veterans during a declared public health emergency</td>
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<td>4201-Use of Per Diem Payments</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Provides authority to utilize GPD per diem payments to provide assistance required for safety and survival</td>
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<td>4201 Additional Transitional Housing</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Provides authority to provide additional funding for transitional housing beds without notice of competition</td>
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<td>4201 Inspections and Life Safety Code Requirements</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Provides authority for the Secretary to provide flexibilities in inspections and life safety code requirements for GPD</td>
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*Time limited refers to only in effect during national health emergency
## Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 – GPD Focused

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<td>4201 - Disposition of Property Relating to Grants</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Allows VA to make the determination that past and new GPD grantees are not subject to OMB real property disposition requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>4204 Increase in Per Diem Payments</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Authorizes increase in the maximum GPD per diem rate to 115% of the state Veterans home domiciliary rate</td>
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<td>4204 Increase in Per Diem Payments</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Secretary may increase per diem from time to time based on locality</td>
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<tr>
<td>4204 Increase in Per Diem Payments</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Authorizing paying up to 50% of the GPD per diem rate for each minor dependent under the care of a homeless veteran while receiving services from the grant recipient</td>
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Legislative Update – Administering changes

- Some portions require SECVA approval some will involve regulations development
- When Capital Grant Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) published there will be “no match requirement”, would make grants awarded during this period not subject to OMB real property disposition
- Maximum “waiver per diem rate” limited to three times State Homes Domiciliary rate during public health emergency to begin as of February 1, 2021
- Waiver Updated GPD Program CARES Act: Per Diem Rate FAQs – GPD Per Diem Request Webpage
Question and Answer Period

- Questions should be submitted through the chat box
- Please do not unmute yourself
- Keep questions focused on items that may interest other participants
COVID-19 Resource Information

- Reminder of various resource documents available on GPD provider website
  - Wellness & Symptom Checks for COVID-19 Positive & Presumptive Positive Veterans In Hotels and Motels
  - GPD Isolation Options
  - GPD CARES Act Implementation Guidance
  - GPD Per Diem Request Webpage
  - Links to Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance
- Be sure to coordinate with local health departments, VA Medical centers regarding testing
- Grantees expected to follow CDC guidance and comply with local public health guidelines regarding quarantine and safety protocols associated with COVID-19
- Grantees may include the cost of testing asymptomatic staff who have direct contact with GPD Veterans as part of their allowable program costs
Reminders

- Next webinar February 9, 2021 @ 2pm eastern
- GPD Provider website
  https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/GPD_ProviderWebsite.asp
  - COVID 19 resource info
  - CDC Guidance links