

GRANT & PER DIEM NATIONAL PROGRAM OPERATIONAL GRANTEE CALL

June 13, 2023

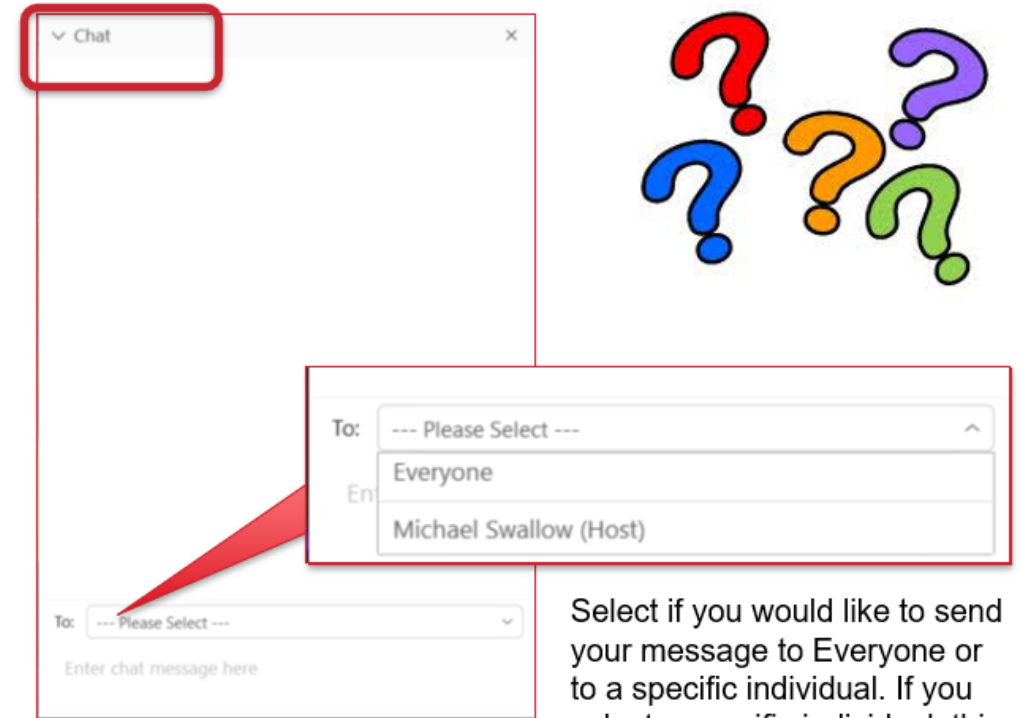
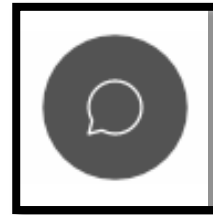
RECORDING LINK: <https://veteransaffairs.webex.com/recording/service/sites/veteransaffairs/recording/playback/17e6ddaec42103b9bff00505681d077>

RECORDING PASSWORD: Homeless1!

HOUSEKEEPING

- This meeting is being recorded.
- Past recordings are available on the GPD provider website:
https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/GPD_ProviderWebsite.asp
- The webinar will last approximately 60 minutes.
- Mics and video are disabled (but always check to make sure you're on mute).
- Questions can be submitted using the Chat function.

Select the Chat icon on the tool bar at the bottom of the screen.



Select if you would like to send your message to Everyone or to a specific individual. If you select a specific individual, this will send the message privately so no one else in the meeting will see it.

AGENDA

- **Announcements & Reminders**
 - July webinar canceled
 - GPD grantee performance
 - Contacts in eGMS
 - Capital grant completion targets
 - Per diem rate requests
 - Anticipated timelines for grant awards
- **VA Office of Business Oversight**
- **Housing Focused Engagements: Eric Gammons, Randy McCoy; TAC & Abt, VA Homeless Programs Technical Assistance**
- **Questions**

Announcements

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- July's webinar is canceled
- Our next meeting will be **Tuesday, August 8th** at 2pm Eastern
- Have a happy and safe Independence Day!



GPD SCORECARD PERFORMANCE

National: National - Report Period: 2023

	Target		Oct	Nov	Dec	Qtr1	Jan	Feb	Mar	Qtr2	Apr	Qtr3	FYTD
GPD													
GPD1: % Exits to Permanent Housing	*		71.15%	69.72%	71.09%	70.66%	66.42%	71.95%	70.93%	69.84%	70.56%	70.56%	70.28%
GPD2: % Negative Exits	20.00%	↓	19.59%	19.39%	18.14%	19.03%	21.08%	16.96%	16.69%	18.16%	17.86%	17.86%	18.48%
GPD3: % Employed at Exit	55.00%		67.15%	63.46%	60.28%	63.58%	56.86%	60.93%	62.82%	60.30%	63.24%	63.24%	62.07%



REMINDER: KEEPING CONTACTS UP TO DATE

- Keeping your agency's points of contact up-to-date in GPD's electronic grants management system (eGMS) **is essential**
- Instructions are here:
<https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/docs/GPD/providers/UDPaaS TutorialAddContacts.pdf>
- **At a minimum**, you must have contacts listed for
 - Organizational leadership,
 - Fiscal management,
 - Grant operations, and a
 - SQUARES manager.
- Please **update your contacts** if new staff members come on board

OVERVIEW APPLICATION EXTERNAL ATTACHMENTS **GRANT CONTACTS**

Grant Contacts

Find Contact

--- Select Role ---

Add Contact

-
- Select Role ---
- Select Role ---
 - Board Member
 - Data/IT Management
 - Direct Service Provider
 - Fiscal Management
 - Grant Operations
 - Grant Owner
 - Grant Writer
 - Organization Leadership
 - SQUARES POC

REMINDER: CAPITAL GRANT RECIPIENTS

- We are approaching the expected completion date for capital projects
 - CARES awards began 10/1/2021 with expected completion by **9/30/2023**
 - ARP awards began 5/1/2022 with expected completion by **9/30/2023**
- There is flexibility if your timeline falls within the performance period of your grant agreement which runs through **9/30/2024**
- If you haven't started working with the CFM team or have only met part of the requirements, reach out to vacocfmgpdcapitalgra@va.gov
- This technical compliance process has three components that must be met prior to drawing funds
 - Please review our [capital grant recipient guide](#)
- If you have full CFM approval and haven't started drawing funds, please provide an updated timeline to GPDFiscal@va.gov
- Thank you to our capital grantees working through this process

REMINDER: PER DIEM RATE REQUESTS

- Initial per diem rate requests for fiscal year 2024 are being reviewed now
 - Any incorrectly completed requests or overstated costs will be returned for revisions
 - FY 2024 rate requests are not effective until October 1, 2023
- When submitting rate requests (initial or modifications), ensure you have **not**
 - overstated your estimated cost of care (budget)
 - exceeded the maximum per diem rate (i.e., \$64.52 for PDO, \$84.15 for TIP, \$112.20 for SN, \$8.06 for SC)
 - If the cost of care is greater than the maximum per diem rate, you must include the other sources of funding/income that will be used to cover those costs (e.g., resident rent, non-VA grant funding, donations)
 - Exception: costs may be higher if the request includes HMIS costs (not to exceed \$10,000)

REMINDER: PER DIEM RATE REQUESTS

- Mid-year per diem rate review
 - All grantees should compare total per diem funds received (October – March) to the actual costs incurred (allowable and allocable) for the first two quarters
 - If GPD per diem funds received **exceed** the actual costs incurred during this period, your organization has overstated your per diem rate
 - Immediately submit a rate decrease to ensure your agency does not continue to accumulate unobligated funds at the end of the fiscal year
 - At the end of each fiscal year, every grantee must submit their Federal Financial Report (SF 425) indicating the actual costs incurred for each FAIN.
 - **Do not** put your organization in a position where VA will need to indebt your agency for unobligated funds

ANTICIPATED TIMELINE FOR GRANT AWARDS

- We anticipate Per Diem Only and Transition in Place grant awards for fiscal year 2024 will be announced this summer.
 - Grantees will not receive executed grant agreements until October 1, 2023
- We expect conditional selections of Case Management grants to be socialized around July 2023
 - Case Management applicants selected for funding will receive a grant agreement to sign
 - Please read the grant agreement very carefully
 - Note if we made any modifications to your award (e.g., funding amount, positions awarded)
 - Some applications included items that could not be funded per the notice of funding and what VA will award may differ from what you applied for

OFFICE OF BUSINESS OVERSIGHT

- **Federal Contractors:**
 - Trilogy, BDO, RMA & Associates
- **Upcoming Fiscal Reviews:**
 - Liberation Veteran Services, Inc. – June 20 - 22, 2023
 - Salvation Army Kansas – June 20 - 22, 2023
 - Salvation Army, Harbor Light – June 20 - 22, 2023
 - Cocaine and Alcohol Awareness Program, Inc. – July 11 - 13, 2023
 - Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency Inc. – July 11 - 13, 2023
 - Housing Authority of the City of Longview – July 17 - 18, 2023
 - Transition Projects, Inc. – July 19 - 21, 2023
 - HOPE Community Services Inc. – July 25 - 27, 2023
 - Volunteers of America of the Carolinas, Inc. – July 25 - 27, 2023
- **OBO Quick Tips:**
 - Monitor grant expenditures monthly to ensure that overspending or underspending can be addressed before the end of the grant period
 - Keep receipts, documentation, and monthly financial statements well organized and accessible
 - Use a system of checks and balances so that no one person is solely in charge of the money
 - Maintain and update contracts
 - Maintain and update policies for bonuses and accurately implement them
 - Maintain and update policies for allocation and accurately implement them
 - Keep indirect cost rates current
 - Must seek approval for expenses greater than \$5k (Liaisons cannot approve expenses)



Housing Focused Engagements

Grant and Per Diem Grantee Call June 13th, 2023

Today's Presenters

Randy McCoy, He/Him/His, Abt Associates

Eric Gammons, He/Him/His, Technical Assistance Collaborative

Agenda and Learning Objectives

Agenda

- Discuss the importance of Housing Focused Engagements.
- Examine how to have Housing Focused Engagements.
- Discuss the importance of identifying Tenant Screening barriers.

Learning Objectives

- How to conduct Housing Focused engagements and how to use them to move Veterans into housing more quickly.
- How to identify Veteran screening barriers and how to use this knowledge to help Veterans identify and move into permanent housing.

CY2023 Goal 1 – Housing Homeless Veterans

During CY 2023, **VA will sustain efforts to permanently house homeless Veterans.**

- Credit for Veterans housed through this goal will follow a similar methodology to the CY 2022 for placements made from the following programs:
 - Grant and Per Diem (GPD), all grant models, including Case Management (CM).
 - Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Contracted Residential Services (CRS), Low Demand Safe Haven (LDSH) and CM.
 - Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH).
 - Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Rapid Rehousing (RRH) and Homeless Prevention (HP) for those Veterans who were homeless at entry.
 - Veterans Justice Programs (VJP), including Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) and Health Care for Reentry Veterans (HCRV)
 - Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment including the following bed types: Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans, Compensated Work Therapy/Transitional Residence, Substance Use Disorder, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and General for those Veterans who were homeless at entry.
- The target is for unique Veterans housed. Veterans housed more than once only counted one time.

Housing Homeless Veterans- GPD's Role

Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Role-

- Enhance strategies to engage unsheltered Veterans in services. Collaborate with coordinated entry systems to house literally homeless Veterans on the BNL or those engaged in outreach settings.
- Emphasize same - day access to safe housing and services while continuing to facilitate timely transitions to permanent housing. In 2022, GPD grantees placed more than 10,000 Veterans in permanent housing with an average length of stay of fewer than six months.
- Increasing the opportunities for GPD providers to collaborate with other VA resources to accelerate transitions to permanent housing. Strategies include: SSVF Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA), including security deposits and landlord and tenant incentives, or escalating to SSVF Shallow Subsidy
- Embed GPD Case Management grants into local systems of care supporting housing retention efforts and preventing returns to homelessness.

Housing Focused Engagements- Equity Considerations

- Even though all racial and ethnic subgroups have benefited from the movement to end Veterans' homelessness, Black, Indigenous, Latina/o/x, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander and other People of Color. Veterans still face higher risks of homelessness.
- According to the 2022 Point In Time (PIT) Count, Black or African American Veterans are overrepresented in the homeless population, as they make up **31%** of all Veterans experiencing homelessness. In contrast, **only 12 percent** of the entire Veteran population identify as Black or African American.
- Additionally, while most Black Veterans experiencing homelessness are sheltered, they still make up **26% of all unsheltered Veterans**.
- One size doesn't fit all- Housing Engagement must be a Veteran specific activity. Veterans who identify as Black, Indigenous or Native, Latino, LGBTQIA or members of other historically marginalized communities may have unique experiences and needs because of systems of discrimination and racism. These Veterans may require additional time in identifying successful housing opportunities and may require additional supports and services.
- Programs should consider tracking housing goals by race/ethnicity to ensure equity goals are met and to inform changes to housing engagements if necessary.

Honoring Veterans by Ending Their Homelessness - National Alliance to End Homelessness

Housing Focused Engagements- The Importance of Veterans with Lived Experience as Staff

Hiring staff with lived experiences offers many benefits to programs.

- Staff with lived experiences have perspectives that deeply relates to the communities served.
- Veterans experiencing homelessness may be more willing to engage with a peer, who has similar lived experiences.
- Staff with lived experiences improves program design, evaluation, and service delivery.

Housing Focused Engagements- The Importance of Veterans with Lived Experience as Staff

When hiring people with lived experience you should consider:

- Onboarding and training that ensure their transition is successful and supported.
- Consider opportunities to explore intersectionality of staff. Some veterans may feel more comfortable working with people who share identities other than race or ethnicity. This could include gender identity or sexual orientation.
- When possible ensure that staff input is more than just advisory and that they have a role in system design and decision making.

Housing Focused Engagements- Approach

- Engagements should be **Person Centered**- Focus on the Veteran's strengths and resources. Don't make assumptions about what they need or want.
- Use a **Trauma Informed** approach- Avoid re-traumatizing Veteran's by building rapport and centering their safety and needs.
- Be **Culturally Responsive** and **Non-Judgemental**- Be respectful of the Veteran's beliefs, practices, gender identities, sexual orientation, disability status and other identities that the Veteran uses to identify themselves.
- Engagements should utilize **Problem Solving** techniques- Identify strengths, support networks and housing opportunities the person may qualify for and be interested in based on their desires.
- When possible ensure that the engagements are more than just transactional. Creating opportunities for transformations engagements is important to advancing Equity.

Housing Focused Engagements- Approach

- Engagements should be Housing First- This means:
 - Serves Veterans through a trauma-informed lens without pre-conditions like income, sobriety or criminal history.
 - Not Housing Only- Includes program and community-based services to promote housing stability.
- Engagements should focus on Veteran Choice- This means:
 - Veterans determine housing goals including where and with whom they live.
 - Veterans are offered a full range of available choices and choose what to participate in.
 - Veterans can refuse services, within requirements of federal funding.

Housing Focused Engagements- In Practice

- **Discuss the Veteran's housing goals right from the start.**
 - Notions about waiting a long time for the Veteran to “get settled”, to first work through other non-housing issues, or to engage with mental health and/or substance use treatment does not align with Housing First principles
 - Housing markets are tight and there can be long waits to get into housing. Learning the Veterans' goals and connecting them to appropriate resources early on is key.
- Be very involved in the Veteran's application and housing process.
 - Some Veterans in this program model may need more support and involvement from their case managers to complete necessary steps.
 - Connect with the Veterans' HUD-VASH case manager, SSVF case manager, or community case manager for collaboration. Conquer and divide action steps to help the Veteran reach the goal of becoming permanently housed.
- Be Consistent- Veterans have the right to turn down permanent housing options repeatedly. Continue to engage in a consistent and Veteran Centered manner without judgement or expectations.

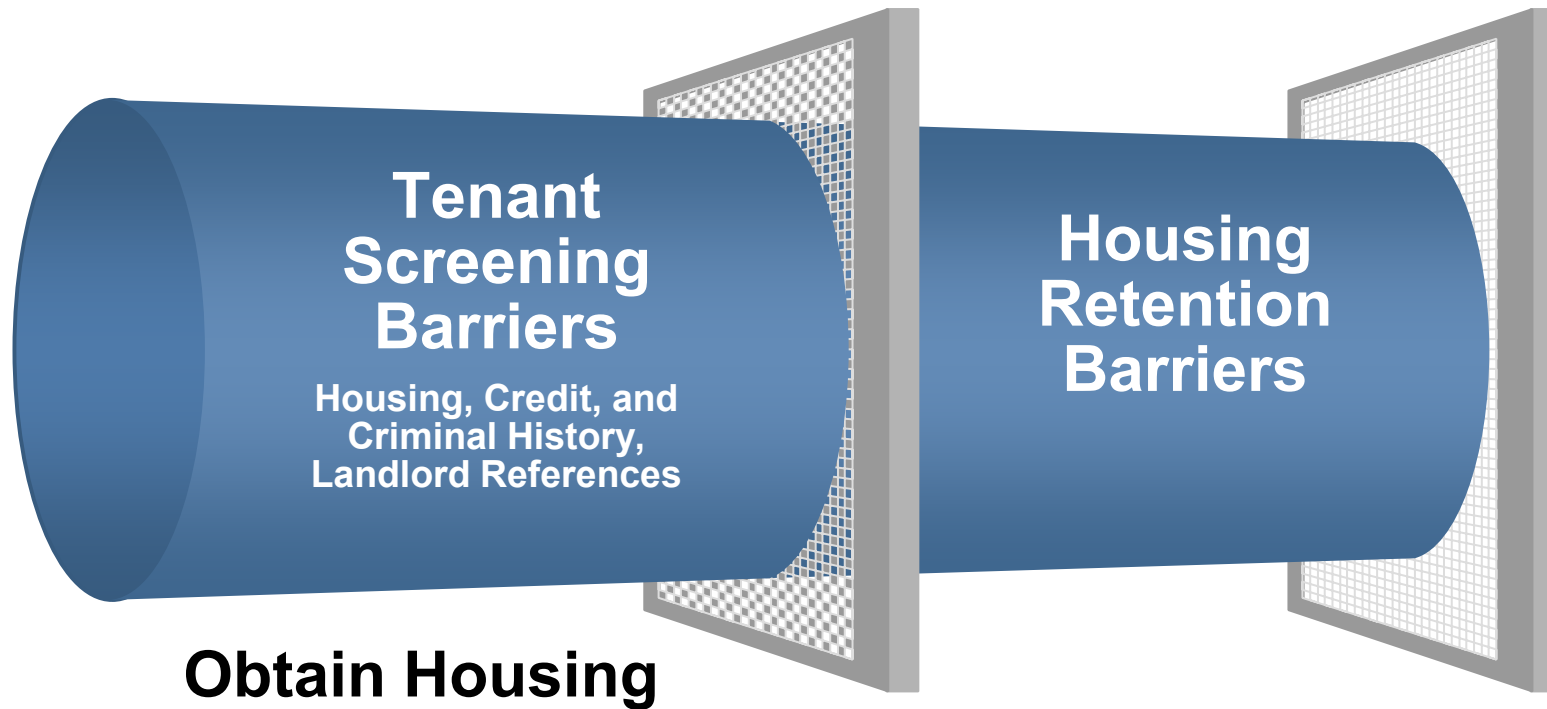
Housing Focused Engagements- In Practice

- Be aware of Veteran Preferences in engagements. Some Veterans may prefer connections based on race, ethnicity, gender identification or sexual orientation.
- Engagements should be modified based on the setting. Things to consider:
 - Street Outreach- Outside, in public places, other people in proximity.
 - In a facility- In a common area, in an office, in a housing unit or dorm.
 - Office- What type of office, how is it furnished or arranged.
- Be sensitive to the immediate surroundings including the Veterans comfort, privacy and basic needs being met.
- Ensure honest communications and transparency. We should be clear about program limitations and constraints. If errors occur we should be open about mistakes and work to repair relationships moving forward.

Understanding the Veteran's History: Tenant Screening Barriers

Tenant Screening Barriers

Stages of Housing Barriers



Identifying Screening Barriers

- Many landlords obtain tenant screening reports that include the applicant's credit, criminal and eviction histories
- In some cases, a client may not know their actual documented record or be unable/unwilling to report it to program staff for fear of being denied access to services. For example:
 - A Veteran may think they have an eviction on their record because they were asked to leave a housing unit and report that during a landlord screening process, but may not have actually had a formal eviction on their record
 - A Veteran may report they do not have any criminal offenses but could have something on the record by mistake, or something they didn't know existed.

Identifying Screening Barriers

- Program staff should work with Veterans to identify screening barriers and build in the services/referrals to mitigate those barriers as part of case management services
- Housing teams are strongly encouraged to use both the Veteran's self-reported information and information from tenant screening reports when preparing for landlord interviews/interactions.
 - Some programs can purchase screening reports, with the Veteran's permission or work with the Veteran to purchase a report on their own
 - SSVF funds may be used to cover the costs of tenant screening reports for co-enrolled Veterans

What are Tenant Screening Barriers?

Tenant Screen Barriers (TSBs) are those barriers that would be visible or discoverable by landlords when conducting the tenant screening process for a unit. These often include:

- Poor credit history
- Criminal history
- No or poor references
- Income and employment history
- Eviction History

Checklist: Tenant Screening Barriers

- Explain to your clients how tenant screening barriers are viewed by landlords and how they affect access to decent housing.
- Discuss their housing, income/employment, credit, and criminal history.
- Review each client's public records and landlord references. Tenant Screening Reports online can also be helpful in reviewing what is public record
- Discuss the report with your client, to identify the story behind the data — why, how, and when problems occurred.
- Note which tenant screening barriers might be harder for a particular landlord to accept.

How do you Identify Tenant Screening Barriers?

- Buy a Tenant Screening Report (use the same online screening company that landlords in your community use)
- Interview your client
- Search public databases
- Call previous landlords

Why do you need to know about Tenant Screening Barriers?

- Your research can help you match the tenant with a landlord who will accept that person's profile/history — this means knowing your landlord partner's "limits."
- Understanding the program participant's tenant screening barriers can help you prepare the Veteran to proactively address issues in their background with the landlord.
- This may help identify those Veterans who may need other support to enter housing (SSVF, Continuum of Care, other)
- Some barriers may be mitigated prior to housing application
 - Credit Repair
 - Housing History (give extenuating circumstances for evictions)
 - Distinguishing between arrests and convictions in criminal history
 - Show other productive activities if not employed: school, volunteer work, etc.

Housing Navigation Considerations

- Programs **should not** use these barriers to screen out Veterans or limit the types of assistance that are offered.
- Preparing for the screening process and identifying these barriers early allows programs like GPD to design personalized interventions to overcome screening barriers (paying debts, legal services, building income)
- Programs should also work to develop strategies to overcome common screening barriers to improve housing outcomes for all veterans.
- Match the tenant with a landlord who will accept that person's profile—this means knowing your landlord partner's "limits."
- Negotiate additional incentives for the landlord (double damage deposit, more frequent check-ins, risk mitigation fund, etc.) if the person "appears" too risky for the landlord's tolerance level. For GPD, this may mean connecting to other VA or community programs for rehousing assistance.
- The Federal Fair Housing Act makes it illegal to deny a person housing solely on the basis of Color, Race, Religion, Sex, National Origin, Disability and Familial status

Questions

THANK YOU!

*Thank
You*

Next Call: Tuesday, August 8th @ 2pm ET