

GRANT & PER DIEM NATIONAL PROGRAM OPERATIONAL GRANTEE CALL

May 9, 2023

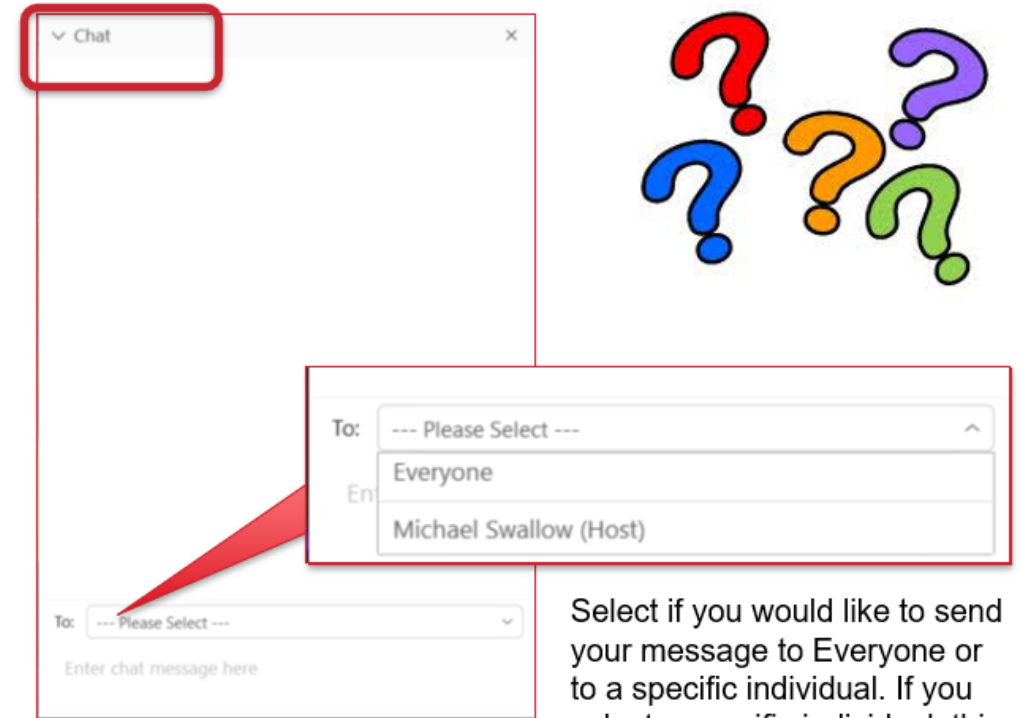
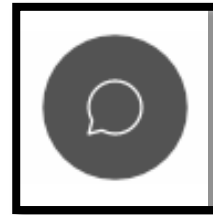
RECORDING LINK: <https://veteransaffairs.webex.com/recording/service/sites/veteransaffairs/recording/playback/4df6bd48d0c1103bbfcf005056810a63>

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 & Discussion**
 - End of the public health emergency declaration and its implications
 - Testing for COVID-19 in GPD settings after May 11, 2023 (Jillian Weber, PhD, RN, CNL)
 - Status of per diem rates
 - Movement towards per diem enhancements beyond the COVID-19 emergency
 - GPD Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) update
- **Preventing Returns to Homelessness: TAC & Abt, VA Homeless Programs Technical Assistance**
- **VA Office of Business Oversight**
- **Questions**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COVID-19 TESTING AFTER THE END OF THE PHE DECLARATION

Expiring PHE:

- COVID-19 testing protocol will end
- Stay up-to-date with COVID-19 vaccines to reduce risk of infection, hospitalization and death from COVID-19
- SAVE LIVES Act will sunset
 - Bill allowed non-healthcare eligible Veterans, spouses, and caregivers to receive vaccination at no cost
- COVID-19 vaccines will continue to be available to Veterans receiving care at VA and to VA employees at no cost
- Vaccine requirement will remain in effect for VA health care personnel

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY STATUS UPDATE

President Biden announced the intent to end the national emergency and the [public health emergency on May 11, 2023](#)

- Per diem rates will return to their statutory maximum (see table)
- Comparison of enhanced per diem with what the per diem rates will be when the public health emergency ends

Type of GPD Grant (<u>see also 38 CFR 61.33</u>)	During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (CARES Act, P.L.116-136) <i>March 2020 – end of the public health emergency</i>	Anticipated After the End of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency
Per Diem Only	Maximum of three times the State Home rate	Maximum of 115% of the State Home rate - \$63.12 \$64.52
Transition-in-Place	Maximum of three times the State Home rate	Maximum of 150% of the State Home rate - \$82.34 \$84.15
Service Center	Maximum of three times the State Home rate	Maximum of 115% of the State Home rate - \$7.89/hr \$8.06/hr
Special Need (<u>see also 38 CFR 61.44</u>)	Maximum of three times the State Home rate	Maximum of 200% the State Home rate - \$109.78 \$112.20

PRACTICAL BILLING IMPLICATIONS

- Per diem Only grantees: if your per diem rate is over the new maximum **on May 12th**, **our office will automatically lower it to \$64.52** (no need to submit a rate request form)
 - If your per diem rate under \$64.52 now, no changes will be made automatically and you will submit one voucher at the end of the month as usual
 - If your per diem rate is **over** \$64.52 now, at the end of the month, you will **work with your GPD liaison** to submit **two** vouchers for May—one for May 1-11 at the higher rate, one for May 12-31 for \$64.52

REFLECTIONS ON THE END OF THE PHE DECLARATION

- Again, we anticipate the public health emergency declaration will [end this week on May 11, 2023](#)
- **Thank you for staying the course** during the past three tumultuous years
- Many of you started writing your current grants before the pandemic
- Even through the uncertainty and near-constant change, you've remained flexible yet steadfast Federal partners in the mission to end homelessness among Veterans
- **GPD grantees housed over 10,000 Veterans in 2022**
- Currently our GPD grantees are demonstrating some of the **highest performance outcomes in GPD history**

SOME HISTORY OF PER DIEM RATES

- GPD has gone through [many evolutions since 1994](#)
- Earlier in GPD history, VA grants only funded 50% of a GPD provider's efforts
- GPD per diem rates are tied to VA's "State Home" rate, which increases every year (usually in autumn, usually by about 2-4%) and recently increased again in April
- On May 12, when the per diem rate adjusts to a regular, nonemergency rate, **it will be 33% higher than when the COVID-19 emergency started**
 - In February 2020, the maximum per diem rate stood at \$48.50
 - On May 12, 2023, it will be **\$64.52**

EVOLUTIONS PAST AND FUTURE

Our legislative and regulatory landscapes are always shifting

- In January 2021, Public Law 116-315 authorized a new GPD per diem rate at 115% **above** the State Home rate
- We continue to be sympathetic to the operational challenges faced by our grantees, and **we share your comments with our VA leaders**
- In December, our office was invited to testify at a Congressional hearing about GPD and the per diem rate
- The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans spoke on our [February webinar](#) to give voice to GPD providers'

EVOLUTIONS PAST AND FUTURE

Our legislative and regulatory landscapes are always shifting

- Other **community stakeholders continue their advocacy** for further per diem increases with their Representatives
- Although VA cannot increase GPD's per diem rate—we take our lead from Congress—there still is **momentum towards increasing the per diem rate**, like [House Resolution 491: Return Home to Housing Act](#)
- We are also excited to see item 74 (page 49) of [VA's fiscal year 2024 budget proposal](#), further demonstrating VA's commitment to continued GPD success
- And the **newest Congressional development**
 - [Critical Health Access Resource and Grant Extensions Act](#) (**CHARGE Act**)

Home > Legislation > 118th Congress > S.1436

Citation Subscribe Share/Save Site Feedback

All Information (Except Text) for S.1436 - A bill to expand and extend benefits available to veterans in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and for other purposes.

118th Congress (2023-2024) | [Get alerts](#)

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BILL Hide Overview X

Sponsor: [Sen. Tester, Jon \[D-MT\]](#) (Introduced 05/03/2023)

Committees: Senate - Veterans' Affairs

Latest Action: Senate - 05/03/2023 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. ([All Actions](#))

Tracker: Introduced Passed Senate Passed House To President Became Law

More on This Bill
[CBO Cost Estimates \(0\)](#)

Get more information
See [Coverage Dates for Congress.gov Collections](#) and learn about other sources.

Give Feedback on This Bill
[Contact Your Member](#)

05.08.23

Tester, Murkowski Lead Bipartisan Push to Protect Critical Services, Essential Resources for Veterans

Senators introduce CHARGE Act to extend veterans' programs and services set to expire May 11th - including support for unhoused veterans, caregivers, and State Veterans Homes

GPD NOTICES OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

- October 27, 2022, GPD published two transitional grant opportunities:
 - [Transition in Place \(TIP\)](#) – due 4:00 p.m. ET on January 30, 2023
 - [Per Diem Only \(PDO\)](#) – due 4:00 p.m. ET on February 6, 2023
- Conditionally selected grantees should have by now signed their grant agreements and submitted their per diem rate request for **fiscal year 2024**
- New transitional housing grants will start on October 1, 2023 (fiscal year 2024)
- At this time, award decisions for this grant round are not yet finalized and our team is working to complete this process before the end of the fiscal year
- Due to the volume of applications received and in fairness to all applicants, individual application feedback is not provided
- However, once the grant review process is complete, a webinar will be provided to offer feedback to applicants and opportunities to improve future applications
- Additional details will be forthcoming

CASE MANAGEMENT FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

- On February 3, 2023, VA Grant and Per Diem (GPD) published a funding opportunity ([Case Management](#)) for organizations to help formerly homeless Veterans maintain their independence and housing stability as a part of ongoing efforts to prevent and end Veteran homelessness
- Applications were due **May 4, 2023 at 4pm, Eastern Daylight Time**
 - Late applications cannot be accepted
 - Grant thresholding and review is underway
 - New Case Management grants will start on October 1, 2023 (fiscal year 2024)

Preventing Returns to Homelessness

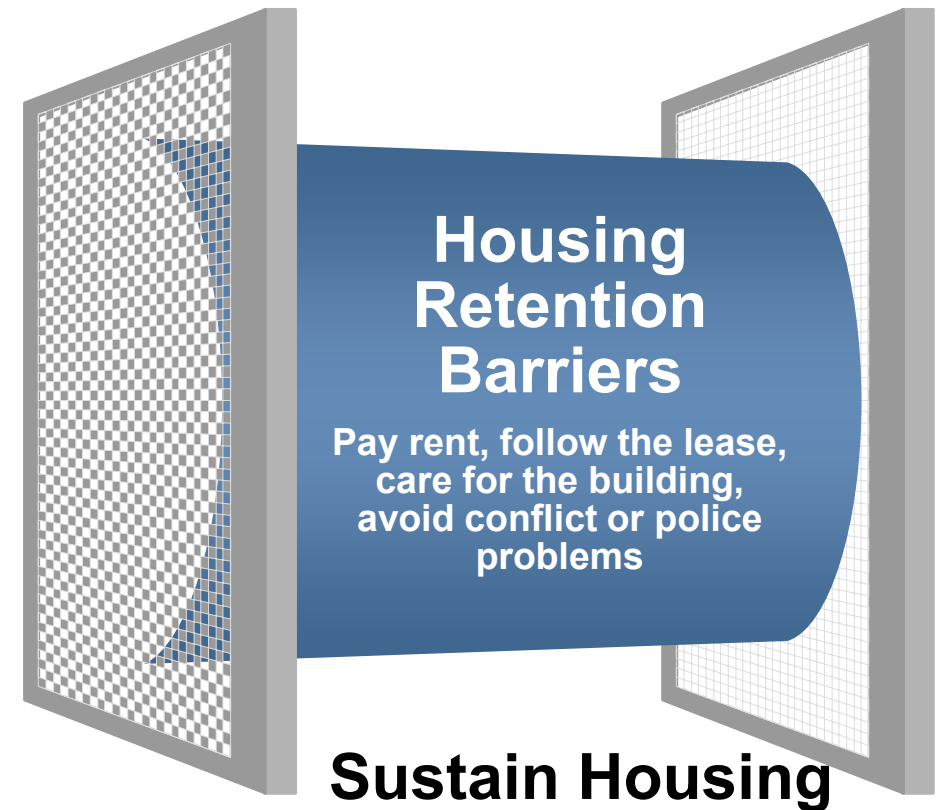
CY2023 Goal – Preventing Returns

- Ensure that at least 95% of the Veterans housed in 2023 do not return to homelessness during the year
- Of those who do return to homelessness, VA will ensure that at least 90% are rehoused or on a path to rehousing by the end of 2023
- This includes Veterans permanently housed via GPD programs that return to homelessness during the calendar year

Housing Retention Barriers

Patterns in a person's history that have resulted in housing crisis or housing **AND** could recur and jeopardize new housing: non-payment of rent, lease violations, property damage, conflict with other tenants, poor landlord references

Exit planning and identifying housing retention needs begin at program **ENTRY**



Characteristics of Veterans Returning to Homelessness

Multivariable analyses of VA data from 2018-2022 revealed significant differences between veterans who do and do not return to homelessness.

Compared to Veterans who did not return, Veterans who returned to homelessness were:

- **38% more likely to have a diagnosis of drug use disorder**
 - Recovery and harm reduction strategies
 - Identify behaviors from substance use that result in housing loss, mitigate or prepare to avoid
- **18% more likely to be black and over 16% more likely to be unmarried**
 - [Equity considerations](#) on race and household composition
 - Consider exit planning that accounts for demographic trends, including greater emphasis on income growth or other program supports
- **More likely to have no VA service-connected disability or a rating of <50%**
 - Need to for other income streams beyond VA or to escalate VA benefits
 - Connections to employment, [SOAR SSI/SSDI](#), etc.
 - Consider [Shared Housing](#) to promote affordability
- **More likely to be less engaged in VA outpatient care and more engaged in VA acute care**
 - Promoting health care connections in coordination with VA Medical Center
 - [Mainstream health connections](#) such as Medicaid or Medicare

Using a Retention Framework for Case Planning

- Challenges paying rent
- Issues with neighbors
- Property damage
- Parties and excessive guests
- Behavioral Issues
- Income maximization, VA connections, Budgeting, rep payee connections, payment plans, shared housing options to promote affordability
- Conflict management techniques, identifying triggers leading to conflict, ensuring lease understanding, mediation supports
- Strategies for avoiding damage even when triggered, lease review, discussion of housing consequences, life skill and cooking/hygiene supports
- Agreed upon times/frequency of guests and behavior, responsibility coaching, alternative ways to engage socially
- Focus on housing impact behaviors and mitigation strategies, alternative use strategies to avoid housing impacts

System Considerations

- Review program and local data with partners to identify homeless return trends by program, demographics and other characteristics to target service interventions using One Team approach
- Coordinate with SSVF to understand Rapid Resolution and available homelessness prevention funds if a Veteran becomes at imminent risk
- Promoting follow up across all VA programs with Veterans and landlords to ensure housing is sustainable (goal: active follow up for 12 months)
- Consider shared housing/roommate options to promote affordability and social well being
- Clear Coordinated Entry policies and procedures and Continuum of Care coordination outlining conditions and process for program transfers or escalation of services (GPD referral to SSVF/HUD-VASH)
- Use of case conference to identify Veterans who may need longer term or deeper program prior to exiting GPD program
- Coordination with diversion and prevention services to ensure Veterans know what to do should potential housing loss arise in the future

Collaboration Opportunities

Internal Opportunities for Collaboration Amongst VA Homeless Programs:

- GPD Case Management Grantees to extend supports beyond transitional housing exit
- GPD Case Management Grant + HUD-VASH [Collaboration](#)
- GPD linkages to SSVF rehousing, including traditional RRH (highly flexible) and [Shallow Subsidy services](#) (2-year housing cost supports with services) and [Landlord Incentives](#) for high barrier Veterans
- Enrollment in VA health care, employment, legal services, other

Explore Opportunities for Collaboration Amongst the Community:

- Continuum of Care housing and referral networks
- Connections to local Veteran groups and support systems
- Connections to other mainstream or local support systems

Questions

OFFICE OF BUSINESS OVERSIGHT

- **Federal Contractors:**
 - Trilogy, BDO, RMA & Associates
- **Upcoming Fiscal Reviews:**
 - Operation Rebuild Hope – May 15 - 17, 2023
 - Homeless Emergency Project, Inc. – May 15 - 17, 2023
 - WestCare Oregon, Inc. – May 18 - 19, 2023
 - Housing for Homeless, Inc. – May 18 - 19, 2023
 - Cecil County Men's Shelter, Inc. – May 16 - 18, 2023
 - Vitality Unlimited – June 6 - 8, 2023
 - New Mexico Veterans Integration Centers – June 6 - 8, 2023
 - HOUSE, Inc. – June 6 - 8, 2023
 - Liberation Veteran Services, Inc. – June 20 - 22, 2023
 - Salvation Army Kansas – June 20 - 22, 2023
 - Salvation Army, Harbor Light – June 20 - 22, 2023
- **OBO Hot Topics:**
 - SF-425s
 - Unobligated Funds
 - Grantee FY23 Best Practices
 - Internal Controls
 - Document retention
 - Must seek approval for expenses greater than \$5k (Liaisons cannot approve expenses)
 - Budget monitoring (New Per Diem Rate)
 - High Risk Grantees

THANK YOU!

*Thank
You*

Next Call: Tuesday, June 13th @ 2pm ET