SSVF Program Manager Academy

March 13, 2018
Houston Texas
Welcome & Introductions

• Introductions of Staff and Federal Partners
• Why We Are Here
• Agenda Overview
• Welcome and Setting the Stage
Introductions
Facilitators

VA SSVF Program Team
John Kuhn – National Director
Linda Southcott – Deputy Director
Jill Albanese – Supervisory Regional Coordinator
Sandra Foley – Supervisory Regional Coordinator
Jeff Houser – Compliance Officer
Riccardo Aiello – Project Coordinator
Jeffrey Brean – Associate Director, Office of Internal Controls

Technical Assistance Team
Phil Allen – Technical Assistance Collaborative
Jim Yates – Technical Assistance Collaborative
Kyia Watkins – Technical Assistance Collaborative
Who’s in the Room?

Who is a Program Manager?

Who is a Financial Manager?

Who is another SSVF Professional?

SSVF for less than 6 months?

SSVF 6 months - 1 year?

SSVF 1 year - 2 years?

SSVF more than 2 years?
Goal of the Academy

The goal of the training is to give new Program Managers the tools, resources and training to enable them to effectively take on the role of Program Managers across a variety of topics necessary to effectively manage the SSVF Program.
AGENDA

- Setting the Stage
- Fidelity to the SSVF Model
- Customer Service and SSVF
- Managing Quality Data
- SSVF in the Community
- Monitoring
- Financial Auditing
Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) An Overview

John Kuhn, LCSW, MPH
National Director, SSVF
SSVF Funds Services with Grants

VA funds community non-profits

Grantees provide services to Veterans and their families

You are responsible to work with household on what services to provide. Program office provides guidance & oversight.
Rapidly re-house homeless Veterans and their families

Homelessness Prevention – keep those imminently at-risk, housed
Mission One: Rapid Re-housing

- Triage priority
  - Literally Homeless

- Budget sufficient resources,
  Demand = BNL (or PIT) + inflow
Mission Two: Homelessness Prevention

- TFA limited to 40% without a waiver (can be just services).

- Targets **imminent** risk of homelessness

- Emphasize diversion – may straddle into early shelter intervention. Should be part of CES assessment.
SSVF Delivers

Outreach

Identifying Housing

Case Management

Securing Income
Consumers Have Varied Needs

- Young Veterans
- Women
- Dependent children
- Disabled
Design Services to Meet Household Needs

- Address needs of non-Veterans to support housing stability

- 20% of participants are dependent children

- Able to serve family members if household separates
  - DV provision resets TFA clock
Tools to Ensure Participant Safety

1. Housing First is SSVF policy
2. Emergency Housing Assistance
3. General Housing Stability Assistance
1. Housing First

- The underpinning of Rapid Re-housing
- Evidence-based
- Not Housing Only
Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs
2. Emergency Housing Assistance

(38 CFR 62.34(f))

- Serves families up to 45 days who generally cannot be served by GPD, HCHV, or suitable community options.

- Individuals generally limited to 72 hours

- Can be used for TIP when occupying Section 8
3. General Housing Stability Assistance

(38 CFR 62.34 (e))

- Items necessary for safety
- Employment assistance: uniforms, tools, certifications, licenses
- Kitchen utensils, bedding, supplies
- Housing applications, tenant screening reports, background checks, inspection fees
Service Plans Focus On:

Finding Suitable Housing

Sustainability

Treatment not a precondition
Finding/Keeping Housing

- Plans address household barriers
- Housing Specialists with local knowledge of market

- Sustainability means affordability
  - Likely still rent burdened
  - Income
  - Housing costs
Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA)

What?
Provides short to medium term financial assistance

Who?
Apply “but for” criteria
Housing Barriers

Civil justice problems

Credit counseling & repair
Progressive Engagement

- SSVF serves the most vulnerable
  - Sometimes “Plan B” is needed (HQS inspection standards)

- Veterans retain homelessness status for PSH while enrolled

- Collaboration and communication with HUD-VASH critical
Placement Rates Excluding HUD-VASH, FY 16
Returns to Homelessness
Oct 2014 – May 2016

- Homelessness Prevention: Veterans in HHs with Children
  - 6 month return rate: 6%
  - 12 month return rate: 11%

- Rapid Re-housing: Veterans in HHs with Children
  - 6 month return rate: 7%
  - 12 month return rate: 12%

- Homelessness Prevention: Veterans in HHs with No Children
  - 6 month return rate: 8%
  - 12 month return rate: 13%

- Rapid Re-housing: Veterans in HHs with No Children
  - 6 month return rate: 9%
  - 12 month return rate: 16%
Opening Doors First Objective

“Provide and promote collaboration at all levels of Government and across all sectors to inspire and energize Americans to commit to preventing and ending homelessness.”
The Big Picture

- SSVF most effective as part of the Continuum of Care

- Use community planning to match resources to need

- Engagement
The Continuum

Permanent Supportive Housing

Service Directed Housing Intervention
SSVF Interacts with Community and Supports Planning
NOFA Expectation

SSVF grantees are **required to participate in local planning efforts**

Grantees may use grant funds to support SSVF involvement in such community planning by providing staff support or sub-contracting with CoCs.
Training Materials, Program Information and Regulatory Information

www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp
FIDELITY TO THE SSVF MODEL:

Management, Staffing & Supervision
Myths? Facts?

- Having an income and/or job is a “must have” before someone can be housed with SSVF RRH.

- SSVF is a 90 day program.

- Everyone in SSVF should receive the same standard set of services.
Complete the following statement:

“Questions I have about how to supervise and manage an effective SSVF program include…”
RRH: Core Concepts and Design

1. **Housing First Approach**: Permanent housing assistance is not contingent on sobriety, treatment, background, or income

2. **Crisis Response**: RRH is designed to help quickly resolve the immediate housing crisis and end someone’s homelessness

3. **Client Choice**: Participants determine when they want to be housed, choose the services they want, and have choices in the type and location of housing they enter whenever possible

4. **Screen In, Not Out**: RRH is for all types of individuals and families, no matter what kind of tenancy barriers exist

5. **Progressive Assistance**: Start with the least amount necessary and add more as needed or requested.
SSVF Rapid Re-Housing Core Components

I. Housing Identification: Assistance finding and moving into housing

II. Financial Assistance: Move-In and Rental Assistance

III. Housing Case Management and Connection to Services
SSVF RRH as Best Practice

National Standards for RRH

- Published by NAEH, Informed by and by SSVF/VA, HUD, and other Partners
- Set’s forth the national standards for each of the three Core Components previously listed
- Should be seen as a guide for your RRH practice
- Find them on SSVF University!
Myth? Fact?

- Stress overload due to the experience of homelessness can affect a person’s ability to find housing on their own

- SSVF RRH programs should give Veterans housing resources and send them out to find their own housing

- SSVF RRH programs partner with landlords to encourage their participation in our program

- SSVF RRH programs can provide a number of incentives to landlords to encourage their participation
Core Component #1: Housing Identification

Build relationships with landlords to have access to as many housing units as possible.

Program Manager considerations:

- Housing navigators are employed and bring necessary skills sets
- Staff time is allocated to allow for adequate landlord recruitment
- Housing staff are trained to assume responsibility for housing partnerships, even if shared, including local tenancy law/responsibilities
- Managers promote a culture of mutual partnership with landlords and housing partners – they are our second client.
Core Component #1: Housing Identification

Find and secure housing as quickly as possible

Program Manager considerations:
- Communication between Housing and Case Management staff is coordinated
- Intake policies gather critical information first to begin housing ID
- Program uses and supports local BNL and prioritization of most vulnerable
- Managers ensure consistent application of P&Ps to support prioritization
- Supervision focuses on maintaining Housing First and Veteran Choice in housing identification process
Core Component #1: Housing Identification

Limit the time a family or individual spends homeless. Move people into housing within 30 days or less.

- Managers use data to track placement times, then adjust.
- Roles of different staff are clarified, clear and consistent.
- Supervision ensures housing plans are focused on housing first, with longer term plan after Veteran is housed.
- Supervision ensures staff case loads, job descriptions and overall project design promotes housing as the key driver of the work.
- Budget and financial projections reflect both actual and aspired housing placement rates and average costs.
The Core Principles of Forging Partnerships with Landlords

1. How do you and your staff work with your client during and after the housing search process?
   • Preparation for Housing Identification and Retention
   • Develop information, skills and income needed to keep housing

2. How do you and your staff support the Housing Partner?
   • How does their experience with you and your Veteran feel to them?
   • Have you reduced their actual or perceived risks?
ACTIVITY - Landlord Recruitment and Retention

What kinds of activities are a regular part of your work to recruit and retain landlords?

- Landlord of the Month
- Thank you notes
- Landlord Appreciation/Recruitment Breakfasts
- Certificates of Appreciation

What else?
Core Component #2: Financial Assistance

- Move-In Assistance and Costs
- Rental Assistance
Myths? Facts?

- Every Veteran should get the same amount of TFA and rental assistance.

- The best approach is to have a set up “step down” process for how much rent we pay vs. the Veteran pays.
Financial Assistance Buckets

- **Move-In Assistance and Costs**
  - Essential start up costs to enter housing, often security deposit and other deposits
  - Nearly all RRH households need this

- **Rental Assistance**
  - Set of ongoing rental payments based on household unique needs
  - Coordinated with CoC and other SSVF grantees
  - Individually tailored in progressive manner. Just because they can receive 7-9 months doesn’t mean they should.

- **Other Financial Assistance**
  - Payment for other allowable costs on an as need basis
  - Must support housing stability
  - Important attention to allowable and appropriate costs
Rent and Move-in Assistance: Progressive Assistance

- TFA is **not a standard “package”** and must be flexible enough to adjust to participants’ unique needs and resources, including income changes

- Start with the least amount that is necessary for participants to **move immediately out of homelessness and to stabilize** in permanent housing and provide more **when and if needed**.
  - Helps to maximize the number of households able to be served
  - Reflects client resilience
  - Ensures flexibility

- Provide more assistance (TFA and/or Support) only if needed

- Work with CoC to coordinate RRH Written Standards and expectations
Progressive Assistance is *Not*...

- ... a pre-determined program length or amount for everyone
  ("One Size Fits All")

- ... a pre-determined step down of assistance
  (100%/70%/30%/0%)

- ... determined time or amounts from outset based on assessment score

  “He’s a 10 so he gets 12 months”
Progressive Assistance Management Considerations

- Staff are supported and trained to make initial assistance decisions
- Use of standard assessment or protocol to expand or end assistance
- Managers work closely with finance staff to coordinate dynamic budgeting – not over or under-committing available grant resources
- Common messaging used with landlords to ensure clear expectations
- Supervision and meetings to share strategies and promote creativity
ACTIVITY

- How does your SSVF Program manage a progressive assistance approach to financial assistance?

- What policies are in place?
  - When and how to review Veteran’s portion of the rent?
  - Can you flex up and down on rental assistance?
  - How quickly can you cut checks?
  - How do you manage landlord and Veteran expectations?
  - How do you use dynamic budget process to manage grant?

- How are staff trained to handle progressive assistance?

- Other?
Break
Myths? Facts?

- A best practice in SSVF RRH is to have consistent home visits.

- An SSVF RRH program can continue case management services after stopping financial assistance if needed.

- SSVF’s primary services role is to assure that the Veteran is stably housed by connecting them to VA and community resources for longer-term supports.
Core Component #3: Housing Case Management

- Housing-Focused Case Management

- What we care about---KEEPING HOUSING
  - Pay the Rent
  - Maintain the Unit
  - Treat other people with respect
  - Follow all aspects of the lease

*If your clients can do these things, they can keep their housing.*
“I tell my staff, ‘if you’re not talking about housing, you’re having the wrong conversation.’”

Deronda Metz, Salvation Army, Charlotte, NC
Case Management and Services: Principles

- Case management focuses on helping to obtain and maintain housing
- Services and support are client-driven and voluntary
- RRH case management should be flexible in intensity
- RRH case management is, at some times, home-based

Discussion

➢ How do you as a manager promote these key practices?
➢ What challenges do you face in balancing consistency with flexibility?
➢ What successes have you had in working with your team to achieve promote these principles?
Home Visits: Overview

- During home visits, staff observe potential tenancy issues in need of support, but not as a “gotchya” mission.

- Home visits respect privacy, choice and autonomy of Veteran.

- Red flags are an opportunity for teachable moments (noise levels, housekeeping, unauthorized tenants, responding to a complaint).

- If a landlord “suddenly” evicts your program participant, you haven’t been paying attention.
Home Visits: Management Considerations

- Ensure **safety planning** and clear boundaries
- Work time/expense of Home Visits into **case loads and budget**
- Support staff with **mobile technology** and other tools
- Use **team meetings** to troubleshoot
- Ensure **clear protocol** for when/why to involve landlord in issues that arise
Closing the Case

Exit planning starts at entry!

- Case managers create an exit plan to address potential problems and access specific community resources, regularly review goal progress, keep exit date flexible, and adjust as necessary.

- Discuss options and criteria for ending assistance with transparency and well in advance.

- Exit planning includes transparency with landlords and other partners.
Closing the Case

- Program manager or supervisor should review progress on housing plans and tentative exit plans regularly with case manager

- Use team meetings or case conferencing meetings to discuss closing difficult cases
# Case Closing: Key Considerations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Indicators for closure</th>
<th>Indicators for continuation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INCOME</td>
<td>--Housing subsidy secured</td>
<td>--Cannot pay rent for next month or two</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--Income from all sources is sufficient to pay rent</td>
<td>--No income sources available</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--Can share housing using current income</td>
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<tr>
<td>LEASE</td>
<td>--In compliance, landlord satisfied</td>
<td>--Currently in violation of lease or subject or</td>
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<td></td>
<td>--LL willing to accept loss of programmatic support</td>
<td>serious complaints</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>--LL accepted client only if longer-term support</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>provided</td>
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<tr>
<td>LINKAGES</td>
<td>--Other resources will provide needed assistance</td>
<td>--No other resources are willing/able to assist,</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and need is critical to housing stability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHOICE</td>
<td>--Program participant wants to complete services</td>
<td>--Program participant wants (and needs) additional assistance</td>
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Is it time to Close the Case?

- Is there enough income to pay the rent for at least the next few months?
  - ✅ Remember: Rent may be well above 30% of income.

- Is the person fulfilling the requirements of their lease?
  - ✅ Landlord confirms that there are no significant problems that could escalate or lead to eviction

- If the person must have other community resources to keep their housing (e.g., childcare to keep a job or legal help to obtain child support) has the linkage been made?

- Is there a plan for possible new housing crisis? Be sure to prepare tenant with tools

- Does the person agree that the goals have been met and is ready to exit?
A Note About Supervision

- Supervision an ongoing process with regular formal/informal discussion
- Use data as a program planning tool (more on this later)
- Case Conferencing/Meetings and Supervision: Regular and Relevant
- Case Loads and Staffing
  - How do you determine size, intensity, etc?
  - Do you balance Veterans with different intensities of need?
  - Do you account for time for all needs (case management, travel between clients, data entry, home visits, assessments, meetings, etc.)?
  - Staff work in teams or individually?
Other SSVF Services and Management Needs

- Coordinated Outreach/In-reach and Community Coordination

- Eligible Costs and Activities (full awareness of any changes to guidance)

- Working closely with your VA
  - Verifying Veteran status
  - VA Benefits enrollment
  - HUD-VASH Referral Packet
  - Coordinating services and referrals

- Tracking Screened but not Enrolled

- Other requirements and administrative needs
SSVF Homelessness Prevention

- RRH is the priority activity for SSVF. HP used strategically to reduce the number of Veterans becoming homeless after RRH need met.

- Research has not found a link between being evicted and becoming literally homeless – SSVF HP must be more strategic than just eviction prevention
  - In most CoCs people are doubled up with family and friends the night before they are literally homeless
  - This is why the “But For” test is so crucial.
  - Without targeting you will go through HP resources too quickly!
SSVF Homelessness Prevention

- Estimate HP resources after determining need for RRH in all CoCs.

- Identify other HP resources and targeting/priorities in homeless system.

- Determine HP threshold score that will make resource available to Veterans who are in greatest need and would be hardest to re-house when they do become homeless.
  - Ensure that you are coordinating threshold scores with other grantees in the community.
  - Set threshold score so that resources are available throughout the year.
QUESTIONS
LUNCH
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND THE VETERAN EXPERIENCE
Lesson Objectives

- “Hostmanship”
- VA ICARE
- VA Message
- Customer Service in SSVF
- VA Participation Satisfaction Survey
  - Key Requirements
  - Lessons learned
  - Results
- Other surveys
Words of Wisdom by Ron Burgundy

CUSTOMER SERVICE

IT'S KIND OF A BIG DEAL
Hostmanship (Jan Gunnarson)

- The art of making people feel welcome as customers
- Seeing the person as a “guest”
- Starting point to develop a truly welcoming attitude
- If the client feels like a “guest”
- Client can take with them better quality and value
- Exceed expectations
VA Customer Service
Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence (I CARE)

- ICARE core values are "who the VA is," VA's culture, and help guide the actions of staff across VA.
- Staff - at every level within VA - play a critical role to support VA's commitment to care and serve our Veterans, their families, and beneficiaries.

  - Integrity
  - Commitment
  - Advocacy
  - Respect
  - Excellence
VA Message on Customer Service

- I care about those who have served.
- I care about my fellow employees.
- I care about choosing “the harder right instead of the easier wrong.”
- I care about performing my duties to the very best of my abilities.
Customer Service in SSVF

- How do you define it?
- When is it bad?
- When is it good?
- It’s never easy!
It all starts with........
Not this…

This office is now closed.
What it takes?

- Resources
- Time
- Leadership
When

- **Before**
  - How do Veterans access or inquire about services?
  - That first access point - critical interaction
  - The enrollment process

- **During**
  - Interactions with staff, case managers...etc.
  - Acknowledgement, celebrate progress and deal with any setbacks

- **After**
  - Willingness to reach out when assistance is needed
Participant Satisfaction Survey
Registering Veterans within 30 days of exit for the Participant Satisfaction Survey is?

A. Optional
B. Required
C. Depends whether you have already exceeded 70% registration rate for the month
D. WWRBD (What Would Ron Burgundy Do)
SSVF Participant Satisfaction Survey

- SSVF Requirement: Each Veteran is required to be registered for the VA survey
- Veteran registered through weblink **once** within 30 days of final services
- If cell phone number & e-mail are included, text/e-mail invitation sent to Veteran.
  - *If a veteran does not have access to the internet, he or she has the option to take the survey by phone.*
- Veteran provides feedback
- Receive quarterly reports with feedback from the Veterans you serve
- Registration rates part of Uniform Monitoring Program review (pass >70%)
- No Paper surveys!
SSVF Participant Satisfaction Survey - lessons learned

- Develop internal process to ensure all Veterans are registered
- Don’t forget about subcontractor staff
- Train staff using pre-recorded webinars
- Review survey questions with staff
- If weblink option is not feasible, encourage Veteran to use phone option
- Use results for quality improvement
- Use results and feedback to acknowledge good performance
- Formally recognize great customer service
Results

FY 18 results
- 18% Overall response rate for October 1, 2017 thru January 31, 2018
- 72% Quality of services above average or excellent
- 81% Satisfied or very satisfied with courteousness, responsiveness and timeliness of staff

FY 17 Results
- 13% Overall response rate October 2016 – September 2017
- 76% Quality of services above average or excellent
Questions regarding survey

- M. Davis and Company
  - Please email or call if you do not have a grant-specific weblink to register Veterans, or if you have any questions
  - vassvf@mdavisco.com
  - 215-790-8900 ext 124

- SSVF Grantee Regional Calls
  - Discuss with other grantees what works and best practices

- SSVF Webinar
  - Pre-recorded webinar on best practices
Other Grantee surveys

- Several Grantees have developed their own survey in addition to the VA survey
- Grantees are encouraged to develop specific surveys or other avenues for feedback for Veterans
- Advantage: tailor to your program, population and region
- Involve staff in the development
- Use results to celebrate success!
Additional Inputs on Customer Service

- Staff feedback
- Stakeholder feedback
- SSVF Inbox communication
- Critical Incidents
- Grievances and Complaints
What can I do when I get back?

- What 3 things can you do when you return to address Customer Service in the SSVF Program?
Questions?

HAPPY CLIENTS?

NAILED IT.
COMMUNICATION WITH THE SSVF PROGRAM OFFICE
SSVF Program Office
Overview

- Critical incidents
- Grievances
- GIFTS Contacts
- GIFT Requirements
- SSVF Inbox- ssvf@va.gov
CRITICAL INCIDENTS AND GRIEVANCES
Critical Incidents

- Safety of Participant, SSVF Providers and Staff
- Agency Policy and Procedures
  1) what constitutes a critical incident
  2) how to define an incident as critical
  3) how to respond accordingly
  4) who is responsible for responding
  5) a detailed action plan
  6) an internally established timeframe for responding to the incident and
  7) when necessary, reporting the incident to the SSVF Program Office
Too many Critical Incidents and Grievances mean that a Program is not performing well!
Critical Incident Reports

- Critical Incidents are reported to the SSVF Program Office using the SSVF online grants management system (GIFTS).
- Grantees have an active Requirement form in their GIFTS account portal, titled SSVF Critical Incident Form.
- A blank form will be available within the GIFTS account portal at all times. Please note that the form should not contain any Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and Veterans should be identified only by their HMIS ID.
- Grantees who submit the Critical Incident Form to the SSVF Program Office can expect a new Requirement to be published in their portal for future use. If Grantees require more than one form at a given time, they may request an additional form from the SSVF Regional Coordinator.
Critical Incidents

- Grantees to only submit the most serious of Critical Incidents,
  - Suicides
  - Homicides
  - Staff Improprieties including allegations of criminal activity by agency and subcontractor staff.

- 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

When an incident involves a Veteran, information regarding the status of Veteran at the time of incident is necessary. This includes:

- SSVF admission and exit date, if applicable
- Date of last SSVF contact with Veteran
- Veteran’s Living Situation and move-in date, if applicable
- Receiving VA Healthcare and name of VAMC
- Receiving Mental Health or Substance Use Treatment and name of VAMC
- Receiving Mental Health or Substance Use Disorder from Community Program
- Enrollment in other VA Homeless Programs
Critical Incidents

- Grantee should provide as much information about the incident
- Complete a Chart review and include a synopsis of over all SSVF Intervention

  Include
  - How Grantee learned of incident
  - Any follow up completed
  - For Veteran - SSVF services received by Veteran
  - If Suicide
    - When was Veteran last seen at Mental Services, if applicable
    - History of Suicide attempts
    - When Veteran was last seen by SSVF
    - Recent SSVF intervention
  - Communication with VAMC, if applicable
Critical Incidents

- SSVF Program Office reviews Critical Incident
- May request more information from Grantee
- Summary Report is sent to VA Central Office Homeless Program Office
- Incidents are tracked and reviewed by the SSVF Program Office
- Tracked by VACO Homeless Program Office
Critical Incidents

Considerations

- Only submit Critical Incidents for the requested Incidents
- Use the “Other” sparingly
- Only Active Veterans
- If unsure, ask Regional Coordinator
- Be clear and concise while providing relevant information
- Respond promptly to any additional information request
- Procedure for Critical Incident Review as part of a Quality Assurance
- Staff debriefs, training and supervision
Critical Incidents

SSVF Companion Guide is available on the SSVF Website at:

https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/?page=/official_guide/reporting_and_monitoring_requirements
Grievances & Appeals
Grievances & Appeals

- 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 program office will be processed internally and require grantees to respond to a request for information within the online grants management system (GIFTS). Please note that SSVF Regional Coordinators do not provide direct assistance to Veterans as part of the grievance process.
Grievances & Appeals

SSVF Program Office Process

- Grievance submitted to ssvf@va.gov
- SSVF PO responds to Veteran acknowledging grievance
- May ask for more detail in writing or use submitted information
- Create a Grievance Requirement in GIFTS with a response date within 3 days
- Regional Coordinator is copied and available for any assistance in follow up
- Once received Grievance response reviewed
- Additional information may be requested by Regional Coordinator
- SSVF PO responds to Veteran, once grievance is resolved by grantee
- SSSVF PO sends notification to Grantee of close out
Grievances & Appeals

- Grantee should provide as much information about the grievance.
- Complete a Chart review and include a synopsis of over all SSVF Intervention.
- Include
  - Current Housing Status
  - Summary of Intervention/ Assessment
  - Confirmation that Veteran received Grievance Policy
  - Review of grievance
  - Action Taken
  - Communication with Veteran
- Avoid
  - Listings dates
  - Attaching case notes
Grievances & Appeals

Considerations

- Be clear and concise while providing relevant information
- Respond promptly to any additional information request
- View as opportunity for process improvement or validation that process is good
- Procedure for Grievance Review as part of a Quality Assurance
- Staff debriefs, training and supervision
Grievances & Appeals

DON'T WORRY
EVERY CLOUD HAS A SILVER LINING
GIFTS Account Holder

- ONE GIFTS account holder per award
- Grantee may transfer requirement within GIFTS
- General Guide For GIFTS available on the SSVF website
Please Sign In

- If you have an existing SSVF account, please log in using your E-mail Address and Password.
- To create an SSVF account, please use the "New Applicant" link found below.
- This grant application system uses the following email domain: ssvf@va.gov. Please add it to your safe-senders list to be sure you receive all communications.

E-mail

Password

New Applicant?

Forgot Password?

Login
GIFTS - Requirements

Click the Applications tab to view saved and submitted Applications.
GIFTS- Requirements

Requirements

Click the Applications tab to view saved and submitted Applications.

<table>
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<th>Form Name</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
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<th>ID</th>
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<th>Action</th>
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<td>Corrective Action Plan</td>
<td>Delete this after testing</td>
<td>Monitoring Visit (UMP)</td>
<td>51888</td>
<td>05/24/2016</td>
<td>07/19/2016</td>
<td>Owner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSVF Program Change</td>
<td>Delete this after testing</td>
<td>Program Change</td>
<td>45270</td>
<td>04/14/2016</td>
<td>06/01/2016</td>
<td>Owner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GIFTS Requirements

- Required All Awards
  - Resolution
  - Quarterly Report
  - Program Change
  - End of year Certification

- Open until end of year- submitted as needed
  - Critical incident
  - Travel and Training
  - HP score change

- Published by SSVF program as needed
  - Grievance
  - Voluntary Grant reductions
  - Extension requests
  - RRH Waiver Renewal Request
GIFTS Contacts

- Four Contacts
  - Agency Contact
  - Grant Contact 1
  - Grant Contact 2
  - GIFTS Account Holder
Request to Change Contacts

- Confirm with Regional Coordinator the current GIFTS contacts
- Request should include:
  - **Grant Award Number** and Name
  - Contact’s full name
  - Contact’s title
  - Email address
  - Telephone number (extension if available)
- Specify role that the contact should be affiliated (brief description of allowable points of contacts below):
  - Agency Contact
  - Grant Contact 1
  - Grant Contact 2
  - GIFTS Account Holder
  - Intake Email and Number
- Authorization for such requests should be approved by the Agency’s Point of Contact or the Grant Contact 1, whichever is available.
- Send to ssvf@va.gov and copy Regional Coordinator
SSVF Inbox

- General SSVF Questions
  - Requests from external Stakeholders

- Grant Administration communication from Program Office  Some examples:
  - MOA follow up
  - GIFTS Contact requests
  - NOFA questions

- SSVF Regional Coordinators
  - Represent the SSVF Program Office
  - First contact for any grantee question
  - Will refer to inbox as needed.
SSVF Regional Coordinator

KEEP CALM AND Find Coordinator
Break
MANAGING AND USING SSVF DATA
**Myths? Facts?**

- No one looks at the data once it is uploaded to the Repository.
- The only data point that really matters is the number of clients served.
- Grantees only need to report in one CoC’s HMIS when they serve multiple CoCs.
- SSVF data has no impact or relevance to broader community efforts ie. CoC performance measures.
The Importance of Data

- SSVF legislation requires use of HMIS for client-level data collection and to report monthly on program activities.
- Data can offer program managers near real-time feedback and insights to help align the right actions with the right problems.
- Data can provide an informed and accurate picture for your agency, community and stakeholders.
- Without accurate data, there is no way to track progress in ending Veteran homelessness.

Why else is data important?
How is SSVF Data Used?

- Upload to Repository to track clients served and services provided
- Track Veteran system progress on ending Veteran homelessness
- Program planning by grantees
- Annual application for SSVF funding
- CoC system performance measures
SSVF Data Refresher: VA Repository

- VA-owned databases designed to receive and store SSVF Program data.
  - Data received must align with HUD’s HMIS Data Standards.
  - Comprised of tables similar to the HMIS Logical Model.

- “The Repository” is actually 2 remote VHA servers:
  - Production Server = Grantee Uploads
  - Reporting Server = Archive of previous FYs and copy of current Production Server data

- Grantees upload data for their entire grant year each time.
  - Example: January uploads contain all active FY18 clients’ data through December.
Repository

- **Why use a Repository?**
  - SSVF Grantees are required to enter all program data into their local HMIS systems.
  - The SSVF Program Office is accountable for program data and must have visibility into grantee progress/outcomes.
  - VA currently does not have a bi-directional way to share data with communities/outside stakeholders.
  - The HMIS Repository allows VA to receive grantee data via monthly upload.

- **Why not just use HOMES?**
  - Data access issues for non-VA staff.
  - Minimal crosswalk between HOMES and HMIS at the time of the SSVF Program implementation (in FY11).
  - Grantee burden (need for training on HOMES, duplicate data entry if HOMES data cannot be uploaded to the community, etc.).
Repository Limitations

- Access is limited.
- Data is not real-time.
- Difficult to report across FYs.
- No automatic reporting capabilities
  - This includes on the front end when grantees upload data.
  - Validation Report is helpful by showing row counts and major issues but is not sufficient for data quality.
    - Note: just because the Repository accepts the upload does not mean the data is accurate or that issues did not occur during upload.
- Any reports generated are run via SQL coding/procedures and on an ad-hoc basis.
  - Example: Tracker; Data Quality Reports
VSSC Dashboard

- VHA Supportive Services Center (VSSC)
  - VHA reporting service generates reports for the HPO programs including the SSVF Dashboard.
  - VSSC pulls SSVF data directly from the HMIS Repository Production Server on the 10th or 11th of each month.
  - Validation processes and business rules are applied to generate the dashboard reports.
    - Example: missing/invalid SSNs omitted from reporting.
  - The VSSC SSVF Dashboard is not the same thing as the Repository but the data should be identical.
    - Caveat: timing between Prod and Reporting Servers.
VSSC Dashboard Demo

---

**Time Period:** May 2017  
**Type:** National  
**Location:** National

**SSVF - Dashboard**  
Supportive Services for Veteran Families

**Click Here for SSVF Veterans by Grant ID and Program Report**  
**Click Here for SSVF Veterans by Grant ID Only Report**  
**Click to Send Feedback**

### National: National - Report Period: May 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination Type</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>YTD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prevention</td>
<td>RHI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent</td>
<td>1,757</td>
<td>2,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,976</td>
<td>3,747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful Housing Outcome</td>
<td>88.52 %</td>
<td>76.57 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Veteran Destination Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>May</th>
<th>YTD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prevention</td>
<td>RHI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent</td>
<td>956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,693</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Program Progress - Quarterly Reports

- Does the data indicate that Grantee is on target to reach annual?
  - Veteran served
    - HP
    - RRH
  - Veterans exited
    - HP
    - RRH
    - % of RRH Exits
  - Veterans exited to PH
    - HP
    - RRH
    - % of RRH Exiting to PH
  - Total RRH Veteran placed
Quarterly Report data review
Quarterly Certification Review Data

- Quarterly Certification submitted via GIFTS
- Regional Coordinator reviews
  - Grantee Drawdown Percentage
  - Grantee Monthly Upload Success Rate
  - Grantee Households Served (From VSSC)
  - Participant Survey data including number of exiting households registered, percentage registered, number of exits, and percentage of exits who have taken the survey
  - Grantee certifications for Trainings, Webinars, and Data
  - Any data variances over 10% between the Grantee’s data responses and the SSVF Program Office data
Regional Coordinator Quarterly Review

New for FY18

- Track households who are screened but not enrolled during each quarter.
- Indicate total households screened but not enrolled
- Rapid Rehousing and Homelessness Prevention.
  - Eligible (Self resolved prior to enrollment)
  - Eligible (No show for Enrollment)
  - Eligible (Waived SDHI Services for HP)
  - Ineligible (Veteran Status)
  - Ineligible (Exceeds Income)
  - Ineligible (No imminent risk for HP)
Repository Uploads and Data Quality

- Data quality review of uploads for:
  - Missing client data
  - Missing Veterans
  - Missing RRH move-in dates
  - Missing TFA information

- Review also checks for missing uploads – grantees need to upload monthly for RRH and HP even if no clients are served in that month

- To reduce data quality problems with uploads grantees should implement a data quality plan that includes checking on the upload requirements in addition to the HUD data quality definitions
Data Quality

HUD has defined several aspects of data quality. CoCs need to ensure that all of these elements are addressed. Programs entering data into HMIS need to have a Data Quality Plan that addresses the program specific elements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Quality Element</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>CoC or Program Element</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coverage</td>
<td>Proportion of all homeless providers entering data into HMIS</td>
<td>CoC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilization</td>
<td>Number of beds occupied as a percentage of the inventory</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td>Data reflects information provided by client</td>
<td>Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeliness</td>
<td>Data entered in timeframe required by CoC</td>
<td>Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td>Same information is collected for each data element</td>
<td>Program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Repository Requirements and HUD Data Quality Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Repository Data Quality Review</th>
<th>HUD Data Quality Element</th>
<th>SSVF Specific Data Quality Element</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Missing uploads</td>
<td></td>
<td>SSVF requirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing client data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Data entry error</td>
<td>Utilization and accuracy</td>
<td>Required for upload</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Delay in entering client data</td>
<td>Timeliness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing Veterans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- No data entry</td>
<td>Utilization and accuracy</td>
<td>Required for upload</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing RRH Move-In Dates</td>
<td>Accuracy and timeliness</td>
<td>Required for upload</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing TFA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- No data entry</td>
<td>Accuracy Completeness</td>
<td>Required for upload</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Incomplete data entry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Current Data Quality Review Process

Ask yourself...
- Is there a data quality review workflow?
- What data sources are reviewed?
- What outcomes are reviewed?
- How often are they reviewed?
- Who does the review?
- How is it communicated with staff, which staff?
- How are trends mapped/tracked?
- Do you have internal thresholds/triggers?
- What is your response strategies for various data issues

Are you doing enough to ensure you have high data quality?
SSVF Data Quality Plan

Data quality plans should include:

- Purpose statement
- Roles and responsibilities
- Context for SSVF Data Quality Plan
  - CoC’s data quality benchmarks for utilization, accuracy, timeliness, completeness
  - SSVF Repository requirements
- Monthly data quality monitoring process
  - Data Quality reports
  - Timeline for running initial reports, checking data and making corrections as needed, rerunning reports. Schedule should reflect Repository upload schedule and community reporting timeline.
  - Data sources to use for data quality review
- Management review of data quality progress with identification of training or resources needed to improve initial data quality
Mapping the Data Quality Review Workflow

Daily Data entry

Run/Review Reports Monthly

No findings

Document and file

No findings

Findings

Correct Data

Run report

Findings

Quality Control Measures

Note and address common findings/errors
Activity

On your note cards answer the following questions.

1) What is one thing that you know you are doing well with your data quality plan?

2) What is one thing that you are going to change or add to your data quality plan?
Using SSVF Data
Other Data Sources to Consider

- VA Registry reports (confirmation e-mails)
- CoC data: Point-in-Time Count, AHAR Data Summary Report, Other CoC data
- Participant feedback & evaluations
- Financial reports
- Master list
Using Data to Manage the SSVF Program

- How do you measure program outcomes?
- Do you use data to determine appropriate staffing levels?
- Do you use data to determine appropriate level of services needed?
Using Data for Community Goals

- Why is your data important to the community?
- How does your program data affects community data as a whole?
- Is your data aligned with and reviewed for Community Goals?
- Have you used your data to target specific populations?
- Are you reporting out to the community on Veteran Milestones?
- What roles does your data play in Coordinated Entry?
Example - Process to Analyze RRH Need

1) Determine the annual number of Veterans who will need RRH – from master list data, coordinated entry assessment data, local Gaps Analysis, SSVF Served by CoC and Resource Allocation form

2) Subtract RRH need from total SSVF households to be served to determine HP availability for the year

**EXAMPLE**

100 Veteran households to be served annually

- **80** Veteran households needing RRH

20 Veteran households to be served with HP
Key Take Aways

Reviewing Data is like brushing your teeth

1. You don’t want anything in them that isn’t right...
2. You should do it frequently.
3. You should be consistent to avoid bigger issues which can develop.
4. You want to make sure you thorough
5. You want to make sure when you show them to people they’re nice
HMIS Resources

- SSVF University Homeless Management Information Systems section
- SSVF HMIS help at ssvfhmis@abtassoc.com
- SSVF Regional Coordinator
- HMIS Lead
- HMIS trainings and manuals
SSVF IN THE COMMUNITY
Federal Goal to End Homelessness Among Veterans

To build a systemic response to homelessness among Veterans that ensures that Veteran homelessness is Rare, Brief, and Non-Recurring

- Articulated and defined by the Federal Criteria and Benchmarks for Ending Homelessness Among Veterans
- Allows for holistic view of homeless crisis response system that addresses varying levels of need and variety of available VA and non-VA resources
- Promotes other locally-driven goals and performance benchmarks
- Vision achieved as communities optimize their homeless crisis response system(s)
How Can a Community End Homelessness for Veterans?

**Optimization**: an act, process, or methodology of making something (as a design, system, or decision) as fully perfect, functional, or effective as possible.

—Merriam-Webster Dictionary
Optimizing the Crisis Response System

Optimization is an ongoing process, not an end state, requiring ongoing monitoring and adjustment as demand, resources, and other conditions change.

- Plan & Design
- Set, Adjust Goals
- Implement
- Evaluate
SSVF Role in the Crisis Response System

Local Planning Support and Leadership: Supporting or driving local efforts and management capacity

Program and Direct Services: Providing RRH and HP Services directly to eligible Veteran families
VA Homeless Programs in Coordinated Entry

- Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management (DUSHOM) Memo released in 2017

- VA and all VA funded homeless programs required to participate in the CoC’s Coordinated Entry process by March 2018

- Closely aligns with HUD’s Coordinated Entry Requirements

- **VA Programs Required to Participate Across 5 Domains:**
  1. Community Case conferencing
  2. By-Name-Lists
  3. Common Assessments
  4. Commitment of resources
  5. Data Sharing

*Read the Memo and HUD’s CE Requirements!*
SSVF: Engaging the VAMC and VISN Leadership

- Know your... VAMC Homeless Programs Director, VAMC Catchment area, VISN

- Leverage your SSVF Regional Coordinator’s expertise and connections!

- Plan or support collaborative events and training with a local VAMC’s homeless team.

- Share the load and know the challenges

- Ensure communication and activity is part of broader community planning process
SSVF: Creative Uses of SSVF: Examples

- Supporting or driving local leadership or Veteran committees
- Assisting in By-Name List Management and Coordination
- Participating in or leading community Case Conferencing
- Subcontracting with CoC to support Veteran related operations
- Providing coordinated outreach and front line Housing Offers and Coordinated Entry assessments
- Acting as mobile in-reach team for all Veterans in community programs
- Liaison between VA, HUD and community programs
- Acting as primary housing navigator and landlord database for Veterans
SSVF Program Manager: A Unique Position

- Oversee service practice while informing larger community efforts
- Able to identify barriers and challenges from multiple vantage points
- Able to leverage multiple levels of knowledge/program to find solutions
- Have active partnerships in all domains of the program and community
- Have the capacity to communicate to a broad array of stakeholders
Wrap Up and Tomorrow