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# Homelessness Prevention

SSVF Grantee Webinar

January 9, 2020

[Link to audio](#)

# SSVF Homelessness Prevention

- Rapid Rehousing (RRH) is the priority activity for SSVF. Homelessness Prevention (HP) should be used strategically to reduce the number of Veterans becoming homeless after the RRH need is met.
- Research has not found a link between being evicted and becoming literally homeless – SSVF HP must be for only those imminently at risk and more strategic than just eviction prevention
- In most CoCs people are doubled up with family and friends the night before they become literally homeless
- Rapid Resolution and the “But For” test are crucial.
- Limited HP resources require targeting for those who will be harder to rehouse when they become homeless

# Stage 1: VA Eligibility

## Eligibility Conditions:

### **Condition 1: Veteran Status**

- *Is the applicant a qualified Veteran*

### **Condition 2: Very Low-Income Status**

- *Is the gross annual household income below 50% of area median income (AMI) for the household size; AND*

### **Condition 3: Imminently At-Risk of Literal Homelessness**

- *Will the Veteran soon become literally homeless but for your SSVF program assistance (aka "Category 1")*

# HP Screening Form V4 January 2020

<b>3B: Other Housing Options &amp; Resources</b>	<i>We would like to know if you have any other safe and appropriate place to stay— either permanently OR while you look for other housing. We would also like to know if you have family, friends or others you know that may be able to help you financially.</i>
<p><b>[Staff Note]:</b> Discuss and record below a summary related to each of the following potential housing options and sources of assistance: 1) family members or relatives; 2) close or trusted friends; and 3) faith-based group or network applicant associates with. Where appropriate, ask if a potential housing option can be contacted by you to help secure housing. Attach additional notes as necessary. <b>NOTE: If the Veteran household would have become homeless tonight but SSVF assisted in identifying or accessing an alternative to that entry into homelessness (such as family, friends or other networks), the Veteran household would be eligible for Rapid Resolution services under the HP Enrollment.</b></p> <p><i>Do you have a safe, appropriate place where you could live if you lose your current home? Let's talk about different types of options and whether any of these might be available to you as a safe, appropriate place to live, either permanently or while you seek other housing on your own. Let's start with family members and relatives...</i></p> <p><input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/></p> <p>¶ ¶ ¶ ¶ ✕</p>	
<p><i>If you're unsure if relatives, friends or others could help OR if there are any people or groups you have NOT contacted for help, but you think might be willing to assist you...</i></p> <p>¶</p> <p><i>Would you be willing to contact them OR may I contact them to find out if they can provide you with a place to stay, financial help, or other assistance to keep you from becoming homeless? This might include family, trusted friends or other groups (faith-based, social, etc.) that might be able to help.</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> NOT SURE ¶</p>	

# HP Screening Form V4 January 2020

*If YES, who should be contacted?*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Relationship to you</i>	<i>Phone number or email</i>
o o o o o	o o o o o	o o o o o
o o o o o	o o o o o	o o o o o
o o o o o	o o o o o	o o o o o

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

**NOTE:** *If the Veteran household would have become homeless tonight but SSVF assisted in identifying or accessing an alternative to that entry into homelessness (such as family, friends or other networks), the Veteran household would be eligible for Rapid Resolution services under the HP Enrollment.*

o o o o o ¶  
¶  
¶  
x

Does applicant have other safe/appropriate housing options and/or resources sufficient to avoid literal homelessness?  YES  NO ¶

**IF "YES", Applicant may be eligible for limited Rapid Resolution Services.**

# HP Screening Form V4 January 2020

Stage 1: Eligibility Disposition	
<b>ELIGIBLE: Meets all eligibility requirements above</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>CONTINUE TO STAGE 2</b>
<b>ELIGIBLE: Rapid Resolution only</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>CONTINUE TO STAGE 2</b> (refer to Rapid Resolution Compliance Guide for next steps)
<b>NOT ELIGIBLE: Does not meet one or more eligibility requirements</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>STOP</b> (reference HP Screening Form Instructions for next steps)

## Eligible Veteran households Rapid Resolution ONLY

- Veterans diverted from entering the homeless system by identifying an alternative safe place to stay may be eligible for Rapid Resolution Services including limited TFA if necessary

## Ineligible applicants

- Provide other referrals when needed and desired
- Track as “Screened, but not Enrolled”

# STAGE 2: TARGETING

- Setting a score to prioritize SSVF homelessness prevention assistance in the event there are insufficient resources to assist all eligible Stage 1 Veterans
- Each grantee sets targeting threshold score
- Grantees may have more than one score
- Veterans who meet or exceed score may receive all SSVF forms of assistance (i.e. Including TFA)
- Veterans who do not meet the threshold score may receive Service Directed Housing Intervention (formerly “light touch”) (i.e., non-TFA) assistance
- Eligible and Meeting Targeting Threshold (Stages 1 & 2)
  - Use progressive assistance approach – start with Service Directed Housing Intervention when possible and effective in avoiding literal homelessness

# HP Scores in GIFTS

- Currently on Website
  - Homelessness Prevention Screening Form (updated January 2020)
  - Homelessness Prevention Screening Form Companion Guide(updated January 2020)

Available under Housing Status

[https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/?page=/official\\_guide/forms](https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/?page=/official_guide/forms)

- GIFTS
  - Homelessness Prevention Screening Score Threshold Score Requirement
  - Published to all Grantees
  - If need additional forms due to multiple threshold scores, consult Regional Coordinator
  - Submit throughout the year
  - New Requirement will be published, when request submitted

# Setting the HP Threshold Score

# Overview of Process to Set HP Score

- Estimate HP resources available after determining need for RRH in all CoCs
- Identify other HP resources and targeting/priorities in homeless system
- Determine a HP threshold score that will target resources to Veterans who are in greatest need of assistance 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

# Analyzing Rapid Re-Housing Need

- When reviewing the by-name-list or PIT count data, has the rate of inflow for literally homeless Veteran households been established? (each CoC)
- Were RRH referrals that were turned away in the previous year because of insufficient resources?
- Has there been any changes in community resources (shelters closing, increase in housing costs, etc.)?
- Are there multiple CoCs with differences in geographic make-up which may indicate differing RRH need within CoC?

# Understanding the Numbers

- Determine the number of households to be served as identified in the SSVF Resolution process.
- Determine the number of Veterans who will need RRH
- Work closely with other SSVF and RRH providers to establish CoC capacity
- Average Cost of TFA per RRH Household
- Total amount of RRH TFA needed within CoC
- Total amount of RRH TFA from each SSVF award
- Amount budgeted for TFA for the fiscal year
- Establish amount of TFA left for HP
- Understand the average TFA cost per household of HP households served.
- Results in estimated HP Households to be served

# Common Approaches

Consider any additional targeting criteria that will ensure HP households with the greatest needs and who would be the hardest to house following a homeless episode, are targeted for resources

- Conduct a data review for a set period of time (3, 6, 12 months and find the average score
- Adjust Score if indicated- Possible scenarios:
  - Resources were exhausted early in Fiscal Year,
  - Increases in housing costs
  - Decreases in available housing stock (natural disasters, changes in landlord tenant laws, etc.)
  - Increased need
  - Excess HP near the end of the Fiscal Year

# Common Approaches

Coordinated scoring based on collaboration with other HP Providers.

- SSVF Grantees utilizing the same score based on analysis
- One SSVF Grantee identified as the HP provider for the community

Some Grantees may find that when the RRH need is high they may need to limit HP assistance significantly. For example some have:

- Used only 15% of TFA funding for HP
- Provided HP in exceptional circumstances only
- Utilized a 90/10 split for TFA
- Diverted all resources to RRH

# Select Approaches to Setting Score

Grantees reported that they:

- Reviewed data about those served in the previous FY and utilized the mean score plus 2 points due to exhausting all resources before the end of the year.
- Saw increased HP need due to increased housing costs, set score higher to target most vulnerable Veteran households – recognized they would not be able to serve some lower need households and are referring to other providers for assistance.
- Analyzed characteristics of HP households – added additional targeting criteria regarding low income to ensure the most vulnerable and at risk are being served.
- Reviewed HP requests from CoC and identified increased need due to loss of other HP resource and housing stock with increasingly restrictive eligibility criteria – score was decreased to address new needs

# Regular Evaluation of the HP Score

Grantees should complete a thorough evaluation of their HP score at least annually.

Other times to reevaluate the HP score:

- When there are community changes that could impact the need for HP:
  - New HP resources
  - Increases in housing costs
  - Loss of other Veteran or HP resources
  - Comprehensive CES implementation with all HP referrals from CES – all receive 5 points for referral
- When there were program changes that would impact score:
  - Increase or decrease in SSVF funding

# Grantees Should Not...

- Set score to maintain 60/40 split without a proper analysis of RRH need
- Set HP percentage to a random percentage without a proper analysis of RRH need
- Setting targeting criteria to serve Veteran households with:
  - The lowest HP costs
  - The highest income
  - The lowest barriers

# Resolution Analysis

Based on the narratives provided by Grantee during the Resolution process

- Scores were based on review of historical data
- The main difference between the highest score and lowest score is geography. The highest scores were set for urban areas and the lowest scores were set for rural areas.
- Distribution of HP scores across Grantees:
  - Below 5 = 1 Grantee
  - 5 to 9 = 9 Grantees
  - 10 to 14 = 69 Grantees
  - 15 to 19 = 112 Grantees
  - 20 to 24 = 52 Grantees
  - 25 to 30 = 28 Grantees

# Resolution Analysis

- 24 determined their HP score only utilizing the 60/40 split formula
- 9 identified the prioritization of RRH as an influencing factor
- 2 identified cost per household or other financial reasons as an influencing factor
- 6 referenced meeting USICH Benchmarks or Functional Zero
- 38 identified having multiple HP scores
  - 13 of those identified a difference between rural and urban geography as an influencing factor
- 80 identified having shared service area(s) with other SSVF Grantees
  - 4 of those identified having a different HP score than the other provider(s)

# Evaluating the Impact of Homelessness Prevention

# HP Goal: Reduce Inflow of Veterans to Literal Homelessness

In determining effectiveness of HP activities:

- Use community data to determine inflow of homeless Veterans each month
- Review Rapid Resolution data and impact on inflow
- Work with Veteran Committee to determine a process or process improvement to position HP information/resources at main points of contact to try and reduce inflow.
- Work with CoC to develop a process for educating other members about SSVF Grantee HP resources available in the community on an annual basis.
- Monitor impact of HP activities on inflow after processes are developed and adjusted
- Develop a strategy for continual process improvements as needed.

# Rapid ReHousing Waiver

# Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Waiver Request

- A RRH waiver allows SSVF grantees to lower the 60% minimum amount of TFA required to be used for RRH households
- Communities with a SSVF RRH Waiver must continue to demonstrate that no literally homeless Veteran will be turned away from services, even if that requires exceeding the approved/revised minimum RRH.
- Grantees with RRH waivers for FY2020 were notified by SSVF Program Office, as part of the Resolution and MOA distribution Process
- RRH Waiver Requirements in GIFTS for all other grantees
- RRH Waiver Request Sheet and RRH Waiver guide is on the SSVF Website at

[https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/?page=/official\\_guide/reporting\\_and\\_monitoring\\_requirements](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/?page=/official_guide/reporting_and_monitoring_requirements)

# Options for RRH Waiver

SSVF grantees may request a waiver under one of three Options:

- A. Eligible to reduce RRH TFA minimum to 30% if an agency's CoC has been confirmed as having reached the goal of ending Veteran homelessness by the USICH and the Federal Partners
- B. Eligible to reduce RRH TFA minimum to 40% if an agency's service area is rural to the point that there are not enough RRH clients to support using 60% of TFA on RRH households.

This should be limited given all grants have applied for funds via NOFA stating 60% is the requirement.

- C. Eligible to reduce RRH TFA minimum to 40% if there is a strategic allocation applied to a CoC, based on community plan to end Veteran homelessness, that has multiple SSVF grantees and one grantee may agree to be the only provider of homelessness prevention services.

# Rapid Rehousing (RRH) Waiver Request

All RRH Waiver Requests MUST include Continuum of Care (CoC) endorsement.

- Applying for a waiver is a community-based decision. Requires justification indicating that RRH demand can still be met
- CoC endorsement must be signed by CoC Chairperson or equivalent
- All SSVF Grantees serving CoC must provide information on allocated resources to CoC
- SSVF grantees serving the CoC may apply for the RRH waiver, depending upon the proportion of their award allocated to the CoC
  - For example, if a grantee within a CoC applying for a waiver only attributes 10% of their SSVF grant funds to that community, that grantee may not necessarily be approved for a waiver to their program
- Approval decisions will be made by SSVF Program Office on a Grantee by Grantee basis.
- Submission are accepted on an as needed basis. Refer to RRH Waiver Companion Guide for this fiscal year's end date for submission

# RRH Waiver Requests

- Currently on SSVF Website
  - Rapid Rehousing Waiver Guide
  - Rapid Rehousing Request Form

[https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/?page=/official\\_guide/reporting\\_and\\_monitoring\\_requirements](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/?page=/official_guide/reporting_and_monitoring_requirements)

- GIFTS
  - RRH Waiver Requirement
  - Published to all Grantees who don't currently have waiver
  - Submissions accepted until 7/17/20

# QUESTIONS?