SSVF Rapid Resolution Planning Toolkit

Questions and Considerations for SSVF Rapid Resolution System-Wide Planning

This *Planning Toolkit* was created to assist SSVF Programs and their partners with the process of beginning a system-wide implementation of Rapid Resolution interventions in their communities. Over time, SSVF Grantees are expected to begin planning for Rapid Resolution with the CoC, VAMC, Coordinated Entry, and community partners in each of the CoCs/Communities they have been funded to serve. It is understood that this will be a process, and grantees are not expected to begin planning and implementation with all CoCs that they cover at once.

This Toolkit covers a few primary areas of consideration, including:

Please contact your SSVF Regional Coordinator if you have any concerns or questions as you begin your local planning process.

Before beginning Rapid Resolution implementation planning, SSVF grantees should evaluate the readiness of the current CoCs they serve to adopt Rapid Resolution and decide how to prioritize which CoCs or geographies may be best equipped and most appropriate to incorporate this intervention with SSVF's support. Some CoCs may not be in a position to implement Rapid Resolution right away or may have other similar services already operating that SSVF may need to align with in a given community. Use these questions and considerations to help prioritize your initial planning.

CoCs Covered by your SSVF Grant(s)

CoC Name: _____ Estimated Portion of SSVF resources dedicated to CoC:_____
CoC Name: _____ Estimated Portion of SSVF resources dedicated to CoC:_____
CoC Name: _____ Estimated Portion of SSVF resources dedicated to CoC:_____
CoC Name: _____ Estimated Portion of SSVF resources dedicated to CoC:_____
CoC Name: _____ Estimated Portion of SSVF resources dedicated to CoC:_____

Coverage and Shared Geography

Which CoCs/geographies is your SSVF Program physically located in and therefore may be better positioned to implement this intervention?

What other SSVF Grantees serve the same CoC(s), and how might that effect where to prioritize your planning?

CoC Capacity and Current Status

Are there certain CoCs you serve that have better or more fully implemented Coordinated Entry systems and related coordinated emergency shelter and entry points?

Of the CoCs you serve, are some in better or worse position to devote capacity (time) to planning this effort?

Where, if anywhere, are Rapid Resolution (diversion, rapid exit) strategies already being employed? Of those areas, is there a role for SSVF to enhance those activities, or should you focus on other CoCs that do NOT have any Rapid Resolution type interventions being offered? Of those CoCs that already have Rapid Resolution type services, is there an aftercare/service role that SSVF should play to support folks who are diverted via that process?

Any other notes to help you decide which CoCs/Geographies to approach first with this planning effort?

Rapid Resolution Planning: Key Considerations, Questions, and Next Steps

As you begin planning, you need to understand some of the key aspects of the community in which you operate and its homelessness crisis response system. Consider the following questions and suggestions as you begin your planning process.

Community Name and CoC Number: _____

Part 1: Planning for the Culture Shift and Stakeholder Engagement: Identifying Stakeholders, Preparing Messaging, and Engaging in Dialogue

Rapid Resolution is a shift in the way business is done in the homelessness system. Be prepared to work closely with stakeholders and staff as your community thinks about how to implement this emerging practice. Consider some of the following questions and suggestions as you plan stakeholder engagement.

Big Picture Questions and Considerations

- Who is your audience? Who do you need to communicate with? What is their experience and level of understanding?   For example, if your CoC has some form of diversion in place (even if it is for a specific subpopulation), the messaging that you use with your CoC Board/Leadership Team and Coordinated Entry may look very different than perhaps the staff at your agency who have not really been exposed to this work before.

- What messaging do you need to share? If you had to write out a few bullets, what would they be? Would they change depending on your audience?

More Detailed Questions and Considerations

- Create **brief materials (**or use materials provided by SSVF Program Office) to share with people that explain Rapid Resolution, the reason it is important in your homelessness system, the planning you hope to go through, and the importance of involving all stakeholders in the planning and implementation process. Resources:

- Talk with your program staff and board so that they understand what Rapid Resolution is and **how it could impact your CoC's ability to serve Veteran and the impact Rapid Resolution will have on your program.**

- Talk with other SSVF grantees that have shared geography to discuss engaging stakeholders together. You will want to have a clear communication plan and ensure that all grantees have had internal conversations at their agencies and are on the same page so that you present as a unified front when meeting with stakeholders.

- Talk with the CoC Board/Leadership staff so that they understand what Rapid Resolution is and the importance of their **involvement in planning**.

- Talk with the Coordinated Entry staff and/or committee so that they understand what Rapid Resolution is and the importance of their **involvement in planning and implementation**.

- Talk with your CoC HMIS System Administrator and let them know that you may need some assistance looking at system data.

- Talk with the VAMC including the VAMC Coordinated Entry Specialist (if applicable) or VAMC designated point of contact (per VA Coordinated Entry Memo). Please note that this may be the same person or different people. If you need assistance, please contact your SSVF Regional Coordinator. Explain Rapid Resolution and the importance of their **involvement in planning and implementation**. Tip: Refer VAMCs to the HCHV National Webinar recording on 12/18/18 for additional information.

- Talk with other key stakeholders--- shelter providers, outreach providers, Mayor's Office, consumers and other key "voices" in the community to discuss how to start the **community-wide conversation about a system-wide implementation of Rapid Resolution.**

- Plan to **follow up directly** when questions are raised or people offer to get involved. Plan to also have specific asks for each stakeholder group as needed.

In some cases, it may be helpful to create a specific Rapid Resolution planning team. In other cases, it may make sense to develop a subgroup within an existing CoC or Coordinated Entry team, especially if elements of diversion/rapid resolution are already incorporated into the system. Please consider the following:

- Who are your potential planning team members? What people/entities would you invite? Does an equivalent planning group already exist in your community?

- What materials might you use to explain Rapid Resolution?

Other notes on engaging with stakeholders and preparing messaging:

Part 2: Gathering Information and Data to Prepare your Planning Team

> ***What data do you have? What information do you need, and where can you find it?*** *Note: The holder of the master list and/or your CoC HMIS System Administrator may be extremely helpful with this process. You will want to loop them in.*

Community Data

- How many Veterans **become homeless in your community each month**? What does this tell you about Rapid Resolution need?

- Does the **inflow change depending on the weather, time of year, or other conditions**?

- Do you have certain **subpopulations that are over or under-represented in your Veteran population** (families, individuals, single parents, etc.)?

System Entry Trends

- List the designated Coordinated Entry **Access Sites in the CoC** (may be a phone system in some communities, especially in rural areas)?

- Where do most Veterans **first present** in the homelessness system (ex: Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Access Center, SSVF Location, VA CRRC (if applicable), VA Medical Center, etc.)?

- Do different **sub-populations of Veterans enter different locations** (male/female, singles, families with young children, young vs older, households fleeing domestic violence, etc.)?

- Are there entry points that are **already engaged** in Rapid Resolution type services or are in a good position to provide these services?

- Are there **other places** that Veterans occupy that need to be covered with outreach or some other form of engagement (for example, do Veterans stay in encampments, living in their car, places not meant for human habitation like subway tunnels, etc.)?

What **other local information** or Coordinated Entry information do you have to help you plan for Rapid Resolution?

Part 3: Convening and Managing Your Planning Team

> *Great meetings occur because good planning was done prior to the meeting. This is a crucial but often overlooked step.*

Purpose and Goals

- What is the **purpose** of your meeting? What are the initial goals/objectives?
- Who will develop the **agenda**?
- What are the **most important** initial agenda items**?**
- What kind of information do you want to share? Are there **documents you want to provide?** Who will prepare this information? Will you print or send via email?

Logistics

- ✓ **When and where** will your first meeting take place?
- ✓ Who will **facilitate** the meeting?
- ✓ Who are you **inviting**?
- ✓ Do they have a specific **role, expertise**, or strength that you want to use within your Planning Team? Has this been communicated to them?
- ✓ Will you have snacks (purchased with non-SSVF funds)? What **prep** should your facilitator do prior to the meeting?
- ✓ Do you need any **equipment** for the meeting (laptop, projector, etc.)?

Follow Up

- How will **meeting outcomes** be communicated to the Planning Team and/or other stakeholders?
- Is there a need for a centralized **management tool** (Google Doc, Documents) to track progress and report on next steps?
- Would your Planning Team be given times on the **CoC Board or CE Committee Agenda** to provide ongoing updates with community leadership?

Other Notes Related to Convening and Managing your Planning Team:

Part 4: System Design Considerations for Your Planning Team

This is the opportunity for your team to consider the community context while also being open to exploring creative options. This may take several discussions to really map out the most effective design for Rapid Resolution. While working on the design of the Rapid Resolution process it is important to consider the following areas:

- Will SSVF be having the **initial Rapid Resolution conversation** with Veterans, or are there local Rapid Resolution/ diversion-type activities that SSVF needs to coordinate with?

- If there isn't diversion in the community, how **should the Veteran get to SSVF** (or other providers) to engage in the Rapid Resolution conversation?

- Would SSVF be **co-located** at the first point of contact within the system? If so, at what times/dates? For example, if the first point of contact with the system is at the drop-in center which also serves as a designated coordinated entry access point, does SSVF want to have staff at this location?

- Would SSVF be **on-call** to be able to travel quickly to the location to meet the Veteran?

- Would the **Veteran travel to the SSVF** office location or other meeting place? Is transportation available?

- Would the staff at the first point of contact location connect the Veteran to SSVF by phone? **Does the location have the space and capacity to facilitate this**?

- What **role will non-SSVF staff have** in supporting the Rapid Resolution intervention besides making the connection to SSVF? For example, will the local VA Medical Center also have trained staff who can engage in Rapid Resolution conversations with Veterans?

- If **more than one SSVF grantee shares geography** in a community, how will this impact the design? What does regular coordination look like now? Does each grantee serve approximately the same area or the same percentage of area within the CoC? Does each grantee invest 100% of their grant in the given community? What might coordination look like with Rapid Resolution?

Overall, what is **the path the Veteran will take from housing crisis into the Rapid Resolution process**? Please note that it may be helpful to draw a picture or flow map.

- Who is doing what?
- Where are things happening?
- How can you summarize the process in just a few words/ideas?
- What would the Veteran/Consumer's experience be in this process? Is it easy and efficient?
- Will this require any updates to the Coordinated Entry process? How will you communicate these changes?

Part 5: Advanced Discussion: Key Questions and Considerations for SSVF Program Management

It is understood that responses to these questions will look different for each community that a grantee or team of grantees serves. Additionally, it may be helpful for communities to work through what currently exists in their system and to have at least a general idea of the plan prior to focusing on these specific questions. It will also be helpful for SSVF grantees to assess their available resources (staffing, TFA, etc.) for each community as this may also influence the set-up. Grantees with shared geography may want to complete this section individually and then meet with the other grantees that share geography in the CoC to discuss options across grantees.

Lastly, SSVF grantees should see their SSVF Regional Coordinator as a resource and guide in planning these components as they can share ideas and resources with grantees and connect grantees to other communities.

PLEASE NOTE: The SSVF Program Office will provide additional guidance on how to request changes in staffing composition, use of training funds, uses of TFA , enrollment and follow up expectations and budget modifications.

SSVF Staffing:

- Will **all SSVF staff be trained** on how to do Rapid Resolution, or are there Rapid Resolution Specialists?
- How will you **determine case load** and number of staff?
- Which staff will do this? Will you be hiring new staff?
- What kind of **characteristics** do you think you will look for in people doing this work?

SSVF and Community Training

- What kind of **training** do you feel you need? Do you have **current staff** who have skill sets that would be a good fit for Rapid Resolution? Will you **need to hire?**
- What capacity do your subcontractors have (if applicable)? Are there local training opportunities that you can tap into?

Work Location and Accessibility

- **Where** will the Rapid Resolution conversation take place? In person? By phone?
- How does this effect **technology or other budgeting needs** at the program level (e.g. do you need to build in more staff transportation funds to accommodate travel to Veterans presenting at a community shelter?)

Follow Up and Ongoing Service Case Loads

- If the Veteran's housing crisis is Rapidly resolved, what kind of **follow-up will happen**? Is this coordinated with your **other community partners**? Are there ways for you to provide light touch ongoing support to Veterans to make sure their resolution remains successful?
- If the housing crisis cannot be resolved and the Veteran enters the homeless system, what are the next steps to **ensure that the Veteran has a safe place to stay that night**? How does that **interact with the Coordinated Entry** system and SSVF's role in coordinating with the Coordinated Entry Access Points?

SSVF Management and Supervisor Support

- What supervisory tasks might need to change, if any, to support Rapid Resolution staff? Please note that staff conducting Rapid Resolution may need to have support through coaching and other supervisory techniques, and this may or may not fit in with the currently established plan of direct supervisor.
- Are **there meetings or peer groups that need to be convened** to support the practice so you can ensure consistency and continued quality improvement? What other agencies or entities might need to be involved in this?

Financial. Admin and HMIS

- How and when will you need to include your **Finance and HMIS/Admin staff in Rapid Resolution**?
- Who will be responsible for understanding all **SSVF Program Office directives** related to your grant?

Other notes regarding Program Management and Internal Design:

Part 6: Resources: Current and Needed (SSVF and Community)

It is important to assess what resources currently exist and what resources might be needed. Please note that some resources may exist in a community but have just not been fully accessed. It is also important to think outside of the box in this section while understanding that not every need will able to be fulfilled by SSVF so partnerships are key.

- What types of services do you **currently offer** via SSVF that you think will be useful for participants in Rapid Resolution (i.e. case management, connections to VA and mainstream benefits, employment support or referrals)?

- Do SSVF grantees currently provide (or might wish to provide via a program change request) **mediation services directly or through a subcontractor**? Does anyone else in your community offer these kinds of services?

- If possible, what **types of limited financial assistance would you want** to provide to support Rapid Resolution (help to family reunifying with Veterans, transportation, etc.)?

- What types of assistance would you like to be able to offer to help Veterans **find alternative housing for the night** but are currently not available? (e.g. Better connections to shelter system, hotel/motel vouchers in the event that no alternative safe place exists, transportation to alternative crisis bed, etc)

What do you NOT have now in your toolkit of resources and support that you WISH you could have to make Rapid Resolution successful?

Part 7: Keeping Organized

Moving forward in your planning and implementation, it will be important to stay organized by documenting your process, communicating with stakeholders, and adjusting as needed. Consider some of these items to support the work of your planning team

- Policies & Procedures
- SSVF Forms/tools, including Program Office directives
- System, data & staff workflows (including outcome data)
- Financial assistance protocol
- Action Items, Tasks and Group Assignments
- Other?

What protocols or policies (Written Standards, CE Manual) **already exist** that may need to be revisited with your CoC as you plan and implement Rapid Resolution?

What **other items will you need** to document and what is the most efficient way to do so?

Part 8: Initial Action Planning Template and Next Steps

*CoC Name and Number:*_____

*List of Grantees Serving CoC:*_____

*Lead SSVF Grantee in CoC (if applicable/decided):*_____

What <u>initial</u> action steps do <u>you</u> need to take and by when? Use this template to record some initial planning action steps for when you return home	
Action Step	**Date Needed/Who's Responsible**
Ex: Distribute SSVF Rapid Resolution documents and VA Implementation Plan Template to key CoC leadership and request an introductory call/meeting to brief them on Regional Meeting and Rapid Resolution framework	SSVF Program Manager, Jane Smith. Schedule call to take place by January 31st. Include SSVF Regional Coordinator for reference.
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

At this point in time, how much time (give an estimate) do you think you and your community need in order to get system-wide Rapid Resolution implemented, even if further refinement is need?

Length of Time:

Approximate Implementation Date: