The SSVF NOFA was released June 2022 and will provide new authorities to select high priority communities to address housing barriers, to supplement funding to support new authorities and to allow for the leveraging of existing awards to support objectives. More information on the NOFA including the list of communities allowed to apply can be found here SSVF_NOFA_June_2022.pdf (va.gov)

Letter of Intent

1. What is the program called?
   This is not a program. It is an opportunity to augment existing TFA and partnerships.

2. What are the requirements for the application? Does the application include submitting statistics regarding how many HUD-VASH vouchers are available in the catchment area?
   The only requirements for the application are providing services in one of the eligible areas as listed in Table 1 of the NOFA and submission of the budget and Letter of Intent (LOI) via UDPASS (formerly smart simple).

   Applicants should log into UDPaaS and review the requirements that are listed in the application. The Letter of Intent is not a requirement of a physical letter and is described in the application.

NOFA

3. When is the deadline for the NOFA application?
   The deadline is July 22nd at 4pm EST. There will be no applications accepted after this time.

4. For Grantees not eligible for funds; can we use our current funding for "quality of life" items listed or to issue landlord or tenant incentives?
   Currently, these new authorities can only be used in areas listed in Table 1.

5. Can more than one grantee receive funding in one catchment area?
   Yes. We encourage all grantees in eligible areas as listed in Table 1 to apply. All grantees who apply under this NOFA in a catchment area that is funded will receive some type of funding.

6. It was also my understanding from reading the federal register, there was focus on areas where grantees met the USICH benchmarks and criteria. Would those areas be able to be served by this grant, even if those areas approved by USICH are not in the specific VAMC regions on the Table?
   The only eligible areas are listed in Table 1.

7. What if your existing award covers two VAMC areas? Would we submit one application and explain this, so any award is not prorated? Or would we need to submit two applications?
   Grantees submit one application and ensure you check off every eligible VAMC that you currently serve. The SSVF Program Office will compare to your renewal award if any pro-rating is still necessary.

8. We are a priority 2 grantee but share a catchment area with a priority 1 grantee. Will we still have a chance at getting any of this funding? Will multiple grantees in certain areas be able to receive the funding? I want to caution that if one grantee receives this and another doesn’t in the same area this may harm our VASH relationships and cause the VASH office to send more referrals to the funded grantee.
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If any of your current catchment area includes a VAMC listed in Table 1 you are eligible for funding. All grantees who apply under this NOFA in a catchment area that is funded will receive some type of funding. Grantees sharing areas will need to coordinate services to ensure one standard of practice.

9. Could you talk a bit more about the catchment area helping us to determine the amount of award we could request in the budget?
   Eligible VAMCs are listed in Table 1 of the NOFA. You need to work with your local HUD-VASH teams to understand the catchment area that needs to be served. Eligible VAMC’s are listed in Table 1 of the NOFA. If your current grant serves areas outside the NOFA, you can request a pro-rated amount of your FY23 anticipated award, or we will pro-rate it at the time of award announcement.

10. We have multiple SSVF providers with overlapping catchment areas and all working with the same HUD-VASH staff. Do we all need to apply for a housing navigator, or can we just submit for the landlord and tenant incentive and share the navigator?
    Staffing can be shared, but due to budgeting, the costs to support the housing navigator needs to originate from one Grantee. It is, however, expected that most Table 1 grantees will need multiple housing navigators due to the number of households expected to be served. It is important to consult with your local HUD-VASH team to get a clearer sense of local needs when putting together a budget.

11. We serve 100 counties and only 5 of them are in the VAMC regions on table 1 of the NOFA; while we have a substantially large FY23 budget, when prorating the 5% of the budget would only calculate to around $150,000 for a 4-year period - which would not even cover the role of the Housing Navigator salary and benefits, let alone any TFA.
    Suggestions
    Grantees awarded under this NOFA may use their normal grant awards to supplement these activities and should do so especially if the NOFA award is not enough to carry out all of the new flexibilities. All grantees are carrying significant portions of their FY 22 awards in FY 23. Also, the only Veterans eligible for incentives will be the ones you place in the Table 1 catchment areas.

12. If we are not funded through this funding opportunity, can we use our FY23 funding to provide these services in the targeted communities?
    That will be determined at the end of the application period when funding decision are made. All funded grantees will be able to use available FY 22 and FY23 budgets to supplement this initiative in designated Table 1 target areas.

Co-Enrollment and Services

13. For co-enrollments, would SSVF still need a referral from the HUD-VASH worker to enroll Veteran?
    Local coordination and planning will be essential to determining the process, but generally SSVF would need to communicate with HUD-VASH team before providing the NOFA-related navigation services.

14. Can HUD-VASH Contractors utilize the additional services too?
    Collaborative planning will be critical, and services performed by contractors cannot be duplicated by SSVF.

15. What will be the role of HUD-VASH versus SSVF if we get this funding?
    Identifying Veterans for HUD-VASH is the responsibility of the HUD-VASH team (in coordination with location CES and partners, including SSVF). The expectation is that HUD-VASH will continue to screen and enroll Veterans in HUD-VASH through this process, but specific strategies for coordinating with SSVF to ensure all appropriate Veterans are screened will be dependent on local case conferencing processes, etc. HUD-VASH will provide the primary case management services with SSVF focused on housing navigation.
16. It sounds like the SSVF Bridge to HUD-VASH is similar to what we were given clearance to do during the PHA delays during Covid? Is it essentially similar?
Yes. Although, bridging is not a part of the new NOFA it is encouraged for grantees in Table 1 communities who are getting new awards.

17. We have just received a grant for HUD-VASH Housing Navigators where we receive $2,000 per lease signed. Can this grant and outcomes use this SSVF grant if they are controlled and count as an outcome.
Unfortunately, not at this time.

18. Will we have a targeting tool to determine equitably which of expanded families to enroll?
The only mandated targeting tool currently is use is the SSVF homeless prevention screener. Grantees must work closely with the local HUD-VASH and coordinated entry teams to ensure equitable access to these enhanced services. All grantees are strongly encouraged to partner with their local VAMC, CoC, and other key critical partners; including Veterans with lived experiences and expertise to understand the local needs, available local resources, and data – disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, ability and other intersectional factors- to avoid causing or worsening any disparities.”

HHS Account/PMS

19. Will the funding be a separate account in the PMS? Do we need to track expenditures for this funding separately from our regular SSVF funding?
Yes, a separate HHS account will be established for this funding and separate fiscal reporting will be required (FFR-FER)

80% AMI

20. Will HUD-VASH/PHA’s in the table 1 communities also be increasing their cap to 80% AMI?
This is a local PHA decision. We encourage grantees to work closely with your HUD-VASH and PHA partners.

21. If a Veteran is homeless with 80% AMI, would the TFA for rent have a different limit than the Veterans at 50% AMI?
No, other regulations are unchanged.

22. Can the 80% AMI flexibility be used for Shallow Subsidy? We see Veterans who are over 50% AMI, but have child support, other withholdings that may make rent unaffordable.
Yes.

23. Can you please clarify/confirm/deny that by very low income you mean below 50% AMI?
The definition of very low income is at or below 50%. For areas in Table 1 that receive funding, you can serve up to 80% AMI. This applies to all Veterans enrolled in SSVF, not just those co-enrolled in HUD-VASH.

24. Is there an income level restriction/component to this 80%?
80% AMI is the income limit, which is equal to the "Low Income" level in the HUD AMI Limits chart.

25. Please expound on the "Income eligibility in target areas increased to 80% AMI". Does that only apply to co-enrolled Veterans (both HUD-VASH & SSVF), or can it apply to a non-HUD-VASH enrolled Veteran?
This increased income limit applies to any Veterans enrolling in SSVF regardless of whether they are co-enrolled in HUD-VASH or not within the eligible VAMC catchment area.
26. When will traditional SSVF (separate from this NOFA) expand financial eligibility from max of 50% AMI to 80% AMI for all grantees? If we did that, we could take a substantial step towards meeting the 38,000 goal. The changes available to grantees serving areas in Table 1 may be expanded, in the future, to other areas depending on funding availability.

27. Were there strategies shared on how to ramp up to 80% AMI? VA will be offering Technical Assistance to grantees upon funding decisions. Grantees are encouraged to work with HUD-VASH teams to develop a projection of how demand may increase. Grantees are still expected to use the HP screener to prioritize services for at-risk Veterans. Literally homeless Veterans eligible for services should be prioritized for service. Grantees are strongly encouraged to communicate these changes with local coordinated entry leads so appropriate adjustments can be made.

Budget and Timeline

28. Is the budget we submit for the application a 4-year budget or an annual budget? The budget template breaks down the funding over a 4-year period; so, 25% each year.

29. Will the budget submitted be combined (merged/amended) with our existing FY 2022 award? No.

30. The NOFA states that a minimum of 80% of TFA must be used to serve very low-income Veteran families. The NOFA states that 80% of funds must be used on Veterans experiencing literal homelessness.

31. Is this part of the $1800 General Housing Stability limit or money in addition? The $1,000 tenant incentive is in addition to GHSA and is a more flexible resource than traditional GHSA.

32. You mentioned that we must have FY23 MOA, is that correct? Grantees should use the amount on your FY23 conditionally selected MOA for amount requested in this opportunity, as final FY23 awards are award announcements and distribution. Only existing grantees, i.e., those with FY22 awards serving areas listed in Table 1 are eligible for funding.

33. Is there a dollar amount that we can apply for? You can apply for your FY23 conditionally selected award amount.

34. Can you please clarify how this grant budget works in conjunction with our existing grant budget so that I understand how to do the budget for the NOFA? Please be specific about what we should be putting in this budget vs what is in our usual budget, e.g., incentive money, Housing Navigator position, Veteran incentives but not regular staffing to support the case management? That should come out of our regular grant? Please follow the budget instructions. The specific items for the budget are Housing Navigator Staffing, Incentives and up to 10% for admin. The funding from this NOFA is meant to supplement your existing budget. Your existing budget can also be used to support expenses described in this NOFA if necessary.

35. Can this ARP funding or SSVF funding be used to pay for HQS training/certification of housing staff? Grantees can certainly use the “regular” budget for this purpose.

36. Can a Veteran receive TFA through traditional SSVF and the new NOFA?
Grantees can use the “regular” grant for other forms of TFA. This NOFA is exclusively to be used for incentives and housing navigators. This is an added service on top of other traditional SSVF services.

37. Is there a limited or maximum month(s) that we can provide the rental assistance per Veteran?
The amount of rental assistance (dollars or months) is based on the Veteran's needs and SSVF RRH or Shallow Subsidy program guidelines. This NOFA doesn't change those program guidelines.

38. Is supervisory staff allowable with this funding (e.g., portion of a FTE for Program Manager), or must that come from existing funds?
Staff outside the Housing Navigator must come from your regular grant funds.

39. So, we can use TFA from regular grant in conjunction with landlord incentives with new grant, correct? We can co-mingle grant monies to serve the same Veteran.
Yes, that is correct.

40. Are we able to master lease?
You can, but SSVF can only pay for rent of a Veteran occupied unit.

41. When do we find out if we receive the funds? Hiring is taking a long time.
Start recruiting now! Funding will be coming, and you can at least start the process. Funding decisions will come quickly. This may also be a good opportunity to elevate/promote a current, experienced SSVF Housing Navigator to this new position.

42. If we don't have a current Housing Navigator, will there be enough to hire one? Can that Navigator split their services between HUD-VASH and SSVF?
Depending on the size of your grant and assessment of local need (to be informed through collaborative planning with other area grantees and HUD-VASH), you may elect to have staff with roles that are split.

43. What is the official difference between a housing navigator and a healthcare navigator?
Those are two different roles and service types. You may want to discuss with your Regional Coordinator. More information can also be found at SSVF Health Care Navigators (va.gov)

44. Are these Navigators will only provide services to Veterans that are in or can be enrolled in HUD-VASH? Those that are not eligible for HUD-VASH but are for SSVF cannot be served by these specific Navigators?
Generally, yes. Funds from this NOFA must support housing navigation for HUD-VASH co-enrolled Veterans. However, some staff may need to split roles based on budget constraints or need so a single individual staff member could provide housing navigation to SSVF-only Veterans but their time providing those services to Veterans not co-enrolled in HUD-VASH would be charged to your normal grant budget.

45. Must the housing specialist be segregated, meaning that they can work PT for HUD-VASH and PT for just SSVF?
Housing specialist time funded through this NOFA must work to support HUD-VASH. Your regular budget should be used to support other SSVF housing navigation services.
46. We cover multiple HUD-VASH teams. Is there going to be a cap on the number of Housing Navigators we can have on staff to work with HUD-VASH?

You will need to work with HUD-VASH and other area SSVF grantees to determine how many navigators and where they will be placed.

47. Is this housing navigator a separate position from the housing navigator we already utilize?

Housing navigator services funded under the NOFA are dedicated to finding housing for Veterans enrolled in HUD-VASH. The Veteran may initially be briefly housed through SSVF, but the final housing must be HUD-VASH.

48. Can we also hire a Social Worker for HUD-VASH as our local HUD-VASH has almost no staff and they desperately need a Social Worker? Or is it Housing Navigator? Who do the new Housing Navigators report to? SSVF or the HUD-VASH staff?

The staffing funds from this NOFA can only be used to hire/retain housing navigators. The housing navigators are hired by SSVF and report to the SSVF grantee but work collaboratively with the HUD-VASH team. SSVF funds from this NOFA cannot be used to hire other staff or hire federal employees.

49. Why not consider that the funding is allocated to HUD-VASH for the housing navigator if it’s just to augment their roles as case manager?

The process for HUD-VASH teams augmenting their staffing is separate. This process is specifically for grantees to utilizing their existing flexibilities to support shared goals.

50. Will sample functional statements/job descriptions be provided?

We will make sample job descriptions available and invite grantees to share existing job descriptions they have with the SSVF program office.

51. If we elevate a current housing navigator into the liaison role with HUD-VASH through this funding - would we still be able to utilize these staff for traditional case management (non-dually enrolled Veterans)?

The staffing funds from this NOFA can only be used to hire housing navigators. The housing navigators are hired by SSVF and report to the SSVF grantee but work collaboratively with the HUD-VASH team. Some individual staff members may split their roles if appropriate, but their time performing job duties not related to HUD-VASH would need be charged to your normal grant.

52. Are there any templates that can guide the SSVF providers on procedures for imbedding staff with HUD-VASH or is that something we would develop collaboratively with the HUD-VASH staff?

It will be critical to work collaboratively with local HUD-VASH staff to develop locally responsive processes and procedures.

53. Are we limited to 1 housing navigator to place with HUD-VASH, or is it 1 position per HUD-VASH program, or determined by our planning with partners in community?

SSVF grantees will need to work both with other area grantees and HUD-VASH staff to assess need. It is expected that approximately 40-50% of your new funds for Housing Navigation. So, you would want to balance budget realities, geography and priority population to determine the number of FTEs.

Landlord Incentives

54. Would the 2 months of rent go under GHSA? Can you use this if the rent is over the FMR?
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Whatever the unit rent up to rent reasonableness is the basis for the incentive. It is not charged under the GHSA limit. As a reminder, SSVF uses Rent Reasonable rather than Fair Market Rent.

55. Is there a minimum lease term for landlord incentives?  
Incentives may only be offered for lease situations of at least one year. Shorter term lease situations may not include landlord incentives.

56. Can you clarify more about the landlord incentives and HUD-VASH?  
SSVF can provide up to the value of 2-months’ rent to secure a new lease for Veterans enrolled in SSVF or co-enrolled in SSVF and HUD-VASH. This payment is not considered “rent” or “security deposit” but instead a “fee” or “incentive” for the landlord for leasing to a high-risk tenant/Veteran.

57. Can we also use TFA from regular grants to pay for landlord incentives if we need to for some reason?  
Yes. This is limited to Veterans housed in the catchment area for the VAMC in Table 1.

58. Is there a limit on how often a landlord incentive may be used with a Veteran?  For example, if we use the incentive to house a Veteran but he/she is evicted or needs to move before the end of the lease, can we use these funds again for a different landlord to receive an incentive?  
It can be used again if the Veteran needs to move to a new housing location.

59. Will landlord incentives and any other new eligible expenses under this funding also be allowable under existing funding, or can we only pay for these types of new eligible expenses under the new NOFA funding? If only under the new funding, can we pair the new funding with our regular grant, e.g., pay for the landlord incentives with the new grant and pay for the rental assistance through the regular grant or shallow subsidy grant for example?  
If awarded under this NOFA, grantees will also be able to use existing funding for these incentives.

60. Can you clarify what a “double security deposit” is and what the landlord incentive is of up to 2 months’ rent?  Is this landlord incentive for 2 months’ rent applied to the total rent or is it just a separate payment to the landlord as a bonus incentive not applied to the rent?  
The landlord can receive two, separate payments to support move-in. Previously, you were always allowed to provide a 2-month security deposit where market conditions made that necessary to secure a lease. This NOFA allows for an additional landlord incentive payment worth up to 2-months’ rent. Unlike the security deposit, the landlord incentive is not returned at the end of the tenancy. The landlord incentive would not be applied towards the Veterans rent.

61. Can we give the landlord the 2-month incentive once every year during the four years of this grant?  
Once for a lease. The incentive would not be given every year on the same lease. It is to be used to originate, not renew a lease.

62. Are there any capped amount of months for this rental assistance per Veteran household?  
Under SSVF the limit is a rent reasonableness standard. HUD-VASH uses the FMR. All other SSVF rental assistance regulations remain in place.

63. The landlord would get paid for 14 months of rent for a 12-month lease, correct?  
Yes, the landlord could receive up to two months additional rent as an incentive if needed to secure housing for the Veteran.

64. Our HUD-VASH team mentioned that they may have landlord incentives coming also. Can a landlord receive both the SSVF landlord incentive AND the HUD-VASH incentive?
SSVF funding cannot be combined with other federal funding used for identical purposes, so incentives provided by SSVF cannot be combined with HUD incentives. They could, however, be combined with other private or local government resources.

**Tenant Incentives**

65. **The tenant incentive is NOT a direct payment to Veteran, correct?**
   
   Correct. The tenant incentive does not go directly to the Veteran. Instead, SSVF makes the purchases on behalf of the Veterans.

66. **Can you buy the Veteran a pet?**

   Grantees can buy a pet (including fees associated with adoption) but cannot pay for any ongoing expenses so this must be carefully planned and budgeted. Grantees should ensure that the pet is also in compliance with the terms of the rental agreement.

67. **If we purchase a computer for a Veteran, can we also pay for internet access?**

   SSVF is incorporating and updating the Program Guide for internet services, cell phone or landline phone to be allowed under Utility TFA.

68. **Can the tenant incentives include a "move in kit" such as dishes, cleaning supplies, shower curtains, etc.?**

   Yes, but grantees should also consider that these items can be funded with TFA under GHSA as well so the tenant incentive TFA can include items not generally purchased under GHSA.

69. **We purchase beds under GHSA, would beds as an incentive only be if they exceed the GHSA limit?**

   Yes, if TFA for GHSA is exhausted, the tenant incentive can be utilized for this.

70. **The NOFA says food IS allowed?**

   Correct, grantees can utilize this funding for food for Veterans only. The SSVF Program Office will update the items for consideration chart.

71. **Can incentives be more than one item that totals up to $1,000?**

   Yes.

72. **Are the tenant incentives for all SSVF clients or only those co-enrolled with HUD-VASH?**

   Both tenant and landlords’ incentives are available to SSVF only households as long as they are served in one of the Table 1 target areas that receives funding.

73. **Can we use the tenant incentive money for Veterans already housed but still enrolled and served with ongoing TFA and housing retention services and/or shallow subsidy services or is this only for new clients?**

   No, this is for newly housed.

74. **Can you use the tenant incentive money with prevention clients or just RRH clients?**

   Grantees can utilize for both prevention and RRH, however a minimum 80% of the TFA funds from the NOFA must be used for the literally homeless.
75. For the tenant incentive, we were looking at staggering the $1000.00 over two periods: one at move-in, and one at the halfway point of a lease agreement. To get housed and stay housed. Is this kind of flexibility allowed, or should it be all up front?
   The intent of the incentive is $1,000 at the time of move in and not to stagger the purchases. It may take a couple of weeks or so for a Veteran to identify their needs in housing but generally the $1,000 incentive should be used at the beginning of the tenancy.

76. Just confirming that HUD-VASH isn't responsible for the purchasing.
   Correct. Though, HUD-VASH case managers may help co-enrolled Veterans identify what they need or want and communicate with SSVF to make the purchases

HMIS

77. Regarding HUD-VASH tracking purposes in HOMES, for Veterans housed through this incentive, prior to voucher receipt would we identify the Veteran as housed with SSVF as we do for Veterans being housed with RRH funds at HUD-VASH program entry?
   If the Veteran is housed by SSVF in lieu of a voucher, as has been done by RRH during COVID, then yes you would document that in HOMES.

78. Do we have to create a separate project for this grant in HMIS and, if so, the Veterans will have to be dually enrolled, correct?
   This is not a new project type. SSVF grantees will continue to enroll participants as RRH or HP.