

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)

Grant Award Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

September 14, 2017

Overview

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program, awards grants to private, non-profit organizations, and consumer cooperatives to provide a broad range of services to very low-income Veteran families residing in or transitioning to permanent housing. These services may include outreach; case management; assistance obtaining VA and other benefits; and temporary payments for rent, moving expenses, child care, transportation and other costs associated with helping Veteran families stay in or acquire permanent, stable housing. Renewing funding to grantees that are producing desired outcomes and demonstrate continued effectiveness helps VA advance its goal of ending Veteran homelessness. In response to changing national needs and reduced FY2018 program funding, SSVF was unable to renew grants for all existing eligible grantees. For this reason, existing SSVF providers and new applicants in high-need communities are required to apply for funding consideration through the SSVF Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA) issued for each fiscal year.

The following answers to frequently asked questions provide more information about the award for renewable grants:

Q: When will the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) awards be announced?

Awards were announced on September 13, 2017.

Q: Why have some applicants received a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)?

The SSVF grant applicants that have been recommended for funding have been notified and are required to submit additional information and sign a proposed grant agreement, or MOA, before the grant is awarded. This phase needs to be completed before the award announcement can take place.

Q: When will the funding period end for existing SSVF grantees that are not awarded a grant?

The grant period for most grantees ends on September 30, 2017. Currently, 10 grants will end sometime during FY 2018 either due to an extension or because the funding period of their three-year award ends on March 31, 2018.

Q: What will happen to the Veterans being served by an organization whose application was not selected as part of this Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)?

The VA Homeless Program Office (HPO) will work with VA Medical Centers to transition homeless Veterans, including those in need of services, from non-selected applicant programs into other VA homeless programs. The HPO will continue to coordinate with all community partners to meet the needs of all homeless Veterans.

Q: When will there be another opportunity to apply for SSVF grants?

The VA plans to issue an SSVF NOFA late in the first quarter of FY 2018.

Q: Can an unsuccessful applicant for the current NOFA apply for future grant opportunities?

An unsuccessful applicant can apply for funding in response to future NOFAs, subject to the terms of the NOFA.

Q: Can the results of the current NOFA be appealed?

The results of the grant selection cannot be appealed.

Q: Will unsuccessful applicants have the opportunity to receive feedback about their applications?

The SSVF Office will offer a webinar during which grant review teams will provide feedback on the factors that make an application successful, and the most common errors and omissions found in unsuccessful applications. This feedback will give unsuccessful applicants the opportunity to improve future applications.

Q: How does the grant review process work?

The grant rating criteria are based on SSVF regulations in 38 CFR Part 62.

The SSVF Office identifies and trains VA staff from various homeless programs nationwide in the grant review process. These grant review subject matter experts are divided into two-member teams, where each team reviews and scores its assigned application. All team members then come together to discuss the results and achieve a final consensus on each reviewed application's score. Applications with scores below the threshold are re-reviewed by SSVF staff to ensure that none of them is disqualified without adequate cause.