SSVF and HUD-VASH Coordination for Co-Enrolled Veterans in Response to COVID-19

VHA Homeless Programs (11HPO)

Overview

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| This document provides information about collaborative care for Veterans who are co-enrolled in Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) and Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. | [HUD-VASH Admissions During COVID-19 Response 10N Memo](https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/VHAHL/HRRTP/planning/HelpDocsOpPlan/Operational%20Planning%20Hub%20Files%20for%20Library/Technical%20Assistance%20for%20FY%202015/2813695Housing%20and%20Urban%20Development-Veterans%20Affairs%20Supportive%20Housing%20signed.pdfhttps:/dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/VHAHL/HRRTP/planning/HelpDocsOpPlan/Operational%20Planning%20Hub%20Files%20for%20Library/Technical%20Assistance%20for%20FY%202015/2813695Housing%20and%20Urban%20Development-Veterans%20Affairs%20Supportive%20Housing%20signed.pdf)  [SSVF Assistance for Veterans Participating in HUD-VASH 11CS Memo](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_Assistance_for_Veterans_Participating_in_Housing_and_Urban_Development_Veterans_Affairs_Supportive_Housing_HUDVASH.pdf) |

In response to the impacts of COVID-19, SSVF and HUD-VASH program offices have provided flexibilities that allow each program to collaborate in new ways toward the goal of rapidly moving homeless Veterans into permanent housing. In order to do this successfully, local SSVF and HUD-VASH programs must work together to clarify the roles and responsibilities of each party in serving co-enrolled Veterans. These responsibilities must be discussed and decided by the partners based on local conditions, other service partnerships, and other identified needs. The information below assumes involved Veterans are eligible for both SSVF and HUD-VASH and are enrolled in both programs.

Key components of SSVF and HUD-VASH Collaboration

* Establish clear and regularly occurring communication about a Veteran’s needs, preferences, and housing plans to maximize efficiency, promote Veteran choice, and expand opportunities for successful housing outcomes.
* Leverage the expertise of each program to allow for complimentary service packages highlighting each program’s strengths, relationships, and community/VA partnerships while avoiding duplication of services.
* Establish clear definitions of each partner’s roles to provide a foundation for coordination efforts related to program activities and services for individual Veterans.
* Establish processes and procedures for managing Veteran needs, ensuring visibility and coordination across programs while the Veteran is co-enrolled. Ensure discussions include topics such as: communication agreements with hotel, motel, and community points of contact; privacy and confidentiality procedures; and follow-up expectations.

Services that may be provided by SSVF for Co-Enrolled Veterans

1. **Housing Navigation**

* Housing search including identifying potential units, supporting contact with the landlord, and lease applications or administrative needs.
* Assistance with lease-up processes and lease education, including basic tenancy education and supports.
* Inspection by SSVF for Veterans who will be housed for a period of time with SSVF rental assistance before a HUD-VASH voucher is available.
* Inspection by SSVF for Veterans who will be housed with a HUD-VASH voucher and where the Public Housing Authority (PHA) is unable to inspect and allows for an alternative inspection process during the public health crisis.
* Security and utility deposit assistance if needed, and rental assistance if the PHA is unable to commit a HUD-VASH voucher due to COVID-19 restrictions or closures.
* Move-in coordination including support for Veteran to acquire furniture, household items, and basic hygiene products.

1. **Non-Clinical Case Management**

* Linkages to community resources.
* [COVID-19 health screenings for Veterans in hotels/motels](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_COVID_19_Guidance_Health_and_Symptom_Check.pdf), consistent with SSVF COVID-19 guidance.
* Coordination and communication about services to housing partners, including HUD-VASH.
* General case management support in partnership with HUD-VASH, including tenancy preparation and non-clinical service interventions.
* Provision of [Health Care Navigation](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_Health_Care_Navigators_2020_08_13.pdf) services.
* HUD-VASH voucher coordination:
  + Document collection required by the PHA for HUD-VASH enrollment.
  + Primary POC with the PHA to ensure that all HUD-VASH standards are met and to address any concerns that are presented during the vouchering process.
  + Connection to PHA for HUD-VASH voucher application, including assistance in completing and submitting application and follow up activities.
  + Review unit compliance with household composition and Fair Market Rent (FMR) requirements.
  + Preparation of HUD-VASH packet.
  + Ensuring the voucher briefing is conducted and Veteran receives voucher when PHA issues it.
* Other services as needed:
  + Transportation assistance to appointments, including medical appointments.
  + Hotel sheltering if appropriate, including assistance with food and personal needs while homeless and coordination of service provision with HUD-VASH.
  + Securing income through employment or benefits.
  + Other housing and tenancy supports while the Veteran is receiving SSVF rental assistance before a HUD-VASH voucher is available.

Services that must be provided by HUD-VASH

1. **Clinical Case Management**

* Assessment and support for acute and chronic mental and physical health needs including referring Veterans to mental and physical health care resources at the VAMC and/or in the community. Clinical support can occur in hotel setting, home setting, or both.
* Acuity assessment and determination of level of case management.
* Developing a clinical treatment plan for the Veteran, including setting clinical goals and plans to achieve goals.
* Discussing tenancy requirements and care options and choices to support meeting tenancy expectations.
* Discussing Veterans’ preferences, cultural, and spiritual aspects of healthcare delivery.
* Discussing emergency plans and resources.

1. **Other Services**

* Other services including housing navigation, non-clinical case management, HUD-VASH voucher coordination, and/or other services identified above and not provided by to the Veteran by SSVF.

Shared responsibilities

* Development, coordination, and implementation of a permanent housing plan.
* Landlord coordination and communication, including education about HUD-VASH vouchers, SSVF’s role, the Veteran’s tenancy responsibilities, and ongoing support for tenancy.
* Communication about Veteran housing plans throughout the process.
* Coordination of activities to help the Veteran establish sustainable income and resources via employment or appropriate benefits.
* Coordination of health and clinical services across agencies to ensure VA or community healthcare engagement, as indicated.

Additional Information

Questions about specific allowable activities or services should be directed to the program’s respective national program office or Regional Coordinator.

Web resources:

* [VHA Homeless Program Operational Planning Hub](https://r03cleapp06.r03.med.va.gov/hub2/hp/•%09VHA%20Homeless%20Hub)
* [SSVF Website](https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp)