

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Back to Basics: Enhanced Supportive Services March 11, 2021

[Link to Audio](#)

Mike Boyd

Maxie Pulliam

Marzena Guzik

Jennifer Colbert



AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions
- Rapid Resolution
- Returning Home
- Shared Housing
- Shallow Subsidy
- Question & Answers



Rapid Resolution

Mike Boyd, LMSW

SSVF Regional Coordinator



RAPID RESOLUTION

empathetic **listening** **build trust**
brainstorming **empowerment** **be positive**
diversion **safe place** **resourceful** **quiet space**
mediation **family options**
rapid resolution
problem solving **client choice** **partners** **housing**
trauma informed **friends** **safety** **conflict resolution**
respectful **creative**
crisis resolution **social networks** **rapid exit**
open-ended questions **natural supports** **action oriented** **active listening**
follow up **trust**



Rapid Resolution Core Goal

Using **Housing Problem Solving (HPS)** approaches to identify safe alternative options to homelessness that are:

- Available immediately or quickly,
- Based on Veteran's choice,
- Using an exploratory, conversation style which focuses on revealing Veteran's existing strengths and supports.
- For housing potentially longer-term or permanent.
- When placement isn't long term, it still has the effect of de-escalating the housing crisis so longer-term housing planning can occur.



Rapid Resolution Defined

- Using Housing Problem Solving (HPS) approaches with the primary goal of avoiding homelessness (diversion) or ensuring it's as brief as possible for those recently entered into shelter, transitional housing, or who are unsheltered (rapid exit).
- SSVF and non-SSVF providers can use HPS system-wide while RR services are specific to SSVF enrolled Veterans.
- Using exploratory, problem solving and mediation methods, providers assist families to articulate their immediate alternatives to homelessness connecting them with existing supports.
- Rapid Resolution is not a separate program, and not a one-time conversation, but a set of approaches to be considered at all points in a homeless crisis. HPS approaches result in ongoing SSVF RR services.



Rapid Resolution Methods

- HPS intentionally builds trust and rapport through an exploratory, non-judging stance of active listening and question asking designed to discover a Veteran's strengths and existing resources.
- Mediates concerns helping resolve conflicts between Veterans and their family, friends, and other support systems.
- Uses a strength-based exploratory stance for immediate crisis resolution and longer-term housing goals and pathways.
- Treats each Veteran individually by recognizing their potential past trauma and their current unique crisis.
- Rolls with resistance - Not taking the first no if appropriate. Offer traditional, full-suite SSVF as necessary.



Why use HPS and Rapid Resolution Services?

- Homelessness, including shelter and transitional housing, can be traumatic. Avoiding continued trauma should be everyone's priority.
- Culture shift – Developing HPS skills changes how we initially engage with Veterans, emphasizing the individual's existing strengths and supports, rather than focusing solely on their barriers.
- Preservation of finite resources – Diverting Veterans from longer use of emergency resources keeps these resources available to those who need it most.



Considerations

- Limited TFA may be offered. However, TFA is often secondary to problem solving and mediation.
- Rapid Rehousing (RRH) VS Homelessness Prevention (HP)—
“Where did you sleep LAST NIGHT?” RRH if homeless last night, HP if they were not homeless last night but will be.
- Measuring success – If staff are engaging in HPS conversations with ALL new households, for now this is our measurement of success. RR services should be offered to **EVERYONE** where traditional diversion or rapid exit methods are used.
- Traditional SSVF services can be offered at any point they are needed after SSVF enrollment.



Resources – SSVF Website

- [HUD Housing Problem Solving](#)
- www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp

➔ Official Guide to the SSVF Program

➔ Supportive Services

➔ SSVF Rapid Resolution Initiative:

You'll find the latest guidance including...

- SSVF Rapid Resolution Service Compliance Guide
- Rapid Resolution FAQ's
- Rapid Resolution Planning Toolkit
- Rapid Resolution Training Guidance

- Contact your RC for further support



Returning Home

Maxie Pulliam, LCSW

SSVF Regional Coordinator



THE PURPOSE OF RETURNING HOME

- Background: The National Center on Homelessness Among Veterans (NCHAV) found that 15.3% of all homeless Veterans migrated across VISNs in the two-year period of 2011 to 2012.
- Veteran households that have migrated to areas with high rental costs and low vacancy rates often face barriers to finding suitable housing. They may not have nearby social and emotional supports that are frequently used as safety nets from falling into homelessness.



THE PURPOSE OF RETURNING HOME

- Offer homeless Veteran households the option of returning to their community of origin or to a community where they have available supports to facilitate housing placement.
- These placements would be supported with resources from the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program.



BENEFITS OF RETURNING HOME

1. It will reduce homelessness.
2. It will allow Veteran households to return to communities where they are more likely to have familial and social support networks.
3. It may support family reunification.
4. It will reduce competition for scarce affordable housing for those homeless Veterans remaining in communities with low vacancy rates.
5. It may be used to link Veterans to employment, providing the income critical to sustain permanent housing.



DEFINITIONS

- **Departure Community:**
 - The community where the Veteran household is currently located.
 - **SSVF Grantee in the Departure Community:** Responsible for initiating the Returning Home Request. This is the same grantee who, upon RC approval, helps facilitate the Veteran's move to the arrival community.



DEFINITIONS

- Arrival Community:
 - The community where the Veteran household is seeking to move to.
 - SSVF Grantee in the Arrival Community:
Responsible for accepting the Returning Home Referral and provides any needed follow up services upon the Veteran's arrival.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do we determine appropriateness of an arrival community?

- Will Veteran be moving in with familial or social supports?
- Is the Veteran moving to pursue a viable employment opportunity?
- Does Veteran have a stable permanent housing option awaiting them?



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do we determine Veteran eligibility for Returning Home?

- Veterans enrolled in Rapid Rehousing are the target population.
- May be a component of Rapid Resolution.
- On a case-by-case basis, Veterans enrolled in HP may be considered.
- Returning Home cannot support Veterans that are already placed in permanent housing or who are in possession of a HUD-VASH voucher.



How do we determine income eligibility?

- AMI standards in the departure community will be used for SSVF program admission but rent reasonableness of the arrival community should be considered.
- After the move takes place, the arrival community's AMI will be used for eligibility after recertification.
- Until that recertification occurs, the departure community's AMI will be used for eligibility determination.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who provides funds for the Veteran's move?

- The SSVF grantee in the departure community will provide funds for the Veteran's move. The SSVF grantee in the departure community may continue to provide TFA until the next recertification is required.
- The SSVF grantee in the arrival community will be responsible for completing the recertification. If the household remains eligible for services, the SSVF grantee in the arrival community may continue providing services and TFA as needed.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can we use gift cards for gasoline, food and lodging during Veteran's travel to arrival community?

- Yes, gift cards for gasoline, food and lodging are allowable for Returning Home and paid for and facilitated by the grantee in the departure community unless alternate arrangements are requested and authorized by the Program Office.
- The SSVF grantee in the arrival community will be asked to obtain receipts once the Veteran arrives, and send copies of the receipts to the SSVF grantee in the departure community.
- Please note that the purchase of gift cards is approved for Returning Home only and is impermissible for all other participants.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do the SSVF grantees in both the departure community and the arrival community document Returning Home participation?

- In HMIS:
- RRH or HP Project Type →
V2 “Type Provided and Subtype Provided” for
Returning Home Services →
- TFA expenditures should be documented according to normal V2 TFA categories (i.e., moving costs, transportation, etc.).



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How does the SSVF grantee in the departure community document expenditures for Returning Home in HMIS?

See table on page 6 of the RH Guidance and FAQs, 3rd Edition:

Temporary Financial Assistance V2 Services Provided 152= SSVF Financial Assistance Type and Sub Type Provided				
5 - Moving Costs	*Moving company	*Pods	*U-Haul	Meal and Incidental Expenses (M&IE) Per Diem for travel <i>(see page 4 for details)</i> Hotel accommodations when requiring an overnight stay <i>(see page 4 for details)</i>
8 – Transportation Services: tokens/vouchers	*Airplane ticket; check-in baggage fees, if needed <i>(see page 5 for GSA airline city pairs)</i>	*Bus ticket	*Train ticket	Personal owned vehicle (POV) mileage for gasoline <i>(see pages 4 and 5 for details)</i>
9 – Transportation Services: vehicle repair/maintenance	*Vehicle repair for personal owned vehicle (POV) prior to departure			
14 – Emergency Housing Assistance	EHA for host in arrival community categorized under the Rapid Resolution Service (see Rapid Resolution Compliance Guide: https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_Rapid_Resolution_Service_Compliance_Guidance_May_2019.pdf)			



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the main responsibilities of the grantee in the departure community?

- Completing ROI and obtaining confirmation of housing plan.
- Seeking approval from your Regional Coordinator (RC) via Returning Home Request.
- Planning details of trip with Veteran. Approval confirmation from your RC will include point of contact (POC) of grantee in the arrival community who should also be involved in the travel plan.
- Paying for Veteran's move, which must be of reasonable cost, as well as any other allowable expenditures before the next recertification occurs.
- Maintaining contact with the Veteran during trip to the arrival community.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the main responsibilities of the grantee in the arrival community?

- Conduct a housing inspection prior to Veteran's move for hosts who are seeking TFA. In this scenario, Veteran can only travel to arrival community once housing inspection has been approved by grantee in arrival community. Note: The same procedures also apply for Veterans who have identified independent housing in the arrival community and are seeking rental assistance upon move-in.
- Enroll Veteran in SSVF program upon Veteran's arrival and providing local case management and other services/referrals as needed.
- Send pre-loadable gift cards and receipts retained during Veteran's move back to SSVF grantee in the departure community.
- Assisting Veteran with enrolling into local VAMC if eligible. 10 10 EZ found here:
<https://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/1010EZ-fillable.pdf>



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do we receive approval to assist a Veteran through Returning Home?

- Please email answers to the questions to your Regional Coordinator for review and approval prior to any Veteran's move.
- In your request, please include your grant number. Please keep a record of your email approvals for Returning Home so that you will have them during FOFA visits. The approval email from your Regional Coordinator will include a point of contact for the grantee in the arrival community for coordination purposes.
- The grantee in the departure community should not look for a grantee in the arrival community on their own. We ask that you wait for your RC's approval email, which will contain this information.



RETURNING HOME REQUEST

9 / 11

Share

Returning Home Request

- What is the Veteran household's current homeless status?
- What city and state is the Veteran household currently staying in?
- Where does the Veteran want to move and why?

8

3rd Edition Released October 2019

- Is the Veteran currently in possession of a HUD-VASH or Section 8

3:17 PM
3/3/2020



CONNECTING TO ARRIVAL GRANTEE

Returning Home Request from CA to NM - Message (HTML)

File Message Insert Options Format Text Review Help Tell me what you want to do

Clipboard Basic Text Names Include Tags Voice My Templates

Send To Cc Bcc

Subject Returning Home Request from CA to NM

Hi David,

We have a Veteran who would like to move from San Diego to his friend's house in Las Cruces, NM. Would your team be willing and able to assist this Veteran upon his arrival to NM? This Veteran is not in need of housing location services, nor is his host friend seeking any funds through Rapid Resolution. The Veteran would just need a local grantee to offer services as needed.

Attached is the Returning Home Request from the grantee in the departure community. And here is the link to the 3rd Edition Returning Home Guidance and FAQs for your review:
https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/Returning_Home_Guidance_and_FAQs.pdf

May you let me know? Thank you!

Maxie

Maxie Pulliam, LCSW
Regional Coordinator
SSVF Program Office
VHA Homeless Programs Office
VA Central Office
www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp

View short film highlighting SSVF Program here:

Windows taskbar: 3:51 PM 3/6/2020



REGIONAL COORDINATOR APPROVAL

Returning Home Request from CA to NM - Message (HTML)

File Message Insert Options Format Text Review Help Tell me what you want to do

Clipboard Basic Text Names Include Tags Voice My Templates

Send To Cc Bcc

Subject Returning Home Request from CA to NM

Really appreciate it, David! Adding Stacy to this email thread as she is the grantee from the departure community. Please consider this email correspondence as confirmation of approval for this Veteran to receive the Returning Home service. Please retain for your records.

You can refer to the RH FAQs (3rd Edition) to review allowable costs, HMIS data entry, the different responsibilities of each grantee, etc. Moving forward, the Regional Coordinators can be removed from future email correspondence between both grantees unless further guidance is required.

Thank you,

Maxie

Maxie Pulliam, LCSW
Regional Coordinator
SSVF Program Office
VHA Homeless Programs Office
VA Central Office
www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp

View short film highlighting SSVF Program here:
<https://youtu.be/W-fxpa2GRo>

3:46 PM
3/6/2020



DOCUMENTATION CHECKLIST

11 / 11

Share

Documentation Checklist

For grantees in both the departure and arrival communities.

- Completed Returning Home Request from the grantee in the departure community. *This should be submitted to and approved by your SSVF Regional Coordinator prior to making any travel arrangements.*
- Email from SSVF Regional Coordinator confirming approval of Returning Home. This will include a Point of Contact (POC) of the grantee in the arrival community that has agreed to accept the Veteran's case. *Grantee in the departure community should have this approval prior to making any travel arrangements.*
- Grantee certifies the utilization of the Returning Home intervention is the most appropriate way to resolve the Veterans homeless crisis and support permanent housing.**
- Grantee certifies the Veteran actively participated and agrees to the goals and objectives of the Returning Home plan.**
- ROI and other enrollment documentation to forward to grantee in the arrival

3:19 PM
3/3/2020



Shared Housing

Marzena Guzik, LCSW

SSVF Regional Coordinator



What is Shared Housing?

- Two or more people who live in one housing unit sharing costs such as rent and utilities
- Also known as “roommates”
- It is not a “new program”



Who can participate?

- Veterans who are eligible for SSVF and open to having a roommate
- Can be offered as an option; however, client choice is critical
- May have roommates who are not enrolled in the program



Advantages of Shared Housing

Overall benefits:

- Increased access to diverse housing market
- Reduced housing cost burden
- Reduced living expenses
- Increased budget control and personal savings

Psychosocial Benefits:

- Increased social networks and decreased isolation
- Sustain independent housing longer
- Help with community integration
- Increased problem-solving skills



Shared Housing Challenges

- Roommate conflicts - some roommate living situations will be short
- Landlords may be hesitant to provide separate leases
- Case manager involvement - some roommate situations may require considerable time and follow-up
- City, county, state regulations- local laws may not allow shared housing as defined by federal programs



Critical Elements

- Client choice
- Separate leases - Veteran is not responsible for other roommate's rent, even if they move out
- Separate security deposits and assistance
- Matching roommates - most successful when roommates chose each other
- Roommate agreements if requested – cover expectations, quiet hours, chores, settling disputes etc.
- Units must meet habitability standards
- Units must be rent reasonable



Additional Tools & Materials

- Pending Updates
- [Shared Housing Toolkit](#)
- [Community example: Roommate Matching Form](#)
- [Community example: Roommate Agreement](#)
- [Community example: Shared Housing Landlord Conversation](#)
- [Community example: Rent Analysis Worksheet](#)



Shallow Subsidy

Maxie Pulliam, LCSW

SSVF Regional Coordinator



SHALLOW SUBSIDY LOCATIONS (COUNTIES)

- **Hawaii:** Honolulu, Kauai, Maui and Hawaii
- **Washington:** King, Pierce and Snohomish
- **California:** Los Angeles, San Francisco, Alameda, San Diego, Santa Clara, Contra Costa, Kern, Riverside, San Bernardino, Orange, Santa Cruz, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Sacramento, Kings, Tulare, Ventura, Solano, Amador, Marin
- **Illinois:** Cook
- **District of Columbia:** District of Columbia
- **Maryland:** Prince Georges and Montgomery
- **Virginia:** Fairfax and Prince William
- **New York:** New York, Bronx, Queens, Kings, Richmond, Nassau, Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, Ulster, Sullivan and Suffolk.



KEY FEATURES

- Max rate is 35% of FMR or rent reasonableness. Must be one or the other.
- Monthly rental subsidy does not change for duration of subsidy: 2 years for HH < 30% of AMI; 2 years (-length of RRH/HP support) for HH < 50% of AMI.
- Placements can only be made in designated CoCs as defined in the final rule –not portable.
- No recertification required for entire subsidy period, so no disincentive to increase income.
- Could potentially be recertified after shallow subsidy period ends.



TARGETING

- Generally expected to part of progressive engagement approach.
- Employed after a period of Rapid Re-housing or Homeless Prevention assistance, when household's housing cannot be stabilized by shorter-term intervention.
- May be effective prevention tool for those on fixed incomes such as retired seniors or disabled Veterans
- Household requires minimal clinical services and only needs moderate financial support differentiating it from HUD-VASH.



SHALLOW SUBSIDIES AND STAFFORD ACT

- New exemption allows grantee to set time limit without regard to previous rental assistance
 - This would allow for Veteran households between 30% and 50% AMI to receive a full 2 years of supports regardless of prior assistance provided, if they were enrolled after March 2020
- Recommend that grantee sets time limit at 2 years for all placements supported by Shallow Subsidies, regardless of previous rental support
- Commitments made during Stafford Act exemption continues beyond end of disaster declaration



Questions & Answer