

Emergency Housing Assistance Guidance

May 7, 2020

1. Under 38 CFR Part 62.34, the SSVF Program can place homeless Veteran households in emergency housing (hotels and motels) for up to 45 days pending placement into permanent housing. This limit has been suspended by the Stafford Act for the duration of the disaster declarations made in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (currently declarations have been made in all 50 states). The 72-hour limit for individuals is also suspended.
2. In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, SSVF grantees are now allowed to offer emergency housing placements even if other temporary housing options are available if those options would place high-risk Veterans into congregate living environments. High-risk Veterans would include those Veterans over the age of 60 and/or Veterans with significant underlying health problems, particularly those identified by the CDC as being at increased risk from COVID-19.
3. Additionally, unsheltered Veterans and asymptomatic Veterans in need of quarantine should be prioritized for emergency housing placement should capacity exist after high-risk placements have been made.
4. It is important to note that such temporary housing placements are only available to homeless Veteran households eligible to be enrolled in SSVF and information on provided services must be captured in HMIS.
5. Veterans who are symptomatic with COVID-19 should not be referred for these emergency housing placements as SSVF grantees do not have the capacity to place and adequately monitor such patients. Exceptions can be made when local governments have established housing options, such as dedicated hotel space, for those testing positive to COVID-19.
6. It is critical that SSVF grantees actively engage VA Medical Centers and other community-based health care providers to ensure appropriate medical supports exist for those placed.
7. Should you have additional questions, please contact your Regional Coordinator or the SSVF Program Office by email at ssvf@va.gov.