

**SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR VETERAN FAMILIES  
PROGRAM (SSVF)**

**Introductory Program Overview  
including Orientation Resources and Toolkits**

JANUARY 2017

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## Purpose

### Introduction

This document offers a broad introduction to the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program. It is focused on providing a basic overview of SSVF philosophy, allowable activities, and information for SSVF grantees to utilize when onboarding new program staff.

This is also a tool for SSVF program staff at all levels to access important materials and resources related to the SSVF program. Each SSVF grantee is expected to share the orientation materials with new program staff as part of their organization's robust training and professional development protocol. New staff should read all materials in their entirety and review the resources and materials that are included in the hyperlinks throughout the document.

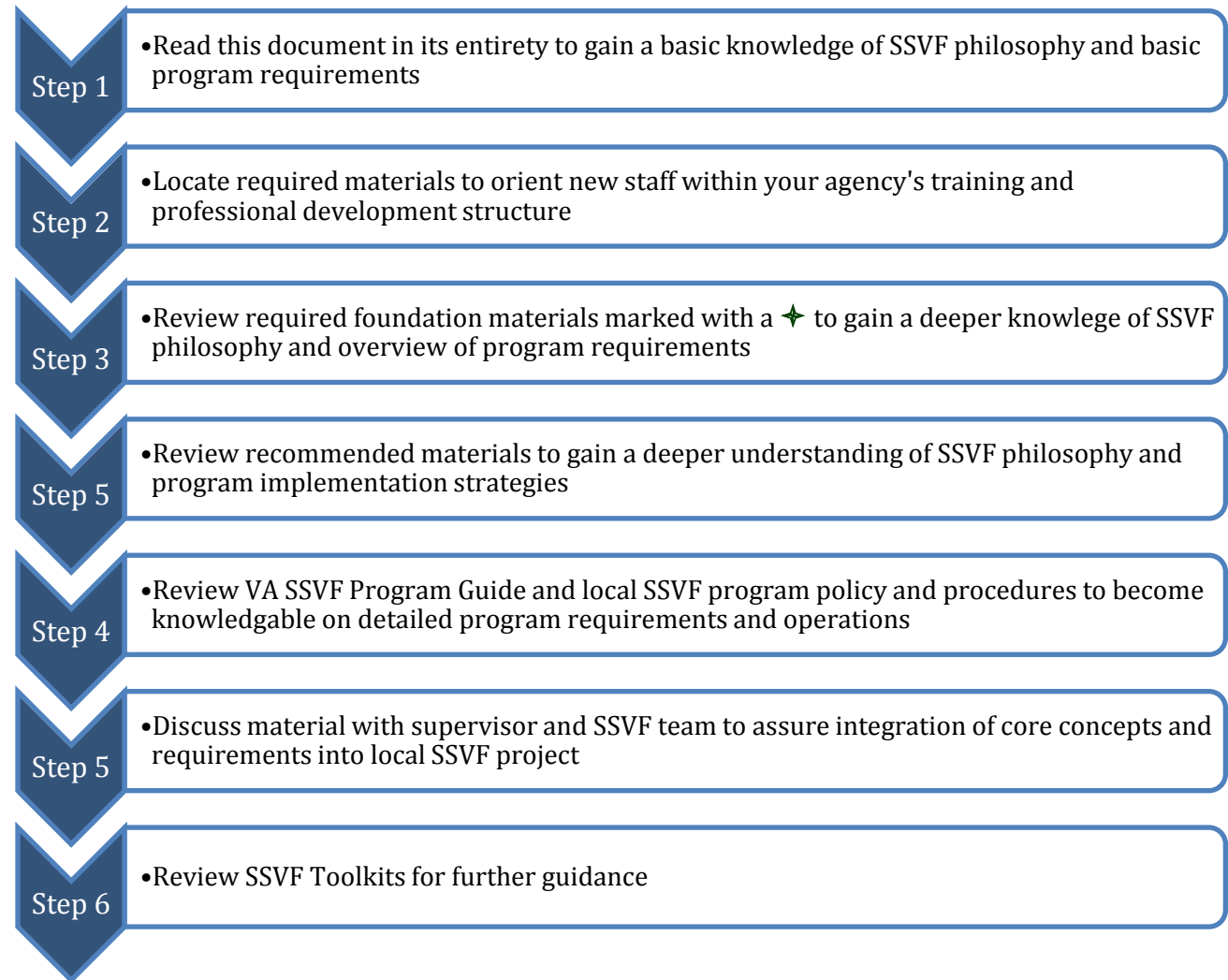
Of important note: text surrounded by this symbol ✦ indicates foundational, required reading/viewing for all new program staff.

Please understand that document is not exhaustive and does not contain all of the resources and training materials available to SSVF grantees. The SSVF Website and University, which can be found at [www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf), includes a full listing of tools and resources available to SSVF grantees.

### Questions

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) SSVF Program Office and Regional Coordinators will provide an opportunity for new grantees to ask questions. Please contact [ssvf@va.gov](mailto:ssvf@va.gov) if you have immediate, time-sensitive questions or need the contact information of your Regional Coordinators.

## How to Use



## ✦ Required Material for New SSVF Staff ✦

Below is a reference list of foundational, required reading and viewing for all new program staff.

### Introduction Materials

- ❖ [SSVF Introduction Video](#)<sup>i</sup>
- ❖ [SSVF Program Description](#)<sup>ii</sup>
- ❖ [SSVF Definitions of Key Terms](#)<sup>iii</sup>

### Core Concepts and Program Design Elements

- ❖ [SSVF Core Concepts](#)<sup>iv</sup>
  - [Housing First Fact Sheet](#)<sup>v</sup>
  - [Housing First Checklist](#)<sup>vi</sup>
  - [Housing First Video](#)<sup>vii</sup>
- ❖ [Progressive Engagement](#)<sup>viii</sup>
- ❖ [Supportive Services page of the SSVF website](#)<sup>ix</sup>

### Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)

- ❖ [Rapid Re-Housing Works: SSVF Video](#)<sup>x</sup>
- ❖ [What is Rapid Re-Housing Video](#)<sup>xi</sup>
- ❖ [Rapid Re-Housing Basics](#)<sup>xii</sup>
- ❖ [NAEH Core Components of Rapid Re-Housing](#)<sup>xiii</sup>

### Homeless Prevention and Diversion

- ❖ [Homelessness Prevention Basics](#)<sup>xiv</sup>
- ❖ [Homelessness Prevention Screening Disposition Form and Toolkit](#)<sup>xv</sup>

### Program Requirements

- ❖ [VA SSVF Program Guide](#)<sup>xvi</sup>
- ❖ [SSVF Audit Guidelines, Fraud Prevention, Reporting and Compliance webinar](#)<sup>xvii</sup>

### Criteria, Benchmarks, and Supporting Tools to Measure Ending Veteran Homelessness

- ❖ [The Federal Criteria and Benchmarks for Ending Homelessness Among Veterans](#)<sup>xviii</sup>
- ❖ [Master List of Veterans Experiencing Homelessness](#)<sup>xix</sup>
- ❖ [Case Conferencing](#)<sup>xx</sup>
- ❖ [Federal Criteria and Benchmarks Review Tool](#)<sup>xxi</sup>
- ❖ [SSVF Community Coordination and Plan Materials](#)<sup>xxii</sup>

## Recommended Basic Resources for the Provision of SSVF Supportive Services

### Screening and Assessment

- ❖ [Trauma-Informed Care Video \(Part 1\)](#)<sup>xxiii</sup>
- ❖ [Trauma-Informed Care Video \(Part 2\)](#)<sup>xxiv</sup>
- ❖ [Outreach, Engagement and Admission Webinar](#)<sup>xxv</sup>
- ❖ [Targeting, Screening and Assessment Webinar](#)<sup>xxvi</sup>
- ❖ [Homelessness Prevention Targeting Webinar](#)<sup>xxvii</sup>
- ❖ [Assessment and Housing Plans Webinar](#)<sup>xxviii</sup>
- ❖ [Progressive Engagement in SSVF Webinar](#)<sup>xxix</sup>
- ❖ [Suicide Prevention Overview](#)<sup>xxx</sup>

### Housing Location and Partnerships

- ❖ [SSVF Housing Navigator Tool](#)<sup>xxxi</sup>
- ❖ [Tips for Working with Landlords](#)<sup>xxxii</sup>
- ❖ [Rent Burden: How High is Too High?](#)<sup>xxxiii</sup>
- ❖ [Housing Plan Template Sample](#)<sup>xxxiv</sup>
- ❖ [Housing Barriers Summary](#)<sup>xxxv</sup>
- ❖ [Housing Barriers Assessment Module](#)<sup>xxxvi</sup>
- ❖ [Guidelines for HUD-VASH and GPD Coordinating with SSVF](#)<sup>xxxvii</sup>
- ❖ [SSVF Memo re. Coordination of SSVF and HUD-Veterans Assistance Supportive Housing \(VASH\)](#)<sup>xxxviii</sup>
- ❖ [Leveraging HUD-VASH to End Homelessness Among Veterans](#)<sup>xxxix</sup>
- ❖ [HUD-VASH Referral Packet for RRH TFA](#)<sup>xl</sup>
- ❖ [HUD PSH Eligibility Guidance for VA Programs](#)<sup>xli</sup>

### Service Provision and Benefit Connection

- ❖ [Establishing Services Webinar](#)<sup>xlii</sup>
- ❖ Income
  - [Key Strategies for Connecting People Experiencing Homelessness to SSI and SSDI Benefits](#)<sup>xliii</sup>
  - [SSA and VA Disability Benefits: Tips for Veterans](#)<sup>xliv</sup>
  - [SOAR Works to End Veteran Homelessness: VA Caseworker's Guide](#)<sup>xliv</sup>
- ❖ Legal
  - [Legal Services in the SSVF Program](#)<sup>xlvi</sup>
  - [Legal Services 101 and Family Law/Child Support Webinar](#)<sup>xlvi</sup>
- ❖ [Employment as a Key to Ending Veteran Homelessness](#)<sup>xlviii</sup>
- ❖ [Case Closing Guide](#)<sup>xlix</sup>

## Key Online Resource Pages

- ❖ [SSVF Home Page](#)<sup>i</sup>
- ❖ [SSVF Official Guide Home Page](#)<sup>ii</sup>
- ❖ [SSVF University](#)<sup>iii</sup>
- ❖ [USICH Ending Veteran Homelessness Goals](#)<sup>iiii</sup>
- ❖ [National Alliance to End Homelessness Solutions](#)<sup>liv</sup>

## SSVF Toolkits

The following toolkit documents are available to help new grantees to establish and build their SSVF programs. The tools cover a variety of topics to assist grantees in meeting program requirements.

DOCUMENT	DESCRIPTION
<b>New Grantee Program Start-up Checklist</b>	Checklist of considerations and requirements involved in setting up an SSVF program. <sup>1</sup>
<b>Grant Administration and Program Compliance Checklist</b>	Checklist of considerations and requirements when administering your SSVF grant and ensuring it meets all grant compliance requirements. <sup>2</sup>
<b>Training and On-Boarding Guide for SSVF Programs</b>	Summary of some of the training and supervision activities, to be undertaken by one person or divided among several staff. <sup>3</sup>
<b>Sample Participant File and Additional Documentation Requirements</b>	Checklist of documentation requirements that a grantee should maintain in participant files and in their general program records. <sup>4</sup>
<b>SSVF Program Policies and Procedures</b>	Sample outline of the policies and procedures to be developed for each SSVF program. <sup>5</sup>
<b>SSVF Data Guide</b>	Overview of SSVF data entry requirements

<sup>1</sup>New Grantee Program Start-up Checklist -

[https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF\\_New\\_Grantee\\_Program\\_Start\\_up\\_Checklist.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_New_Grantee_Program_Start_up_Checklist.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Grant Administrations and Program Compliance Checklist -

[https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF\\_Grant\\_Admin\\_and\\_Pgm\\_Compliance\\_Checklist.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_Grant_Admin_and_Pgm_Compliance_Checklist.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Training and On-Boarding Guide for SSVF Programs -

[https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF\\_Training\\_and\\_On\\_Boarding\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_Training_and_On_Boarding_Guide.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Sample Participant File and Additional Documentation Requirements -

[https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF\\_Sample\\_Participant\\_File\\_and\\_Additional\\_Required\\_Documentation.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_Sample_Participant_File_and_Additional_Required_Documentation.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> SSVF Program Policies and Procedures -

[https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF\\_Program\\_Policies\\_and\\_Procedures.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_Program_Policies_and_Procedures.pdf)

SSVF Data Guide - [https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/VA\\_Data\\_Guide\\_FY17.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/VA_Data_Guide_FY17.pdf)

## SSVF Overview and Role in Community Progress

The VA [SSVF](#)<sup>6</sup> program provides supportive services and temporary financial assistance to very low-income Veterans and their families who are experiencing literal homelessness or are at risk of experiencing literal homelessness. SSVF's primary goal is to support Veterans who **but for** SSVF assistance will become or remain literally homeless. An important unique feature of SSVF is that the program is able to serve the entire Veteran household (including spouses and dependents) so long as the services aim toward ending or preventing that household's homelessness.

SSVF has grown significantly since it started providing services in October 2011. A brief history of funding levels and geographic coverage and basic services is below.

<b>FY 2012</b>	\$60 million (new)	85 grantees	40 states and DC
<b>FY 2013</b>	\$100 million (new and renewal)	151 grantees	49 states, DC and Puerto Rico
<b>FY 2014</b>	\$300 million (new and renewal)	319 grantees	50 states, DC, Puerto Rico, and Virgin Islands
<b>FY 2015</b>	\$300 million (renewal)	312 grantees	50 states, DC, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, and Guam
	\$300 million (new 3-year)	92 grantees	55 Priority Communities
<b>FY 2016</b>	\$300 million (renewal)	315 grantees	50 states, DC, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, and Guam
<b>FY 2017</b>	\$300 million (renewal)	275 grantees	50 states, DC, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, and Guam

SSVF provides six types of services:

1. Outreach services
2. Case management services
3. Assisting participants in obtaining VA benefits
4. Assisting participants in obtaining and coordinating other public benefits such as Food Stamps
5. Other services as specified under 38 CFR 62.34. (optional)
6. Temporary Financial Assistance services (optional)

The [SSVF Introduction Video broadcast](#) offers a general introduction to SSVF, its role in the community, and the requirements of the program. The [VA SSVF Program Guide](#) is the primary resource for understanding allowable costs and activities, fiscal and reporting requirements, and general SSVF program implementation requirements. All staff should read the VA SSVF Program Guide in its entirety and use it actively on an ongoing basis.

<sup>6</sup> SSVF Home Page - [http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/home/general\\_program\\_info\\_regs](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/home/general_program_info_regs)



In order to enhance your understanding of the following material it is recommended that you review the ✦ definition section of the VA SSVF Program Guide<sup>7</sup> ✦ and the additional key terms related to SSVF service provision that are included at the end of this document.

### **SSVF as a Driver of Community Progress**

In 2010, President Barack Obama and the VA announced the federal government's goal to end Veteran homelessness by the end of 2015. This goal was announced as part of the Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness<sup>8</sup> in 2010, published by the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH),<sup>9</sup> which for the first time identified the federal goal of ending homelessness among Veterans.

In early 2015, the Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness was announced, and later that year the ✦ Federal Criteria and Benchmarks for Ending Homelessness among Veterans ✦ were published by USICH. The Federal Criteria represent the federal government's best thinking on how communities can design, operate, and measure optimized response systems to ensure that homelessness among Veterans is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

SSVF is one of the primary drivers of local progress toward achieving the ✦ goal of ending homelessness among Veterans. ✦ The program's unique flexibility, strong funding levels, and ability to contribute and lead community planning and implementation activities at the local level has created an opportunity for success in every region of the county.

SSVF programs are expected to be fully integrated into existing and planned community planning efforts, including:

- Implementation of Coordinated Entry<sup>10</sup>
- Periodic demand and resource analysis
- Comprehensive outreach efforts
- The development and use of a ✦ Master List of Veterans Experiencing Homelessness ✦
- Local ✦ Case Conferencing ✦ processes connected to the Master List of Veterans
- Housing First approaches
- Facilitating rapid linkages to permanent housing for Veterans experiencing or at imminent risk of experiencing homelessness.

SSVF should also be a key partner in ✦ reviewing progress toward the Federal Criteria and Benchmarks, ✦ or any alternative goals the community may be pursuing. SSVF grantees are required to be active participants and stakeholders in the efforts of each community they serve to end homelessness among Veterans. Funding decisions for SSVF are not only based on a grantee's housing placement and numbers of Veterans served, but also each grantee's contributions to system-wide planning efforts toward achieving local goals and implementing effective practices.

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<sup>7</sup> VA SSVF Guide, Section I.C

<sup>8</sup> Opening Doors -

[https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/USICH\\_OpeningDoors\\_Amendment2015\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/USICH_OpeningDoors_Amendment2015_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> USICH Ending Veteran Homelessness - <https://www.usich.gov/goals/veterans>

<sup>10</sup> HUD Coordinated Entry Policy Brief- <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Coordinated-Entry-Policy-Brief.pdf>

The VA requires SSVF grantees to submit a quarterly Community Plan Summary Survey so it can measure each community's efforts and confirm SSVF's proactive role locally. This SSVF requirement does not replace the need for fully developed local community plans to address Veteran homelessness. The [SSVF Community Coordination and Plan Materials](#) include past summary submissions, as well as other tools related to community planning efforts.

The [FY 2015 SSVF Annual Report](#)<sup>11</sup> is a good resource to review the broad impact of SSVF and the outcomes of the SSVF program on ending and preventing Veteran homelessness.

## SSVF Core Concepts

Effective Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) and Homelessness Prevention (HP) services programming are the core components of the SSVF program. There are three interrelated [SSVF Core Concepts](#) that underlie programs to assist people who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness. These concepts, which may be new to some staff, are supported by many years of practice and positive program outcomes. All SSVF grantees and staff are expected to be familiar with Core Concepts and how they are applied at all levels within the SSVF program. The Core Concepts are:

**Housing First:** [Housing First](#) approaches recognize and promote responses based on belief that housing is a basic right that should be provided as quickly as possible, without any preconditions that prevent a person experiencing homelessness from gaining that housing. Traditional homelessness programs have been based upon the assumption that people should not be placed into housing until they have resolved personal issues, such as diagnosis and treatment of a disability or training in independent living skills. Conversely, a Housing First approach assumes that people should start with stable, permanent housing. They may then choose to address other life issues by engaging in services as needed and desired. The [Housing First Checklist](#) and [Housing First Video](#) provide more information about how the Housing First principles influences program design.

**Crisis Response:** Consistent with the Housing First approach, RRH and HP programs are designed to serve as a short-term response to the crisis of homelessness or imminent homelessness. They are based on a crisis intervention model rather than on a longer-term, rehabilitative or other behavioral change model. The crisis may not be resolved the day of housing placement or when the eviction notice been withdrawn, but through SSVF staff are able to continue to focus on providing the services needed to achieve near-term housing stability.

**Choice:** While very low-income households do not have as many choices as those with higher incomes, they still have the right to make their own decisions about what they need and how to achieve that. Among those choices: where and with whom they will live (at least for the immediate future) and when/whether they wish to address anything beyond the immediate housing crisis.

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<sup>11</sup> FY 15 SSVF Annual Report - [https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF\\_Annual\\_Report\\_for\\_FY\\_2015.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_Annual_Report_for_FY_2015.pdf)

## SSVF Interventions: Rapid Re-Housing and Homelessness Prevention

SSVF provides both RRH and HP, depending on a household's current housing situation and need. SSVF's program regulations prioritize RRH interventions. It is expected that SSVF grantees and community partners prioritize resources to meet the needs of all eligible, literally homeless Veteran households, while only offering HP services to the most vulnerable Veteran households. As part of the community plan for ending Veteran homelessness, this may require that HP services be offered only when an SSVF grantee or community is able to meet the needs of all eligible literally homeless Veterans.

### *Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)*

Services to Veterans and their families who are experiencing literal homelessness and who, "but for" SSVF assistance, will be unable to access permanent housing.

### *Homelessness Prevention (HP)*

Services to prevent Veterans and their families who are at imminent risk of experiencing literal homelessness and who *but for* SSVF assistance will lose their current permanent housing.

In both interventions, SSVF uses the "but for" rule, meaning that SSVF services should only be provided if the Veteran would remain or become literally homeless "but for" SSVF assistance. This targeted approach, which ensures that SSVF resources are provided to those Veterans who need them most, relies on a series of evidence-based and promising practices to succeed.

SSVF aims to deliver all services using a ♦ Progressive Engagement Approach. ♦ Progressive Engagement means that in all cases, SSVF should offer the least amount of assistance necessary to end or prevent a household's homelessness and should offer additional support only as needed. The services offered by SSVF are therefore uniquely tailored to each Veteran household based on an ongoing assessment of that household's needs and desires.

*Progressive Engagement: SSVF is able to provide temporary financial assistance (TFA) but whether that assistance is offered, in what amount, and for what duration of time should be determined based on the least amount necessary for that unique household.*

## Introduction to Rapid Re-Housing

♦ Rapid Re-Housing ♦ is designed to assist Veteran households that are experiencing homelessness to find and move into permanent housing quickly.

SSVF's core service and first priority is to help Veteran households (individuals or families) that are experiencing literal homelessness to access permanent housing quickly through the provision of ♦ RRH services. ♦ SSVF utilizes a Housing First model, meaning that RRH can and should be provided regardless of the household's perceived housing barriers, such as a lack of income, substance use issues, untreated mental health issues, or criminal records.

*SSVF grantees are required to use at least 60 percent of their temporary financial assistance budgets on RRH activities, and may use up to 100 percent of temporary financial assistance on RRH if needed to completely meet the needs of Veterans experiencing literal homelessness in their communities.*

RRH is an intervention designed to help individuals and families to exit homelessness quickly by re-entering permanent housing, and to prevent returns to homelessness in the near term. As a crisis response, RRH does not aim to solve all the household's challenges or to assure long-term stability, but rather seeks to end the immediate crisis of homelessness. Utilizing a Housing First approach, RRH assistance is offered without preconditions (such as employment, income, absence of criminal record, or sobriety) and the resources and services provided are tailored to the unique needs of the household.

The core components of SSVF's Rapid Re-Housing program are:

- Housing Identification
- Rent and Move-In Assistance (Financial Assistance included), and
- Housing-Focused Case Management Services.

While an RRH program must have all three core components available, it is not required that a single entity provide all three services or that a given household utilize them all. In 2014 the [National Alliance to End Homelessness](#) (NAEH)<sup>12</sup>, in partnership with the VA, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and USICH, published the [Core Components of Rapid Re-Housing](#). [SSVF Grantees should be familiar with RRH core components within the context of SSVF's allowable activities and costs.](#) Similarly, NAEH along with the VA and HUD also published [performance benchmarks and program standards](#)<sup>13</sup> for RRH that are discussed later in this document.

## Introduction to Homelessness Prevention

[Homelessness Prevention](#) is designed to assist Veteran households at imminent risk of homelessness to maintain permanent housing. SSVF requires a prioritization strategy, including a detailed assessment, to determine eligibility — with the following core concepts at the center of enrollment decisions:

- SSVF HP resources are limited within each grantee's budget, with a priority placed on RRH.
- Many people who face eviction or are otherwise unstably housed do not ultimately become homeless.

SSVF uses evidence-based screening practices for enrollment in HP services. SSVF nationally and at the project level must ensure that HP services are delivered not only to those Veterans who are at risk of experiencing homelessness, but specifically to those for whom gaining back access to permanent housing would be most difficult once they became homeless. SSVF provides homelessness prevention, not eviction prevention. So while the reality of impending eviction is an important eligibility factor for HP services, it is not the only factor used to determine whether SSVF can or should provide assistance to a particular Veteran household.

SSVF has implemented a robust [Homelessness Prevention Screening Disposition Form and Toolkit](#). These materials are required forms and processes to be used by all SSVF grantees. SSVF grantees that have the capacity to provide HP services (assuming there are no gaps in RRH resources) must use the Homelessness Prevention Targeting Threshold Score developed by the

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<sup>12</sup> NAEH Home Page - <http://www.endhomelessness.org/>

<sup>13</sup> RRH Benchmarks and Standards - <http://www.endhomelessness.org/page/-/files/Performance%20Benchmarks%20and%20Program%20Standards.pdf>

SSVF program to determine the level of services a given household can access, if any. Three types of households often apply for SSVF HP services and there are three corresponding outcomes based on these household types:

1. Households that are unstably housed or facing eviction but that are not at imminent risk of experiencing homelessness: SSVF cannot provide services, but may provide referrals to other community resources.
2. Households at imminent risk of experiencing homelessness but that do not present enough of the risk factors (as determined by the Scoring Tool) to meet a specific grantee's Targeting Threshold Score: These households may receive all SSVF services except TFA. This type of assistance is called *Non-TFA Supportive Services Only/Light Touch Services*.
3. Households at imminent risk of experiencing homelessness and whose risk factors meet a specific grantee's Targeting Threshold Score: These households can access the full range of SSVF services, including TFA.

SSVF grantees should be familiar with [prevention screening criteria](#)<sup>14</sup> and allowable SSVF services for eligible Veteran households.

## SSVF Activities and Costs

The SSVF program has established requirements for which potential Veteran households may be enrolled, what services may be provided and for how long, and how to document grant activities. SSVF grantees are expected to be in full compliance, and the VA's [monitoring](#)<sup>15</sup> of the grant focuses heavily on these requirements. SSVF grantees that have subcontractors are responsible for ensuring that their subcontractors fully comply with these requirements, and must have internal monitoring processes for doing so.

## Participant Eligibility

Prior to enrollment, potential Veteran households must be assessed to determine if they meet SSVF eligibility criteria. SSVF projects must have written Policies and Procedures that describe how screening is conducted and who is responsible for making enrollment decisions. People experiencing homelessness often face challenges during project enrollment such as not having required documents, experiencing trauma reactions such as having difficulty following through with appointments, and recalling previous negative experiences with service providers.<sup>16</sup>

SSVF intake and enrollment processes should be as accommodating to Veterans as possible, utilizing the following techniques:

- Limiting documentation requirements to those items required by project funders
- Conducting assessments in a conversational manner
- Meeting Veterans in community locations that are comfortable and accessible
- Assisting with obtaining required documentation

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<sup>14</sup> Homeless Prevention - [https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF\\_National\\_Webinar\\_HP\\_7-21-2016.FINAL.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_National_Webinar_HP_7-21-2016.FINAL.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Monitoring - <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/30000000010734532>

<sup>16</sup> Trauma-Informed Care Video series

[https://www.sharedfedtraining.org/videoContent/TRAIN\\_video/VEHU/SSVF\\_8094/index.htm](https://www.sharedfedtraining.org/videoContent/TRAIN_video/VEHU/SSVF_8094/index.htm)  
[https://www.sharedfedtraining.org/videoContent/TRAIN\\_video/VEHU/HPACT/index.htm](https://www.sharedfedtraining.org/videoContent/TRAIN_video/VEHU/HPACT/index.htm)

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*SSVF has broader eligibility criteria for Veteran status than other VA programs.*

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The following information is required to document program eligibility:

- **Veteran Status<sup>17</sup>:** SSVF's definition of eligible Veteran status is broader than those of many other VA programs. The VA SSVF Program Guide lists several sources of acceptable documentation for verifying discharge status and period of service. It also expressly describes when to use "Pending Verification of Veteran Status," which allows SSVF projects to enroll Veteran households while waiting for documentation. In this situation, SSVF programs can enroll and provide supportive services, with the exception of TFA. TFA must not be provided until the needed Veteran status documentation is obtained.
- **Household Status<sup>18</sup>:** A household is an individual Veteran or a Veteran with other persons who present together for services and identify themselves as a household.

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*Self- or staff-declarations of household status are acceptable and grantees may not exclude any type of household composition.*

*Proof of family status (i.e. marriage) is not required, but may serve as proof of household status in some circumstances.*

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- **Income<sup>19</sup>:** The Area Median Income (AMI) is used to determine income eligibility for Veterans based on household size. In order to qualify, households' income must be less than 50% AMI ("very low-income"). Some projects have decided to serve only lower income households such as 30% AMI ("extremely low income"). The VA SSVF Program Guide has detailed instructions about income calculation, verification, and certification. In the VA SSVF Program Guide, "Exhibit A: Inclusion and Exclusion Tables"<sup>20</sup> details what types of income should be used in determining eligibility and "Exhibit B: Income Documentation Standards"<sup>21</sup> details acceptable types of documentation for each income source as well as for households with zero income.
- **Housing status<sup>22</sup>:** In both RRH and HP assistance, households must meet the "but for" screening standard. This means that the household would either become literally homeless (HP) or remain literally homeless (RRH) "but for" the assistance of the SSVF program. A household must meet the requirements at the time of application to the local SSVF project.

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<sup>17</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section V. Participant Eligibility, B.1

<sup>18</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section V. Participant Eligibility, B.2

<sup>19</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section V. Participant Eligibility, C

<sup>20</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section XII. Exhibits. Exhibit A

<sup>21</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section XII. Exhibits. Exhibit B

<sup>22</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section V.D



The eligible housing status categories are:

- Category 1 Homelessness Prevention: To qualify under the HP category, a household must be at risk of experiencing literal homelessness due to loss of “permanent housing” as defined in the VA SSVF Program Guide; this includes situations such as being doubled up or staying in a hotel paid for by themselves.
- Categories 2 and 3 Rapid Re-Housing: To qualify under the RRH category, households must be experiencing literal homelessness at the time of application. The VA SSVF Program Guide states that households that are doubled up living with family and friends are not considered “literally homeless” for the purposes of the SSVF program. *(Note: Persons fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence are served under this category.)*

The VA SSVF Program Guide includes complete homeless definition descriptions and eligibility documentation requirements for category of housing as well as requirements for documenting the assessment of other housing options and resources.<sup>23</sup>

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*Staff should help households think through available alternatives, such as moving in temporarily with friends or family, etc. as part of assessing for “but for.” This can divert households from SSVF enrollment when there are other options available in their support system or community.*

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## **Eligible Costs and Services**

SSVF projects’ grant agreements specify the amount of funding that may be spent on eligible expenses. Even though a cost or service is allowable by the SSVF program, unless a project is included in the organization’s grant agreement, the cost or activity must not be paid for with contract funds. Eligible expenditures include Administrative and Provision and Coordination of Supportive Services costs.<sup>24</sup> Refer to the Eligible Expenses section of the VA SSVF Program Guide for detailed descriptions of each budget line item and its allowable expenses. The Supportive Services section of the guide describes how, and to which Veterans and household members, services may be provided.<sup>25</sup>

## **Unallowable Costs**

Unallowable costs include any activity not included in the SSVF grant agreement. The VA does not allow SSVF grantees to use an indirect cost rate to bill for Administrative Costs. Instead, grantees must track actual Administrative Costs billed to the grant to ensure compliance with allowable expenses. Refer to the VA SSVF Program Guide for a list of Ineligible Activities.<sup>26</sup> Finance staff and program managers should refer to [OMB Circular No. A-122 “Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations”](#)<sup>27</sup> for additional guidance.

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<sup>23</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section XII. Exhibits. Exhibit B

<sup>24</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section VIII.C

<sup>25</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section VI

<sup>26</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section VIII.E

<sup>27</sup> OMB Circular - [https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars\\_a122\\_2004](https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a122_2004)

## Assistance Timeframes

SSVF services, including supportive services such as case management and TFA, should be provided only for long enough to help the household exit its homeless crisis and become stably housed. Households must be recertified every three months while enrolled in order to verify continued eligibility and document need for ongoing assistance. There is no time limit for how long households can remain enrolled in the project; however, there are limits on the amount and duration of TFA that may be provided.<sup>28</sup>

## Required Forms and Documentation

Grantees are responsible for maintaining case files for each Veteran household.<sup>29</sup> Case files may be paper or electronic, but must be accessible for monitoring purposes. Documentation of other activities such as invoices, timesheets, outreach logs, and staff meeting notes is also required. The VA SSVF Program Guide describes the documentation required for various stages of serving a Veteran household including intake, assessment for and planning of services, case notes and documentation of service coordination, temporary financial assistance payments, and exiting a household from the program. Forms developed by the SSVF Program Office are on the [SSVF website](#)<sup>30</sup>, which also includes a summary document that provides a [Sample Participant File and Additional Documentation Requirements](#).<sup>31</sup>

## SSVF Supportive Services and Other Resources

SSVF is a flexible supportive service program that allows for a broad range of services to meet the needs of Veterans experiencing or at imminent risk of experiencing homelessness. It is the expectation that policies related to the provision of any services are highly specific to each individual Veteran household's needs and desires. Grantees should tailor the service package for each individual Veteran household based on that household's unique needs.

There are four required services and two optional services for all SSVF grantees.

By law, SSVF grantees are required to provide:

- Outreach
- Case management
- Connections to VA benefits
- Connections to mainstream benefits

Grantees are also allowed to provide enhanced services and TFA. While the law does not mandate TFA, every SSVF grantee provides it. The availability of TFA is a core feature of RRH and HP programs and should be provided by the grantee as needed, consistent with a progressive engagement approach that tailors the SSVF response to each household.

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<sup>28</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section VIII.C.2.h

<sup>29</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section V.F

<sup>30</sup> SSVF Form Web Page - [http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/official\\_guide/forms](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/official_guide/forms)

<sup>31</sup> Sample File and Documentation Requirements -

[https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF\\_Sample\\_Participant\\_File\\_and\\_Additional\\_Required\\_Documentation.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_Sample_Participant_File_and_Additional_Required_Documentation.pdf)



Below is a brief, general description of the services SSVF provides. All SSVF staff should be very familiar with the resources on the [Supportive Services page of the SSVF website](#). This section also includes a list of some key resources for staff to review.

## Outreach

Outreach is one of the most important required services of SSVF. No community can end homelessness among Veterans without having a proactive outreach strategy to make sure all Veterans experiencing homelessness in their community are identified and engaged. This is particularly true for hard-to-reach Veterans who may face significant barriers to securing housing or engaging in traditional homelessness services.

Outreach is:

- implementing a proactive strategy for engaging Veterans at any access point in the community's system, and
- ensuring that these Veterans are immediately linked to community resources and housing opportunities.

In partnership with community partners and local coordinated entry systems, SSVF should have the capacity and systems to perform outreach and coordination activities in the following settings:

- On the streets or in places not meant for human habitation
- At intake centers
- At VA access points (including temporary housing and Grant and Per Diem programs)
- In any other place that Veterans experiencing homelessness may be (including shelters).

SSVF's role in this outreach will look different in every community, but the expectation is that SSVF grantees ensure complete and comprehensive coverage of the geographic area they serve, either directly or through partnership with other outreach providers.

## Case Management

Case management services play a key role in the SSVF program as the central focus of the grantee's supportive service program. As a short-term, crisis intervention program SSVF does not seek to provide all of the long-term or "wraparound" services a Veteran household may need in order to retain its housing. Rather, a case manager acts as the linkage point to the community-based services that the household needs and desires to help it remain stably housed. SSVF grantees must strike a delicate balance between providing services directly and linking to community-based and mainstream resources.

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*The primary objective of housing-focused case management is to extend support to participants, through an individualized case management relationship, that will ultimately translate to increased housing stability.*

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Case management in the SSVF program is a broad term that includes a number of different functions — some staff may perform only some of the activities captured in case management services. Broadly speaking, case management includes:

- Housing needs assessment
- Veteran-centered housing planning
- Housing search and identification
- Advocating for and assisting in applying for housing
- Providing support to Veterans in interacting with landlords and property managers to assist with developing housing stability
- Linking to community resources or other long-term supports, as needed
- Providing referrals
- Case closing and transition planning

### **Connection to VA Resources**

Veterans are often entitled to unique resources through the VA. Depending on a specific Veteran's eligibility, the VA has a wide range of income, health care, housing, employment, educational, and other services that can assist Veterans in pursuing their personal goals and stabilizing their lives. The [Veterans Benefits Administration \(VBA\)](#) is a key resource for SSVF program participants and family members.<sup>32</sup> SSVF staff must determine whether a Veteran household is receiving services from the VA. Based on what the household identifies as its service needs to achieve housing stability, SSVF staff will facilitate new or additional VA referrals and linkages.

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*VASH and other community PSH projects can accept qualified, currently enrolled, RRH Veteran households. They maintain their homeless or chronically homeless status while enrolled.<sup>33</sup>*

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### **Connection to Mainstream Resources**

Similar to connecting Veterans to VA resources, there are a wide range of mainstream housing, health care, income, employment, educational, and other services (daily living, personal finances, childcare, fiduciary, transportation, etc.) for which Veterans may be eligible based on their income or homelessness status. Grantees are expected to be familiar with the mainstream services available in their community as well as federally, and to facilitate referrals and linkages for Veterans who choose to pursue those resources.

### **Enhanced Services**

Enhanced Services is a broad term for other types of services and TFA that SSVF grantees should consider providing directly or through linkages when designing their SSVF programs. Enhanced Services include:

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<sup>32</sup> VBA Overview webinar <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/300000000010772179>

<sup>33</sup> HUD VASH Referral Guide for RRH TFA

[https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/official\\_guide/forms](https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/official_guide/forms)

- Legal services
- Employment and vocational services
- Educational services
- Property owner supports and mediation

TFA provides time-limited financial assistance to support housing-related costs where those costs are prohibiting a Veteran from obtaining or retaining permanent housing. A full description of allowable TFA costs is included in the VA SSVF Program Guide.<sup>34</sup>

Consistent with the Progressive Engagement approach described above, not all SSVF households will require TFA or the same level of TFA. This means that policies that either restrict TFA or automatically provide the same amount of TFA to all households would be inconsistent with SSVF's intent. Some households need no TFA, others need just a security deposit and a month or two of rent, while others still require the fully allowable amount of TFA for which they are eligible in order to achieve permanent housing.

## SSVF Grant Management

SSVF grantees have many grant management responsibilities to keep their local program in full compliance with SSVF rules, regulations, and guidelines. Four key areas are highlighted below, but more in-depth information is available through SSVF University regarding the [SSVF monitoring](#)<sup>35</sup> process, expectations, and requirements.

### Fiscal Systems

#### Payment Management System

Supportive services grant funds are disbursed via the Department of Health and Human Services' [\(HHS\) Payment Management System \(PMS\)](#).<sup>36</sup> PMS is an internet-based system supported by staff from the HHS Division of Payment Management (DPM). Grantees must log into the PMS system using the [DPM](#)<sup>37</sup> website in order to draw down SSVF funds for reimbursement.

#### Audit Guidelines, Fraud Prevention, Reporting, and Compliance

The webinar ✦ [SSVF Audit Guidelines, Fraud Prevention, Reporting and Compliance webinar](#) ✦ covers SSVF program reporting, compliance, and fraud and abuse deference. This should be reviewed on an annual basis by all SSVF staff.

#### Financial Closeout

SSVF grantees are responsible for documenting that all expenditures are allowable and reasonable. Subcontractors must follow the same standards regarding compliance and must be appropriately monitored by the SSVF grantee. All SSVF funds must be spent by the end of the contract year.

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<sup>34</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section VIII.C.2

<sup>35</sup> SSVF Reporting and Monitoring -

[http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/official\\_guide/reporting\\_and\\_monitoring\\_requirements](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/official_guide/reporting_and_monitoring_requirements)

<sup>36</sup> HHS Payment Requests and Reporting Requirements -

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/7577669592009611011>

<sup>37</sup> DPM - <https://www.dpm.psc.gov/>

Grantees are required to submit a Federal Financial Report (FFR) no later than 45 days after the project or grant period end date.<sup>38</sup>

## **GIFTS**

The SSVF program office utilizes a grants management database called GIFTS<sup>39</sup> to track, send and receive grantee information including budgets and budget changes. The SSVF Grantee Portal Guide<sup>40</sup> contains step-by-step instructions for utilizing the portal.

## **HMIS**

All households enrolled in SSVF must be entered in their local Continuum of Care's (CoC) Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). HMIS is a database used for client report purposes, and some grantees use it as their case management software. In order to understand the HMIS data elements to which a response is required, refer to HUD's HMIS Data Standards<sup>41</sup> document. Each CoC designates a HMIS Lead Agency that is responsible for administering the local implementation of HMIS. The HMIS Lead provides training, maintains local HMIS policies, and assists with project setup. Each SSVF project is also required to develop an HMIS data quality plan, as described in the VA SSVF Program Guide<sup>42</sup> and the VA's Developing a Comprehensive Data Quality Plan<sup>43</sup> training.

More resources on this topic are available on SSVF University HMIS page.<sup>44</sup>

## **SSVF Reporting**

Monitoring progress toward ending Veteran homelessness at the national and project levels is key to the success of the SSVF program. SSVF grantees are responsible for providing accurate data to the VA throughout the cycle of the grant, using the following mechanisms:

- Submit monthly uploads of client-level SSVF data to the secure HMIS Data Repository managed by the VA
- Submit quarterly program certifications to address programmatic and financial information<sup>45</sup>
- Enroll households in VA Participant Satisfaction Surveys<sup>46</sup> (this may be supplemented by the agency's own participant feedback system)
- Submit Critical Incident Reports to the SSVF Program Office in cases of health or safety issues that occur in a participant household.<sup>47</sup>

All of this information is critical to the VA in tracking program progress, outcomes, and data quality, and serves as the basis for the SSVF Annual Report<sup>48</sup> as well as other reports to federal partners.

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<sup>38</sup> Federal Financial Report Form

[https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/grants/approved\\_forms/sf-425a.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/grants/approved_forms/sf-425a.pdf) and instructions [https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/grants/approved\\_forms/sf-425-instructions.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/grants/approved_forms/sf-425-instructions.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> GIFTS Sign-In Homepage [https://www.grantrequest.com/SID\\_2115/](https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_2115/)

<sup>40</sup> GIFTS Grantee Portal Guide [https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/GIFTS\\_GranteeGuide.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/GIFTS_GranteeGuide.pdf)

<sup>41</sup> HMIS Data Standards - <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3826/hmis-data-standards-manual/>

<sup>42</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section X.B.1

<sup>43</sup> Data Quality Plan - [https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/Data\\_Quality\\_Jan2016.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/Data_Quality_Jan2016.pdf)

<sup>44</sup> SSVF HMIS Home Page -

[http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/official\\_guide/homeless\\_management\\_info\\_system](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/official_guide/homeless_management_info_system)

<sup>45</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section X.B.3

<sup>46</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section X.B.4

<sup>47</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section VII.C

<sup>48</sup> FY 2015 SSVF Annual Report -

[https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF\\_Annual\\_Report\\_for\\_FY\\_2015.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_Annual_Report_for_FY_2015.pdf)

## **Standards and Accreditation**

SSVF promotes the use of general RRH and HP standards and carves out specific accreditation opportunities that can lead to prioritized funding for qualifying SSVF grantees.

### **SSVF Practice Standards**

In 2012, VA released the [SSVF Practice Standards](#).<sup>49</sup> The VA strives to promote best practices among SSVF grantees related to what works in Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing programs. Toward that end, SSVF grantees are encouraged to review and, to the best of their ability, adhere to best practice standards established for SSVF. The [fidelity self-assessment tool](#)<sup>50</sup> may be used by grantees to assess the degree to which their program adheres to each standard and to identify areas for quality improvement. Programs can use this tool periodically to gauge improvements and avoid unintended loss of fidelity over time.

### **National Alliance to End Homelessness Rapid Re-Housing Performance Benchmarks and Program Standards**

In the fall of 2016, NAEH published a [document](#)<sup>51</sup> providing details on performance benchmarks that would qualify a Rapid Re-Housing program as “effective.” These benchmarks and standards were developed in conjunction with HUD, the VA, USICH, and other Rapid Re-Housing practitioners and have been endorsed by the SSVF Program Office. The benchmarks are accompanied by qualitative program standards for each of the RRH core components. Lastly, this document includes a section on program philosophy and design standards that provides guidance on the broader role an RRH program should play in ending homelessness.

### **Accreditation**

SSVF recognizes accreditation awards from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), the Council on Accreditation, (COA) and the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) as a positive way to strengthen SSVF project outcomes and management. Grantees receiving renewal awards that have had ongoing SSVF programs in operation for at least one year may be eligible for three-year awards upon renewal if they have certain accreditations from these entities. More information on the process and requirements regarding three-year awards is located in the VA SSVF Program Guide.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> SSVF Practice Standards -

[http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/ssvf\\_university/fidelity\\_tool\\_ssvf\\_standards](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/ssvf_university/fidelity_tool_ssvf_standards)

<sup>50</sup> Fidelity Tool - [http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/docs/SSVF\\_Self\\_Directed\\_Fidelity\\_Scale\\_Tool.pdf](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/docs/SSVF_Self_Directed_Fidelity_Scale_Tool.pdf)

<sup>51</sup> RRH Performance Benchmarks and Standards - <http://www.endhomelessness.org/page/-/files/Performance%20Benchmarks%20and%20Program%20Standards.pdf>

<sup>52</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide, Section III

## Key Terms to supplement VA SSVF Program Guide

<b>Case Conference:</b>	Regularly occurring meetings attended by staff representing key homeless Veterans service providers that collectively identify solutions and strategies to end the homeless experience for those identified on the community's active list (Master List) of persons or Veterans experiencing homelessness.
<b>Community Resource and Referral Center (CRRC)</b>	A collaborative effort of the VA, the community, service providers, and agency partners. CRRCs are located in strategically selected areas to provide both a refuge from the streets and a central location to engage Veterans experiencing homelessness in a variety of services. Veterans will be referred to health and mental health care resources, job development programs, housing options, and other VA and non-VA benefits. Not all VA medical centers have a CRRC, so SSVF grantees should find out if this available in their community.
<b>Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans (DCHV)</b>	Time-limited residential treatment for Veterans experiencing homelessness with who have mental health and substance use disorders, co-occurring medical concerns, and psychosocial needs. DCHV programs provide Veterans experiencing homelessness with access to medical, mental health, and substance use disorder treatment in addition to psychosocial and vocational rehabilitation treatment programs.
<b>Grant and Per Diem Program (GPD)</b>	A program that allows the VA to award grants to community-based agencies to create transitional housing programs and that reimburses these agencies with per diem payments. The purpose of GPDs is to promote the development and provision of supportive housing and/or supportive services that can help Veterans experiencing homelessness to achieve residential stability, increase their skill levels or income, and obtain greater self-determination. GPD-funded projects offer communities a way to help Veterans experiencing homelessness with housing and services while assisting VA medical centers by augmenting or supplementing care.
<b>Harm Reduction</b>	An approach or strategy aimed at reducing the risks and harmful effects associated with substance use and addictive behaviors for the individual, the community, and society as a whole. In the context of Housing First programs, harm reduction provides relief from sobriety requirements.
<b>Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV)</b>	An organization that engages Veterans experiencing homelessness with health care and other needed services. HCHV programs provide outreach, case management, and HCHV Contract Residential Services ensuring that chronically homeless Veterans, especially those with serious mental health diagnoses or substance use disorders, can be placed in VA or community-based programs that provide quality housing and services that meet their needs.

<b>Health Care for Reentry Veterans Services (HCRV)</b>	A program designed to address the community re-entry needs of incarcerated Veterans. HCRV's goals are to prevent homelessness, reduce the impact of medical, psychiatric, and substance abuse problems upon community re-adjustment, and decrease the likelihood of re-incarceration for those leaving prison.
<b>Homelessness Diversion</b>	A strategy that prevents homelessness for people seeking shelter by helping them identify immediate alternate housing arrangements and, if necessary, connecting them with services and financial assistance to help them return to permanent housing.
<b>Homelessness Prevention (HP)</b>	Assistance intended for eligible Veteran households who are at imminent risk of becoming literally homeless (e.g., entering an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation) <i>but for</i> SSVF assistance.
<b>Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)</b>	An information system designated by the Continuum of Care to comply with HUD's data collection, management, and reporting standards. HMIS is used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness and persons at-risk of homelessness. SSVF providers are required to enter their client-level data into their CoC's HMIS system.
<b>Homeless Operations Management and Evaluations System (HOMES)</b>	HOMES is a data collection system used by the VA to track data about Veterans experiencing homelessness as they move through the VA's system of care. The system streamlines data collection processes and facilitates communication between VA homelessness program staff and leadership at the local, regional, and national levels.
<b>Housing and Urban Development – Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)</b>	A collaborative program between HUD and VA through which eligible Veterans experiencing homelessness receive a Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) from HUD, paired with case management services provided by the VA to promote and sustain housing stability and recovery from physical and mental health problems, substance use disorders, and functional concerns contributing to or resulting from homelessness. HUD-VASH subscribes to the principles of the “Housing First” model of care. Program goals include housing stability while promoting maximum Veteran recovery and independence in the community for the Veteran and the Veteran's family.
<b>Master List (also known as <i>Active List</i> or <i>By-Name List</i>) (ML)</b>	A list of all Veterans experiencing homelessness in a community. The list ensures that all Veterans experiencing homelessness within a community are identified; notes their housing needs; allows tracking of each Veteran's status and progress toward permanent housing; coordinates efforts at finding housing and services among community providers; measures progress towards community goals of ending Veteran homelessness; and identifies key barriers to goal attainment and opportunities to resolve them.



<b>SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR)</b>	A program designed to increase and streamline access to SSI/SSDI for eligible adults who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and have a mental illness, medical impairment, and/or a co-occurring substance use disorder. Online training is available for SSVF staff to help them assist Veterans and their family members with the streamlined SSI applications.
<b>Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)</b>	Disability income benefits administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA) that also provides Medicaid and/or Medicare health insurance to eligible individuals.
<b>Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO)</b>	A program intended to prevent homelessness and avoid the unnecessary criminalization of mental illness and extended incarceration among Veterans. This is accomplished by ensuring that eligible justice-involved Veterans encountered by police, and in jails or courts, have timely access to Veterans Health Administration mental health, substance abuse, and homelessness services when clinically indicated, and other VA services and benefits as appropriate. <a href="http://www.va.gov/homeless/vjo.asp">http://www.va.gov/homeless/vjo.asp</a>
<b>Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)</b>	A federal agency that provides a variety of benefits and services to Service members, Veterans, and their families. <a href="http://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits">http://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits</a>
<b>Veterans Health Administration (VHA)</b>	The United States' largest integrated health care system, consisting of 150 medical centers, nearly 1,400 community-based outpatient clinics, community living centers, Veterans Centers, and Domiciliaries. <a href="http://www.va.gov/health">http://www.va.gov/health</a>



## Web/URL Addresses for Required and Recommended Materials

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- <sup>i</sup> SSVF Introductory Video - [https://www.sharedfedtraining.org/videoContent/TRAIN\\_video/VEHU/SSVF\\_8912/index.htm](https://www.sharedfedtraining.org/videoContent/TRAIN_video/VEHU/SSVF_8912/index.htm)
- <sup>ii</sup> SSVF Program Description - [http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/home/general\\_program\\_info\\_regs](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/home/general_program_info_regs)
- <sup>iii</sup> SSVF Definitions of Key Terms - VA SSVF Guide, Section I.C - [http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF\\_ProgramGuideOctober2016\\_Final.pdf](http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_ProgramGuideOctober2016_Final.pdf)
- <sup>iv</sup> SSVF Core Concepts - [http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/ssvf\\_university/core\\_concepts](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/ssvf_university/core_concepts)
- <sup>v</sup> Housing First Fact Sheet - <http://www.endhomelessness.org/page/-/files/2016-04-26%20Housing%20First%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>
- <sup>vi</sup> Housing First Checklist - <https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/housing-first-checklist>
- <sup>vii</sup> Housing First: An Evidence-based Recovery Model to Address Veteran Homelessness - [https://www.sharedfedtraining.org/videoContent/TRAIN\\_video/VEHU/SSVF\\_4290/index.htm](https://www.sharedfedtraining.org/videoContent/TRAIN_video/VEHU/SSVF_4290/index.htm)
- <sup>viii</sup> Progressive Engagement - [https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/Progressive\\_Engagement\\_Overview.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/Progressive_Engagement_Overview.pdf)
- <sup>ix</sup> SSVF Supportive Services - [http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/official\\_guide/supportive\\_services](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/official_guide/supportive_services)
- <sup>x</sup> Rapid Re-Housing: SSVF Video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rq3foBI7Hgk>
- <sup>xi</sup> What is Rapid Re-Housing Video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=frWexyi6qAk>
- <sup>xii</sup> Rapid Re-Housing Basics - [https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/Rapid\\_Rehousing\\_Overivew\\_Fall\\_2016.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/Rapid_Rehousing_Overivew_Fall_2016.pdf)
- <sup>xiii</sup> NAEH Core Concepts of RRH - <http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/rapid-re-housing2>
- <sup>xiv</sup> Homeless Prevention Basics - [https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/DS\\_HP\\_Presentation\\_Fall\\_2016\\_Final.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/DS_HP_Presentation_Fall_2016_Final.pdf)
- <sup>xv</sup> Homeless Prevention Screening Disposition Form and Toolkit - [https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF\\_Homelessness\\_Prevention\\_Screening\\_Toolkit\\_v2\\_Website.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_Homelessness_Prevention_Screening_Toolkit_v2_Website.pdf)
- <sup>xvi</sup> VA SSVF Program Guide - [http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF\\_ProgramGuideOctober2016\\_Final.pdf](http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_ProgramGuideOctober2016_Final.pdf)
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