

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

SSVF Leadership to Leadership Webinar

SSVF National Webinar

April 17 & 18, 2024

[Link to Recording](#)

Housekeeping



Webinar
will last
For **60**
minutes



Slides &
handouts
are in the
“handout”
section



Recording,
Handouts &
Slides will
be sent via
email



Submit
questions in
the question
box or any
time at
ssvf@va.gov



OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION- GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Welcome and Introductions
- VA National Goals
- Leadership Update
- One Team/SSVF Overview
- Strategies for Success
- One Team in Practice
- Q & A and Discussion



PRESENTERS

- Adrienne Nash Meléndez, MLD, National Director, SSVF
- Matt Leslie MSW, SSVF TA Associate, Technical Assistance Collaborative



Opening Remarks



VA NATIONAL CY23 OUTCOMES: ONE TEAM APPROACH

- VA housed 46,552 homeless Veterans, exceeding the goal of 38,000 by over 22%
- Of the 46,552 Veterans housed, 95.9% remained in housing by the end of the year
- Of the 1,919 Veterans who returned to homelessness, 96.4% were either re-housed or on a pathway to re-housing by the end of the year
- VA engaged with 40,203 unsheltered veterans, connecting them to VA care -including housing and health services, exceeding the goal of 28,000 by 44%





OUR NEW CHALLENGE: VA'S 2024 ONE TEAM HOMELESSNESS GOALS

Goal 1: Consistency in Permanent Housing

- VA will house at least 41,000 individual Veterans in FY 2024, an increase of 8% from CY 2023.

Goal 2: Prevention of Returns to Homelessness

- VA will ensure that at least 95% of Veterans housed in FY stay housed.

Goal 3: Engagement of Unsheltered Veterans

- VA will engage with at least 40,000 unsheltered Veterans in FY 2024, an increase of 43% from CY 2023.



POLL QUESTION

In your role as Executive Director/CEO, how involved are you with your agencies SSVF operations?

- A. Actively involved – At minimum, receive weekly updates and interaction with program design and administration
- B. Somewhat Involved – At minimum, receive monthly updates and interaction with program design and administration
- C. Minimally Involved – You have little involvement with SSVF operations except for monitoring and compliance



VA'S ONE TEAM APPROACH

- Each Veteran is our collective responsibility. We must support their housing needs and goals.
- All VA homeless programs must prioritize housing placements and retention strategies for homeless or at-risk Veterans.
- This will require an effective One Team approach among all VA homeless programs
- Lead a balanced approach to offer the necessary supports to sustain long-term tenancies and limit returns to homelessness, including with co-enrollment in certain circumstances.
- Fully coordinate outreach and linkages to interim housing with “same day” access and cross-referral protocol.
- Using data to inform strategies that promote equitable access to and delivery of critical outreach and housing services.
- Full commitment to case conferencing, list management and cross-program collaboration in the overall system and individual Veteran-level planning.



SSVF CORE CONCEPTS

- **Housing First:** Serve Veterans through a trauma-informed lens without preconditions such as sobriety, income, treatment, criminal background, etc. Target services to the most vulnerable.
- **Crisis Response:** Focus first on the immediate crisis at hand – the need for safe and/or permanent housing.
- **Veteran Choice:** Ensure Veterans are driving housing plans and goals with support of SSVF grantee, including where and with whom they want to live.
- **Progressive Assistance:** Begin with lighter services (Rapid Resolution) and escalate intervention as needs and desires arise.
- **Race Equity and Social Justice Driven:** Actively using data and Veteran feedback to combat disparities based on race and other marginalized identities to make program and system design adjustments that further equity



THE ARC OF SSVF

2011

Design/Start Up

- SSVF Begins
- Annual Report
- \$60 million
- 85 grants

2012-2013

Advancing Practice

- Accreditation
- Practice Standards
- Mentoring

2014-2017

Community Strategy & Planning to End Veteran Homelessness

- Surge Grants
- Community Plans
- CoC Support
- TFA Expansion
- Federal Criteria and Benchmarks

2018-2020

Addressing the Affordable Housing Crisis

- Integration into CES
- Returning Home
- Rapid Resolution
- Shallow Subsidies

2020-2022

Addressing the Affordable Housing Crisis

- COVID Response
- Stafford Act
- Emergency Housing Assistance expand
- Equity informed
- VA Partnerships
- Supplemental Housing Navigation and Incentive Funds
- Health Navigator
- Legal Services

2022-2023

Solidification One Team Approach

- CCM
- Enhancing VA partnerships
- Community Planning
- Landlord/Veteran Incentives
- Equity Report and Dashboard
- Income Eligibility increased to 80%

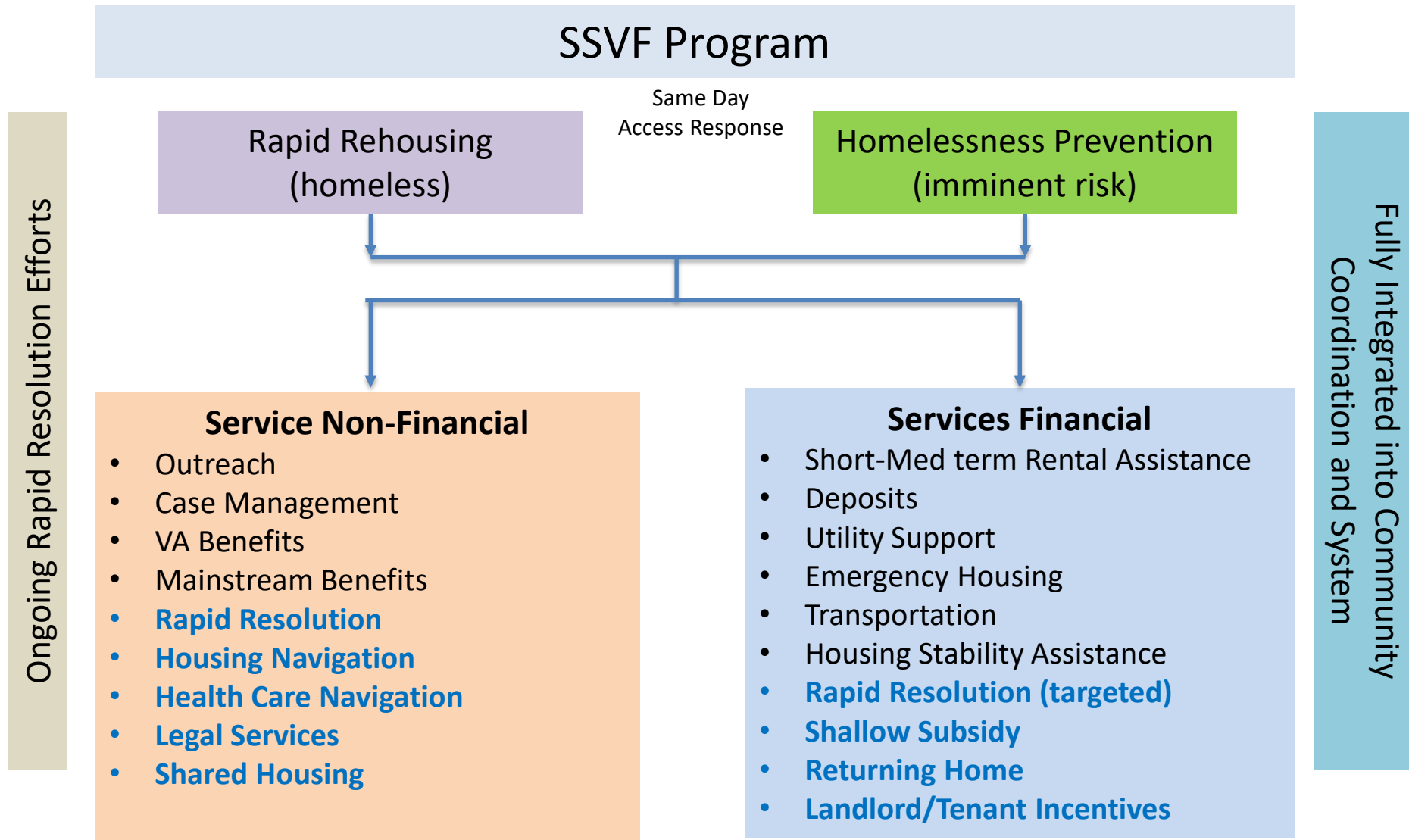
2024

Sustaining One Team Approach

- One Team and Strategic Capacity Building
- Creating Sustainability
- Refining SSVF Practices
- Enhancing VAMC and Community Partnerships



SSVF SERVICE PORTFOLIO





Vision for SSVF



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Strategies For Success



STAFFING

- Program managers should have very limited or no caseloads
- Having a culture to remove barriers for staff on the front line
- Continue efforts to hire peer support and PWLE to support Veterans and inform programming
- Supporting and paying staff competitive wages
- Build good morale and find strategies to reduce burnout





Being responsive to veterans needs

- Streamline and remove barriers so payments to support veterans are not delayed
- Don't be more restrictive than what SSVF allows (e.g. use tenant and landlord incentives)
- Services and financial assistance should be individualized and flexible (not cookie cutter or linear)





LEVERAGE FLEXIBILITY OF SSVF TOOLS

Be creative and flexible

- Rapid Resolution: To avoid entry into homeless response system
- Healthcare navigation: Assist Veterans navigate healthcare system
- Legal assistance: Assist veterans with representation for legal issues that are a barrier to permanent housing (Historically top 7 identified needs through [VA CHALENG survey](#))
- Shallow subsidy: Provide longer term housing affordability in unaffordable housing market
- Landlord/tenant Incentives: Incentivize landlords to increase access and incentives for Veterans to engage in both housing and services
- Progressive engagement: Providing equitable and dynamic services that meet the needs of individual veterans
- Community Awareness- Orient services based on community needs and gaps





COMPLIANCE AND SERVING VETERANS- PRIORITIES

- Our mission is to ensure that Veterans and their families obtain permanent and sustainable housing with access to supportive services that are Veteran-centered, equitable, and lead to personal empowerment.
- Support is key and comes from everyone.
- During those moments of engagement- we need to pause, listen, and respond like we would for those who are important to us

We are One Team



COMPLIANCE AND SERVING VETERANS- BALANCE

- Compliance is a critical function of any high achieving program
- ***Operation considerations in serving and meeting the basic and immediate needs of Veterans and their families should not be diminished in any way out of fear of non-compliance***
- The three specific inter-related SSVF core concepts - Housing First, Crisis Response, and Choice - should be the primary focus in delivering those services

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One Team in Practice



LEADERSHIP

We Need You!

- Ending Veteran homelessness takes leadership, strong partnerships, and collaboration
- Use your executive role to build relationships with other leaders to build partnerships, reduce barriers, and sustain efforts



KEY COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP COMPONENTS

Identify and communicate mutually beneficial goals and delineate roles and responsibilities

- Collaboration
- Coordination
- Transparency
- Flexibility
- Compromise





LEVELS OF COORDINATION



Level 1: Awareness

- Little or no knowledge or exchange of information
- Infrequent referrals



Level 2: Awareness

- Know eligibility requirements, how to refer
- Routine referrals, clear process



Level 3: Coordination

- Point of contact referral
- Warm handoffs
- Meet regularly



Level 4: Enhanced Collaboration

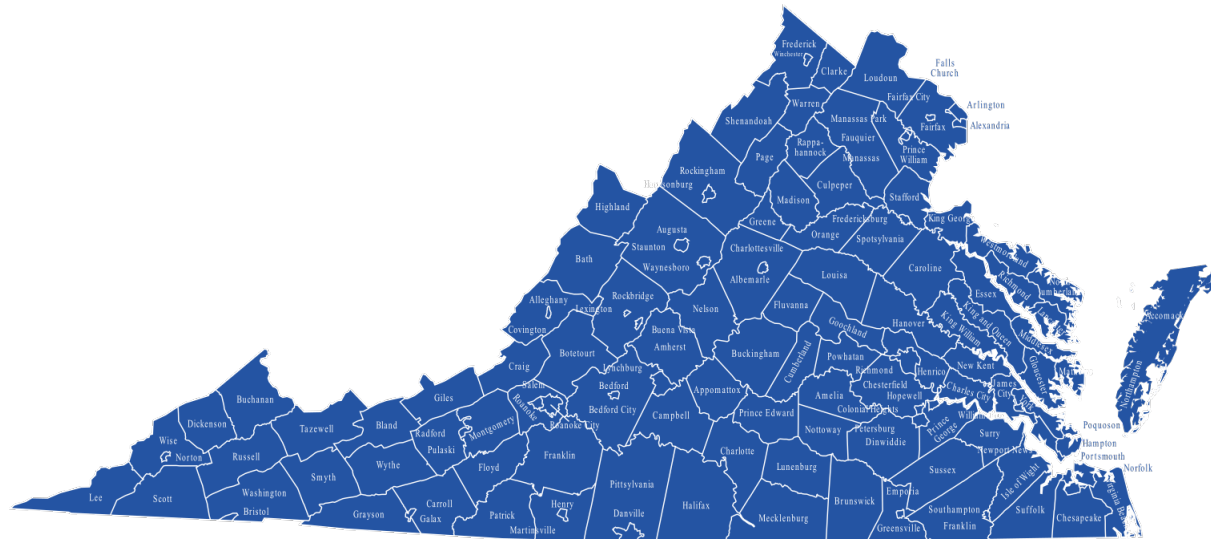
- Shared goals, measures
- MOU
- Routine collaboration, effort to integrate

Optimal Level of Coordination May Vary by Partner/Resource



EXAMPLES IN THE FIELD

Leadership a driving component in Virginia's efforts to end Veteran homelessness



58% drop (PIT) in Veteran homelessness from 2011 (931) to 2023 (386)



We Want to Partner WITH you





Q&A AND DISCUSSION

