

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) & Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Joint National Grantee Webinar

**National Program Updates and SSI, SSDI,
Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR)**

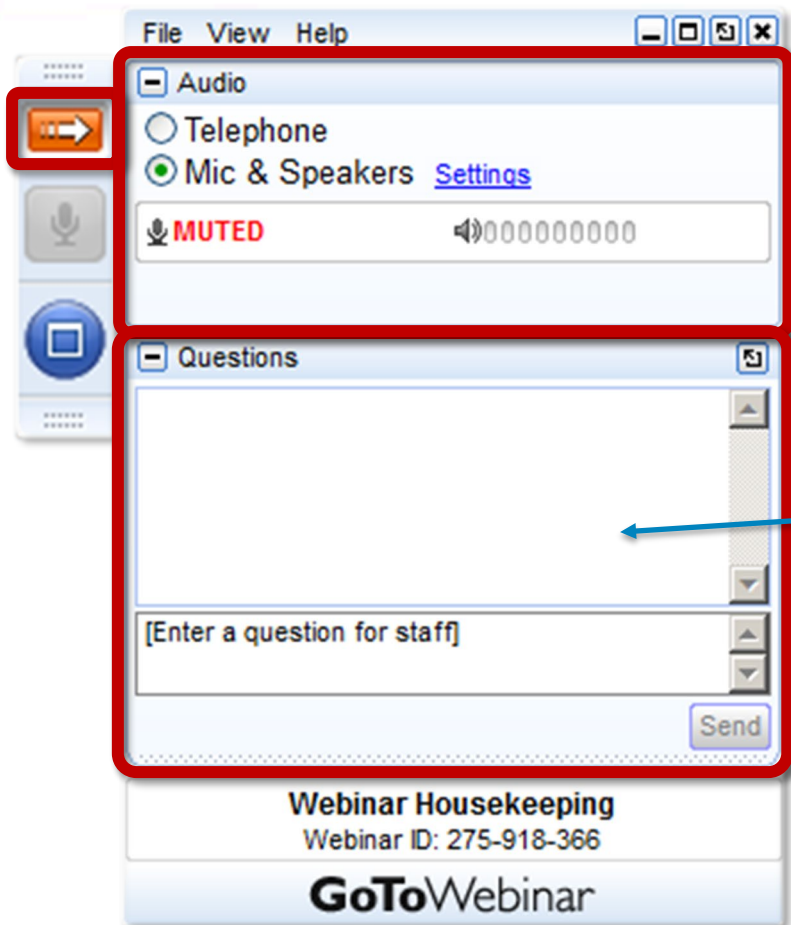
[Link To Audio Recording](#)

June 13, 2019

Webinar Format

- Webinar will last approximately 80 minutes
- Participants' phone connections are “muted” due to the high number of callers
 - **Questions can be submitted during the webinar using the Q&A function**
- Questions can also be submitted anytime to SSVF@va.gov or Gpdgrants@va.gov

Questions



Your Questions

Submit questions and comments via the Questions panel

Presenters & Agenda

1. Welcome and Opening

2. National Program Updates

- John Kuhn, SSVF National Director
- Jeff Quarles, GPD National Director

3. SOAR with our Respective Programs

- Rayme Nuckles, SSVF and Adrienne Nash Meléndez, GPD

4. SOAR for Children and Income Maximization

- Kristin Lupfer, Director and Jen Elder, Assistant Director, SAMHSA SOAR TA Center

5. Q&A and Next Steps

SSVF National Program Updates

1. Proposed Amendment to 38 CFR 62

2. Rapid Resolution Update

- Reminder: Office Hours on June 19th

- Compliance Guide

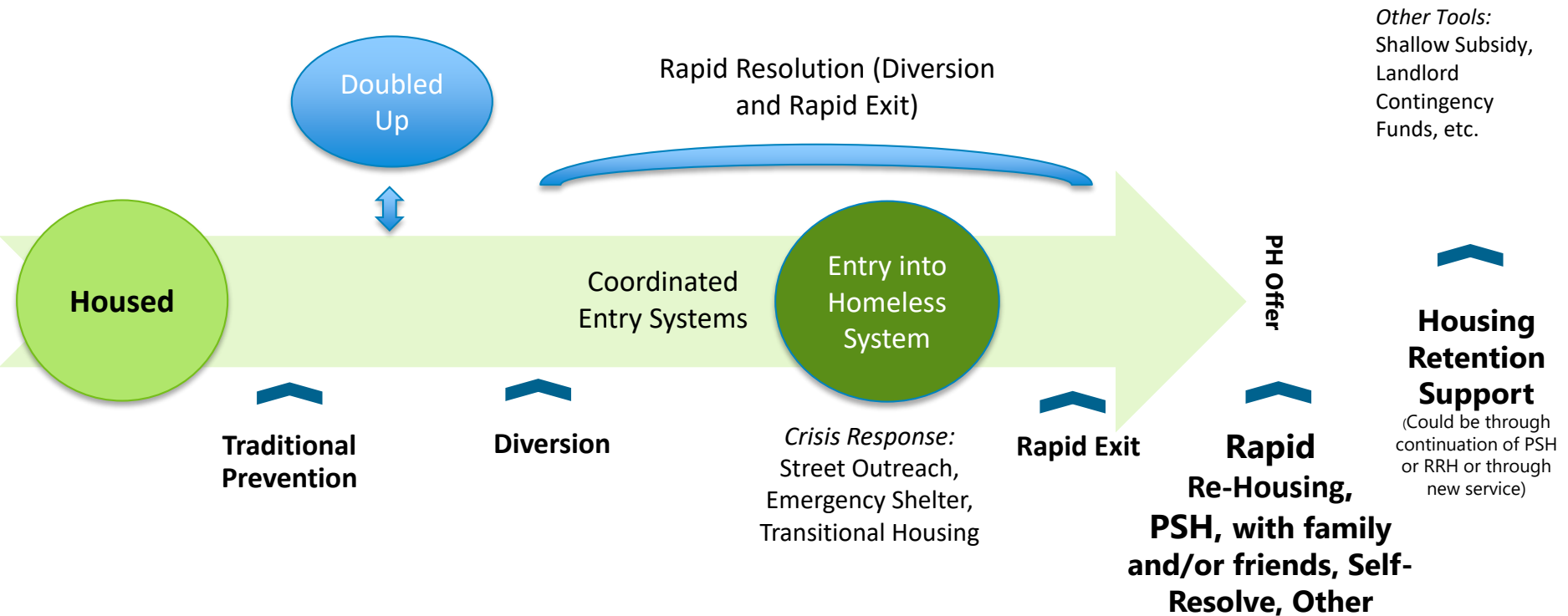
3.Upcoming/Reminders

4.Partnerships

GPD National Program Updates

- 1. GPD Case Management NOFA**
- 2. Option Year Renewal**
- 3. VA, HUD, and USICH Community Planning Survey**
- 4. Partnerships**
 - Community and VAMC**

Why Is This Important: We Need a Variety of Tools in Communities



Source: Adapted from SSVF Rapid Resolution Position in System Image

SOAR: A SSVF, GPD, VAMC, and Community Partnership

Our Work Together



Annual SOAR Surveys since 2013 with incorporation into VA, HUD, and USICH Community Planning Survey

Introducing SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery) for Children

Presented by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services
Administration (SAMHSA)

SOAR Technical Assistance (TA) Center

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

June 13, 2019



SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

Disclaimer

The views, opinions, and content expressed in this presentation do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or policies of the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Purpose and Objectives

- Share goals and objectives of the SOAR Online Course: Child Curriculum
- Learn how to integrate SOAR for Children into your programs
- Explore VA and SOAR Resources
- Connect with local SOAR contacts

What is SOAR?



- A model for assisting eligible adults and children to apply for Social Security Administration (SSA) disability benefits
- For individuals who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and have a serious mental illness, co-occurring substance use disorder, or other physical disabilities
- Sponsored by SAMHSA in collaboration with the Social Security Administration (SSA) since 2005
- All 50 states and Washington, DC currently participate

Why SOAR for Children?

- Children and youth experiencing homelessness have higher rates of disability and experience higher rates of mental health problems, developmental delays, and poor cognitive outcomes than their stably housed peers.
- There were 56,342 families with children (representing 180,413 individual adults and children) experiencing homelessness in 2018.
- There were 36,361 unaccompanied homeless youth under the age of 25 in 2018.
 - Unaccompanied homeless youth are more likely to be unsheltered (51%) than all people experiencing homelessness.

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2018-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>

National Center for Homeless Education, UNC Greensboro (2017). Federal Data Summary School Years 2013-2014 to 2015-2016, Education for Homeless Children and Youth

The National Center on Family Homelessness (2011). The Characteristics and Needs of Families Experiencing Homelessness. Retrieved from: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED535499.pdf>

Importance of SSI for Veteran Families

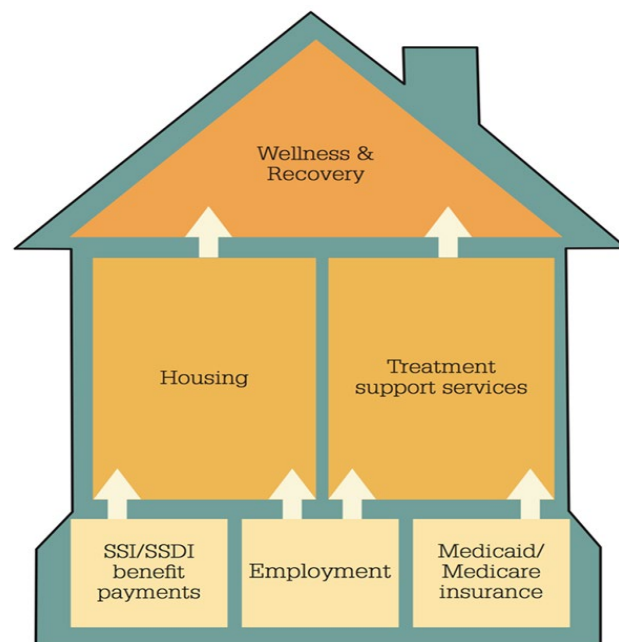
- SSA disability benefits can provide access to:
 - Income: Low-income children can receive SSI to help cover their basic needs
 - Health insurance: Medicaid can be an important supplement to other VHA coverage
- For children with disabilities, SSI can increase income and housing stability, and reduce their future risk of homelessness
- Opportunity for staff serving children of Veteran families to help with both SSA and VA disability benefits

A Foundation for Resiliency and Recovery

More Than Income

- Access to health care and housing
- Increased education and employment opportunities
- Decrease in institutionalization and hospitalizations

SSI: One Brick in Foundation



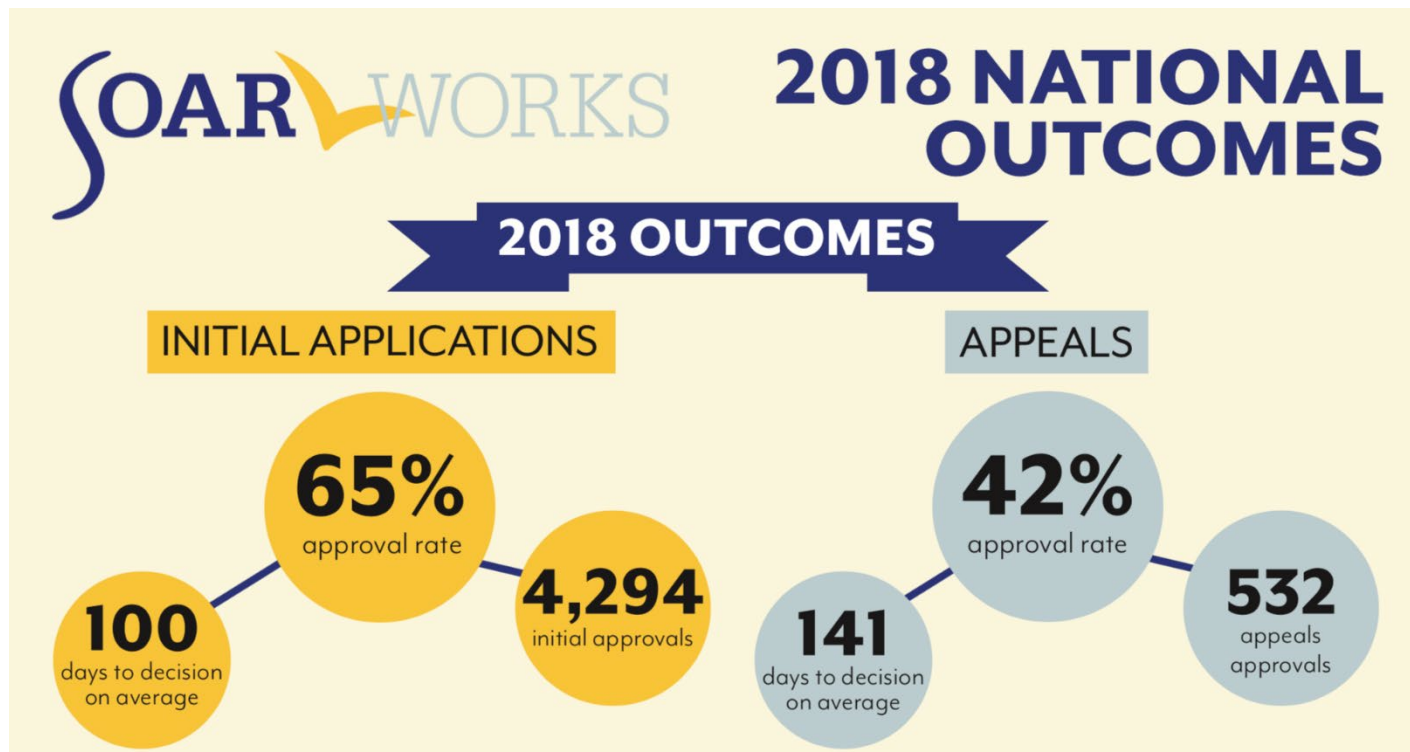
SSI for Children: The Basics

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

- Benefits for low income individuals
 - Financial need is a complete picture of income, living arrangement, and family resources
- Children who are disabled or blind
- Federal benefit rate is \$771/month (2019)*
- Provides Medicaid in most states

**<https://www.ssa.gov/ssi/text-general-ussi.htm>*

2018 National Outcomes



*As compared to a 29% approval rate for all SSI/SSDI applicants nationwide

SSI Annual Statistical Report, 2017. Table 70. SSA Pub. No. 13-11827. Washington, D.C.: SSA, September 2018

Child SSI Application Outcomes

- Select providers in Arkansas, Florida, Kansas and Nevada have been implementing SOAR with children
- 368 decisions, 72 percent approval rate*
- Average of 106 days to decision

**Outcomes reported in the SOAR Online Application Tracking (OAT) program*



Oh, the support you will receive!

SOAR TA Center Activities and Support



SOAR Online Course



SOAR Leadership Academy



SOAR Online Application Tracking (OAT) Program



SOARWorks Library



Individual Technical Assistance



SOARing Over Lunch



SOAR eNews



Bi-Monthly Webinars

Benefits of the SOAR Online Course



SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) Online Course: Child Curriculum

- Standardized training provided across all geographic areas
- SOAR Leaders can coordinate follow-up training and support
- Course is FREE, web-based, and self-guided

Getting Involved: Time Commitment

- Training: 20 hours
- 20-40 hours per complete application
- SOAR Critical Components
- Outcome Tracking
- Benefit to Your Agency and the Individuals You Serve



Getting Involved with SOAR

You want to be a SOAR provider? That's great! Here's what to expect.

SOAR promotes recovery and wellness through increased access to Social Security disability benefits for eligible individuals who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and have a serious mental illness, medical impairment, and/or a co-occurring substance use disorder. SOAR providers assist individuals with complete and quality applications. This is not an easy task, and we want to be sure that you understand the commitment required – we believe it is well worth the effort!

Training

The SOAR Online Course trains providers to assist individuals with the Social Security disability application process. The course includes an Adult Curriculum for assisting with Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) claims for adults and a Child Curriculum for assisting with SSI claims for children.

- The SOAR Online Course: Adult and Child Curriculums are free and are located on the SOARWorks website (<https://soarworks.prainc.com/content/soar-online-course-catalog>).
- Each curriculum consists of seven classes, each of which has a series of articles, short quizzes, and a practice case component. The practice case provides an opportunity for trainees to apply what they have learned in the course by completing a sample application packet for a fictitious applicant using SOAR techniques.
- It takes approximately 20 hours to complete each curriculum and participants can work at their own pace, starting and stopping as they wish. However, we encourage students to complete the curriculum within 30 days to retain the information learned.
- Upon successful completion, participants will receive 20 CEUs (continuing education units) from the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).

Many SOAR Local Leads offer one-day SOAR Online Course Review Sessions to review key components of the curriculum, discuss local/state practices, and connect new providers to local Social Security Administration (SSA) and DDS (Disability Determination Services) offices.

Time Commitment

We estimate that each SOAR application will take approximately 20-40 hours to complete, from initial engagement to receiving a decision on a claim. This generally occurs over the course of 60-90 days.

- The time spent on each application will vary depending on the amount of engagement that is needed as well as other variables such as the experience level of the SOAR worker. For example, engagement with an applicant who is residing in an institution may take 20 hours, while it may take longer to connect with someone who is living outside or difficult to contact.

SOAR Critical Components

SOAR providers with higher approval rates credit their success to implementing the SOAR critical components¹ and submitting high quality applications. Use of these components significantly increases the

VA Guidance on SOAR: SSVF

In July 2017 the VA released the Supportive Services for Veteran Families: SOAR Integration Toolkit

Over 20 pages of comprehensive guidance for SOAR implementation, including:

- Using SOAR in community planning efforts, estimating the need for dedicated SOAR benefits specialists, subcontracting with local agencies, and more!

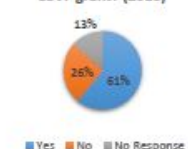
https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_SOAR_Toolkit_Final_v1.pdf

Integration of SOAR into SSVF Programs

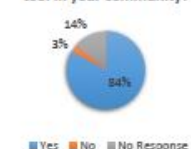
SSVF grantees are critical to preventing and ending homelessness for Veteran families. They are able to provide Veteran families with time-sensitive, housing-focused interventions such as linkages to mainstream resources and income supports that promote housing stability.

In a December 2016 survey, more than 60 percent of SSVF grantees reported using the SOAR model to assist Veteran families, either in-house directly through SSVF staff, through non-SSVF-funded positions, or by referring Veterans to community SOAR partners. However, 84 percent of grantees reported that the SOAR model would be an added tool in their communities.

Do you use SOAR in your SSVF grant? (2016)



Would SOAR be an added tool in your community?



This guide provides tools to:

- ✓ Identify and describe how Veterans with disabling conditions can benefit from SSI/SSDI
- ✓ Begin implementing SOAR best practices within SSVF grants
- ✓ Incorporate SOAR into community planning efforts
- ✓ Define the local need for SOAR assistance
- ✓ Establish a plan and coordinate with community partners to meet service needs

Find Your Local Contacts

- Systems of Care
 - <https://www.samhsa.gov/nttac>
- Family-Run Organizations
 - http://www.fredla.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/FRO-List-At-a-glance-2_2019.pdf
- Youth MOVE National
 - <https://www.youthmovenational.org/find-a-chapter/>

Additional Resources

- SOAR Works Website and Online Course:
<https://soarworks.prainc.com/>
- SOAR Outcomes Tracking: <https://soartrack.prainc.com/>
- SOAR Children and Youth Resources:
<https://soarworks.prainc.com/article/children-and-youth-resources>
- SSA Disability Information:
<https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/disability/>
- SSA Employment Supports: <https://choosework.ssa.gov/>

Next Steps

- ✓ Learn more about SOAR
- ✓ Get in touch with your SAMHSA SOAR TA Center liaison
- ✓ Reach out to your local or state SOAR leads
- ✓ Register for the SOAR Online Course

Thank You

SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities.

<https://soarworks.prainc.com>

soar@prainc.com
www.samhsa.gov

1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727) • 1-800-487-4889 (TDD)

Q& A

Additional Questions?

Emails:

ssvf@va.gov

gpdgrants@va.gov

Websites:

www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf.asp

https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/GPD_ProviderWebsite.asp