

SSVF Community Plan & Gaps Analysis Tool

Frequently Asked Questions

April 21, 2015

Grantees in SSVF Priority 1 (P1), 25 City, and/or Zero:2016 Communities

Q: Do grantees in P1 communities who have already created a plan also need to complete the new SSVF Community Plan Summary document and related worksheets?

A: Yes, grantees in every CoC need to submit the Plan Summary tool, but for grantees in P1 CoCs this should be an update of the progress to date since the initial plan was submitted.

Q: If we are participating in the VA's 25 Cities initiative or the Zero:2016 campaign can we use that data and not complete the SSVF Edition of the CoC Gaps Analysis Tool (GAT) and related CoC SSVF Inventory Worksheet?

A: If your community is participating in the 25 Cities initiative, Zero:2016 OR has otherwise already completed the VA's CoC Gaps Analysis Tool (GAT), then you do not need to submit the SSVF Edition of the CoC GAT. Instead, please submit 1) the Community Plan Summary, 2) the CoC GAT you've already completed (in lieu of the SSVF Edition of the GAT), and 3) the CoC SSVF Inventory Worksheet.

Q: P2 grantees should be using the SSVF Community Plan Summary and not the SSVF P1 Community Plan, correct?

A: If you are working in a community that already submitted a P1 Community Plan, then that group will provide an update on the plan's progress using this new Community Plan Summary template. If you are in a community that has not yet submitted a plan, then you will need to work with any other SSVF grantees in the same CoC, as well as other local CoC, VA and homeless system partners, to develop your plan and submit a summary to VA using the Community Plan Summary template.

Community Plan Summary and Related Tools

Q: Do we have to complete a community plan and also a Community Plan Summary?

A: If your community does not already have a plan to end homelessness among Veterans you are strongly encouraged begin working on one with your local partners. Please submit a summary of whatever plan your community has in place by May 1, even your plan is still under development.

Q: If several grantees cover a CoC are they to work together and submit one plan to cover the service area or does each grantee submit their own plan?

A: Yes, grantees serving the same CoC should work together, and with other key local partners involved in ending homelessness among Veterans, to complete the Plan Summary and related tools. The toolkit instructions page specifies this as well. If one CoC has several grantees, that group will need to select a lead grantee to submit on behalf of the community.

Q: Do we need to submit a Community Plan Summary for each CoC we work with?

A: Yes. Each CoC needs a grantee (or a lead grantee) to submit a summary of the community's plan to end homelessness among Veterans on behalf of the local primary planning and coordination group. If you are a grantee that serves multiple CoCs, the instructions will guide you on listing your resources and assets on the Grantee Worksheet by CoC, so that you can provide that single worksheet to the lead grantee within each CoC you serve.

Q: If multiple grantees cover the same CoC how should we decide who will take the lead on completing and submitting the plan?

A: This is something your group can decide independently. In a CoC where there is a P1 grant, that grantee would be the lead. If your CoC has two P1 grantees or is all P2 or P3 grantees, it is up to the planning group to determine a lead. There is no criteria for being a lead, just someone who can answer questions VA may have on behalf of the group and communicate any feedback that may be provided.

Q: If the Veterans initiative is Regional, where 3 CoCs we cover are all at the table, may we submit one plan?

A: A separate plan summary must be submitted for each CoC. This is because each CoC has different point-in-time and annual data, as well as different local assets and gaps, and because progress on ending homelessness among Veterans will be measured at the CoC level. However, goals, strategies, and other components of the plan may be similar across CoCs in a broader regional collaboration (unless there are unique differences among the communities).

Q: For a very large CoC, such as a BOS CoC, planning for a portion of the CoC might be more effective. Can we write a plan for half of a CoC?

A: Plans to end homelessness among Veterans – and the summary of that plan due to the VA – should reflect the estimated total annual demand (i.e., number of homeless Veterans expected in 2015) and corresponding goals and strategies to functionally end homelessness for those Veterans and Veterans who become homeless going forward. However, the VA recognizes that some CoCs (BOS CoCs in particular) may not yet have the capacity or data to support development of a CoC-wide plan. Plans to end homelessness are often continually evolving or expanding to cover the entire CoC and the VA does not expect that plans will be complete or final for all CoCs as of May 1. If this is the case for your CoC, please submit what you have by May 1 and note any missing or additional work needed.

Q: What is the difference between SSVF Gap Analyses and VA/COC Gap Analyses?

A: The VA Homeless Programs (all VA programs) developed a gap analysis tool (GAT) for VA Medical Centers to use in setting goals for ending Veteran homelessness. Recently, the VA issued a revised version of the GAT based on the CoC geography (initially issued on 3/9/2015). The "SSVF Edition" of the CoC GAT is an abridged version of the CoC-level tool, designed to use the same data and modeling approach as the full CoC tool, but in a streamlined fashion and with a focus on only SSVF programs. This was developed since many communities have not used the full CoC tool or do not presently have the capacity to use the CoC GAT.

Q: Is every grantee expected to submit a grantee worksheet? For example one COC plan may have several grantee worksheets as part of its submission.

A: If a grantee serves multiple CoCs, they will create a Grantee Worksheet and provide that single worksheet to each grantee lead in the CoC they serve. That means one CoC may have to gather several grantee worksheets in order to complete the CoC Inventory worksheet, which compiles available SSVF resources in that single CoC.

Q: Should we complete the worksheets, SSVF Edition of the CoC Gaps Analysis Tool, and plan summary to cover all of 2015, even though our grant ends 09/30/15?

A: Yes, for purposes of planning the projections, you should assume that funding levels remain the same for the October-December quarter (FY16 Q1).

Q: We operate an SSVF program in a CoC that isn't meeting to develop a plan to end homelessness among Veterans. What should we do?

A: If your CoC and/or other local stakeholders have not developed a basic plan to end homelessness among Veterans, SSVF grantees are encouraged to reach out to local partners to initiate such planning. In some communities, SSVF grantees have stepped into lead roles to ensure a plan is in place to functionally end homelessness among Veterans and that specifically identifies what role SSVF has in ensuring all homeless Veterans are rapidly engaged and housed.

Q: Some homeless Veterans in our community do not meet SSVF eligibility requirements. Therefore, the number who need rapid re-housing assistance may be greater than the number who qualify for SSVF. How should we address that?

A: Not every Veteran qualifies for SSVF. In such cases, communities should have alternative forms of permanent housing placement assistance available to assist Veterans and ensure a rapid end to their homelessness. Many communities are using HUD, state, and/or local funding to fill these gaps.

Q: Will the due date change, maybe an extension? This is a lot of complex material to complete with a team by May 1st.

A: Please submit what you have by 5/1 and note any missing information. The VA recognizes that no plan is final and that some communities are only now beginning to formulate a plan to end homelessness among Veterans. There will be opportunities to provide an updated summary later in the year. The important thing is to be working with local partners now, since our national goal is to achieve a functional end to homelessness among Veterans by the end of this year.

Q: What does the goal about ensuring "no Veteran is ever forced to live on the street" mean?

A: Achieving this goal means that, at any point in time, there are no unsheltered Veterans in your community or, if there are any unsheltered Veterans, they are known to SSVF and other homeless assistance providers, they have been engaged by a provider, and they have been offered decent, safe, and low barrier shelter and/or housing. Low barrier shelter and housing means there are no entry conditions, such as sobriety, income, etc., apart from not being physical threat to others.

SSVF Program Questions

Q: Can SSVF Bridge someone to PSH?

A: Yes, SSVF can serve as a bridge to PSH for a literally homeless Veteran. Homeless Veterans retain both their homeless and chronic homeless status when being assisted by SSVF rapid re-housing. For more information see:
<https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/CPD-memorandum-guidance-for-determining-eligibility-for-veterans-affairs-programs.pdf>

Q: How long can SSVF funds be used to bridge?

A: There is no specified time limit apart from the time limits on SSVF assistance. See the [SSVF Program Guide](#) for further guidance.