

# **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR VETERAN FAMILIES**

## **Rapid Resolution Service Compliance Guidance**

v.2 April 1, 2019

\*Document Subject to Change\*

## Table of Contents

<b>Description of Rapid Resolution Services and Design .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Rapid Resolution Defined .....	1
<b>SSVF Rapid Resolution Process and Principles .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Key Distinctions: Rapid Resolution Activities vs. Traditional SSVF Activities .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Rapid Resolution Enrollment Guidelines.....</b>	<b>3</b>
General Enrollment Principles and Summary.....	3
Rapid Resolution Homeless Status and SSVF Enrollment.....	4
Documentation of SSVF Eligibility.....	6
<b>Rapid Resolution Services Limitations and Considerations.....</b>	<b>7</b>
Household Support.....	7
Rapid Rehousing Support .....	8
Homelessness Prevention Support .....	8
<b>Non Traditional - Temporary Financial Assistance.....</b>	<b>8</b>
Rental Assistance Limitations When a Lease is in Place or Established .....	9
Documentation Requirements.....	10
Emergency Housing Assistance.....	10
General Housing Stability Assistance.....	11
Documentation Requirements.....	11
Relocation Payments to Permanent Housing Destinations .....	11
<b>Transition from Rapid Resolution Services to Traditional SSVF Services .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Habitability or Housing Quality Standards Inspections and Rent Reasonableness .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Fraud Prevention .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>HMIS and Data Capture Requirements (Until September 30, 2019) .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Documenting Rapid Resolution Conversations .....	13
<b>Documenting Rapid Resolution Services in HMIS .....</b>	<b>13</b>

## Description of Rapid Resolution Services and Design

The Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program provides homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing assistance to Veterans at imminent risk of or experiencing literal homelessness. In an effort to identify and promote new and creative responses to homelessness among Veterans, the SSVF Program Office is implementing Rapid Resolution services as an allowable activity for SSVF grantees.

### Rapid Resolution Defined

- Rapid Resolution (RR) is an intervention designed to prevent immediate entry into homelessness or immediately resolve a household's homelessness once they enter shelter, transitional housing or an unsheltered situation
- RR includes both Diversion and Rapid Exit strategies with the aim of ensuring that homelessness is avoided or is as brief as possible when it does occur
- RR SHOULD be attempted with every Veteran with whom you interact regardless of their perceived barriers.
- RR and other diversion approaches are system-wide interventions that can be used for all populations, not just Veterans.

SSVF Rapid Resolution is designed to give SSVF grantees and their partners new ways to engage Veterans immediately before or directly after they become homeless to assist them in avoiding continued literal homelessness. This type of service can reduce the trauma and expense associated with extended periods of homelessness and the strain on the housing crisis response system and affordable housing resources in the community. Rapid Resolution services are intended to provide supportive service and financial assistance to help households identify a safe, alternative housing option, even if temporary, at or immediately after entry into the emergency shelter or housing crisis response system. Veteran households who receive Rapid Resolution services but are unable to stabilize in the housing identified through Rapid Resolution can receive more traditional SSVF services, as needed, consistent with a progressive assistance approach. Veterans receiving Rapid Resolution services are afforded more, not fewer, options as they work to end their housing crisis.

### SSVF Rapid Resolution Process and Principles

- Continuum of Care Coordinated entry access points, VA Medical Centers and other emergency providers identify a Veteran immediately before or immediately after their homeless episode begins, and rapidly refer or connect the Veteran to an SSVF grantee who can meet with the Veteran that day, or if needed, shortly after their initial contact. In some cases, SSVF grantees will be the natural first point of contact for Veterans seeking housing crisis services.
- SSVF grantees work with the Veteran household to identify any potential immediate safe place, even if temporary, such as within the Veteran's network of family, friends,

or other social supports, in order to avoid the trauma of staying in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation.

- If this effort is unsuccessful, the grantee, in partnership with other community stakeholders, ensures immediate or continued access to housing crisis services/shelter and connection to permanent housing through local coordinated entry protocol.
- Where an alternative housing option is identified that is expected to last fewer than 90 days, SSVF continues to provide support services to identify a longer-term housing plan, which may include traditional SSVF services later, or not. Veteran households in housing situations that are not expected to last 90 days must not receive Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) as part of the Rapid Resolution service package.
- Where an alternative housing option is identified that is expected to last more than 90 days, and there is a possibility that this placement could become a long-term housing placement, SSVF provides supportive services and may provide, as necessary, limited TFA to support that housing solution (TFA restrictions described below).
- All Veterans who have identified an alternative housing situation through Rapid Resolution should remain enrolled for a minimum of 90 days, even if the active intervention ends after a brief period. This ongoing enrollment allows for progressive engagement/assistance if necessary (participant will retain initial enrollment status) and is important for periodic follow-up.
- SSVF provides referrals and coordination with appropriate VA and mainstream resources that will support housing stability, similar to traditional SSVF services.

## Key Distinctions: Rapid Resolution Activities vs. Traditional SSVF Activities\*

Service Type (As necessary through progressive assistance)	SSVF Traditional	Rapid Resolution
Focus on problem solving, conflict resolution, and Veteran's family and social networks to help Veteran avoid shelter entry or prolonged stays in shelter.	Yes	Yes
Ability for SSVF Grantees to pay family members, friends or other hosts from social networks (details below).	No	Yes
Ability for SSVF Grantees to make payments without a formal lease agreement in place.	No	Yes
Supportive Services	Yes	Yes
Security Deposits	Yes	No, unless full SSVF needed later
Rental Assistance and other TFA	Yes	Yes - Restricted
Habitability or Housing Quality Standards Inspection Required	Yes, per Program Guide	Dependent on temporary housing situation
Relocation Payments/Costs	Yes - Restricted	Yes - Restricted

\*More detail and information throughout this document

## Rapid Resolution Enrollment Guidelines

### General Enrollment Principles and Summary

- All Veterans should be engaged by SSVF as quickly as possible at the point of seeking shelter or soon after initial contact with the homeless system.

- Veteran status and income should be determined as early in the conversation as possible. If the Veteran is not eligible for SSVF then they should be provided a warm hand-off to other community or crisis services providers.
- SSVF grantees are expected to engage in Rapid Resolution conversations with any and all Veterans who present for assistance, regardless of perceived or real barriers to housing or other known vulnerabilities.
- Veterans must meet SSVF eligibility criteria in order to receive Rapid Resolution services. All Veterans enrolled in SSVF and receiving a Rapid Resolution intervention will be entered in HMIS consistent with SSVF requirements and the SSVF Rapid Resolution data workflow.
- For the purposes of monitoring and program review, case files should in some way be distinguished to note the household received Rapid Resolution services.
- All eligible Veteran households who engage in a Rapid Resolution service or conversation are documented by SSVF even if that intervention is unsuccessful in identifying an alternative option and the Veteran enters or remains in emergency shelter or crisis housing.
- If a Veteran household is not able to identify an alternative housing option through Rapid Resolution, SSVF grantees should follow local Coordinated Entry policies and procedures when referring the household to an emergency shelter or to the housing crisis response system.
- Veterans enrolled in SSVF as a result of the Rapid Resolution conversation should maintain their enrollment in SSVF for a minimum of 90 days to allow for continued work with the Veteran to identify permanent housing if the initial housing identified through Rapid Resolution is not permanent. If necessary, continued enrollment allows Veterans to retain their original at-risk or homeless status for the purposes of providing more robust HP/RRH services should such assistance be required to help the Veteran avoid literal homelessness in the near term.
  - This means a Veteran who is diverted or rapidly exited from shelter on a temporary basis can still retain their initial homeless status from the point of enrollment allowing for longer term services, if needed and as appropriate.
  - If longer term, more traditional SSVF services are needed, all Program Requirements, including lease and housing requirements, must then be met. Information regarding Homelessness Prevention threshold scores is noted below.
- Limited TFA can be provided to support a housing situation that will last for at least 90 days. All TFA payments must meet regulatory guidelines for eligible costs, and agencies must maintain appropriate documentation validating and describing all such payments.

### **Rapid Resolution Homeless Status and SSVF Enrollment**

All Veteran households who identify temporary or permanent housing through the Rapid Resolution conversation will be enrolled into the SSVF Program. Veterans who are not able to identify temporary or permanent housing through the Rapid Resolution conversation should not be enrolled in SSVF unless SSVF enrollment is part of the community's coordinated entry process. Please see the following chart:

Situation Previous Night/Tonight	Outcome of Rapid Resolution Discussion	Veteran's Homeless Status	Documentation of Homeless Status	SSVF HMIS Formal Enrollment	Rapid Resolution Enrollment	Specialized TFA?
Family or Friend	Returns to Family or Friend the same day for short-term housing (less than 90 days)	Category 2 - Imminently at Risk	Case manager statement after speaking with family or friends	HP	Yes	No, unless commitment of 90 days made later
	Returns to Family or Friend the same day as permanent housing (90+days)	Category 2 - Imminently at Risk	Case manager statement after speaking with family or friends	HP	Yes	Yes
	Unable to identify short-term or PH placement. Refer to emergency shelter	Category 1 - Literally Homeless	Shelter or outreach documentation	Follow local CE Policies	No	No
Sheltered/ Unsheltered	Goes to Family or Friend for short-term housing (less than 90 days)	Category 1 - Literally Homeless	Shelter or outreach documentation	RRH	Yes	No, unless commitment of 90 days made later
	Goes to Family or Friend the same day as permanent housing (90+ days)	Category 1 - Literally Homeless	Shelter or outreach documentation	RRH	Yes	Yes
Institution (Jail, Prison, Hospital) - not homeless before entry or in institution more than 90 days	Goes to Family or Friend the same day for short-term housing (less than 90 days)	Category 2 - Imminently at Risk	Case manager statement after speaking with family or friends	HP	Yes	No, unless commitment of 90 days made later
	Goes to Family or Friend the same day as permanent housing (90+ days)	Category 2 - Imminently at Risk	Case manager statement after speaking with family or friends	HP	Yes	Yes

Situation Previous Night/Tonight	Outcome of Rapid Resolution Discussion	Veteran's Homeless Status	Documentation of Homeless Status	SSVF HMIS Formal Enrollment	Rapid Resolution Enrollment	Specialized TFA?
	Unable to identify short-term or PH placement. Refer to emergency shelter	Category 1 - Literally Homeless	Shelter or outreach documentation	Follow local CE Policies	Yes	No
Institution (Jail, Prison, Hospital) - homeless before entry and in institution less than 90 days	Goes to Family or Friend the same day for short-term housing (less than 90 days)	Category 2 - Imminently at Risk	Case manager statement after speaking with family or friends	HP	Yes	No, unless commitment of 90 days made later
	Goes to Family or Friend the same day as permanent housing (90+ days)	Category 2 - Imminently at Risk	Case manager statement after speaking with family or friends	HP	Yes	Yes
	Unable to identify short-term or PH placement. Refer to emergency shelter	Category 1 - Literally Homeless	Shelter or outreach documentation	Follow local CE Policies	Yes	No

## Documentation of SSVF Eligibility

All Veterans enrolled in SSVF via an initial Rapid Resolution service must be eligible for traditional SSVF services. The only difference in eligibility is related to the HP Threshold Screening Score, which is discussed below. Given the rapidity with which this intervention occurs, grantees may need to rely more on self-declaration of income and continue to pursue more formal income documentation during the term of the engagement. Grantees are expected, via Squares 2.0 or other means, to quickly verify Veteran status toward the beginning of the Rapid Resolution conversation or as soon as possible afterwards. Grantees should document efforts to obtain full documentation of income and include that documentation in each Veteran's case file, similar to traditional SSVF documentation requirements. For the purposes of ensuring Rapid Resolution services can be provided immediately at the point of a housing crisis, the following applies:



Status of Documentation	Supportive Services Allowable	Resolution TFA Allowable	Enrollment Status
No documentation/verbal only	Yes – limited to initial Rapid Resolution Conversation	No	Screened but Not Enrolled unless otherwise able to establish documentation
Pending Verification of Veteran Status	Yes – limited to initial Rapid Resolution Conversation	No	Enrolled in SSVF once Veteran status verified via Squares or other means
Self-Declaration of Income	Yes	Yes	Enrolled in SSVF; pursue formal documentation when possible
Confirmed Veteran Status	Yes	Yes	Enrolled in SSVF
Confirmed Income Status	Yes	Yes	Enrolled in SSVF

## Rapid Resolution Services Limitations and Considerations

Veterans enrolled in SSVF via an initial Rapid Resolution intervention are eligible for the full suite of non-TFA SSVF Supportive Services. SSVF grantees are strongly encouraged to work closely with the Veteran household in order to determine whether a temporary stay is likely to lead to long term housing without further SSVF assistance, or whether a longer term suite of SSVF services will be needed. This determination is part of a phased assessment, progressive approach similar to traditional SSVF services.

### Household Support

- SSVF grantees can support members of the new/re-united household if the Veteran identifies those individuals as members of their own household. In this case, SSVF may provide the full range of family or other supports similar to traditional SSVF services.
- If the Veteran does NOT choose to include the new household members as part of their “Household”, then SSVF supportive services are limited only to the eligible Veteran being served.
- If the Veteran does include the new household members as part of their “Household”, the full suite of services are available to those household members.
- The Veteran’s income status at enrollment (prior to joining a new “Household”) is maintained for the first 90 days of the SSVF enrollment. However, at the 90 day recertification the income of all identified “Household” members would need to be counted if the Veteran needs longer term services. In this case, the newly defined

household's income may be too high for continued SSVF eligibility, at which point the Veteran and entire household would need to be exited from SSVF. The grantee can work with the Veteran to determine who is in their household and then document the living situation as shared housing if they need further support.

### **Rapid Rehousing Support**

Veterans who were enrolled as RRH are able to move into a temporary housing situation due to a Rapid Resolution service are eligible for longer term Rapid Rehousing support, as needed. This support may be identified at the beginning of the SSVF enrollment or later during the 90 day recertification period. If traditional Rapid Rehousing support is needed within or after the initial 90 days then all traditional SSVF requirements are in effect, including lease requirements for the Veteran household. Grantees must document in case files the reasons and justification for continuing SSVF services beyond the initial 90 day period.

### **Homelessness Prevention Support**

Veterans who present for shelter and engage in a Rapid Resolution conversation, but who were not homeless the night before they presented, are enrolled in Homelessness Prevention but no HP Screening Threshold score is required (see HMIS guidance) at that time. However, further intensive Homelessness Prevention support required additional screening:

- If a Veteran's housing situation becomes unstable **WITHIN** the first 90 days or enrollment and no other alternatives have been identified, then grantees provide the full suite of SSVF services such as security deposit, rental assistance or intensive supportive services, using a progressive assistance approach.
- If a Veteran's housing situation becomes unstable **AFTER** the Veteran is exited from SSVF with Rapid Resolution services, then grantees may use a lower Rapid Resolution HP threshold score to determine if the household should receive additional financial and non-financial supports. More information on this Rapid Resolution HP threshold score will be communicated through the SSVF Program Office.

### **Non Traditional - Temporary Financial Assistance**

Rapid Resolution financial assistance allows for limited, need based payments to be paid to family, friends, or other networks willing to provide temporary housing, with or without a lease in place, and where the minimum requirements are met:

- The household or family is willing to house the Veteran for a minimum of 90 days and is willing to consider a longer-term stay.
- The household indicates a need for financial assistance in order to allow the Veteran to stay with them. TFA is **NOT** the primary service associated with Rapid Resolution, but instead only used when necessary to facilitate a safe alternative to homelessness.
- Financial assistance for housing is limited to one month and should be prorated based on space allocated to the Veteran. For instance, if the Veteran will be residing in one

bedroom of a 3-bedroom unit, TFA would be limited to one-third of the fair and reasonable costs associated with that unit.

- The Veteran and household family agree on the terms of their stay. Although a formal lease is not required, the head of household offering housing to the Veteran needs to provide this commitment in writing.
- The SSVF grantee works with the Veteran and the household or family to develop an understanding that describes expectations for the Veteran's placement. This understanding may be formalized in writing and could include use of common facilities, allowable times to invite guests, and contributions to household support and maintenance.

Situation	Non-TFA Supportive Services Allowable	Prorated Resolution Rental Assistance Allowable	Resolution Emergency Housing Assistance/General Housing Stability Assistance	Eligible for Traditional SSVF Services?
Veteran temporarily housed but no minimum commitment of 90 days	Yes, if needed	No	No	Yes, if needed
Veteran temporarily housed with minimum 90 day commitment with the possibility for a longer term stay, but no formal lease in place	Yes, if needed	No	EHA –Yes GHSA - Yes	Yes, if needed
Veteran temporarily or permanently housed with minimum 90 day commitment and lease is put in place	Yes, if needed	Yes, if needed	EHA – Not once lease in place GHSA – Yes *RA Allowable after EHA if lease in place	Yes, if needed
Unable to resolve situation and prevent shelter entry	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

### Rental Assistance Limitations When a Lease is in Place or Established

- Financial assistance only offered if necessary to remove barriers or financial constraints for a household or family to allow Veteran to stay.
- Lease or formal living agreement must be in place

- Maximum one-time payment (one-month rent based on reasonableness and portion of overall space occupied by Veteran). For example, a host home with three bedrooms where the Veteran occupies one of those bedrooms would allow for a total payment of 33% of the total payment for that single month. All payments must conform to standards for rent reasonableness.
- Rental Assistance payment counts toward total allowable months of payment over a two year period under SSVF regulation.
- No Security Deposits allowed unless Veteran needs further assistance beyond the Rapid Resolution period or if Rapid Resolution is directly to a leased apartment, in which case full SSVF RRH services are available.
- May be combined with one-time General Housing Stability Assistance payment or Emergency Housing Assistance, as described below.
- Typical Rental Assistance may be provided if the Veteran needs longer term SSVF services beyond Rapid Resolution, if all traditional SSVF requirements are met.

## Documentation Requirements

- Standard documentation of lease in Veteran's name
- Habitability/HQS Documentation if moving into a new housing situation where the Veteran has never lived before (even if unit has otherwise been occupied by family/social connection)
- Documentation that amount paid is prorated based on space occupied by Veteran
- Case notes demonstrating SSVF diligence in assessing necessity of such payment

## Emergency Housing Assistance

- Financial assistance only offered if necessary to remove barriers or financial constraints for host to allow Veteran to stay
- Can be used for rapid resolution when host household is able to commit to a minimum stay of 90 days with the possibility of a longer-term housing placement
- No lease or formal living agreement in place required, but host household must agree to 90 days in writing.
- Limit one-time payment (equal to one month of rent based on reasonableness and portion of overall space occupied by Veteran). For example, a host home with three bedrooms where the Veteran occupies one of those bedrooms would allow for a total payment of 33% of the total payment for a single month. All payments must conform to standards for rent reasonableness.
- May be combined with one-time Rental Assistance payment if lease is not initially in place but formal lease is provided later

## General Housing Stability Assistance

- Financial assistance only offered if necessary to remove barriers or financial constraints for host to allow Veteran to stay
- Can be used for rapid resolution when host household is able to commit to a minimum stay of 90 days with the possibility of a longer-term housing placement
- No lease or formal living agreement in place required, but host household must agree to 90 days in writing.
- Limit up to \$1500 per Veteran in a two-year period, which contributes to overall cap outlined in the traditional SSVF regulation.
- May be combined with one-time Rental Assistance payment (in lease situations)

## Documentation Requirements

- Documented/written commitment from the household or family that Veteran can stay for at least 90 days
- Case notes demonstrating SSVF diligence in assessing necessity of such payment

Temporary Financial Assistance	Limitations
Emergency Housing Assistance	30 Day (1 month)
General Housing Stability Assistance	Contributes to 2 year/\$1500 cap
Utility Payments	One-Time Payment counts toward TFA limit

## Relocation Payments to Permanent Housing Destinations

Grantees may, in limited circumstances when delivering Rapid Resolution services, assist Veterans to move to an area where they have strong social supports or an offer of employment, as outlined in the [SSVF Returning Home Initiative](#) procedures. This requires careful coordination with an SSVF grantee in the community the Veteran wants to “return to”. This service can only be provided for those who are literally homeless, and each potential instance must be discussed and receive approval from the SSVF Regional Coordinator. For the purpose of Rapid Resolution, please refer to the [Returning Home FAQ](#) for more information.

## Transition from Rapid Resolution Services to Traditional SSVF Services

The purpose of SSVF Rapid Resolution is to promote alternative housing options for Veterans seeking or having recently accessed emergency shelter or other emergency homeless services. VA acknowledges that these temporary solutions may not always be sufficient to help the Veteran avoid homelessness over the medium or long term. Veterans provided Rapid Resolution services at the point of their housing crisis should remain

enrolled in SSVF for at least 90 days and would retain their eligibility for continued SSVF assistance.

Veterans who are diverted or rapidly exited from shelter to temporary or permanent destinations that turn out not to be stable, may be provided traditional SSVF services such as housing search, case management and TFA (within the service's limitations as described in this document) while residing in the temporary situation.

- Where a Veteran's housing situation does not have potential for being sustained or stabilized with limited Rapid Resolution services and resources, grantees may provide traditional SSVF services such as housing search, relocation, and TFA.
- For those requiring the more robust services SSVF has to offer, all traditional SSVF Program requirements are in effect.

## Habitability or Housing Quality Standards Inspections and Rent Reasonableness

Outcome	Habitability/Housing Quality Standards*	Rent Reasonableness?
Returning to a host or other situation that the Veteran had previously, at any time, resided in, even if temporarily	No	Yes
Moving to a host or other situation where the Veteran had never in their lifetime resided	Yes	Yes
Veteran provided traditional SSVF services or when Resolution not possible. Standard HP or RRH Enrollment and Service	Standard SSVF Guidance	Standard SSVF Guidance

\*Note: While Habitability/HQS inspections are not required when a Veteran is returning to a previous residence, it is expected that all Grantees will engage Veterans in a conversation to ensure that any housing or host situation is safe for the Veteran.

## Fraud Prevention

The SSVF Program Office would like grantees to be mindful of potential situations and instances where fraud could occur. Reviewing preventative measures and risk mitigation is key and aligns with SSVF standard protocols. SSVF grantees are required to review the Audit Fraud Waste and Abuse Webinar annually at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/2174985029631659522>

## HMIS and Data Capture Requirements (Until September 30, 2019)

The SSVF Program Office wants to know how many Rapid Resolution conversations grantee staff had with Veterans and how many Veterans received Rapid Resolution services after identifying a temporary or permanent alternative to homelessness.

### Documenting Rapid Resolution Conversations

Step 1: In a monthly internal log, document the number of unique Veteran households that received Rapid Resolution conversations conducted by each staff member.

Step 2: Report the total number of unique Veteran households that received Rapid Resolution conversations conducted by grantee staff for the entire grant year in the Total number of unique Veteran households that have received Rapid Resolution conversations field of the Quarterly Certification requirement.

Step 3: Report the total number of Veteran households enrolled in SSVF and receiving Rapid Resolution services for the entire grant year in the Total number of SSVF Rapid Resolution enrollments field of the Quarterly Certification requirement. These numbers should match Rapid Resolution numbers served in HMIS. Please review data instructions in the Rapid Resolution Compliance Guide for instructions on how to track these households in HMIS.

### Documenting Rapid Resolution Services in HMIS

Step 1: Enroll Veteran as HP or RRH based on enrollment guidance in Rapid Resolution Compliance Guide

Step 2: Complete all required SSVF data elements

Exception: For HP enrollments, enter '0' in V7 SSVF HP Targeting Criteria

Step 3: Enter 'RR' in V2 Other Services for the Veteran Head of Household (only needs to be entered for Veteran)

Field 1: Date of Service

Field 2: Type of Service

Response 6: Other (non-TFA) Supportive Service

Enter: 'RR'

NOTE: After the implementation of the new HMIS data standards on October 1, 2019 it is anticipated that Rapid Resolution Services will be entered in HMIS under V2 Other Services with a Response Option 9: 'Rapid Resolution' and will no longer need additional text entered to indicate 'RR.'