This document provides answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ) received during webinars and office hours on how the expiration of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) and Stafford Act incident period at the end of the day on May 11, 2023, will impact the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program.

SSVF grantees are strongly encouraged to review related guidance and webinars in addition to this document. These include the following:

* [End of Public Health Declaration and Stafford Act Flexibilities - March 8, 2023](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/Stafford_Webinar_March_8_2023.pdf) (Webinar)
* [Expiration of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency and Stafford Act Flexibilities - March 24, 2023](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/Stafford_Webinar_March_24_2023.pdf) (Webinar)
* [Planning for the End of the Public Health Emergency - April 13, 2023](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/End_of_PHE_April_13_2023.pdf) (Webinar)
* [Shallow Subsidy Service Overview](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_Shallow_Subsidy_Two_Pager.pdf)
* [September 2022 Shallow Subsidy FAQ](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/Shallow_Subsidy_FAQ.pdf)
* [SSVF Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) Limits](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_TFA_Limits.pdf)
* [SSVF Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Supplemental Award FAQ](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SNOFA_FAQs.pdf) (Guidance for landlord and tenant incentives and 80% AMI changes consistent for all grantees)

## Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA)

### 1. What is the impact on TFA after May 11, 2023?

After May 11, 2023, the following TFA cost limits are reset:

* Rental assistance (effective start date of June 1, 2023, rent payment)
* Utility assistance (effective start date of June 1, 2023, utility payment)
* Emergency Housing Assistance (EHA) (effective start date of May 12, 2023)
* All other TFA, including Shallow Subsidy, will follow the SSVF standards and guidelines.

### 2. Would TFA payments made for the June 2023 rent period count as the first month of TFA for the purposes of calculating TFA limits?

Yes, since the TFA reset has an effective start date of June 1, 2023, TFA payments made for the June 2023 rent period will count as the first month of TFA provided, regardless of when those funds are disbursed.

For example, if an SSVF grantee disburses payment on May 25, 2023, for the June 2023 rent period, this payment would count as the first month.

### 3. For Veterans whose income drops below 30% of Area Median Income (AMI) at the time of recertification, does the number of months of TFA we can provide also change?

For Veterans whose next recertification occurs *after May 11, 2023*, and whose income was previously above 30% AMI at the time of enrollment, but fell below 30% AMI, they can be provided additional months of TFA as if they entered SSVF below 30% AMI.

### 4. Are limits on the amount of TFA spent on security deposits included in the TFA reset?

No, as security deposit requirements were not changed by the Stafford Act, the limits on the amount that SSVF grantees may provide do not reset.

SSVF grantees may only provide one security deposit in a two-year period, regardless of an active or expiring PHE declaration.

### 5. How should we calculate TFA allowances for Veterans who receive TFA prior to the expiration of the PHE at the end of the day on May 11, 2023?

After May 11, 2023, the limits of TFA are reset, with an effective start date of June 1, 2023. Any rental assistance payments provided to Veterans prior to June 1, 2023, do not count toward the number of TFA allowances Please note that limits to Shallow Subsidy assistance do not reset.

Additionally, Veterans who enter SSVF with incomes between 31 and 80% AMI are eligible for the following TFA allowances:

* Maximum of 10 months of TFA in a 2-year period.
* No more than 6 months of TFA in any 12-month period.

### 6. Do utility assistance payments reset on May 11, 2023?

Yes, utility assistance payments reset as of May 11, 2023, in the same way rental assistance payments resets.

### 7. Are internet access fees an eligible utility cost?

Yes. As of November 1, 2022, internet access fees are now an eligible cost for utility assistance payments for SSVF. All SSVF grantees are required to pursue the Affordable Connectivity Program and any other resources to assist the Veteran household in obtaining internet access. For more information, visit: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/getinternet>

## Emergency Housing Assistance

### 8. If a Veteran is currently receiving EHA, or has already received EHA in the past, will the limits on the number of days using EHA also be reset after May 11, 2023?

Yes, Veterans who are currently receiving or have received EHA prior to the end of the day on May 11, 2023, will have their limits on days of EHA reset. Starting on May 12, 2023, they will be eligible for an additional 60 days of EHA assistance as long as such assistance is appropriate based on SSVF’s [Emergency Housing Assistance Guidance](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/HPO_Policy_Guidance_EHA.pdf) and the Veteran’s housing and service needs. This is regardless of how much EHA they have already received or their household composition.

### 9. Can SSVF use EHA for any Veteran who is unsheltered or who desires a hotel stay while working toward housing, regardless of the reason?

No, EHA should be the last resort when identifying safe shelter options for Veterans. Communities should first try to help Veterans access Health Care for Homeless Veterans Contracted Residential Services, Grant and Per Diem, or community shelter beds before using SSVF for EHA. For more information, read the [Emergency Housing Assistance Guidance](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/HPO_Policy_Guidance_EHA.pdf).

### 10. For EHA, can the maximum of 60 days of assistance be broken up into different instances? Additionally, if a hotel or motel only permits guests to stay for a shorter period of time such as a maximum of 28 days, can a Veteran be placed into a different hotel during the same instance?

EHA is limited to one instance in a two-year period for a maximum of 60 days. Veterans may only access EHA one time in two years and cannot remain in EHA for more than 60 days. Veterans who access EHA and stay less than 60 days cannot access EHA again during that two-year period.  
  
However, SSVF grantees are permitted to move Veterans from one hotel to another during the same EHA instance, for a total maximum of 60 days of assistance.

SSVF grantees may use EHA when other safe shelter options are not immediately available. Additionally, EHA must be linked directly to efforts to move Veterans out of homelessness into permanent housing.

### 11. What documentation is needed for SSVF grantees to provide EHA for Veterans who can access other shelter options but decline to do so? Can I still put them in a hotel even if there isn’t a plan in place in the beginning?

SSVF grantees have discretion in providing EHA to Veterans who decline other shelter options. However, Veteran’s preference alone is not sufficient justification to provide EHA, and SSVF grantees must ensure that EHA would provide the Veteran with the support needed to move them into permanent housing.

EHA verification will be required after May 11, 2023. An updated EHA verification form can be located here: <https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/EHA_Verification.docx>.

SSVF grantees must ensure that Veterans entered into EHA are immediately provided services focused on obtaining permanent housing. This does not mean a unit must be identified; however, grantees must ensure a pathway toward housing, and services to support that pathway, are in place for Veterans entering EHA.

## Shallow Subsidy

### 12. How does the expiration of the PHE at the end of the day on May 11, 2023, impact Shallow Subsidy assistance?

The expiration of the PHE at the end of the day on May 11, 2023, and the associated resets on certain types of assistance, do not impact Shallow Subsidy assistance. Veterans receiving Shallow Subsidy assistance as of May 11, 2023, will continue their current timeline based on the initial two-year Shallow Subsidy commitment.

Additionally, for Veterans between 30%-80% AMI, TFA provided prior to June 1, 2023, does not count toward the Shallow Subsidy TFA limitations for Veterans with higher incomes.

### 13. How many months of Shallow Subsidy assistance can we provide for Veterans who transition from traditional TFA?

Veterans who transition from traditional TFA to Shallow Subsidy *prior to the end of the day on May 11, 2023*, may receive the full two-year Shallow Subsidy commitment regardless of income level and as long as they are income eligible.

Veterans who transition from traditional TFA to Shallow Subsidy *after May 11, 2023*, may receive Shallow Subsidy commitments based on their income at the point of that transition:

* Veterans at or below 30% AMI may receive the full two years of Shallow Subsidy
* Veterans between 30%-80% AMI may receive two years of Shallow Subsidy minus X months of TFA provided after May 11, 2023.
* For more information, please refer to the [Shallow Subsidy Compliance Guide.](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/Shallow_Subsidy_Compliance_Guide.pdf)

### 14. Are Veterans whose income increases beyond (i.e., exceeds) 80% AMI while enrolled in Shallow Subsidy still able to participate in the Shallow Subsidy service?

Shallow Subsidy is designed to allow Veterans to increase their income without the risk of exceeding the income limits while they are enrolled. Veterans whose income exceeds 80% AMI at the time of recertification after the initial two years of Shallow Subsidy assistance are no longer eligible for SSVF services and would need to be discharged.

## General Housing Stability Assistance (GHSA) and Other Costs

### 15. What limits will there be on food purchases and how will these purchases count towards the GHSA limits?

After May 11, 2023, food purchases (which are allowable up to a maximum of $500), contribute toward the total allowable GHSA limit of $1,948. Please note that GHSA limits remained in place during the PHE and do not reset after May 11, 2023.

### 16. When did the increase to the maximum GHSA amount become effective?

The increase to the GHSA maximum amount of $1,948 went into effect on January 1, 2023. This cap will be adjusted annually based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U).

### 17. Will food and GHSA limits be adjusted to account for inflation?

The SSVF Program Office does not currently have plans to increase the $500 limit on food. GHSA limits are adjusted over time based on increases in the cost of living. The SSVF program office will communicate those changes when they occur.

### 18. Does childcare assistance reset as well?

Childcare assistance remained in place during the PHE, does not reset after May 11, 2023, and will continue to follow the SSVF standards and guidelines.

## Recertifications

### 19. When do you conduct recertifications after May 11, 2023?

Grantees should follow the regular recertification schedule/timing for each individual Veteran.

## 80% Area Median Income

### 20. Does the AMI limit go back to 50% after May 11, 2023?

No, on December 22, 2022, the income eligibility criterion for the SSVF program was permanently changed to 80% AMI.

### 21. Are there going to be different limits for clients between 51-80% AMI?

The TFA limitations for Veterans between 51-80% AMI are the same for those whose income fall between 31-50% AMI. Please see the TFA limit chart for more details.

## Documentation

### 22. Are electronic signatures still allowable after May 11, 2023

Electronic signatures are allowable, but SSVF grantees must provide the traditional level of case management that includes face-to-face interactions with clients.