



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration

# ***Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)***

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1. The SSVF Program
2. Designing SSVF on available research, consumer and practitioner experience
  - Demographics
  - Needs
3. Year 1 Results & Feedback



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# *The SSVF Program*



- **The goal is Housing Stability and is not contingent on treatment.**
- SSVF funding to be used under “but for” criteria
- Leverage grant funds to enhance housing stability of very low-income Veteran families occupying permanent housing
- Encouraged to establish relationships with Continuum of Care
- SSVF Program not intended to provide long-term support for participants, nor will it be able to address all the financial and supportive services needs of participants that affect housing stability; partnerships and referrals are critical (e.g. HUD-VASH, HUD’s Housing Choice Voucher programs, McKinney-Vento funded supportive housing programs, TANF)



# Participant Eligibility Summary

1. **Veteran Family:** defined by the Veteran, includes children & non-traditional households. Families can continue to receive services for up to a full year if Veteran leaves due to institutionalization, death, or other causes.
2. Eligibility includes any veteran with a day of active serve allowing Guard and Reserves called up for short deployments to qualify – important given the reliance on these troops.
3. **Very Low-Income:** < 50% area median income. With targets in next funding round to include:
  - AMI < 30%
  - Veterans with dependents
  - OEF/OIF/OND Veterans
  - Rural areas (need smaller, but unmet)
  - Tribal areas



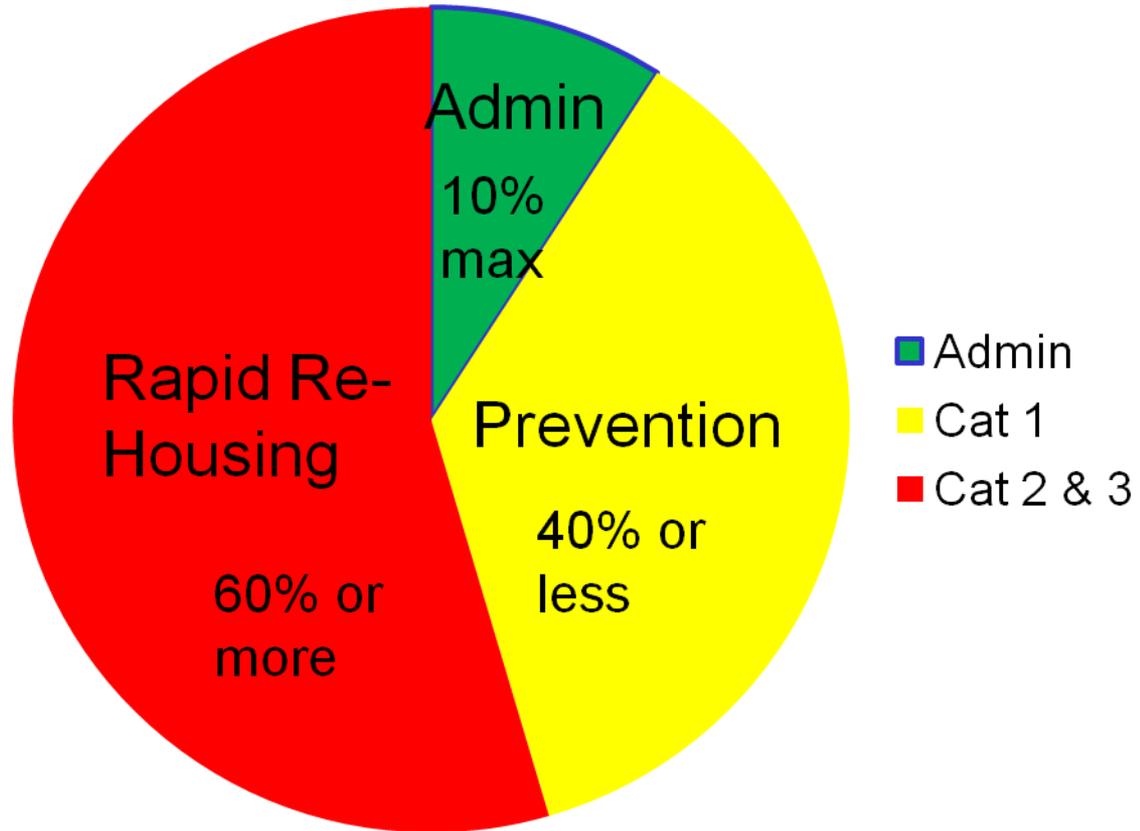
# *SSVF Supportive Services* *(Universal)*

1. Active outreach both in community and with local VA.
2. Case management services
  - Careful assessment of needs in developing plans
  - Providing identified services directly or through referrals
  - Deciding how resources are allocated to participants
3. Assist participants to obtain VA benefits
  - Service connected benefits and NSC pension
  - Educational benefits and vocational services
  - Health care
4. Obtaining mainstream entitlements and services
  - Legal assistance
  - Credit counseling & financial planning
  - Income assistance & health insurance
  - Housing counseling



# Use of Grant Funds

- TFA budget can be increased to 50% (had been limited to 30%).
- Need to submit program change request with revised budget.
- Limits on time described in Final Rule
- Appropriate to ask for co-pays. Payments to third party only.





# SSVF Program Overview

## Supportive Services (cont'd)

Type of Temporary Financial Assistance	Time/Amount Limitation
Rental Assistance*	Max. of 8 months in a 3-year period; no more than 5 months in any 12-month period
Utility-Fee Payment* Assistance	Max. of 4 months in a 3-year period; no more than 2 months in any 12-month period
Security Deposits or Utility Deposits*	Max. of 1 time in a 3-year period for security deposit; Max. of 1 time in a 3-year period for utility deposit
Moving Costs*	Max. of 1 time in a 3-year period
Emergency Supplies*	Max. \$500 during a 3-year period
Child Care**	Max. of 4 months in a 12-month period
Transportation**	Tokens, vouchers, etc. – no time limit Car repairs/maintenance – max. of \$1,000 during 3-year period

\*See § 62.34 of Final Rule for additional requirements and restrictions.

\*\*See § 62.33 of Final Rule for additional requirements and restrictions.



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# Designing SSVF on available research, consumer and practitioner experience



# Location of Homeless Veterans\*

- Almost half of homeless Veterans on a given night were located in four states: California, Florida, Texas, and New York. Only 28 percent of all Veterans were located in those same four states.
- The share of homeless Veterans located in the densest urban areas (or principal cities) is more than twice that of all Veterans (72 percent compared to 31 percent).
- During the course of the year, 33 percent of Veterans experiencing homelessness stayed in emergency shelter for less than one week, 61 percent stayed less than one month, and more than 84 percent Veterans stayed in emergency shelter for less than 3 months.



# ***Homeless Veterans Older Than General Homeless Population***

- 41 percent of homeless Veterans are 51–61 years compared with 16 percent of homeless non-Veterans.
- 9 percent of homeless Veterans are 62 years and older compared with 3 percent of homeless non-Veterans.
- Veterans are older and are more disabled. About 51 percent of individual homeless Veterans have disabilities, compared with 41 percent of sheltered homeless non-Veteran individuals.

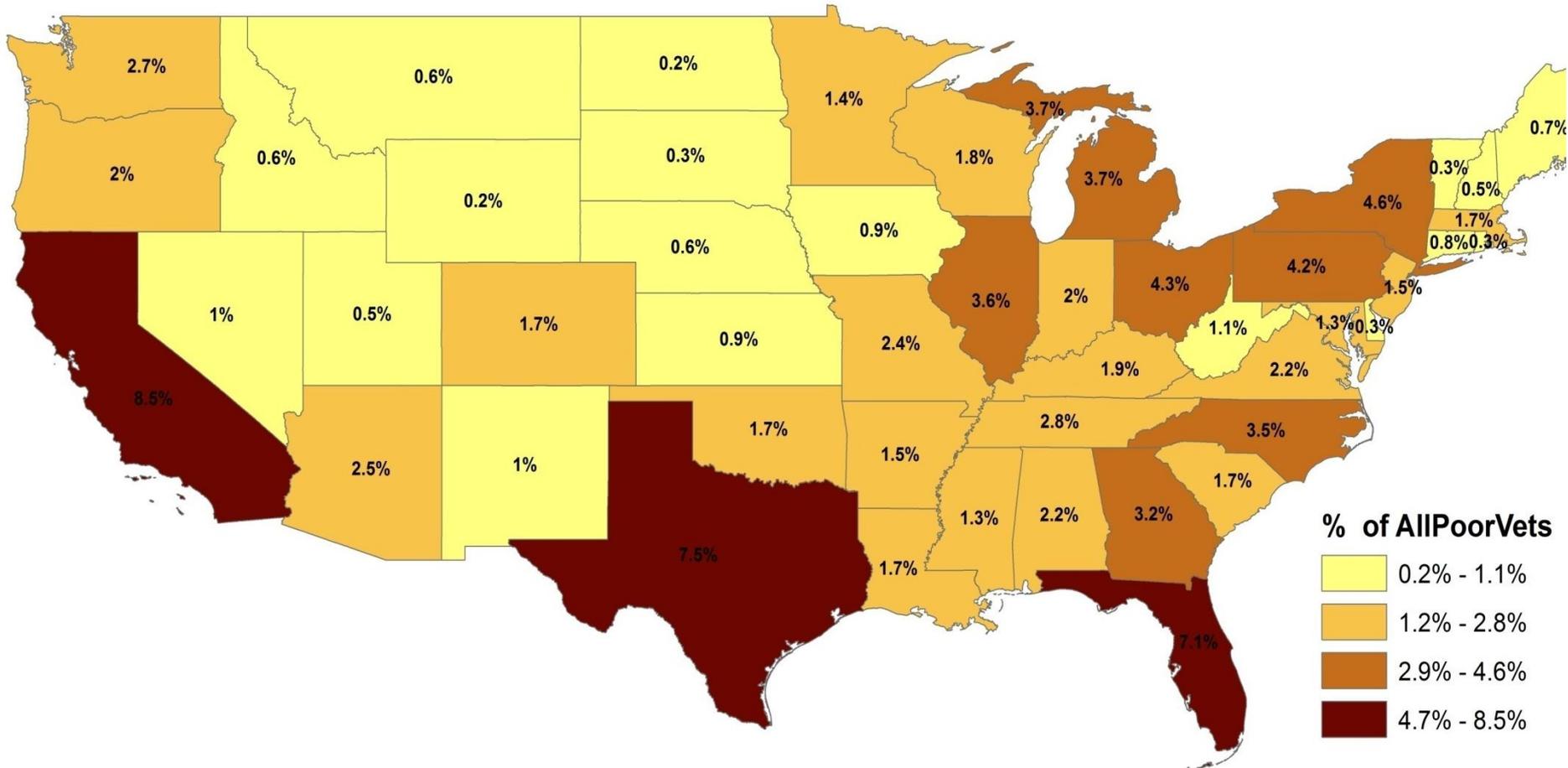


- 13 percent of individual Veterans in poverty became homeless at some point during the year, compared to 6 percent of adults in poverty.
- Rates of homelessness among Veterans living in poverty are particularly high for Veterans identifying as Hispanic/Latino (2.8x) or African American (2.2x).
- Impoverished women Veterans are 3.4x as likely to be in the homeless population as they are to be in the U.S. adult female population.
- Younger Veterans, age 18-30, in poverty are 3.7 times more likely to be homeless than other adults of that age.



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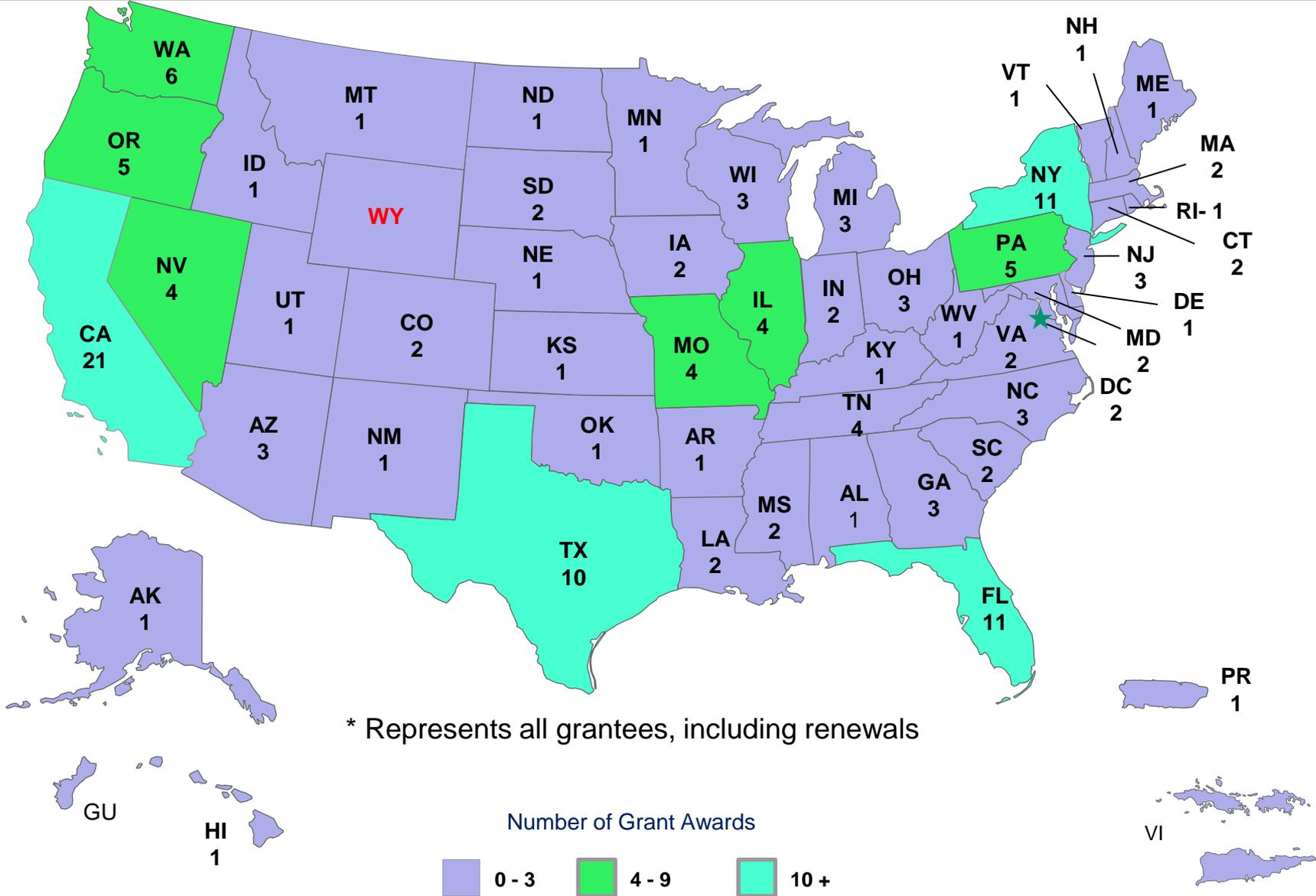
# Distribution of the 1,356,610 Veterans in Poverty





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# SSVF Grant Sites FY 2013\*





- SSVF projects serving 50,000 people in FY 2013 and there are over 1.3 million impoverished Veteran households.
- How do we ensure that SSVF is an effective program to end and prevent homelessness, and not suffer “mission creep” and become an anti-poverty program?



- Targeting, who is at-risk of becoming homeless?
- Once at-risk are identified, how do we determine who at-risk would become homeless “but for” intervention. Even rapid re-housing can be unnecessary; one-third of Veterans stay in shelters less than 1 week & generally leave without special intervention.
- Determining the appropriate (and efficient) response to support housing stability
  - Mainstream services
  - Intensive case management
  - Financial supports
  - Sustainability



Threshold is x+ points

1 point: rental and/or utility arrears

2 points: housing loss in 21 days, significant income loss, applied for shelter, recent military dc, dependent child age 6-17

3 points: housing loss in 14 days, dependent under age 6, 2+ moves in 60 days, living in hotel/motel, friends or family on a temporary basis; dc from institution without housing plan; homeless in past 60 days; income less than 30% AMI

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In many social service programs, recommendations for system designs have generally been made with little consumer input.

- We begin with a recognition that every person/family who is homeless or at-risk has different concerns and needs to be addressed. These concerns may not match agency/provider interests.
- Homelessness only describes living conditions, does not identify the individual needs and aspirations.
- To get to Zero, must engage all Veterans - requires the development of a broad continuum of care that can address the needs identified by Veterans.
- By making consumers active partners, clinicians are more likely to successfully engage them in care (Beck, 2010).



<b>Veterans Literally Homeless (shelter, street, unfit for habitation) (n=3,184)</b>	<b>Veterans in Transitional Housing (VA Grant and Per Diem and Domiciliary) (n=6,111)</b>	<b>Veterans in Permanent Housing (including HUD-VASH) (n=2,672)</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Long-term, permanent housing</li> <li>2. Welfare payments</li> <li>3. Dental Care</li> <li>4. Guardianship (financial)</li> <li>5. Legal assistance for child support issues</li> <li>6. Job training</li> <li>7. Legal assistance for outstanding warrants/fines</li> <li>8. SSI/SSD process</li> <li>9. Family reconciliation assistance</li> <li>10. Job finding</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welfare payments</li> <li>2. Child care</li> <li>3. Legal assistance for child support issues</li> <li>4. Family reconciliation assistance</li> <li>5. Guardianship (financial)</li> <li>6. SSI/SSD process</li> <li>7. Long-term, permanent housing</li> <li>8. Legal assistance for outstanding warrants/fines</li> <li>9. Discharge upgrade</li> <li>10. Women's health care</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dental care</li> <li>2. Legal assistance for child support issues</li> <li>3. Welfare payments</li> <li>4. Child care</li> <li>5. Legal assistance for outstanding warrants/fines</li> <li>6. Family reconciliation assistance</li> <li>7. Credit counseling</li> <li>8. Re-entry services for incarcerated Veterans</li> <li>9. Legal assistance to help restore a driver's license</li> <li>10. Job training</li> </ol>



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# *Year 1: Results, Feedback, and Proposed Changes to SSVF Regulations*



1. Full year projection was to serve 22,000. Served 35,363 during FY 2012.
2. Significant impact on Veteran families with 8,826 children assisted.
3. Of 21,393 Veteran participants, 3,285 were women (15.4% of Veterans served).
4. 15.6% of Veterans served are OIF/OEF/OND.
5. 46.2% of adult participants were disabled.
6. 75% of household had AMI of less than 30%.
7. Average cost per household approximately \$2,800



1. Of those who have exited SSVF, 86% (83% RRH, 90% prevention) or 17,871 are in permanent housing and 1,952 or 9.4% are off the streets in temporary or institutional settings.
2. Average LOS for discharged participants is 93 days.
3. Average income increased 8.3%
  - 205% increase in SSDI
  - 358% increase in VA NSC
  - 245% increase in VA SC
  - 256% increase in SSI
4. In participant survey (N = 1,022), 92% indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with services and 87% said they would definitely recommend SSVF to another Veteran.



- Populations and their needs are not static.
- Programs must continue to adapt until homelessness is solved.
- Survey consumers both in SSVF and homeless and formerly Veterans (CHALENG)
- Regional meetings with all grantees to get feedback on how to improve grant rules and regulations.
- Feedback critical in both directions – use of data, performance metrics (accountability).



# *Requested Changes In Regulations & NOFA*

1. Increase allowable funding available for optional temporary financial assistance (TFA). Grantees had TFA budget cap max of 30%, now 50%.
2. Currently there are 5 month time limits for rental assistance, 2 months for utilities, and 4 months for child care in first year. Proposed rule increase to 6 months for all and 9 months for AMI < 30%.
3. Allow for 30 days family emergency housing when local resources are not available.
4. Permit TFA for other housing related costs: brokers, application fees, basic furniture, bedding, kitchen utensils.
5. Permit TFA support for employment: certifications, licenses, tools, uniforms.
6. Multi-year awards
7. Increase available prevention funding.
8. Expand access.



Coming to SSVF homeless and separated, Craig found a full-time, permanent position as a commercial painter. The children enrolled in their local school district and are adjusting well. Sherri applied for entry into Arizona's Army National Guard and is currently awaiting an enlistment date.

***U.S. Navy veteran Craig with his family (LtoR): Taylor, 10; Tyler, 15; Caitlyn, 13; and mom Sherri, found help and hope through Save the Family and the Supportive Services for Veteran Families program.***



# Contact Information

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