

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Department of Veterans Affairs Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program

PROGRAM GUIDE

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I. Introduction

A. Purpose of the Program Guide

The purpose of this Program Guide is to provide an overview of the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program. This Program Guide has force for oversight, auditing, monitoring and program review purposes, and is to be used by applicants to the SSVF Program, SSVF grantees, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) staff members, and other interested third parties involved in the SSVF Program. The Program Guide provides the following information:

1. Program Overview
2. Renewal Process
3. Technical Assistance
4. Participant Eligibility
5. Supportive Services
6. Program Operations
7. Fiscal Administration
8. Training and Evaluation
9. Reporting Requirements
10. Program Resources

The guidelines provided in this Program Guide are intended to be consistent with SSVF Program regulations ([38 CFR Part 62](#)), and other applicable laws, Executive Orders, OMB Circulars, and VA regulations. In the event of a conflict between this Program Guide and VA regulations, applicable laws, OMB Circulars, or Executive Orders, such regulations, laws, OMB Circulars, or Executive Orders shall control. Guidelines should not be construed to supersede, rescind, or otherwise amend such laws, Executive Orders, OMB Circulars, and regulations. Grantees are responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirements of the SSVF Program regulations, the supportive services grant agreement, and other applicable laws and regulations.

B. SSVF Program Description and Background

Section 604 of the Veterans' Mental Health and Other Care Improvements Act of 2008, Public Law 110-387, authorized VA to develop the SSVF Program. Supportive services grants are awarded to selected private non-profit organizations and consumer cooperatives that assist very low-income Veteran families residing in or transitioning to permanent housing. Grantees provide a range of supportive services to eligible Veteran families that are designed to promote housing stability.

The statutory authority for the SSVF Program is found at 38 U.S.C. 2044. The implementing regulations are found in [CFR :: 38 CFR Part 62 – Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program](#).

C. Definitions

Applicant: An eligible entity that submits an application for a supportive services grant announced in a Notice of Fund Availability.

Area or community: A political subdivision or contiguous political subdivisions (such as a precinct, ward, borough, city, county, State, Congressional district or tribal reservation) with an identifiable population of very low-income Veteran families.

Consumer cooperative: See section 202 of the Housing Act of 1959 (12 U.S.C. 1701q).

Continuum of Care (CoC): Continuum of Care and Continuum refer to the group that is organized to carry out the responsibilities required under the Continuum of Care Program regulations, 24 CFR Part 578, composed of representatives of nonprofit homeless providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless Veterans, and homeless and formerly homeless persons. These organizations consist of the relevant parties in the geographic area.

Department of Defense (DD) Form 214: The Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty issued by the Department of Defense to each Veteran, identifying the Veteran's condition of discharge – honorable, general, other than honorable, dishonorable or bad conduct.

Dependent: For SSVF reporting purposes only, dependents are defined as children under the age of 18 at project entry. This reflects an alignment with the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) definition of "households with children and adults," and can be tracked in

and reported out of HMIS. (Note: A Veteran may identify adult dependents as part of their “household.” These adult dependents may be served as part of the Veteran family, but for SSVF and HMIS reporting purposes, would not be reported as a “dependent.”)

Domestic Violence: The term “domestic violence” includes felony or misdemeanor crimes committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim under the family or domestic violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant funding and, in the case of victim services, includes the use or attempted use of physical abuse or sexual abuse, or a pattern of any other coercive behavior committed, enabled, or solicited to gain or maintain power and control over a victim, including verbal, psychological, economic, or technological abuse that may or may not constitute criminal behavior, by a person who (A) is a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, or person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim; (B) is cohabitating, or has cohabitated, with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner; (C) shares a child in common with the victim; or (D) commits acts against a youth or adult victim who is protected from those acts under the family or domestic violence laws of the jurisdiction.

Equity: Equity refers to proportional representation (by race, class, gender, etc.) of opportunities in housing, health care, employment, and all indicators of living a healthy life. Equity is about fairness; it ensures that each person gets what the person/population needs.

Eligible childcare provider: A provider of childcare services for compensation, including a provider of care for a school-age child during non-school hours, that: (1) is licensed, regulated, registered, or otherwise legally operating, under state and local law, and (2) satisfies the state and local requirements, applicable to the childcare services the provider provides.

Eligible entity: (1) private non-profit organization, or (2) consumer cooperative.

Emergency housing: Temporary housing provided under 38 CFR 62.34(f) that does not require the participant to sign a lease or occupancy agreement.

Emergency Housing Assistance: The provision of up to 60 days of temporary housing for a Veteran family that does not require the participant to sign a lease or occupancy agreement. The cost cannot exceed the reasonable community standard for such housing. Emergency housing is limited to short-term commercial residences (private residences are not eligible for such funding) not already funded to provide on-demand emergency shelter (such as emergency congregate shelters).

Extremely Low Income (ELI): An income category for a Veteran family whose annual income, in accordance with 24 CFR 5.609, does not exceed 30 percent of the area median income.

General Housing Stability Assistance: The provision of goods or payment of expenses not included in other sections, but which are directly related to support a participant's housing

stability, and are authorized under 38 CFR 62.34(e), which are not available through existing mainstream and community resources.

Grant and Per Diem Program (GPD): See website for complete details
<https://www.va.gov/homeless/gpd.asp>.

Grantee: An eligible entity that is awarded a supportive services grant.

Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV): See website for complete details
<https://www.va.gov/homeless/hchv.asp>.

Homeless: The “homeless” definition has the meaning given by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in 24 CFR 576.2.
https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HEARTH_ESGInterimRule&ConPlanConformingAmendments.pdf. For an at-a-glance reference see:
<http://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/24/576.2>

Homeless, “Literally”: The “literally homeless” definition is a narrower definition than “Homeless” defined above. It is this “literally homeless” definition that is a critical requirement to qualify Veterans for SSVF rapid re-housing. This means every participant in SSVF rapid re-housing (category 2 and 3) is qualified within the parameters of “literally homeless.” Note that a Veteran who is residing in what is commonly referred to as a “doubled up” or a “couch surfing” situation in permanent housing, or otherwise residing in permanent housing, would not fit the “literally homeless” definition below. Such persons may be considered category 1 and could qualify for homelessness prevention services. Further, persons fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence are considered literally homeless and would be served as a rapid re-housing household.

As per HUD 24 CFR 576.2, “literally homeless” is defined as:

- (1) An individual/family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:
 - i. An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;
 - ii. An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals);
 - iii. An individual who is exiting an institution where they resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS): The information system designated by the Continuum of Care to comply with the HUD's data collection, management, and reporting standards and used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at-risk of homelessness. HMIS is a valuable resource because of its capacity to integrate and unduplicated data across projects in a community. Aggregate HMIS data can be used to understand the size, characteristics, and needs of the homeless population at multiple levels: project, system, local, state, and national.

Household: All persons as identified by the Veteran, who together present for services, and identify themselves as being part of the same household.

Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH): See website for complete details <https://www.va.gov/homeless/hud-vash.asp>.

Low Income: A Veteran family whose annual income, as determined in accordance with 24 CFR 5.609, does not exceed 80 percent of the median income for an area or community.

Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA): A NOFA is published in the Federal Register in accordance with 38 CFR 62.40, which announces the availability of funds for supportive services grants.

Occupying permanent housing: A very low-income Veteran family will be considered to be occupying permanent housing if the very low-income Veteran family:

(Category 1) Is residing in permanent housing and at risk of becoming literally homeless but for grantee's assistance;

(Category 2) Is literally homeless, and at risk to remain in this situation but for grantee's assistance, and scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days pending the location or development of housing suitable for permanent housing; or

(Category 3) Is literally homeless after exiting permanent housing within the previous 90 days to seek other housing that is responsive to the very low-income Veteran family's needs and preferences.

Participant Household: A very low-income Veteran family occupying permanent housing who is receiving supportive services from a grantee.

Permanent Housing: Community-based housing without a designated length of stay where an individual or family has a lease in accord with state and Federal law that is renewable and terminable only for cause. Examples of permanent housing include but are not limited to a

house or apartment with a month-to-month or annual lease term, or home ownership.¹

Private non-profit organization: Any of the following:

- (1) An incorporated private institution or foundation that:
 - i. Has no part of the net earnings that inure to the benefit of any member, founder, contributor, or individual;
 - ii. Has a governing board that is responsible for the operation of the supportive services provided under the SSVF Program; and
 - iii. Is approved by VA as to financial responsibility.
- (2) A for-profit limited partnership, the sole general partner of which is an organization meeting the requirements of paragraphs (1)(i), (ii) and (iii) of this definition.
- (3) A corporation wholly owned and controlled by an organization meeting the requirements of paragraphs (1)(i), (ii), and (iii) of this definition.
- (4) A tribally designated housing entity (as defined in section 4 of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 4103)).

Rapid Re-housing: An intervention designed to help individuals and families quickly exit homelessness and transition to permanent housing. Rapid re-housing assistance is offered without grantee required preconditions such as employment, income, absence of criminal record, or sobriety. Support services are tailored to the unique circumstances of each individual participant household to facilitate a rapid transition to permanent housing. The three core components of rapid re-housing are identifying housing, providing rent and move-in financial assistance, and offering case management and related services.

Rapid Resolution: SSVF services that promote housing problem solving strategies to assist Veterans in diverting or rapidly existing homelessness, even to temporary options, while SSVF or other partners support longer term housing needs.

Shallow Subsidy service: An SSVF service that allows for two years of rental subsidy not to exceed 50% of unit rent without the need to recertify Veteran income eligibility.

State: Any of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, any territory or possession of the United States, or any agency or instrumentality of a State exclusive of local governments. The term does not include any public or Indian housing agency under the United States Housing Act of 1937.

Subcontractor: Any third-party contractor, of any tier, working directly for an eligible entity.

Supportive services: Any of the following provided to address the needs of a participant:

- (1) Outreach services as specified under 38 CFR 62.30.
- (2) Case management services as specified under 38 CFR 62.31.
- (3) Assisting participants in obtaining VA benefits as specified under 38 CFR 62.32.
- (4) Assisting participants in obtaining and coordinating other public benefits as specified under 38 CFR 62.33.
- (5) Other services as specified under 38 CFR 62.34.
- (6) Legal Services as specified under...Healthcare Navigation as specified under [38 CFR 62.30-62.34](#)

Supportive services grant: A grant awarded under the SSVF Program.

Supportive services grant agreement: The agreement executed between VA and a grantee as specified under 38 CFR 62.50.

Suspension: An action by VA that temporarily withdraws VA funding under a supportive services grant, pending corrective action by the grantee or pending a decision to terminate the supportive services grant by VA. Suspension of a supportive services grant is a separate action from suspension under VA regulations implementing Executive Orders 12549 and 12689, “Debarment and Suspension.”

VA: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VBA: Veterans Benefits Administration

Very low-income Veteran family: A Veteran family whose annual income, as determined in accordance with 24 CFR 5.609, does not exceed 80 percent of the median income for an area or community (current income limits can be found at: <http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il.html>).

Veteran: A person who served in the active military, naval, air, or space service regardless of length of service, and who was discharged or released therefrom. As defined by 38 U.S.C §2002, this definition excludes a person who received a dishonorable discharge from the Armed Forces or was discharged or dismissed from the Armed Forces by reason of the sentence of a general court-martial.

Veteran family: A Veteran who is a single person or a household where the head of household, or the spouse of the head of household, is a Veteran at entry into SSVF. Please note, Veteran Family and Veteran Household are equivalent terms.

VHA: Veterans Health Administration

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA): VAWA is a federal law that, in part, provides housing protections for people applying for or living in units subsidized by the federal government and who have experienced domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, to help keep them safe and reduce their likelihood of experiencing homelessness. VAWA's housing provisions are at [34 U.S.C. 12491, et seq.](#)

Withholding: Payment of a supportive services grant will not be paid until such time as VA determines that the grantee provides sufficiently adequate documentation and/or actions to correct a deficiency for the supportive services grant. Costs for supportive services provided by grantees under the supportive services grant from the date of the withholding letter would be reimbursed only if the grantee is able to submit the documentation or actions that the deficiency has been corrected to the satisfaction of VA.

II. Program Overview

A. Goal of the Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program

The goal of the SSVF Program is to promote equitable housing stability services to low-income Veteran families who reside in or are transitioning to permanent housing.

B. Core SSVF Program Features

1. Eligible Participants

To become a participant household under the SSVF Program, the following conditions must be met:

1. **A member of a “Veteran family”**: Either (a) [a Veteran](#)¹; or (b) a member of a family in which the head of household, or the spouse of the head of household, is a Veteran. (*Note: The head of household should be identified by the Veteran family.*)
2. **“Low-income”**: Household income does not exceed 80 percent of area median income. Unless VA announces otherwise in the NOFA, the median income for an area or community will be determined using the income limits most recently published by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for programs under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f), which can be found at: <http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il.html>.
3. **“Occupying Permanent Housing”**: A low-income Veteran family is considered to be “occupying permanent housing” if they fall into one of three categories:

(Category 1) Is residing in permanent housing and at risk of becoming literally homeless but for grantee's assistance;

(Category 2) Is literally homeless, and at risk to remain in this situation but for grantee's assistance, and scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days pending the location or development of housing suitable for permanent housing; or

(Category 3) Is literally homeless after exiting permanent housing within the previous 90 days to seek other housing that is responsive to the very low-income Veteran family's needs and preferences.

Regarding the above references to Veterans experiencing literal homelessness: for specifics as to what circumstances do and do not constitute literal homelessness, see [Section I.C. Definitions: Homeless, Literally](#). Grantees must ensure that participants experiencing literal homelessness qualify under this definition.

Note: There are time restrictions and limitations on uses of grant funds with respect to the categories of participants grantees may serve. The following table describes the three categories of "occupying permanent housing" as well as the time restrictions related to each.

Grantees are required to certify the eligibility each participant at least once every three months, per 38 CFR 62.36(a), as described in [Section V](#) of this Program Guide

¹ See Section I.C. Definitions: [Veteran](#).

2. SSVF Income Limits

As of December 22, 2022, SSVF grantees are able to serve Veterans with income up to 80 percent of the area median income (AMI). The intent is to allow grantees to effectively serve participants with significant financial vulnerability and to provide extended temporary financial assistance (for specific time limits for temporary financial assistance, see [Section VI.F.](#)).

Notes:

1. Once a participant household is categorized as ELI (Extremely Low Income or below 30 percent AMI), that household retains this designation until program exit, as long as the household continues to meet all other SSVF eligibility requirements. In other

words, an ELI household remains in the ELI category even if income exceeds 30 percent AMI at the point of recertification.

2. A participant household that enrolls in SSVF with income that exceeds 30 percent AMI but does not exceed 80 percent of AMI may also experience a decrease in their income and become ELI. At the point of recertification, such households will be eligible to receive the more extensive SSVF support services allowable under the ELI designation. This determination would be made by the grantee based on its own budgetary flexibility.
3. It is also important to remember that, in keeping with regulations that apply to all SSVF participants, any ELI participant household whose income exceeds 80 percent of AMI at the point of recertification would be exited from SSVF.

3. Rapid Re-Housing Assistance

Unless specified by NOFA or other VA policy, grantees must use a minimum of 60 percent of the temporary financial assistance (TFA) portion of their supportive services grant funds to serve low-income Veteran families who either are experiencing homelessness and are scheduled to become residents of permanent housing within 90 days pending the location or development of housing suitable for permanent housing or have exited permanent housing within the previous 90 days to seek other housing that is responsive to their needs and preferences.

The percentage of each grantee's budget should also reflect the level of need as identified in collaboration with their partners in the CoC and the VA. Frequently grantees will target use of TFA well in excess of 60 percent to meet the needs of Veterans experiencing literal homelessness and ensure no gaps in the availability of rapid re-housing assistance. Determinations regarding the allocation of funds are announced in the SSVF Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA). NOTE: Grantees may request a waiver to decrease this minimum amount.

Note: 80 percent of funds awarded under the FY2022 Supplemental NOFA must be spent on rapid rehousing assistance for Veteran households experiencing literal homelessness.

4. Homelessness Prevention Assistance

For Veteran families who do not meet the housing categories (ii) or (iii) for rapid re-housing assistance, grantees may use supportive services grant funds to provide homelessness prevention assistance to eligible households who also meet criteria for imminent risk of

homelessness. Grantees must use Stage 1 of the SSVF Homelessness Prevention Screening Form to determine eligibility. In the event there are not sufficient resources to assist all eligible at-risk Veterans, grantees must establish a threshold score based on local demand in order to provide temporary financial assistance. This threshold score may be changed or waived in the event of an Exceptional Circumstance. Grantees may also consider more flexible enrollment protocols for Veteran households only needing a direct path to SSVF Shallow Subsidy services.

5. Housing First

VA policy supports a “Housing First” approach in addressing and ending homelessness. Housing First establishes assistance to exit homelessness directly into permanent housing and promotes housing stability as the primary intervention in working with people experiencing homelessness. The Housing First approach is informed by research demonstrating that a homeless individual or household’s first and primary need is to obtain stable housing. Other issues impacting the household’s ability to maintain their housing can and should be addressed as housing is obtained. Research supports this approach as an effective and equitable means to end homelessness.

Under a Housing First approach, housing is not contingent on compliance with support services other than those required by the funding source for the program. Instead, participants must comply with a standard lease agreement and are provided with services and supports that are necessary to help them maintain their housing successfully. Housing First is a low-barrier intervention: There are no prerequisites such as employment, minimum income, completion of behavioral health treatment, criminal history barriers or evidence of sobriety. In a Housing First approach, supportive services focus on assisting program participants to obtain and retain housing, and to prevent a near-term return to homelessness. Research demonstrates that programs utilizing a Housing First approach promote high housing retention rates, low rates of return to homelessness, and reductions in the use of crisis services and institutions.

6. Victims of Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women Act

Under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking have certain protections in SSVF housing. SSVF programs may not deny assistance, tenancy or occupancy rights to someone solely on the basis that they are a victim of one of the four covered crimes. Victims, guests, other tenants, and property management staff have the right to report a crime without retaliation or threat of retaliation. Victims, guests, other tenants and property management staff cannot be retaliated against for exercising their VAWA rights or encouraging a victim to exercise their VAWA rights.

Any household fleeing a domestic violence situation is considered to be experiencing literal homelessness and therefore enrolled as a rapid re-housing household. A participant household experiencing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking receives special consideration in SSVF with regards to supportive services. This is a consideration designed for participants experiencing one of the four covered acts of violence mid-stream during their SSVF participation such that the original participant household breaks apart and/or the victim participant no longer feels safe in their home due to a covered act. Under this policy, the victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking (whether or not the victim is the Veteran), if forming a new participant household, will have the “tolling period” for SSVF’s temporary financial assistance reset back to the beginning. The “tolling period” refers to the limited timeline of months for paying temporary financial assistance within a 12-month or 2-year period (for details, see [Section VI.F.](#)). For these newly formed households, that timeline begins again at zero months. Note that under these circumstances a new participant household may be created even without a Veteran in it.

SSVF funded projects must implement and follow an Emergency Transfer plan. Owners/managers of housing assisted under SSVF shall allow tenants who are victims to transfer to another available and safe dwelling unit assisted under a covered housing program if (A) the tenant expressly requests the transfer and (B) the tenant reasonably believes that the tenant is threatened with imminent harm from further violence if the tenant remains in the same dwelling unit assisted under SSVF; or (ii) in the case of a tenant who is a victim of sexual assault, the sexual assault occurred on the premises during the 90 day period preceding the request for transfer.

Victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking have the right to confidentiality. Records regarding requests for VAWA protections and documentation related to victim certification must be kept confidential and separate from regular tenant files. Location of new dwelling unit must only be disclosed to those persons who need to know and must not be disclosed to a person who commits an act of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking of the victim. Victims have the right to have their personally identifying data kept out of shared Homeless Management Information Systems.

Landlords providing services to SSVF funded families must agree to abide by VAWA protections and add the VAWA addendum to the lease. Notice of VAWA occupancy rights must be given:

- (A) at the time the applicant is denied residency in a dwelling unit assisted under the covered housing program;
- (B) at the time the individual is admitted to a dwelling unit assisted under the covered housing program;
- (C) with any notification of eviction or notification of termination of assistance; and

- (D) in multiple languages, consistent with guidance issued by the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development in accordance with Executive Order 13166 (42 U.S.C. 2000d–1 note; relating to access to services for persons with limited English proficiency).

Further guidance may be released in the future regarding VAWA requirements and SSVF’s related responsibilities.

C. Core SSVF Services

1. Supportive Services Provided

Through the SSVF Program, VA aims to improve the housing stability of low-income Veteran families. Towards this end, SSVF grantees provide a set of required SSVF services and have the option of providing additional SSVF services as outlined below.

1a. SSVF Support Services

- Outreach (Required by statute)
- Case management (Required by statute)
- Connection to VA benefits and programs (Required by statute)
- Connection to public benefits and mainstream, community resources (Required by statute)
- Health Care Navigation (Required by NOFA)
- Legal Services (Required by NOFA)
- Housing Navigation Services
- Childcare Services
- Transportation Services
- Incentives and Enhanced Financial Assistance
 - a. Resources to Secure Permanent Housing (landlord incentives)
 - b. Miscellaneous Move-In Costs (tenant incentives)
- Rapid Resolution Services
- Shallow Subsidy Services
- Emergency Housing Assistance
- Rental and Utility Assistance

Note that [Section VI](#) of this Program Guide provides specifics for each of these required SSVF support services. Details in Section VI include lists of the key benefits and community resources that are fundamental for each SSVF grantee to navigate in their local SSVF jurisdictions.

1b. Additional SSVF Support Services

- Complementary services from SSVF “public benefits” list (proposed to and approved by VA)
- Other unique, grantee-designed services (proposed to and approved by VA)

Note that [Section VI](#) of this Program Guide provides specifics for each of these optional SSVF support services. Details include lists of common complementary services that some SSVF grantees may elect to provide as a component of their direct services.

2. Rapid Resolution

Rapid Resolution is a trauma-informed service designed to assist Veterans upon contact with the crisis response system to attempt to avoid a homeless episode, or after entry into the emergency shelter system with the goal of rapidly exiting the Veteran from homelessness. Rapid Resolution is not a separate program, but instead a series of approaches and services grantees are required to use as part of the overall culture of engagement with Veterans in crisis. When a Veteran reaches out or is identified as needing assistance with a housing crisis, providers start the process of engaging them in a conversation that explores alternatives to becoming or remaining homeless and any potential assistance needed to access those alternatives. Assistance can include supportive services to mediate with a landlord, resolve conflicts or concerns with a family member; help connecting to support networks in other places; and limited financial assistance. Through active listening, staff learn about the person’s housing crisis and what their support network looks like. The conversation can be a deep exploration of social network relationships, potential safe housing alternatives, and community resources. After a safe place to stay is identified, whether it is for a night, or a few nights, or a longer period of time, staff can then provide the Veteran with services to address the other needs they have.

Effective Rapid Resolution conversations require staff to be skilled at mediation, negotiation, and conflict resolution as well as active listening and creative problem-solving. Grantees should assess their progress in training staff on the core skills needed for Rapid Resolution and identify affordable web-based and in-person trainings to support Rapid Resolution.

3. Shallow Subsidy Services

The SSVF Shallow Subsidy service provides rental assistance to eligible Veteran households who are enrolled in SSVF’s Rapid Rehousing services or Homeless Prevention

services. It is likely that most participants will have already received rental assistance (this is not a requirement), but remain rent burdened and require the longer-term, shallow subsidy rental assistance to maintain permanent housing.

Under the SSVF Shallow Subsidy Service, SSVF grantees provide rental assistance payments up to 50% of the unit rent (based on the community standard) directly to landlords on behalf of the Veteran household at 30% AMI or less for two years, and those above 30% but not exceeding 80% two years less the number of months of traditional SSVF Rental Assistance that was provided, without the need for program recertification. SSVF staff will also offer case management services to participants to assist Veteran families in maintaining their housing stability. This commitment provides Veterans with stable affordable housing without concern for eligibility changes should they increase their income during that time period. Veterans still eligible for SSVF may recertify after the initial Shallow Subsidy period if needed to maintain permanent housing.

4. SSVF Coordination

4a. SSVF Coordination with Local Continuums of Care (CoCs)

SSVF grantees are required to be engaged with every CoC where they are approved to provide SSVF assistance to the fullest extent possible, including participating in the local Coordinated Entry Process (See [Subsection II.C.4.c.](#) below). Minimally, grantees must work in close partnership with their local CoC to establish a community-wide plan to prevent and end homelessness among Veterans. Grantees need to adhere to the Program Guide for allowable costs associated with these activities.

Per [VA Coordinated Entry Guidance](#), SSVF grantees are responsible for ensuring that SSVF is formally integrated into this local CoC process and, where necessary, for taking a lead role in developing and implementing such processes for Veterans. This includes situations where a grantee's service area is covered by multiple CoCs. More information about coordinated entry can be found below.

4b. SSVF Coordination with VA Medical Centers

SSVF grantees work in coordinated partnership with their local Veterans Administration Medical Centers (VAMC). Each VAMC offers a range of housing programs including Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH), Grant and Per Diem Program (GPD), and Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV), which offers both outreach and emergency housing. The organizational structure for each VAMC can vary – it is up to the SSVF grantee to contact the VAMC to establish regular contact with local homeless services.

SSVF grantees should work with the local VA to focus on the following:

- Maintaining a current Veteran By-Name List (BNL)
- Assign and track cases from the BNL to the appropriate services
- Supporting joint CoC/VA responsibilities to implement a Coordinated Entry System (CES)
- Case Conferencing to monitor service delivery to those enrolled in care
- Coordinating co-enrollment and other cross program referrals in line with VA guidance and evolving priorities
- Supporting effective Health Care and Housing Navigation services for SSVF enrolled Veterans
- Supporting coordination for Substance Use Disorder (SUD) services in those VA Medical Centers that employ SUD clinicians specifically for the purposes of supporting SSVF enrolled Veterans.

4c. VA Homeless Program Expectations for Coordinated Entry Participation

The coordinated entry (CE) process is an approach to coordination and management of a crisis response system's resources that allows users to make consistent, equity-informed decisions from available information to efficiently and effectively connect people to housing and service interventions that will rapidly end their homelessness. Through coordinated entry, a CoC ensures that the highest need, most vulnerable households in the community are prioritized for housing and services first.

The VA Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management published a [memo \(https://www.hudexchange.info/news/hud-publishes-coordinated-entry-requirements-and-checklist-of-essential-elements/\)](https://www.hudexchange.info/news/hud-publishes-coordinated-entry-requirements-and-checklist-of-essential-elements/) in 2017, issuing guidance to VA medical center staff and staff of VA funded homeless assistance programs regarding their roles in supporting local Continuum of Care (CoC) coordinated entry (CE) systems [\(https://www.hudexchange.info/news/hud-publishes-coordinated-entry-requirements-and-checklist-of-essential-elements/\)](https://www.hudexchange.info/news/hud-publishes-coordinated-entry-requirements-and-checklist-of-essential-elements/) by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This guidance from VA to the VAMC is meant to support community planning and CE efforts within CoCs by clearly outlining the expectations of VAMC involvement. This guidance was updated in 2020 in "VA Integration in Coordinated Entry: Troubleshooting Delays in Care". This document reviews alternative processes that may be used to ensure prompt access to care when CE may not be able to facilitate such access. This updated guidance can be found at <https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/coordination-and-planning/>.

VA recognizes that coordinated entry systems are a critical element in the collective and continued efforts to end Veteran homelessness and homelessness for all populations and to increase equitable access to services for historically marginalized or underserved populations. The memo identified several key components of a successful coordinated entry system and responsibilities of key VA staff, in addition to all CoC partners, in supporting

those components. Responsibilities include active participation in case conferencing meetings, providing necessary data to maintain up-to-date By-Name Lists (BNLs), consistent use of common assessment protocols defined by the CoC, dedication of a VA resources (housing units and service slots) to eligible veterans referred through the CoC's coordinated entry process, and data sharing of veterans' information for purposes of coordinated entry assessment, prioritization and referral. Refer to the memo and [check list \(https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/VA-Participation-in-Coordinated-Entry-Implementation-Assessment-Checklist.pdf\)](https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/VA-Participation-in-Coordinated-Entry-Implementation-Assessment-Checklist.pdf), published concurrently for more details about CE roles, responsibilities and compliance expectations. Coordinated entry requires concerted effort and engaged participation from all system partners, including VA homeless programs. Although initially challenging, transitioning the crisis response system from a set of independent agencies, including VA, and providers making project-specific decisions to one that puts participants first and ensures standardization in processes and consistency in decision-making ultimately results in more efficient and effective housing and service outcomes for everyone.

In many communities, the need for housing resources often exceeds the availability of these resources. For this reason, dedicating VA resources to the community's overall CE system is important because it helps CoCs to understand and account for the total portfolio of housing interventions in the community. This allows CoCs to use more dynamic prioritization methodologies whereby those who are most vulnerable or who have the most intense needs are prioritized for finite permanent housing resources, including rapid rehousing for highly vulnerable Veterans. Many CoCs now recognize that in some cases, permanent supportive housing (PSH) may be the ideal intervention for a given household but where that resource is not immediately available, rapid rehousing should be tried knowing that if PSH becomes available and is still needed, the people with the highest acuity would continue to be prioritized. This ensures that the most vulnerable and high need households are prioritized for some type of housing intervention first, even if that housing intervention is less than ideal. These approaches are consistent with SSVF's adoption of a progressive assistance strategy for service delivery.

III. Renewal Process

If funding is available, VA will announce renewal opportunities in a NOFA. If funding is available for renewals, a grantee may submit an application for grant renewal in accordance with any requirements set forth in the NOFA. To apply for renewal of a supportive services grant, the grantee's program must remain substantially the same (otherwise, the grantee should submit a new application instead of a renewal application). VA will use the criteria and selection process described in 38 CFR 62.24 and 38 CFR 62.25 to evaluate and award supportive services grant renewals. Additional information concerning the renewal process will be provided in the NOFA.

A. Accreditation and Renewal Awards

Grantees receiving renewal awards who have had an ongoing SSVF program in operation for at least one year may be eligible for a 3-year award. Grantees meeting outcome goals defined by the VA and in substantial compliance with their grant agreements (defined by meeting their targets and having no outstanding corrective action plans) and who, in addition, receive a 3-year accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) in Employment and Community Services: Rapid Rehousing and Homeless Prevention standards or a 4-year accreditation from the Council on Accreditation (COA) in Housing Stabilization and Community Living Standards or a 3-year accreditation in The Joint Commission's Behavioral Health Care: Housing Support Services Standards, are eligible for a 3-year grant renewal pending funding availability. If awarded a multiple year renewal, grantees may be eligible for funding increases as defined in NOFAs that correspond to years two and three of their renewal funding. Note that the cost of accreditation for an SSVF program (not an organization) can be an allowable cost if expenses are incurred according to the terms described in the NOFA. Costs to SSVF should be allocable to the SSVF portion of the accreditation. The approved budget template includes a budget line item (BLI) for accreditation. Accreditation costs must be included in this line item.

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IV. Technical Assistance

A. Introduction

Per 38 CFR 62.73, technical assistance will be available as necessary to eligible entities to assist them in meeting the requirements of 38 CFR Part 62. The technical assistance provided is designed to help funded entities implement supportive services grants under the SSVF Program and administer, develop, and operate supportive services programs. Grantees may be required to attend virtual or in-person training events as designated by the SSVF Program Office.

B. Pre-Award Technical Assistance

Pre-award technical assistance will be provided to prospective applicants in the form of a webinar providing an overview of the NOFA and other information available on the SSVF Program website. There is also a general email available for interested applicants. The goals of these efforts are to raise public awareness of the SSVF Program, provide interested parties with information about the SSVF Program, and assist prospective applicants in developing and submitting thorough applications that meet the requirements, goals, and objectives of the SSVF Program. Information on how to obtain technical assistance can be found on the SSVF Program's website: <http://www.va.gov/homeless/SSVF.asp>.

C. Post-Award Technical Assistance

SSVF understands that Rapid Re-Housing and Homelessness Prevention interventions continue to evolve. Changes in community needs and evidence supporting particular approaches to care makes it essential that a robust program of training is available to SSVF grantees and their staff. All grantees are offered access to such training, though both in-person

events and virtual mediums. National and regional in-person training is supplemented by a series of national webinars and on-demand virtual training available through SSVF Website (found at www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf) or the Housing Skills Practice Center learning management system. Grantees are expected to use these opportunities to support the training of their staff and work with newly hired staff to ensure that an appropriate program of training and orientation is provided to help them become proficient in their work.

V. Participant Eligibility

Each participant household's file must include documentation verifying that the participant meets SSVF Program eligibility requirements and specifying the participant's category of "occupying permanent housing." Grantees with insufficient case file documentation may be found out of compliance with SSVF Program regulations during a VA monitoring visit. Grantees must develop policies and procedures that ensure appropriate documentation is obtained and included in participants' files. VA encourages grantees to use this Program Guide to help them ensure appropriate and sufficient information is collected, documented, and maintained in participant case files to document program compliance.

A. SSVF Eligibility Requirements

As described in Program Guide [Section II.B](#), to become a participant household under the SSVF Program, the following conditions must be met:

1. **A member of a "Veteran family"**: Either (a) a Veteran; or (b) a member of a family in which the head of household, or the spouse of the head of household, is a Veteran. (Note: The head of household should be identified by the Veteran family.)
2. **"Low-income" Household**: income does not exceed 80 percent of area median income. Unless VA announces otherwise in the NOFA, the median income for an area or community will be determined using the income limits most recently published by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for programs under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f), which can be found at: <http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il.html>
3. **"Occupying Permanent Housing"**: A very low-income Veteran family is considered to be occupying permanent housing if it falls into one of three

categories:

- (Category 1) Is residing in permanent housing and at risk of becoming literally homeless but for grantee's assistance;
- (Category 2) Is literally homeless and at risk to remain in this situation but for grantee's assistance and scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days pending the location or development of housing suitable for permanent housing; or
- (Category 3) Is literally homeless after exiting permanent housing within the previous 90 days to seek other housing that is responsive to the very low-income Veteran family's needs and preferences.

Regarding the above references to literally homeless: for specifics as to what circumstances do and do not constitute literal homelessness, see Section I.C. Definitions: [Homeless, Literally](#).

Grantees must ensure that literally homeless participants qualify under this definition.

B. Determining Veteran Household Status Eligibility

As discussed above, eligible participants will be part of a "Veteran family," meaning that the person to be served is either (a) a Veteran; or (b) a member of a family in which the head of household, or the spouse of the head of household, is a Veteran.

1. Verifying Veteran Status

It is VA's expectation that SSVF grantees are able to make an eligibility determination and enroll Veteran families the same day they are screened, particularly when the health or safety of the Veteran household is at risk. Prompt enrollment will reduce the significant risks to health and safety faced by homeless and at-risk Veteran families. VA Homeless Programs may serve clients who only had service time in Basic Training. Please be aware that the HMIS definition of Veteran requires a day of active duty beyond training, but this is not a requirement for all VA Homeless Program eligibility.

The term "Veteran" for SSVF eligibility purposes is defined as "a person who served in the active military, naval, air, or space service, regardless of length of service, and who was discharged or released therefrom," excluding anyone who received a dishonorable discharge from the Armed Forces or was discharged or dismissed from the Armed Forces by reason of the sentence of a general court-martial (38 U.S.C. § 2002(b)).

Eligibility is confirmed by reviewing both the character of discharge and type of service. The minimum duty requirements do not apply.

National Guard & Reserves:

- National Guard who are active duty for training (ACDUTRA) only are not eligible. To be eligible, they must have been called to active duty under Title 10.
- Veterans in the Reserves are eligible if they are ACDUTRA only.

NOTE: A service member (Active/Guard/Reserve) is not eligible for VHA homelessness program services, for themselves or their family, while they are on active-duty service.

Due to the complexity in the definition of active military service, it is important to have a strong level of communication with your local VA Medical Center to verify if a potential participant has active military service and to verify their type of discharge.

To prove a participant's Veteran status, grantees should obtain ONE of the following documents:

- SQUARES 2.0 Printout
- DD Form 214 Certificate of Release Discharge from Active Duty
- NA Form 13038
- Veteran Health Administration (VHA) Veteran's Identity card
- VA Veterans Choice Card
- VA Photo ID Card
- Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) Statement of Service (SOS)
- VISTA printout from VHA health care provider
- Veteran Information Solution (VIS) Printout
- VBA award letter of service connected disability payment or non-service connected pension

SQUARES 2.0 allows any SSVF grantee registered user to instantaneously determine Veteran status. The system offers detailed discharge status for the majority of inquiries, allowing instant determination of program eligibility and status of VHA enrollment. SSVF may use SQUARES 2.0 as documentation for purposes of determining eligibility and is included in the list of approved documents to determine SSVF eligibility. To review the features and watch a tutorial on how to use SQUARES, please go to: www.va.gov/homeless/SQUARES.

If such documents proving eligibility are not immediately available, an Affidavit of Veteran Status signed by the Veteran can be used to allow grantees to temporarily enroll Veterans who are Pending Verification of Veteran Status and initiate supportive services. However,

temporary financial assistance will not be provided until the grantee/Veteran can obtain documentation proving Veteran status. For further guidance on Pending Verification of Veteran Status, see [Exhibit D](#).

NOTE: Should a Veteran later be determined ineligible, grantees should document the information clearly and work to transition the household to other VA or community supports available to address their needs.

PLEASE NOTE THAT A DD214 IS NOT REQUIRED FOR ENROLLMENT OR CONTINUED SERVICES IF ONE OF THE ABOVE FORMS OF VERIFICATION IS OBTAINED.

Additional Helpful Links

- Applications for Veterans Choice Card: <http://www.va.gov/opa/choiceact/>
Eligibility information provided via hotline
- E-benefits enrollment: <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/>
Download documents
- Online application for VHA service: <https://www.1010ez.med.va.gov/sec/vha/1010ez>
Eligibility confirmation will be mailed to the Veteran
- DD214 online: <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>
Put "Expedite: Homeless Veteran" in the comments section
- DD214 telephone application: call 314-801-0800 to request same day service
Form will be mailed to the Veteran

2. Verifying Veteran Household Status

The SSVF Program defines a Veteran family as "a Veteran who is a single person or a family in which the head of household, or the spouse of the head of household, is a Veteran." Grantees should document head of household status in the form of self-declaration or other documents deemed appropriate to document household composition. As noted previously, a household is defined as "All persons who together present for services and identify themselves as being part of the same household." Self-declarations or intake worker observations are acceptable. (Note: Proof of family status is not required but may serve as proof of household status.)

C. Determining Income Eligibility

The SSVF Program defines an eligible low-income Veteran family as one whose annual income, as determined in accordance with 24 CFR 5.609, does not exceed 80 percent of the median income for an area or community. Unless VA announces otherwise in the NOFA, the median income for an area or community will be determined using the income limits most recently published by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for programs under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f). Grantees must ensure that they are using the most current of these HUD established income limits. Towards this end, grantees should develop a process for checking annually for updates to HUD's income limits. Adjustments may be made to the required income level based on family size and other mitigating factors listed in the NOFA. The grantee must establish the size of the Veteran family's household to verify that the Veteran family meets the income eligibility requirement for their household size.

1. Area Median Income (AMI)

As indicated in the SSVF regulations, to be eligible to receive any type of SSVF assistance, a Veteran family must have a gross annual income that does not exceed 80 percent of AMI, (which is considered "low-income"). In their grant application, grantees may have indicated they were targeting Veterans with even lower incomes, such as 30 percent of AMI or below. AMI is based upon income data for the state or local jurisdiction in which a household resides, and is dependent on the size of the household (i.e., number of household members). The AMI for each state and community can be found at:

<http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il.html>. Please note this data set is updated annually and grantees are required to use the most recent data posted by HUD. HUD hosts a site which allows agencies the ability to be notified of data releases, such as new income limits, via email. The site is as follows: <http://www.huduser.org/portal/subscribe/subscribe.html>

2. Income Definition

The SSVF income definition contains income "inclusions" (types of income to be counted) and "exclusions" (types of income that are not to be counted) for SSVF purposes. Annual income means all included amounts that go to, or are on behalf of, a household member over a 12- month period, based on income currently received by the household. Note that annual income is assessed both at entry to SSVF and at each recertification. The online [Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook](#) and [Exhibit A](#) of this guide contain the complete definition of annual income inclusions and exclusions as published in the regulations and Federal Register notices. Annual income means all amounts that are not specifically excluded by regulation.

The following types of income must be counted (inclusions) when calculating annual income for SSVF eligibility purposes (see [Exhibit A](#) for details):

- Earned Income—Wages, Salaries, etc. for any adult member of the household including online or gig economy work (note: wages that are garnished are included as earned income)
- Any and all taxable income as defined by IRS" This includes but it not limited to categories such Bitcoin or other electronic incomes derived from platforms such as (UBER, Social Media etc.)
- Self-Employment/Business Income
- Interest & Dividend Income (digital currencies are included, e.g., Bitcoin, etc.)
- Pension/Retirement Income
- Unemployment & Disability Income (excluding lump sum payments)
- Social Security payments made to a child of the household
- TANF/Public Assistance, including the portion of the grant designated for child(ren)
- Alimony and Child Support Income
- Armed Forces Income
- Veteran Benefits Administration Service Connection & Non-service Connection Benefit
- The Post 911 GI Bill Subsistence Payment (Housing Stipend)
- Chapter 11 Transition Assistance

Note that *gross* income is used for the income calculations that are discussed below. However, there is one exception where net income is substituted for gross. This exception is when a household receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), or Veteran Benefit Administration income benefits was overpaid by their public benefit office and, to rectify the overpayment, is subsequently receiving a monthly check with a deduction to it. Under this circumstance, the SSVF grantee uses net income to assess eligibility. In all other cases, gross income is used as outlined below. Furthermore, it is worth noting, as the question frequently arises, that garnishments or payments by the SSVF participant household for child support or owed to the Internal Revenue Service will not reduce the calculation of gross income.

The following types of income are NOT counted (exclusions) when calculating current gross income for SSVF eligibility purposes (see [Exhibit A](#) for details):

- Earned income of participant household members under age 18 years
- Inheritance and Insurance Income
- Medical Expense Reimbursements
- Income of Live-in Aides

- Student Financial Aid, including G.I. Bill Student Financial Aid
- Armed Forces Hostile Fire Pay
- Self-Sufficiency Program Income
- Other Income (i.e. temporary, non-recurring or sporadic income)
- Reparations
- Income from full-time students (excluding head of household)
- Foster Care Income
- Adoption Assistance Payments
- Deferred and Lump Sum Social Security & SSI payments
- Deferred and Lump Sum from VA Disability Compensation (Service Connected Benefits)
- Income Tax and Property Tax refunds
- Home Care Assistance
- Veteran Health Administration Compensated Work Therapy (CWT)
- Chapter 31 Program Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Subsistence Payment
- VA Aid and Attendance Benefit
- Federal stimulus payments made in response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Other Federal Exclusions

For a detailed list with an explanation of these inclusions and exclusions, see [Exhibit A](#) of this Program Guide.

Some types of excluded income, such as tax refunds, could be counted by grantees to be household assets. Grantees are required to include in the calculation of annual income any interest or dividends earned on assets held by the family. For additional information on determining income from assets, please see next Subsection 5b: [“Determining Income from Assets”](#) section.

3. Income Calculation

After determining and documenting specific sources of current income that must be included in the income calculation for each household, grantees then calculate the household’s (not just the Veteran’s) annual income.

3a. Annualizing Wages and Periodic Payments

When calculating income based on hourly, weekly, or monthly payment information, add the gross amount earned in each pay period for which there is documentation and divide by the number of pay periods. This provides an average wage per payment period. Depending on pay periods used by the employer or the schedule of periodic payments, the following calculations convert the average wage into annual income:

- Hourly Wage multiplied by hours worked per week multiplied by 52 weeks
- Weekly Wage multiplied by 52 weeks
- Bi-Weekly (every other week) Wage multiplied by 26 bi-weekly periods
- Semi-Monthly Wage (twice a month) multiplied by 24 semi-monthly periods
- Monthly Wage multiplied by 12 months

Grantees may choose between the following two methods of calculating annual income:

- Calculating projected annual income by annualizing current income, **OR**
- Using information available to average *anticipated* income from all known sources when the sources are expected to change during the year.

For example, a Veteran works as a teacher's assistant nine months annually and receives \$1,300 per month. During the summer recess, the Veteran works for the Parks and Recreation Department for \$600 per month. Grantees may calculate the Veteran family's income using either of the following two methods:

- Calculate Annual Income Based on Current Income: \$15,600 (\$1,300 x 12 months). If recertification falls during summer recess, the grantee would recalculate the Veteran family's income during the summer months at a reduced annualized amount of \$7,200 (\$600 x 12 months).
- Calculate Annual Income Based on Average Experience:

\$	11,700	(\$1300 x 9 months)
	<u>+ 1,800</u>	<u>(\$ 600 x 3 months)</u>
\$	13,500	

Using the first method requires documentation of only one source of income; under the second method, the Veteran family's intake file would include documentation of both sources of income. If a household's periodic benefits and/or period of employment are capped, grantees should not annualize benefits/pay beyond the maximum level of benefit/pay that can be received. For example, a person receives \$100 of unemployment per week, but unemployment is capped at \$4,000 per year. The person's annualized unemployment benefits should be calculated at \$4,000, and not $\$100 * 52 = \$5,200$. Another example, the person is employed for a quarter and will receive \$500/week. The person's annualized pay should be calculated at \$6,000 and not $\$500 * 52 = \$26,000$.

Furthermore, to the extent that there is certainty about expected income, future income should be taken into account when determining whether a household has other financial resources. Remember, grantees are encouraged to assess all circumstances and document that the household would become homeless or remain homeless but for the SSVF assistance. As such, case managers should carefully evaluate the circumstances and

probability of future income.

For example, while a seasonal worker may expect to earn income during an upcoming season, if they have no promise of future employment, the potential of future employment should not be counted as a resource. In contrast, if a schoolteacher has a promise of future employment (by way of a renewed employment contract), the potential of future employment should be accounted for in the assessment of other financial resources. This is not to say that the schoolteacher in the example would be automatically determined ineligible. Rather, grantees should determine when the employment opportunity will take effect (i.e. when the income will be earned) and create financial assistance plans that account for an eligible Veteran family's financial resources. Grantees should also recalculate income should the household income change and go down between eligibility determinations to ensure that Veterans and their families are not overpaying rent at a time when they could receive additional support.

Documentation as described in [Exhibit B](#), of a Veteran family's annual income and the percent of AMI that income represents (not to exceed the SSVF maximum of 80 percent of AMI) must be maintained in the participant's file as documentation of eligibility.

3b. Determining Income from Assets

Grantees are required to include in the calculation of annual income any interest or dividends earned on assets held by the family. When net family assets are \$5,000 or less, use the actual income from assets. When family assets are more than \$5,000, use the greater of:

- Actual income from assets; or
- A percentage of the value of such assets based upon the current passbook savings rate as established by HUD.² This is called imputed income from assets.

² Please contact your HUD field office in order to determine the applicable passbook savings rate. See http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=DOC_11847.pdf for more information.

3c. Summary of Asset Inclusions and Exclusions

Asset Inclusions	Asset Exclusions
A. Amounts in savings and checking accounts	1. Necessary personal property, except as noted in Inclusion I.
B. Stocks, bonds, savings certificates, money market funds and other investment accounts including Cryptocurrency accounts	2. Interest in Indian trust lands.
C. Equity in real property or other capital investments. Equity is the estimated current market value of the asset less the unpaid balance on all loans secured by the assets and reasonable costs (such as broker fees) that would be incurred in selling the assets.	3. Assets that are part of an active business or farming operation.
D. The cash value of trusts that may be withdrawn by the family.	4. NOTE: Rental properties are considered personal assets held as an investment rather than business assets unless real estate is the applicant's / tenant's main occupation.
E. IRA, Keogh and similar retirement savings, even though withdrawal would result in a penalty.	5. Assets not controlled by or accessible to the family and which provide no income for the family.
F. Some contributions to company retirement/pension funds.	6. Vehicles especially equipped for the disabled.
G. Assets, which although owned by more than one person, allow unrestricted access by the applicant.	7. Equity in owner-occupied cooperatives and manufactured homes in which the family lives.
H. Lump sum receipts such as inheritances, capital gains, lottery winnings, insurance settlements, and other claims.	
I. Personal property held as an investment such as gems, jewelry, coin collections, antique cars, etc.	
J. Cash value of life insurance policies.	
K. Assets disposed of for less than fair market value during the two years preceding certification or recertification.	

NOTE: A key factor in whether or not to include an asset in the calculation of annual income is whether any member of the family has access to the asset.

Assets Calculation Example

Compare Actual Income from Assets to Imputed Income from Assets

Applicant has \$7,900 in assets. (Assume passbook rate of 3.5 percent.)

Applicant actual income from assets is paid at 1.5% simple interest annually = \$119

Assets:	\$ 7,900
HUD-determined passbook rate:	<u> x .035</u>
Imputed income from assets:	\$ 277

Compare actual interest of \$119 to imputed interest of \$277. The actual interest of \$277 (the greater of the two will be used as income from assets in the calculation of annual income).

3d. Additional Guidance on Calculating the Value of Assets and Income from Assets

Contributions to Company Retirement/Pension Funds

While a participant is employed, count as an asset only amounts the participant could withdraw from a company retirement or pension fund without retiring or terminating employment. After retirement or termination of employment, count as an asset any amount the employee elects to receive as a lump sum from the company retirement/pension fund. Include in annual income any retirement benefits received through periodic payments. In order to correctly include or exclude as assets any amount now held in retirement/pension funds for employed persons, the grantee must know whether the money is accessible before retirement.

Equity in Real Property

Real property includes land or real estate owned by the participant or participant household. Equity is the portion of the market value of the asset which is owned by the participant (the amount which would be available to the household if the property were to be sold). It is equal to the market value less any mortgage or loans secured against the property (which must be paid off upon sale of the property).

Equity in Real Property Example

Calculate equity in real property as follows:

$$\text{Market Value} - \text{Loan (Mortgage)} = \text{Equity}$$

Calculate the cash value of real property as follows:

$$\text{Equity} - \text{Expense to Convert to Cash} = \text{Cash Value}$$

Expenses to convert to cash may include costs that would be paid to liquidate the asset, such as sales commissions, settlement costs, and transfer taxes.

Assets Disposed of for Less Than Fair Market Value

At initial certification or reexamination, grantees must ask whether a household has disposed of an asset for less than its market value within the past two years. If the family has, the grantee must determine the difference between the cash value of the asset at time of sale or other disposal and the actual payment received of for the asset.

Some of the types of assets that must be considered include cash, real property, stocks, bonds, and certificates of deposit. They must be counted if the household gave them away or sold them for less than the market value. *Note: generally, assets disposed of as a result of a divorce, separation, foreclosure, or bankruptcy are not considered assets disposed of for less than fair market value.*

VA does not specify a minimum threshold for counting assets disposed of for less than fair market value. A grantee may establish a threshold that will enable it to ignore small amounts such as charitable contributions. (HUD Handbook 4350.3, for multifamily subsidized housing, uses \$1,000 as a threshold.) Verification of assets disposed of for less than fair market value is generally done by participant certification. Grantees need verify only those certifications that warrant documentation.

Valuing Assets

Because of the requirement to include the greater of the actual interest/dividend income earned or a percentage based upon a HUD published passbook rate when assets are greater than \$5,000, the value of assets may affect the family's annual income.

Grantees must determine the market value of the asset and then calculate the cash value by subtracting the estimated expense required were the participant to convert the asset to cash. Expenses to convert to cash include costs such as:

- Penalties for premature withdrawal (e.g., the 10% penalty paid when a retirement account is closed prior to retirement age, or a certificate of deposit is withdrawn prior to maturity);
- Broker and legal fees (e.g., a percentage of the value of the asset incurred in the sale of stocks, bonds, real estate, crypto, etc.); and
- Settlement costs incurred in real estate transactions (e.g. the typical percentage of sales price for settlement in the locality).

Note: Grantees must not require participants to dispose of assets in order to determine the costs to convert to cash. These amounts simply reflect a realistic estimate of costs, and by deducting them from the market value of the asset, the imputed income from the asset is based on an amount the participant would have in hand if they converted their assets to cash.

Federal Tax Refunds Received within the Previous 12 Months

If Federal tax refunds received within the previous 12 months make up part of a household's cash assets, that part of the household's cash assets must not be counted among the household's financial resources when determining the household's eligibility or need for assistance under SSVF. See "Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010," Pub. L. No. 111-312, § 728, 124 Stat. 3296, 3317.

For example, if a household applying for SSVF assistance in July 2011 has \$2,000 in total assets that includes a \$500 federal income tax refund received in April 2011, no more than \$1,500 of the household's total assets may be considered when determining whether the household has the financial resources and support networks needed to obtain immediate housing or remain in its existing housing or when determining the amount or type of assistance that household needs.

D. Determining Housing Status Eligibility

As with income eligibility, all participants applying for SSVF assistance must undergo a housing status eligibility determination. The results must be documented in the case file. This section provides detailed information on housing status eligibility.

1. Category 1 Eligibility (Homelessness Prevention)

Homelessness prevention assistance is intended for eligible Veteran families who are imminently at-risk of experiencing literal homelessness (e.g., entering an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation) **but for** SSVF assistance. Veterans may be enrolled in homelessness prevention services under Stage 1 by indicating they anticipate becoming literally homeless in the next 30 days. This ensures SSVF grantees can engage Veterans in Rapid Resolution interventions while maintaining the ability to escalate services as needed. Note that this includes Veteran families who may be living in a doubled-up housing situation and who are also imminently at risk of experiencing literal homelessness.

To qualify under **Category 1**, a Veteran family must be “residing in permanent housing.” This encompasses many different housing situations, including where a Veteran family is residing in (i) a leased unit, (ii) a house with a mortgage, (iii) a unit shared with others (i.e. doubled-up), or (iv) a hotel or motel not paid for by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals or by charitable organizations.

Veteran families who are applying for SSVF assistance must be assessed for

1. Eligibility (Stage 1), and
2. Targeting (Stage 2) using the VA’s “SSVF Homelessness Prevention Screening Form”

Apart from meeting SSVF eligibility requirements for Veteran status and income, applicant families must minimally meet the following Stage 1 eligibility criteria to receive SSVF homelessness prevention assistance:

- A. Anticipate the imminent loss of their current primary nighttime residence (housing an individual or family owns, rents, or lives in with or without paying rent; housing shared with others; and rooms in hotels or motels paid for by the individual or family) within 30 days or less of applying for SSVF homelessness prevention assistance.
- B. Indicate that they are at risk of experiencing literal homelessness but for SSVF assistance. Veterans indicating imminent risk of experiencing homelessness should immediately be enrolled in SSVF services under Stage 1 and be provided Rapid Resolution assistance and further assessment to determine housing needs and the types of resources available, including SSVF TFA (per below) to assist the household.

A Veteran family applying for homelessness prevention assistance must also be assessed and prioritized using VA targeting criteria included in “Stage 2” of the VA’s “Homelessness Prevention Screening Form”, Grantees must notify the VA when the targeting score is changed and provide explanation of how this was determined within their community. Such changes should also be discussed with non-VA community stakeholders as part of the ongoing community planning.

Veteran households who meet both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the ‘Homelessness Prevention Screening Form’ may be offered Temporary Financial Assistance; however, TFA does not always need to be offered to all households meeting these thresholds. Grantees may also adjust their targeting threshold score requirements or use the Exceptional Circumstance waiver to provide TFA, including immediate linkages to Shallow Subsidy, where appropriate and justified.

Veteran households who meet Stage 1 eligibility requirements but do not score at or above the established targeting threshold score should be identified as “Does Not Meet Targeting Threshold” in Stage 2. These households may receive Rapid Resolution and non-TFA supports, unless the grantee has the Exceptional Circumstance Waiver in place.

Grantees may initially provide Rapid Resolution services to eligible Veteran families as part of a progressive engagement approach, whether or not they are allowed to receive SSVF TFA. While it may be that the initial service plan does not include TFA, the housing plan can evolve to include TFA at a later time once it is clear that SSVF TFA is necessary to stabilize the Veteran’s housing and the Veteran family meets SSVF criteria.

For further guidance regarding homelessness prevention screening and targeting thresholds please see [Exhibit E](#) of this Program Guide.

Those Veteran families that qualify under **Category 1** may require assistance to help them remain in their existing permanent housing or identify new housing that will better meet their needs and be more sustainable. For example, the Veteran family may imminently lose their housing and experience literal homelessness if rent arrears are not paid, and the grantee may assist that Veteran family to pay the arrears and develop a housing stability plan that will reasonably result in the Veteran family being able to afford the rent for that unit in the future. Alternatively, if that same Veteran family would not reasonably be able to afford that unit in the future, the grantee may assist the Veteran family to locate an alternate housing arrangement that is sustainable for the Veteran family or access other service, including SSVF Rental Assistance, Shallow Subsidy services, and income maximization services, to promote longer-term housing stability.

2. Categories 2 and 3 Eligibility (Rapid Re-Housing)

SSVF's rapid re-housing assistance is intended for eligible Veteran families who are literally homeless as per definition bulleted below. Persons qualifying as literally homeless include persons who at the time of application or reassessment lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including Veteran families who are:

- Staying in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground; **OR**
- Staying in a supervised publicly- or privately-operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals); **OR**
- Exiting an institution where the Veteran resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution: **OR**
- Are fleeing or attempting to flee a domestic violence situation To qualify under **Category 2**, the Veteran family must ALSO be:
- Scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days pending the location or development of suitable permanent housing.
- Not otherwise be eligible under Category 1.

To qualify under **Category 3**, a Veteran family must also:

- Have exited from permanent housing in the last 90 days to seek other housing that is responsive to the Veteran family's needs and preferences; **AND**
- Not otherwise be eligible under Category 1.

E. Recertification of Eligibility

In order to ensure that SSVF programs fully evaluate participants' housing barriers, housing situation and eligibility for services, SSVF requires recertification at least every three months. The one exception to this requirement is for those Veteran families receiving a Shallow Subsidy described in 38 CFR Part 62.34(a)(8) who are recertified only at the end of the Shallow Subsidy period. Determination of length and amount of assistance is based on a progressive assistance approach that requires ongoing assessment, evaluation, and housing planning to overcome each Veteran household's barriers to obtaining and/or retaining permanent housing. A simple recertification step is required to determine whether the household is ready to exit the program or will require continued provision of services.

Grantees close out those cases where participants are assessed as no longer requiring or qualifying for SSVF assistance. Grantees recertify only those participant households that are both eligible for (see reassessment areas below) and in need of services to obtain or retain housing (see “But For” eligibility in 1.c. below). The recertification requirement applies to all participants regardless if temporary financial assistance is offered except for those Veterans receiving Shallow Subsidy services.

Note that in situations where there is a break in assistance (e.g., the participant receives two months of enrollment services, is exited from the program, and later re-applies for assistance), the household must be reevaluated as if they were going through the initial certification process rather than a recertification.

1. Reassessment Areas

At recertification, the following areas should be reassessed by grantees:

- a. **Income Eligibility**: At recertification, the participant’s income must still not exceed 80 percent AMI. Given that the household’s circumstances may have changed in the intervening months, grantees must recalculate and document household income as they did during the initial certification. If a household’s income exceeds 80 percent AMI at the time it is reassessed, that household is no longer eligible for SSVF assistance.
- b. **Housing Status**: A Veteran is categorized at the start of their SSVF enrollment as either Category 1 (HP) or Category 2/3 (RRH). That categorization determines their initial HMIS project enrollment, and at recertification if the Veteran has been determined to have changed housing status from Category 1 to Category 2/3, then the Veteran should be exited from the HP project in HMIS and enrolled in the RRH project in order to document the loss of housing appropriately. Remember that the goal of RRH is to quickly house a Veteran (meaning we expect the housing status to go from Category 2/3 to Category 1 as part of the program design), so the recertification process does not include changing the Veteran’s housing status in the case of moving from Category 2/3 to Category 1. The change in status only applies to situations when a Veteran was enrolled in the HP project in HMIS and then was not prevented from becoming homeless, and when the recertification happens and the Veteran is still homeless in a shelter or on the street they would need to be exited from the HP project in HMIS and reenrolled in the RRH project in HMIS to document the project’s failure at preventing the Veteran’s homelessness.
- c. **Assessing Continuing Need for Services**: At recertification, participants must still require SSVF services to reasonably assure the participant’s housing stability. This means SSVF staff must again assess and document whether the participant, absent the help of SSVF, continues to lack the financial resources and support networks to either obtain new housing or remain in housing.

- d. **Confirmation of Veteran Family Status:** At recertification, the grantee must confirm whether the participant remains part of a Veteran family. If the Veteran becomes absent from a household or dies while other members of the Veteran family are receiving supportive services, then services may continue to the remaining family members for a grace period established by the grantee. The grace period cannot exceed 1 year from the date of absence or death of the Veteran, and all other requirements for eligibility remain the same. The grantee is required to notify the Veteran's family member(s) of the duration of the grace period.

Eviction, denial of continued assistance, or denial of tenancy on the basis of being a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking is prohibited under VAWA.

2. Adjusting Assistance at Reassessment

As explained above, the appropriate level of supportive services and temporary financial assistance, if given, should be based on a participant's specific housing barriers. During each reassessment, it is important for program staff to consider if circumstances have changed and how much assistance a household currently needs for housing stability. In general, the intensity or duration of services or financial assistance can then be adjusted to be greater or less than expected at an earlier (re)assessment. Veterans receiving Shallow Subsidy services should be assessed for case management needs or any dramatic changes in income or ability to pay rent, but generally their financial assistance support will remain the same over the course of the Shallow Subsidy period.

If a participant becomes ineligible to receive supportive services with SSVF funds during the recertification process, the grantee is required to provide the participant with information on other available programs or resources.

Each person who conducts a reassessment and eligibility screening should complete an SSVF Staff Recertification of Eligibility for SSVF Assistance, for every participant case file.

F. Program Exits

The goal of the SSVF Program is to promote housing stability among very low-income Veteran families who reside in or are transitioning to permanent housing. VA understands that every household exit is different; however, SSVF grantees should strive to ensure that households being exited from SSVF into permanent housing are stable and have the resources/supports to sustain housing, at least in the near term. When it is determined that a participant household will soon be exiting SSVF, the grantee should review the final housing stability plan goals with the participant, review a final budget, review housing counseling elements such as lease requirements and home

maintenance which contribute to housing stability, and make any last referrals to community resources. Grantees must utilize the [SSVF Program Exit Checklist](#) to ensure the appropriate exit steps have been carried out once it is determined a household is going to be exited. For Veterans who may be discharged for other reasons (e.g., reunited with family, jail, relocated, etc.), the grantee should develop internal policies and procedures for exiting those households. In particular, the program must utilize the SSVF Program Exit Checklist and have clear expectations that staff will make numerous attempts, via various methods, to contact a person who has stopped responding to program requests to meet with the case manager. See "Releasing Participants from Program" under Program Operations for more information.

G. Case File Documentation Requirements

Grantees are responsible for maintaining case files for each participant household. This information must also be reflected in HMIS uploads where appropriate HMIS fields exist to capture this data. During the scheduled audit, case files will be inspected for the following forms:

Forms	Homelessness Prevention	Rapid Re-Housing
Grantee Designed Forms	✓	✓
1. Intake Screening	✓	✓
2. Housing Stability Plan	✓	✓
3. Release(s) of Information	✓	✓
4. HMIS Release of Information	✓	✓
5. Grievance Procedure with Participant Signature	✓	✓
6. Case Notes	✓	✓
7. Program Agreement	✓	✓
Required SSVF Forms – Download from the SSVF website or find in Forms section		
1. SSVF Homelessness Prevention Screening Form	✓	
2. Staff Certification of Eligibility for SSVF	✓	✓
3. Critical Incident Report	As needed	As needed

Forms	Homelessness Prevention	Rapid Re-Housing
Official ³ SSVF Forms – Download recommended format from SSVF website or find in Forms		
1. Staff Recertification of Continued Assistance	✓	✓
2. Pending Verification of Veteran Status	As needed	As needed
3. Income Verification Template OR Self-declaration of Income ⁴	✓	✓
4. Asset Income Calculation Worksheet	✓	✓
5. Literally Homeless Certification Template OR Domestic Violence Certification Form OR Self-declaration of Literal Homelessness ⁵		✓
6. Rent Reasonableness Checklist	✓	✓
7. Housing Habitability Standards	Required for new (different) units	Required for new (different) units
8. Emergency Housing Assistance Verification	As needed	As needed
9. Exit Checklist	Required	Required

³ “Official” SSVF forms are recommended for SSVF grantees to use to fulfill requirements. However, grantees may create a form of their own design to fit the same purpose.

⁴ Self-declaration formats are only to be used when third-party documentation cannot be obtained.

⁵ See Note 4.

1. Eligibility Documentation Standards

Grantees are responsible for verifying and documenting the eligibility of all Veteran families prior to providing SSVF assistance. They are also responsible for maintaining this documentation in the SSVF participant case file once approved for assistance. Grantees with insufficient case file documentation may be found out of compliance with SSVF program regulations during VA monitoring. It is important for grantees to develop local policies and procedures to ensure appropriate documentation is obtained and included in SSVF participants’ files.

For purposes of SSVF, VA allows various types of documentation, ranging from third-party written verification to participant self-declaration. Minimum acceptable types of documentation vary depending on the type of income or particular housing status and circumstance being documented. See [Exhibit B](#) for detailed documentation standards. General documentation standards, *in order of preference*, are as follows:

- a. **Written Third-party** — Verification in writing from a third-party (e.g. individual employer, Social Security Administration, welfare office, emergency shelter provider, etc.) either directly to SSVF staff or via the Veteran family is most preferred. Third-party verification of income, such as a deposit slip for a paycheck, might show income after deductions have been made; grantees must document gross income, before any deductions. Written third-party documentation may include completion of a standardized form, such as a verification of income statement.
- b. **Oral Third-party** — Verification from a third-party (e.g., individual employer, Social Security Administration, Welfare Office, etc.) provided over the telephone or in-person directly to SSVF staff who, in turn, create a written record in the case file. Oral third-party verification is acceptable only if written third-party verification cannot be obtained in time to resolve the housing crisis. SSVF staff must document reasons why third-party written verification could not be obtained in the SSVF participant file.
- c. **Participant Self-Declaration** — An affidavit of income and/or housing status as reported by the household is allowable but is only acceptable if written or verbal third-party verification cannot be obtained. Self-declaration of housing status (e.g., eviction) should be rare. SSVF staff must document reasons why third-party written, or oral verification could not be obtained in the SSVF participant file — for example, if obtaining the third-party verification would place the household in danger due to experiencing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking.

VA encourages grantees to carefully review what documentation is included in participant case files through periodic monitoring and be sure it is sufficient to document that the household meets all eligibility criteria. Remember, determining eligibility can be a multi-level process. Veteran families must meet ALL criteria and evidence of this must be present in the case file.

2. SSVF Staff Certification of Eligibility for SSVF Assistance

The Staff Certification of Eligibility for SSVF Assistance Form should be maintained in each participant's file and is subject to review by VA. This form should be completed for each household deemed eligible for SSVF assistance. The form should be completed and signed by both the person determining eligibility and their supervisor for all households. Supervisory review and signature of eligibility and recertification is required within 7 business days after staff initial signature/intake. Each grantee should develop a policy on acceptable forms of signatures (electronic, email, inked). It is critical to maintain an audit trail of efforts to maintain compliance to the regulatory guidance.

3. Determining Acceptable Level of Documentation

VA expects that all grantees will make a conscientious and reasonable effort to use the highest documentation standard possible. Detailed tables outlining all acceptable forms of homelessness and income documentation are included in [Exhibit B](#) of this Program Guide and on the [SSVF website](#).

To determine the highest documentation standard that is reasonable, each SSVF grantee should review their own existing resources (i.e., funding, capacity, pre-existing income verification process for other programs). Some grantees already utilize a third-party verification process for other funders that could be reasonably incorporated into the SSVF eligibility determination and documentation process. All grantees should attempt to meet the highest documentation standard possible within the agency resources.

Establishing a reasonable documentation standard also depends on the type of service provided. For example, the highest level of income documentation for one-time or emergency assistance may not be reasonable given the urgency of the participant's housing crisis and/or short-term nature of the assistance. It would not be reasonable to delay SSVF assistance if third-party documentation cannot be obtained in time to allow assistance to be provided and the experience of literal homelessness averted. Rental assistance over multiple months and/or other ongoing assistance (i.e. case management) allows time to obtain a higher standard of documentation. The SSVF grantee is encouraged to provide a brief written description of efforts to obtain third-party documentation in the participant case file (e.g., in case notes, participant assessment form, or participant self-declaration).

The income and housing status documentation tables in [Exhibit B](#) of this Program Guide outline the minimum income documentation standards. While the highest level of documentation may not be possible or desirable in all cases, SSVF staff must clearly describe in participant case files each instance when a documentation standard is used that is lower than the most preferred, third-party standard, per the tables in [Exhibit B](#) of this

Program Guide. This may be done as part of the client assessment or as part of other case file documentation (e.g., in case notes, on income verification form).

Grantees should note that **self-declaration of housing status** for participants who are at-risk of losing housing should be used **ONLY** in very limited circumstances. VA recognizes there may be some unusual cases where a third-party is not able to provide documentation that a participant is at-risk of losing housing (e.g., host family refuses to provide or the participant is experiencing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking). In these rare cases, grantees should clearly document the situation in the case file including all attempts to obtain verification of housing status in writing or orally. Efforts to obtain third-party documentation (written and oral), including the circumstances describing why third-party documentation was not received, must be clearly documented in the case file. Use of self-certification documentation without a written description of due diligence efforts to obtain third-party documentation in the case file may result in non-compliance with the SSVF Program.

4. Timeliness of Income Documentation

The definition of income for the SSVF program reflects a Veteran family's annual income at the time of application. Accordingly, documents and information collected to verify income should be recent and current at time of application for SSVF assistance.

5. Documenting Domestic Violence

As discussed earlier, for all participant households newly created under circumstances of domestic violence, SSVF resets the tolling period for receiving temporary financial assistance. For participants for whom this policy applies, grantees must certify a participant's domestic violence situation using the SSVF Domestic Violence Certification Form. Under VAWA, victims may choose the form of documentation of victimization. They may choose from any of the following:

- Self-certification, such as through Form HUD-5382.
- A document that must be signed both by (1) the applicant or tenant requesting VAWA protection, and (2) by one of the following professionals: an employee, agent, or volunteer of a victim service provider; an attorney; or a medical/mental health professional ("professional") from whom the victim has sought assistance relating to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or the effects of abuse. The professional must also specify, under penalty of perjury, that they believe the incident that is the ground for protection and remedies under the VAWA Final Rule occurred, and that the

- incident meets the applicable definitions of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking under 24 CFR 5.2003.
- A record of a Federal, State, tribal, territorial or local law enforcement agency (may include a police report), court, or administrative agency.

Note that the SSVF Domestic Violence Certification Form allows participants to provide a self-certification of their circumstances. Third-party verification, from a social worker or legal services providers, for example, is also sufficient but not required particularly if doing so may jeopardize the safety of the household members.

VI. Supportive Services

A. Introduction

The primary aim of SSVF Program supportive services is to help Veteran families who are currently experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness quickly regain stability in permanent housing after experiencing a housing crisis and/or homelessness. Grantees must use SSVF supportive services grant funds to provide supportive services to very low-income Veteran families that fall within one of the three categories of occupying permanent housing. Grantees will assist participant households by providing a range of supportive services designed to resolve the immediate crisis and promote housing stability. Grantees are required to provide the following supportive services:

- Outreach services
- Case management services
- Assistance in obtaining VA benefits
- Assistance in obtaining and coordinating other public benefits available in the grantee's area or community
- Health Care Navigation Services
- Legal Services
- Temporary financial assistance

B. Outreach

1. Description of Services

Performing outreach is a critical component of grantees' programs. Outreach services must be customized to the target populations being served by the grantee (i.e., a plan to target

very low- income Veteran families, who are literally homeless, or at imminent risk of becoming homelessness and ensuring equitable outreach activities to historically marginalized or underserved populations). Outreach plans also depend upon the area or community in which supportive services will be provided (e.g., urban vs. rural) and the available resources in those areas or communities. Grantee outreach should be comprehensive and targeted to all communities and CoCs listed in their resolution and ensure that historically underserved populations, such as Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) and LGBTQ2+ Veterans, are included in targeting considerations. Grantees should maintain documentation of where outreach is conducted and how often it takes place.

There are two parts to the provision of outreach services: identifying very low-income Veteran families and screening them to determine eligibility for supportive services provided by a grantee. Grantees should work with other SSVF grantees in their geography and local VA and CoC stakeholders to ensure outreach is coordinated and consistent with the CoC's overall outreach and coordinated entry policies. SSVF Grantees are expected to participate in planning, implementation and operation of the local CoC's Coordinated Entry (CE) process (which should account for SSVF and VA homeless programs in general) for Veterans and should align all outreach and referral activities, to the extent possible, with the local CE Policies and Procedures. See [VA Homeless Program Expectations for Participation in Coordinated Entry](#) section for more information.

2. Identifying Veteran Families

Effective outreach is required to ensure that supportive services are provided to very low-income Veteran families who are “most in need” and who would otherwise be difficult to locate or serve. This includes particular focus on historically marginalized or underserved populations. As part of providing outreach, grantees should:

- Develop relationships with local social services and public benefit agencies, shelters, and faith-based and community-based organizations and victim services provider serving low-income, at-risk, and Veteran families experiencing homelessness, especially those from marginalized populations;
- Develop relationships with local VA facilities, including Vet Centers and Veterans Benefit Administration (VBA) offices;
- Host local informational events; and
- Participate in Stand Down (or similar) events.

Maintaining contact with local organizations who serve Veterans will help grantees to identify additional participants. Such organizations are able to provide referrals, consistent with local CE policies, which will simplify the process of recruiting new participants to the grantee's program.

3. Eligibility Screening and Evaluation

It is the expectation that SSVF grantees can screen and enroll eligible Veteran households on the same day they request services, particularly for Veterans needing immediate connections to services that ensure health and safety and for whom no other safe shelter or service options are immediately available. Screening for eligibility must occur prior to the intake process. Grantees should develop screening tools to assist them in (a) confirming a low-income Veteran family's eligibility for supportive services and (b) prioritizing those families in the greatest need.

In screening Veteran families for homelessness prevention assistance, grantees must use VA's Homelessness Prevention Screening Form to assist in identifying and then prioritizing those families who will imminently be experiencing literal homelessness. This required SSVF form also assists in documenting the eligibility of persons applying for SSVF homelessness prevention assistance. This screening form should be completed by SSVF grantee staff using information obtained from the head of household. Screening forms should be supported by additional assessment and documentation of the eligibility conditions and targeting factors indicated. All screening forms should be signed and dated by the authorized SSVF staff person completing the form and their supervisor.

Grantee screening methods and targeting criteria should be consistent and coordinated with the local CoC's Coordinated Entry policies.

Grantees should establish a file for each incoming participant that contains completed, signed and dated screening forms; documentation confirming the participant's eligibility for the SSVF Program; and an assignment for the participant to one of the SSVF Categories of Occupying Permanent Housing.

3a. Participant Eligibility Verification and Documentation

Grantees are required to serve low-income Veteran families occupying permanent housing as defined in 38 CFR 62.2 and 38 CFR 62.11(a). Staff should be familiar with SSVF Program eligibility requirements in order to determine a very low-income Veteran family's eligibility. See [Section V](#) of this Program Guide for detailed eligibility determination and documentation guidance.

3b. New Participant Health Screening (Physical and Mental)

Some people experiencing a housing crisis or homelessness have acute or chronic health problems which may not have received medical attention. By coordinating the provision of health screenings of new participant households, grantees assist VA in ensuring the health and well-being of very low-income Veteran families. SSVF grantees are required to employ Health Care Navigators who do assist in coordinating health related referrals and services

for all SSVF participants. With participant agreement and consent, grantees are encouraged, to coordinate these screenings at intake. For the Veteran, this may mean connecting the Veteran to the local VA facility to ensure they receive medical care. For the Veteran's family members, this may mean identifying local community health resources that can assist non-Veteran household members. Health related supports should assess, as appropriate, both the mental health and the general physical well-being of new participants and what support the Veterans needing in accessing appropriate, desired health care services. It is important to note that SSVF grant funds cannot be used to directly perform any indicated medical or psycho-social assessments and screenings. (If a grantee wishes to perform these services directly, the grantee must utilize an alternative funding source.)

3c. Legal Services Assessment

All SSVF grantees are required to assess Veterans for legal service needs utilizing their local legal services assessment. Legal services assessments are an integral part of progressive engagement and Veterans should be asked about legal needs at various points during their SSVF enrollment, as legal needs may change as Veterans and SSVF deal with and resolve the immediate housing crisis. SSVF grantees should have a process with their in-house counsel or legal services subcontractor to provide referrals or direct services when eligible SSVF legal service needs are identified. If non-eligible SSVF legal service needs are identified, SSVF grantees should work to locate appropriate resources in the community for the Veteran and provide a referral.

3d. Referral When Sufficient Resources are not Available

When there are not sufficient resources to accommodate additional participants at a given time, grantees should make efforts to ensure Veterans are connected to local Coordinated Entry and emergency housing options and/or refer eligible Veteran families to other programs run by VA and/or public or private entities that will provide the assistance they require, including appropriate legal services. Please see VA's guidance regarding the use of Emergency Housing Assistance on the SSVF website. Grantees should have established relationships with local VA and other local homeless assistance and homelessness prevention programs to facilitate warm handoffs and referrals. Assistance from the VA can also be obtained by contacting the VA National Call Center at 877-424-3838.

4. Referral of Ineligible Veteran Families

If grantees encounter Veteran families who do not meet the eligibility requirements of the SSVF Program, they should make efforts to refer such Veteran families to another program that will provide them with the assistance and services they require. Veteran households who do not meet the eligibility requirements of the SSVF Program should be referred to other resources that will provide them with the assistance and services they require. Grantees are required to inform the Veteran household as to the reasons they were found

ineligible, recommend alternative services to meet the household's needs and notify any applicable referral source a Veteran elects to contact. Grantees should inform the household of the agency's grievance policy should the determination be disputed. Staff should be familiar with area resources so that appropriate referrals can be made. Grantees should track these ineligible households internally identifying the reason they were found ineligible and where they were referred. Grantees will be asked to report on screened but not enrolled households, in the Quarterly Certification.

5. Eligible Expenses for Outreach

Outreach activities and costs are typically made up of direct outreach staff time. However, SSVF may pay for SSVF marketing materials to enhance conventional staff-driven outreach provided that all of the following terms are met before incurring such costs:

- Traditional staff-driven methods of outreach were tried but target numbers are still unmet.
- An assessment was performed to ensure chosen marketing method will be effective.
- A comparison was made between effectiveness of staff outreach versus marketing.
- Care was taken to market only the SSVF program itself and not the sponsoring agency.
- Marketing was designed to ensure effectiveness in connecting Veterans to SSVF
- Participation in outreach consortium/coordination driven by CoC wide process. SSVF providers must be billed for the same type of services to the CoC so that it meets the definition of being equitable and reasonable.

C. Case Management Services

1. Description of Services

To effectively assist participant households to obtain and retain permanent housing, grantees must provide Housing First, housing-focused case management services. SSVF is a crisis response program. The household is experiencing a specific crisis—the loss or imminent loss of their housing – and resolving that crisis is the goal of SSVF grantees. Case managers utilize a wide array of approaches to resolve or minimize each program participant's barriers to obtaining and retaining housing, including historical and systemic barriers faced by marginalized groups. Participant choice is paramount. While a case

manager may identify an approach or helpful resource, utilizing these recommendations is voluntary. Therefore, it is essential that case managers assertively and positively engage with the Veteran household, assisting them to achieve housing they want and can sustain.

Overcoming other housing barriers will require case managers to assist the household to utilize community resources. Case managers must have current knowledge of the many resources that can help a very low-income or extremely low-income household to secure and retain housing. While the use of referrals is voluntary, many participants willingly participate in services that will help them keep their housing and avoid homelessness.

2. Intake

2a. Needs Assessment

Once the participant's eligibility has been confirmed, the case manager begins by identifying any emergency needs that must be immediately met. For Veteran households experiencing homelessness, it is expected that the household will not spend any additional time on the street or in places not meant for human habitation. This will generally require an intervention that may include Rapid Resolution services, placement in a VA temporary housing program or emergency housing. Other emergency needs are often related to medical issues; for example, a Veteran who is unable to obtain medications for diabetes or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), or a person who may have a significant injury or illness. These immediate needs are a priority.

Second, the case manager begins consulting with the participant to determine their housing barriers. This highly specialized assessment identifies both Tenant Screening Barriers (TSB) and Housing Retention Barriers (HRB). TSBs include any elements of a person's income, credit, rental and criminal history that fail local landlords' tenant screening criteria and could cause the person's rental application to be rejected. Assessments should also focus on potential health or legal barriers to housing. Assessing housing barriers combines discussions with the program participant and collecting records of the person's rental, credit and criminal history. Such records can be obtained through public databases or purchased from a rental screening company (an eligible expense for SSVF grant funds). Review of these records with the program participant focuses on the ways the person's history can affect their access to housing (due to landlord screening criteria) and avoiding future housing instability (by addressing any relevant patterns that have resulted in housing instability in the past so they are less likely to recur).

The assessment becomes the basis of creating plans to obtain and retain housing. Some program participants will have relatively few housing barriers beyond poverty-related blemishes on their credit and rental history. Others may lack essential knowledge, skills and supports necessary to fulfill their responsibilities as tenants.

2b. Housing Stability Planning

To maximize the effectiveness of services provided to or coordinated on behalf of the participant, the case manager will work with the participant household to develop individualized housing stability plans. Plans are based upon the household's strengths, housing barriers and priorities, as identified through the housing barrier assessment.

Case managers, with the participant, establish reasonable milestones for obtaining greater housing stability. These milestones will become a set of actionable goals intended to address the participant's obstacles to housing stability. Goals should be appropriate, time oriented, and reasonable, with specific action steps to be taken by the program participant and by the case manager to achieve the objectives. The case manager should ensure that proposed goals and objectives are manageable and focused on the immediate needs of securing and sustaining housing; overly ambitious plan can easily overwhelm participants who are already suffering from stress overload. Participants should be given choice and control in the plan. Participants are more likely to remain engaged in activities have been collaboratively identified, with their case managers, as a means to support their housing stability.

After meeting emergency needs, initial plans focus on housing search, specifying the steps taken by the participant and the case manager to identify suitable housing and a strategy for approaching the landlord or property manager. Veteran households will often need the active involvement of the Grantee staff to secure decent housing. Landlords may consider a household with high barriers to be too risky to accept as a tenant. The SSVF Grantee approaches landlords with incentives designed to minimize those perceived risks, such as home visits to reinforce lease compliance, a quick response to landlord concerns, a willingness to consider a double damage deposit, etc.

Landlord partnerships are essential to assure access to decent housing for every Veteran family, and every SSVF program must prioritize landlord recruitment and retention. This includes screening prospective landlord partners to assure they fulfill their responsibilities and crafting the kinds of incentives that will be attractive to prospective partners.

After the Veteran household secures housing, subsequent housing stability plans address how they will maintain their housing. Based on their Housing Retention Barriers, the plan's goals and action steps focus on assuring the household can fulfill their tenancy requirements: paying the rent, following the lease, caring for the unit and avoiding conflict with the landlord, other tenants and the police. Many tenants will have successful experience as renters and may need little help to fulfill their responsibilities.

Housing stability plans should use a progressive assistance approach. Participants are offered only as much assistance as needed and only as long as needed to end the housing crisis. Over time, the intensity and duration of services can be scaled up or increased only if and when the participant demonstrates a need for such increased assistance.

In some situations, the participant will have entered the program with a well-defined idea of their goals and the steps needed to resolve their housing crisis. In other situations, the participant may not understand how the options available through SSVF might contribute to housing stability. The case manager should explain how housing barriers impact housing stability and the SSVF, VA and community services that are available to program participants. Referrals to other community and VA resources should be undertaken only with the agreement of the program participant.

The case manager and participant will monitor progress toward achieving the established goals, including requesting updates from the participant's other service providers, as necessary. The housing stability plans should be updated as action steps and goals are met. As participants' needs change, new goals and action steps should be developed. Regular communication with the participant's landlord may uncover additional assistance needed to maintain housing stability. This may include the use of Shallow Subsidy services or referrals to more intensive or permanent services such as HUD-VASH or other voucher programs.

3. Role of Case Manager in Coordinating Provision of Supportive Services

The case manager is the participant's primary point of contact within the grantee's SSVF program. In addition to assisting the participant to assess their housing barriers and priorities, the case manager is responsible for coordinating the provision of supportive services, including Temporary Financial Assistance, legal services, income and health benefits, income maximization supports, and Healthcare Navigation. The case manager will also provide and coordinate referrals for other supportive services not offered by the grantee (or provided more efficiently or effectively elsewhere). An effective case manager should be familiar with the area or community in which the program operates and actively cultivate a working knowledge and connections to relevant area resources such as affordable housing providers; emergency, medical and other care professionals; public benefits offices; employment training and job placement programs; affordable daycare; legal or credit counseling services; transportation, etc.

D. Assistance in Obtaining VA Benefits

1. Description of Benefits/Services

As part of participant intake, the grantee should determine whether the participant household is already receiving services from VA. If the participant is already receiving services, the grantee's assessment should focus on what additional services the participant may need, want and be eligible for, and refer the participant to the appropriate VA office for assistance. If the participant is not already receiving services from VA, the grantee should

make the participant aware of the services for which they may be eligible and offer to refer the participant to the nearest VA facility. Potential VA benefits and services may include, but are not limited to:

- Income Assistance;
- Vocational and rehabilitation counseling;
- Employment and training service;
- Educational assistance; and
- Health care services.

Income assistance, employment, training, and educational resources are especially important for the target population of the SSVF Program. Participants will need to establish regular incomes to support the program's primary goal of housing stability. Health care benefits will offer participants mental, behavioral and physical health services that are not currently being addressed. VA offers health care services at over 1,400 locations nationwide, including hospitals, clinics, community living centers, domiciliary care facilities, readjustment counseling centers, etc. A person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released there from under conditions other than dishonorable or was discharged or dismissed by reason of a General court-martial may qualify for VA health care.

2. Guidance on Linkages to Benefits/Services

SSVF grantees are required to employ Health Care Navigators who help coordinate each household's access to health care supports, as needed. If a participant has not yet enrolled in the VA health care system, the grantee should, with the Veteran's consent, provide assistance in the enrollment process. Additional information on VA health care and benefits can be found on the following VA websites: <https://www.va.gov/health/index.asp> and <https://benefits.va.gov/benefits/vonapp.asp>.

If necessary, grantees must access and pay for an accredited claims agent or attorney and other services to assist them in obtaining VA benefits. Although grantees will assist participants in obtaining available benefits from VA, grantees are not permitted to represent Veterans in benefit claims before VA unless the individual providing representation is an accredited claims agent or attorney.

3. Using Community Linkages to Enhance Effectiveness

Grantees should develop relationships with local VA facilities, State Veterans Affairs Offices and Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs). A list of State Veterans Affairs Offices can be found on the following VA website: <http://www.va.gov/statedva.htm>. VA also maintains a

searchable database of VSOs that can be accessed online at:

<http://www.va.gov/vso/index.cfm?template=search>.

Grantees who maintain lines of communication with VA facilities will be able to stay up-to-date about new benefits and services for which participants may be eligible and make or receive referrals as appropriate.

E. Assistance in Obtaining and Coordinating Other Public Benefits

1. Description of Services

Grantees are required to assist participant households to access both public benefits and mainstream community resources. The terms “public benefits” and “community resources” are defined broadly to include health care (medical, mental health, and substance abuse services) and daily living services, affordable housing, employment and vocational services, income support (from public benefits), legal services, transportation, personal financial planning and credit counseling, VA fiduciary and representative payee services, and childcare. The goals for connecting with these external programs are, first, to meet immediate housing-related and non- housing-related needs and, second, to avoid another housing crisis in the near term.

Assuring that Veteran households can access the resources to help maintain housing may be organized by the grantee using three possible approaches:

1. **Direct:** by grantee staff OR by subcontract to partner organization (*Note: SSVF funds cannot pay for direct provision of health care or daily living services*).
2. **Indirect:** refer out to external resources with grantee utilizing a conventional information and referral approach and building upon in-house knowledge of external resources.
3. **Both:** by grantee staff OR by subcontract to partner organization AND referred out to external resources with grantee utilizing a conventional information and referral approach and building upon in-house knowledge of external resources

1a. Connection to Healthcare and Daily Living Services

Options for Grantee: 2. **Indirect**

SSVF Health Care Navigators support participants in accessing health care and daily living services from their local VA Medical Center and other health care providers. This includes

primary care, mental health treatment, substance abuse services, daily living services (also known as home care), and other specialty health care that an individual participant needs and chooses to utilize.

Grantees, primarily via SSVF Health Care Navigators, must cultivate strong relationships with their points of contacts at local VA Medical Centers and/or community-based outpatient clinic and utilize those relationships to make and monitor referrals. For participants with a history of reluctance to seek care from VA settings, case managers leverage the trust established with participants to support reestablishing connections.

Some Veterans and non-Veteran household members may be ineligible for VA health care. Accordingly, grantees must also identify non-VA health care resources. Grantees must also be able to assist participants in applying for Medicaid and/or subsidized insurance through local health care exchanges created by the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

1b. Connections to Affordable Housing via Housing Counseling

*Options for Grantee: 1: **Direct**; 2. **Indirect**; 3 **Both***

SSVF participants must be supported in searching for appropriate housing. Whether the grantee assigns specialized staff or utilizes subcontractors, this service should be delivered to all participants receiving rapid re-housing and those receiving homelessness prevention who require relocation to new housing. The terms “housing counseling” and “housing navigation” are defined broadly, to include identifying an appropriate housing unit to securing the lease. Specific tasks include researching available market rate and subsidized housing units that match a participant’s housing budget and needs; evaluating options that fit rent reasonableness; negotiating rents and lease terms (when possible) with landlords; appealing tenant selection decisions; assessing units using the [Habitability Standards](#); providing deposits and first month’s rent; signing leases; and devising move in plans. Depending on the program participant’s experience and knowledge, housing navigation may also include educating the Veteran household on such things as local housing options, standard lease requirements, fair housing laws, landlord and tenant rights and relationships, reasonable accommodations, lead paint laws, home maintenance, and efficient use of home systems such as heat. It also involves advance work with participants to devise household budgets and plan a schedule for regular and timely rent payments.

To optimize Veteran access to decent housing opportunities, Housing Counseling or Navigation services require that grantees build staff expertise on the availability of both affordable, private market rate units and publicly subsidized, affordable housing. For success in the private market, staff must cultivate a network of willing local landlords and their management companies as well as carry out efforts to maintain and expand that network over time. For success in the subsidized arena, staff must research, via information clearinghouses and online locators, housing programs dedicated to Veterans, to households exiting

homelessness, to low and extremely low income households in general, and to special populations such as persons who are elderly or with disabilities. Furthermore, staff must be knowledgeable of admissions preferences established in any and all subsidized housing.

1c. Connections to Employment and Vocational Services

Options for Grantee: 1: **Direct**; 2. **Indirect**; 3 **Both**

Where appropriate, SSVF participants should be supported to connect with services that foster workforce participation, job readiness, and job opportunities with the aim of maximizing income and thereby increasing housing stability. This effort could be carried out by an in-house employment specialist position or participants can be referred to such services through community resources, such as local job centers funded by the Workforce Investment Act, or VA-sponsored workforce development programs such as the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program. These programs may offer assistance with resume writing, job search, job interviewing, and job skill development. Grantees should also explore the availability of local job fairs, particularly those dedicated to Veterans, and local employers advertising new job development specifically for Veterans. Of note, refusal to participate in employment services should not be a barrier to access SSVF services nor a reason to terminate assistance..

1d. Connections to Income Support (Public and VA Benefits)

Options for Grantee: 1: **Direct**; 2. **Indirect**; 3 **Both**

SSVF participants should be supported to obtain public benefits including Social Security Disability Income, Supplemental Security Income, Veteran Benefit Administration benefits, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. Such benefits can be an essential resource for maximizing participants' income and thereby increasing housing stability. For applications to the Veteran Benefits Administration, participants should be assisted via referrals to local Veteran service organizations or via direct application through the SSVF liaison for the local Veteran Benefit Administration Office in the grantee's jurisdiction.

For applications to the Social Security Administration, participants should be assisted by staff who are trained in the SSI/SSDI Outreach Access and Recovery Program (SOAR). SOAR is a federal interagency project, and the SOAR Technical Assistance Center is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). SOAR assistance is designed to increase access to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) for eligible adults who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness and who have a mental illness, medical impairment, and/or a co-occurring substance use disorder. SOAR assistance is proven to increase the approval rate for those applying for benefits and shorten the time it takes individuals to receive them.

Every SSVF grantee should have a clear, formal relationship with SOAR-trained providers or train their own staff to provide SOAR assistance directly. SSVF grantees are encouraged to utilize the resources in the SOAR-SSVF Integration Toolkit to expand use of the SOAR model. The goal is that any Veteran with disabling conditions who is experiencing or at risk for homelessness is able to quickly connect with a SOAR provider for SSI/SSDI application assistance. It is the SSVF Program Office's expectation that all grantees utilize SOAR through either direct provision, a subcontract relationship, or through a specific Memorandum of Understanding that clearly outlines referral processes and expectations across partners.

1e. Connections to Legal Services

Options for Grantee: 1: **Direct**; 2. **Indirect**; 3 **Both**

Grantees are required to provide legal services to assist participants with issues that interfere with participants' ability to obtain or retain permanent housing or supportive services (38 CFR Part 62.33). When providing legal services directly, either through in-house counsel or by contract, the grantee must document the legal service being provided and the link between the legal issue and housing stability in the client file. Issues that fall under this category are legal in nature and have an impact on housing stability. Examples of common issues faced by homeless or at-risk Veterans include:

1. Eviction (threatening or pending)
2. Child support issues
3. Assistance in obtaining SSI and SSDI benefits and/or assistance with benefit claims
4. Landlord/Tenant issues (includes protecting tenant rights, addressing housing code violations, protecting security deposits, and providing lease reviews)
5. Obtaining a domestic violence restraining order or peace order
6. Outstanding warrants and/or court fees
7. Assistance in obtaining VA benefits and/or assistance with claims for those benefits
8. Driver's license reinstatement issues
9. Criminal records expungement
10. Debt collection (includes pursuing debt forgiveness and processing personal bankruptcies)
11. Discharge upgrade (if Veteran already enrolled in SSVF and current the upgrade is directly connected to the Housing Stability Plan.)

SSVF-funded legal assistance must be provided directly by the grantee through in-house counsel or contracted paid legal services in the community. Below are descriptions of the service models most commonly utilized. Grantees must use in-house counsel and/or contracted

services, and should also provide referral to legal services that cannot be paid for with SSVF funds.

1. **In-House Counsel:** Grantees may choose to hire licensed counsel as part of their SSVF staff to provide legal services to their program participants. This model constitutes direct service provision and costs acquired fall under the “Provision and Coordination of Supportive Services – Personnel” category of the budget.
2. **Contract:** Many Grantees elect to subcontract services out to a legal services provider (Private Attorney, Legal Aid Provider, etc.). This model constitutes direct service provision, operates on a flat fee or fee for service agreement, and is based on an anticipated volume of legal services that will be used by the grantee’s participants. Costs acquired under this model fall under “Provision and Coordination of Supportive Services – Non-Personnel” category of the budget. Grantees are encouraged to include specific reporting requirements (services provided, length of service, etc.) in the contract as well as include subcontractor- led issue spotting training for case managers.

Please note, pursuant to 38 CFR Part 62.33, Grantees must assist participants in obtaining legal services or coordinate the provision of legal services. When Veterans have legal issues that cannot be covered by SSVF legal services, grantees may satisfy this requirement via referrals on an as-needed basis to community legal aid organizations, Legal Aid Clinics, and other entities (or attorneys) providing pro bono assistance. Informal coordinated referral agreements may also be made with these service providers as well as with local law schools and chapters of the American Bar Association.

http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/Legal_Aid_Society_of_Cleveland_Check_Issue_Spotting_Tool.pdf

1f. Allowable and Unallowable Costs

Grantees must ensure that legal services provided fall under the allowable cost category and are linked to housing stability. Below is a list of allowable and unallowable costs. However, due to the complexity of legal issues and the differing capacity of each Grantee and community, Grantees should always contact their Regional Coordinator with any questions/issues that should arise regarding allowable and unallowable costs.

Allowable Costs

- 1) Supportive services that promote housing stability
 - a) Intake
 - b) Consultation

- c) Representation
 - i) Includes representation of participants before VA with respect to a claim for VA benefits, but only if individual is recognized for that purpose under 38 U.S.C. Chapter 59. For information on accreditation, please visit <http://statesidelegal.org/va-accreditation>.
- 2) Income Assistance paid under General Housing Stability Assistance
 - a) Court filing fees. (e.g. fees associated with filing a written response to the landlord's complaint)
 - b) Ad hoc fees associated with the provision of supportive services, including legal representation (e.g. fees associated with driver's license reinstatement)
- 3) Staff Training/Education

Unallowable Costs

- 1) Income Assistance
 - a) Court-ordered judgments or fines. (e.g. Traffic tickets or speeding tickets).
 - b) Family law issues related to Divorce or Child Custody
 - c) Estate planning (wills, trusts, etc.)

* Please note that although unallowable costs cannot be provided with SSVF funds, these services may be provided via referral.

1g. Additional Training, Tools, and Resources for Grantees

Grantees are encouraged to regularly visit the Legal Services section of the SSVF website (http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp?page=/official_guide/supportive_services) in order to build capacity in this area of service provision. The Legal Services section is always being updated and provides Grantees with access to available resources and templates, as well as examples of successful collaborations and best practices.

1h. Connections to Transportation

Options for Grantee: 1: **Direct**; 2. **Indirect**; 3 **Both**

SSVF participants should be supported to connect with transportation on an as-needed basis, for housing stability purposes when the Veteran lacks access to a car or public transportation. Where available, grantees should help participants take advantage of subsidized transportation and free bus passes in their jurisdiction. These are typically offered for low income people who have disabilities or are elderly. Participants should also be connected to local shuttle services to VA Medical Centers, shuttles that typically leave from Veteran service organization sites. To supplement local transportation assistance,

grantees have the option to provide transportation to participants themselves to transport participants to service appointments, including health appointments, and housing search-related destinations. When transportation is provided, grantees must devise a written policy requiring that all drivers have a valid driver's license, cell phone access inside the vehicle, and training on agency transportation procedures. Such policies also must call for insurance for all vehicles used to transport participants. Note, in addition to the resource access approach outlined here, transportation may also be paid for directly by SSVF temporary financial assistance. When transportation is needed, the grantee can use ride sharing companies (Uber, Lyft, etc). In order to justify the need, grantees must provide documentation of the purpose and show that traditional public options are not available.

1i. Connections to Personal Financial Planning and Credit Counseling Services

*Options for Grantee: 1: **Direct**; 2. **Indirect**; 3 **Both***

Where appropriate and desired, SSVF participants should be supported to connect with services that improve their day-to-day finances and help achieve long-term budgeting and financial goals. These services may include individualized counseling or workshops that teach critical skills such as budgeting, setting up bank accounts, managing money in the long term, accessing a free credit report, and repairing credit. In particular, the National Foundation for Credit Counseling (www.nfcc.org) is an accredited, non-profit resource that can directly negotiate interest rates, package loans, and obtain the most favorable debt settlement terms, grantees should seek services for participants who need and want to resolve poor credit to reduce the negative influence such histories have on tenant selection and employment decisions. Community action agencies, adult education community centers, and non-profit workforce development organizations often provide financial education services and that may be helpful. When desired, participants may also be assisted in opening personal savings and checking accounts. In addition, the cost of a class on financial literacy or personal credit may also be paid for directly by SSVF temporary financial assistance under the general housing stability assistance category. However, it is important to note that SSVF is a crisis response program and many people in crisis are less willing and able to acquire skills and information until they have recovered from stress overload. Financial literacy may be a goal that is best postponed for many Veterans.

1j. Connections to VA Fiduciary and Representative Payee Services

*Options for Grantee: 1: **Direct**; 2. **Indirect**; 3 **Both***

SSVF participants should be supported with the option of enlisting a VA fiduciary or representative payee arrangement on an as need basis. SSVF may not require such services as a condition of program enrollment. These arrangements may help participants who cannot manage their own financial affairs due to injury, disability, or age. Instead, a participant may choose to designate a VA fiduciary or representative payee to manage their Veteran Benefits Administration benefits, Social Security Disability Insurance,

Supplementary Security Income, or other income on their behalf. The designated party then uses the individual's income to consistently pay for current and foreseeable needs including rent. Grantees should help participants who may need and want to explore the availability of this option.

1k. Connections to Childcare Services

Options for Grantee: 1: **Direct**; 2. **Indirect**; 3 **Both**

SSVF participants should be supported to access childcare when needed by heads-of-household undertaking new tasks related to increasing housing stability. Childcare may be especially useful to participants engaged in a busy schedule of housing search visits or job interviews or in the initial weeks of new employment that has yet to yield sufficient savings to pay for childcare. To meet this need, grantees should research the availability of subsidized or free childcare for low income and homeless households in their jurisdiction. Ideally, grantees will find emergency childcare services that could bridge participants through a period of instability until more long-term arrangements can be secured that are affordable to the household. Note, in addition to the resource access approach outlined here, childcare may also be paid for directly by SSVF temporary financial assistance. Grantees can pay for childcare out of temporary financial assistance when no other free or reduced-cost options can be found for a participant in their community.

2. Using Community Linkages to Enhance Effectiveness

Grantees should actively develop linkages with community organizations to effectively connect participants to public benefits. In deciding whether to provide or to refer a participant for a needed service, the grantee must consider the availability of local offerings, as well as the grantee's own level of expertise in providing the service/benefit. A grantee who has not investigated the community's service/benefit offerings is unlikely to be able to maximize the cost-effectiveness of directly operating a new service.

F. Other Supportive Services / Temporary Financial Assistance

1. Other Supportive Services

A grantee may propose additional supportive services in their SSVF grant application or by submitting a written request to modify the supportive services grant (in accordance with 38 CFR 62.60).

2. Eligible Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA)

Grantees may choose to provide TFA to participant households. However, not all households require such assistance. Supportive services grant funds should only be used as direct financial assistance when “but for” criteria are met. For homelessness prevention, TFA can only be provided when a participant meets or exceeds a grantee’s approved targeting threshold score. The grantee must explore whether the household would become or remain literally homeless “but for” the provision of SSVF TFA. When grantees do choose to provide TFA, it should be provided to a participant as part of a plan to increase the participant’s housing stability. Per 38 CFR 62.34, eligible forms of temporary financial assistance are:

- Rental assistance;
- Utility-fee payment assistance;
- Deposits (security or utility);
- Moving costs;
- Transportation (public transportation or car repair);
- General Housing Stability Assistance
- Emergency Housing Assistance
- Child care
- Rapid Resolution targeted TFA to hosts providing 90 day or more of housing supports
- Shallow Subsidies
- Resources to Secure Permanent Housing
- Miscellaneous Move In Costs

SSVF financial and non-financial assistance should be delivered in a progressive assistance approach. Grantees should focus on the most critical threats to the participant’s housing stability in providing the “minimum necessary” level of assistance, keeping in mind that SSVF funds for temporary financial assistance are limited. Providing unnecessary temporary financial assistance to one participant will limit the total number of participants grantees will be able to serve. As stated in the previous Section VI.E. (“[Assistance in Obtaining and Coordinating Other Public Benefits](#)”), all participants should be referred to mainstream income supports and financial assistance sources for which they may qualify. See the most recent NOFA for the maximum percentage of total supportive services grant funds that can be used for this purpose. Wherever possible, grantees should attempt to connect participants to community resources, such as the federal Emergency Food and Shelter Program, to obtain comparable assistance.

Grantees should develop internal guidelines for the payment of temporary financial assistance and ensure that participants receiving temporary financial assistance as part of a housing stability plan are informed of such guidelines.

2a. Rental Assistance

Rental assistance includes the payment of rent; mobile home lot rent when the participant owns or rents the mobile home; and penalties or fees to help a participant remain in or obtain permanent housing. (Note: Where the rent includes utilities, the entire amount will be considered “rental assistance” and will be subject to the applicable conditions). Rental assistance payments can be provided for amounts that are currently due (including first month or prorated rent paid prior to or at move in) or are in arrears, and for the payment of penalties or fees that have been incurred by the participant and are required to be paid under an existing lease or court order. Such allowable fees are typically late rent fees that are paid directly to a landlord. Note that debts owed by the Veteran on former leases, related to housing where the Veteran no longer resides, are not an allowable TFA expense for rental assistance.

It may be beneficial for participants to share in the cost of rent payment, within the limits of the household’s current income, as assistance service design approach. Grantees are also encouraged to negotiate with landlords and utility companies to waive fees, security deposits, and, where possible, accept partial payments to satisfy arrearages. In this way, grantees conserve SSVF grant funds for future use and also empower participants to share in the responsibility. Grantees should determine the level of assistance provided on a case-by-case basis, based on the minimum amount needed to prevent the program participant from becoming homeless or returning to homelessness in the near term. Grantees should also consider that households that have already experience a housing crisis or homelessness remain at higher risk for experiencing homeless again. If a household has remaining TFA eligibility after program exit, that resource may help prevent that household’s homelessness at a later date.

Rental assistance may be provided to eligible participants using SSVF grant funds, with the following restrictions:

Restrictions on Rental Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.34(a))

Assistance Type	Restrictions on Rental Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.34(a))
Payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be paid by the grantee directly to the third-party provider to whom rent is owed.
Rent Reasonableness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grantee must determine reasonableness of rent, penalties or fees prior to providing assistance by conducting a market study. • A market study involves documenting details of three comparable advertised rental units. Grantees may substitute a letter from the property manager of the unit under consideration that cites details of three comparables within the manager’s portfolio. Note that citing Fair Market

Assistance Type	Restrictions on Rental Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.34(a))
	<p>Rents (FMRs) is insufficient for market study purposes. SSVF is not bound by FMR limitations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be completed for Veterans receiving financial assistance and either staying in or moving into a new housing unit. • Rent reasonableness is not required in SSVF files where participant are using a HUD-VASH voucher. However, for other subsidized housing placements (e.g. Housing Choice Voucher (aka Section 8)), rent reasonableness is required either from the administering agency (i.e. the PHA), or completed by SSVF staff. • Details documented for each comparable unit cited in the market study must include rent, location, number of bedrooms, and if utilities are included. • In general, the assisted unit must be comparable to rents charged during the same time period for similar units in the private, unassisted market. • In general, the assisted unit must not be in excess of rents charged by the property owner during same time period for other unassisted units. • Online platforms that assess rents for a specific area are only allowable as a tool to evaluate rent reasonableness if they examine all of the required elements listed above.
Shared Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent charged for a participant must be proportional to the size of the participant’s private space in comparison to other private space in the unit (i.e., excluding common space). • Participation in shared housing arrangement must be voluntary.
Cost-Sharing with Other Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rental assistance payments cannot be provided on behalf of participant households for the same period of time and for the same cost types that are being provided by any and all other Federal, State, or local subsidized affordable housing programs such as HUD-VASH, public housing, and other subsidized programs. This restriction includes a tenant’s own portion of rent owed when in subsidized housing. SSVF may not pay the tenant’s portion of rent under these circumstances. • When the cost type is different than what is paid by the housing subsidy, SSVF rental assistance may be used. This means SSVF may pay for a security deposit for a Veteran who is receiving HUD-VASH or receiving another form of subsidized rental assistance. Furthermore, SSVF may be used to pay rent arrears for a Veteran who is receiving HUD-VASH rental assistance or receiving other forms of subsidized housing. These costs are both considered a different cost type.

Assistance Type	Restrictions on Rental Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.34(a))
Assistance Limit Traditional Rental Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible for payments currently due or in arrears (Note: the number of months in arrears paid for through rental assistance counts towards the maximum allowable months of assistance). • Maximum of 10 months in a 2-year period. • Maximum of 6 months in a 12-month period. • Must be in compliance with rent reasonableness. • SSVF Shallow Subsidy service is a two-year commitment of up to 50% of the rent amount for reasonable units. Veterans may be recertified for an additional two years if appropriate.
Shallow Subsidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSVF Shallow Subsidy service provides up to 50% of the rent for an initial commitment of two years for Veterans at or below 30% of AMI and two years less the number of months of traditional rental assistance for Veterans at 31% to 80% of AMI. • Veterans may be recertified for additional two year cycles if needed to sustain permanent housing and if still eligible for the program.
Assistance Limit for Low Income Families⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum of 12 months in a 2-year period. • Maximum of 9 months in a 12-month period. • Must be in compliance with rent reasonableness. • SSVF Shallow Subsidy service provides up to 50% of the rent for an initial commitment of two years for Veterans at or below 30% of AMI and two years less the number of months of traditional rental assistance for Veterans at 31% to 80% of AMI.

⁶ See Section I.C. Definitions: [Extremely Low Income](#).

As with all temporary financial assistance under the SSVF Program, rental assistance may only be provided if the payment of such assistance is necessary to enable the participant to obtain or retain permanent housing. TFA may be provided in consecutive or non-consecutive months. For example, a Veteran family may receive three months of rental assistance until they have financial resources to support full rent and then at a later date (while still enrolled) receive an additional month of assistance because the household’s financial circumstance have changed. As a condition of assistance, the grantee must help the participant develop a reasonable plan to address the participant’s future ability to pay rent or linkages to other forms of long-term housing stability assistance. The grantee should

assist the participant to implement such a plan by directly providing necessary supports or by helping the participant to obtain necessary public or private benefits or services or, where appropriate, employment. If the grantee determines that the rent is not sustainable, the grantee should assist the participant in locating more affordable housing that meets the participant's needs or, if affordable housing is not readily available, attempt to connect the participant with a program that offers long-term rental assistance (e.g., HUD-VASH, CoC funded supportive housing programs, etc.). If necessary, the grantee should attempt to connect the participant with other short-term support if long-term support is not readily available.

Shared housing, where two or more people who live in one permanent rental housing unit sharing costs associated with maintaining housing such as rent and utilities, is another affordable housing option. In SSVF, the assisted Veteran must be listed on the lease (SSVF does not prescribe lease status for non-SSVF tenants) and their portion of the rent must be proportional to the amount of private space that Veteran has in relation to the other tenants. The overall size of the unit is dictated by the co-housing tenants' preferences, available income, and the cost of rent and utilities. While many tenants will want their own bedroom, they may, in some cases, voluntarily agree to share a bedroom. What is important to remember is that shared housing is permanent rental housing, in that the Veteran is on the lease and has full tenancy rights.

SSVF Shallow Subsidy service provides up to 50% of the rent for an initial commitment of two years for Veterans at or below 30% of AMI and two years less the number of months of traditional rental assistance for Veterans 31%-80% AMI. This service does not require the typical recertification every three months, though grantees must record income changes in HMIS as they occur. Shallow Subsidy services allow Veterans to stabilize over a longer period of time without the risk of becoming ineligible for assistance due to increases in income. Veterans receiving Shallow Subsidy services whose situation changes or where needs evolve may be recertified into "traditional" SSVF assistance (which is more flexible) or should be connected to other resources such as permanent supportive housing or other public and affordable housing opportunities. Veterans must have been recertified within 90 days of beginning Shallow Subsidy service.

2b. Utility Payment Assistance

Utility payment assistance includes the payment of utility costs (i.e., heat, electricity, internet, water, sewer, and garbage collection) to help the participant obtain or retain permanent housing. Utility assistance may consist of payments for multiple types of utilities, including basic internet services, telephone, and cell phone service. Utility assistance can be provided for amounts that are currently due or are in arrears. Where amounts in arrears are too great to be eliminated through SSVF assistance, grantees to explore options that might include a negotiated reduction in the amount owed; developing a repayment plan; including the utility payment in the rent (so the utility is in the landlord's name). A grantee may choose to require participants to share in the

cost of utility-fee payments, to the extent possible within the household’s current income, as a condition for receiving assistance.

Note that SSVF may use TFA to pay outstanding utility arrears pertaining to a previous rental situation if situation is that utility debt prevents the participant household from obtaining utilities in a new housing arrangement. This debt may only be paid directly to the third party, the utility company.

Utility payment assistance may be provided to eligible participants using supportive services grant funds, with the following restrictions:

Restrictions on Utility Payment Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.34(b))

Assistance Type	Restrictions on Utility Payment Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.34(b))
Payment	Payment must be made by the grantee directly to a utility company or third party. Participant, legal representative or a member of the household must have an account in their name with a utility company or proof of responsibility to make payments.
Assistance Limit for Low-Income Families⁷	Maximum of 12 months utility payments in a 2-year period Maximum of 9 months utility payments in a 12-month period

⁷ See Section I.C. Definitions: [Extremely Low Income](#)

As with all temporary financial assistance payments made under the SSVF Program, utility payment assistance necessitates the development of a reasonable plan to address the participant’s future ability to make utility payments. The grantee should assist the participant to implement such a plan by providing necessary assistance directly or by helping the participant to obtain any necessary public or private benefits or services. In the creation of the plan, grantees must consider that many regions have seasonal fluctuations in the cost of utilities.

2c. Deposits

Deposit payment assistance includes the payment of security or utility deposits to help the participant obtain permanent housing. Deposit payment assistance may be provided on behalf of eligible participants using SSVF grant funds. This assistance does not count towards the monthly assistance restrictions for both rent and allowable utilities. The following restrictions apply:

Restrictions on Deposit Payment Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.34(c))

Assistance Type	Restrictions on Deposit Payment Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.34(c))
Payment	Payment must be made by the grantee directly to the third party to whom the security or utility deposit is owed.
Cost-Sharing with Other Programs	Payments for deposits cannot be provided on behalf of participants for the same period of time and for the same cost types that are being provided for by any and all other Federal, State, or local subsidized affordable housing programs such as rapid re-housing programs that pay for security deposits. When the cost type is different than what is paid by the housing subsidy, SSVF deposit payment assistance may be used.
Assistance Limit	Maximum of one security deposit payment during a 2-year period Utility deposit assistance is limited to one time during a 2-year period. In cases where water and power are not included in the rent and are billed separately, deposits can be paid on each utility. Security deposits must align with state or local law, including allowance of more than one month rent value of deposits if aligned with local practice or standards.

A grantee may choose to require participants to share in the cost of a deposit payment as a condition for receiving assistance, if the household’s income allows. A deposit amounted no more than two months’ rent is typically considered to be the maximum reasonable level. Grantee must adhere to state laws, in areas that prescribe maximum deposits.

Deposit payment assistance may only be provided if the payment of such assistance will directly allow the participant to obtain permanent housing. The grantee must work with the participant to develop a reasonable plan to stabilize housing so that additional deposits are not needed, and should assist the participant to implement a housing stability plan by directly providing necessary assistance or by helping the participant to obtain necessary public or private benefits or services.

Grantees have discretion to determine how to handle security deposits if and when an assisted household moves from the assisted unit (assuming the landlord has not retained the deposit to pay for damages incurred by the tenant). The grantee may recover the security deposit (in which case it must be treated as program income) or the grantee may allow the Veteran family to keep the deposit and use it towards their next unit.

2d. Moving Costs

Moving costs payment assistance includes costs necessary to help the participant obtain permanent housing. Moving costs may include reasonable costs such as truck rental; hiring a moving company; or short-term storage fees for a maximum of three months or until the participant is in permanent housing, whichever is shorter. Note: A one-time moving cost for truck rental means one episode of moving to permanent housing; a rental truck may be needed to move a participant’s belongings to storage unit and then move those belongings again once permanent housing is secured. Relocation expenses are an allowable use, in accordance with SSVF Returning Home guidance. Moving costs payment assistance may be provided on behalf of eligible participants using supportive services grant funds, with the following restrictions:

Restrictions on Moving Costs Payment Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.34(d))

Assistance Type	Restrictions on Moving Costs Payment Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.34(d))
Payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment must be made by the grantee directly to a third party.
Cost-Sharing with Other Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payments for moving costs cannot be provided on behalf of participants for the same period of time and for the same cost types that are being provided through another Federal, State, or local program.
Assistance Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum of cost of one move to permanent housing during a 2-year period.
Miscellaneous Move-In Costs-Tenant Incentive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Veterans entering new housing, grantees may pay up to \$1,000 in move in costs related to a Veteran’s health and comfort in housing. These costs must be incurred toward the beginning of the Veteran moving into a new unit and allow for a wide range of goods and products that the Veteran may choose to have purchased on their behalf.

2e. General Housing Stability Assistance

General Housing Stability Assistance refers to the provision of goods or payment of expenses not included in other SSVF categories but which are directly related to supporting a participant’s housing stability. All such expenses relate to a participant’s ability to gain or keep employment or permanent housing. Such assistance is offered only when it is not available through existing mainstream resources. Note that this assistance must be paid directly to a third party (not to a participant).

Four Classes of Housing Stability Assistance

There are four classes of Housing Stability Assistance expenses, outlined below, that can be authorized up to a maximum of \$1,948 per participant household during any 2-year period.

Expenses associated with gaining or keeping employment:

- (1) Expenses associated with gaining or keeping employment:
Eligible items include but are not limited to uniforms, tools, driver's license fees, license/certification costs required for employment, documentation acquisition fees such as for Social Security Number or birth certificate, document court filing fees, and short-term training leading to employment, where other funding is not available.
- (2) Expenses associated with moving into permanent housing:
Eligible items include but are not limited to furniture delivery costs, furniture bank fees, bed frames, conventional mattresses, air mattresses, box springs, bedding (sheets, pillowcases, and pillows), basic kitchen utensils, and cleaning supplies.
- (3) Expenses necessary for securing appropriate permanent housing:
Eligible items include but are not limited to fees for rental applications, background checks, housing inspections, credit score checks, credit counseling, criminal background check, tenancy screening reports, financial literacy class, document court filing fees, and documentation acquisition such as for Social Security Number or birth certificates, items necessary for life or safety provided on a temporary basis to address an emergency. Eligible items include food, baby formula, diapers, and winter clothing. These items are allowable up to \$500 per participant household in a 2-year period and are included in the overall \$1,948 cap.

Brokers Fee:

- (1) Reasonable amount for a realtor broker's fee. This may be paid once during a 2-year period. The reasonableness of this fee must be determined based on the condition of the local housing market.

Items that cannot be funded under General Housing Stability Assistance are: phone cards, gift cards of any kind, and furniture (except beds). Major appliances are also generally non-eligible with the rare exception of circumstances when the VA allows such an item for an individual case.

Restrictions on General Housing Stability Assistance

Assistance Type	Restrictions on General Housing Stability Assistance
Payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment must be made by the grantee directly to a third party.
Cost-Sharing with Other Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment under General Housing Stability Assistance cannot be provided on behalf of participants for the same period of time and for the same cost types that are being provided through another Federal, State, or local program.
Assistance Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Items in the four classes add up to a maximum total of \$1,948 per participant household during any 2-year period. Items for life and safety add up to a maximum of \$500 within the overall \$1,948 limit. • Realtor broker fees are once in a 2-year period and are not included in this \$1,948 limit.

2f. Emergency Housing Assistance

Emergency Housing Assistance is a category of assistance that allows SSVF programs to provide temporary housing for eligible literally homeless participants who are awaiting permanent housing if no other shelter is available. As SSVF resources must be focused on securing and sustaining placement in permanent housing, grantees are expected to exercise great care in committing resources to emergency housing, ensuring no alternative VA resources (such as Grant and Per Diem or Healthcare for Homeless Veterans residential contract housing) or community resources exist.

Emergency housing may be provided to a short-term commercial residence, not already funded to provide on-demand emergency shelter, that does not require the participant to sign a lease or occupancy agreement (private residences are not eligible). Note that the *Emergency Housing Assistance Verification* is used to confirm eligibility.

If permanent housing, appropriate shelter beds, and transitional housing are not available and subsequent rental housing has been identified generally but is not immediately available for move-in by the participant; or where a Veteran’s immediate health and safety are at risk, then a grantee may place a participant in emergency housing, subject to the following limitations:

Limitations:

- Placement for a Veteran household may not exceed a single instance of 60 days.
- A participant may be placed in emergency housing only once during any 2-year period, beginning on the date the grantee first pays for emergency housing.
- The cost of the emergency housing must be reasonable in relation to the costs charged for other available emergency housing considering the location, quality, size, and type.
- At least one viable option for a permanent housing pathway must be identified for the participant who is temporarily receiving emergency housing assistance.

Emergency Housing Assistance (EHA) may also be provided by the SSVF grantee under 38 CFR 62.34(f) to offer transition in place when a permanent housing voucher, such as one offered through HUD’s Housing Choice Voucher Program (aka. Section 8), is available from any source, but access to the permanent housing voucher is pending completion of the housing inspection and administrative processes necessary for leasing. In such circumstances, the EHA payment cannot exceed what would otherwise be paid when the voucher is utilized. Note that the *Emergency Housing Assistance Verification* is NOT used for this request.

Restrictions on Emergency Housing Assistance

Assistance Type	Restrictions on Emergency Housing Assistance
Payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment must be made by the grantee directly to a third party.
Cost-Sharing with Other Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payments for emergency housing assistance cannot be provided on behalf of participants for the same period of time and for the same cost types that are being provided through another Federal, State, or local program.
Assistance Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum of 60 days

2g. Transportation Assistance

A grantee may provide transportation assistance if it will enhance housing stability. For example, a participant may require assistance with transportation to a job interview or a medical appointment. Because the use of public transportation is generally less expensive than the use of private vehicles and may be more sustainable in the long-term, grantees should consider providing public transportation tokens or vouchers before offering financial assistance for personal vehicles. If sufficient public transportation options are not locally available, a grantee may provide car repair or maintenance assistance on behalf of a

participant. The following table outlines restrictions applicable to temporary transportation financial assistance:

Restrictions on Transportation Payment Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.33(d))

Assistance Type	Restrictions on Transportation Payment Assistance (per 38 CFR 62.33(d))
Payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment must be made by the grantee directly to a third party.
Cost-Sharing with Other Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payments for transportation cannot be provided on behalf of participants for the same period of time and for the same cost types that are being provided through another Federal, State, or local program.
Assistance Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No financial limit on amount of public transportation assistance for participants • No time limit on public transportation assistance • Maximum of \$1,200 car repairs/maintenance in a 2-year period on behalf of a participant

The provision of money or gift cards to a participant to pay for gasoline is not permitted with SSVF funds. However, in rural areas with limited to no public transportation, the issuance of Gas Vouchers may be allowable under the conditions listed below:

1. A gas voucher is allowable as transportation cost only towards needs directly related to housing stability and is incorporated in the participant’s Housing Plan.
2. Payment must be made by the grantee directly to a third party. For example, the grantee may make arrangements with a local gas station by pre-paying for gasoline only, require gas station to view identification of participant prior to approval of any gasoline purchase, and provide grantee with receipts for all gasoline purchases.

As with all temporary financial assistance payments made under the SSVF Program, the provision of transportation assistance requires the development of a housing stability plan. The grantee should consider a participant’s unique situation, as well as the area’s transportation options in creating such a plan, weighing the costs and benefits of different options. If the grantee cannot help the participant develop a reasonable plan to address the participant’s future ability to pay for transportation, supportive services grant funds should not be used to provide transportation assistance. In that case, transportation assistance

should be limited to the grantee’s efforts to connect the participant with a program offering long-term assistance.

2h. Child Care Assistance

A grantee may make payments on behalf of a participant to an eligible child care provider providing child care services. Such child care payments should only be provided by the grantee if the assistance will improve a participant’s housing stability (e.g., if the provision of child care assistance will allow the participant to obtain or maintain employment). The following table outlines restrictions applicable to child care assistance payments:

Restrictions on Child Care Assistance Payment (per 38 CFR 62.33(h))

Assistance Type	Restrictions on Child Care Assistance Payment (per 38 CFR 62.33(h))
Payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment must be made by the grantee directly to an “eligible child care provider.” An “eligible child care provider” is a provider of child care services for compensation, including a provider of care for a school-age child during non-school hours, that: (1) is licensed, regulated, registered, or otherwise legally operating under state and local law, and (2) satisfies the state and local requirements applicable to the child care services the provider provides.
Cost-Sharing with Other Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payments for child care cannot be provided on behalf of participants for the same period of time and for the same cost types that are being provided through another Federal, State, or local program.
Assistance Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum of 10 months in a 2-year period, per child in household • Maximum of 6 months in a 12-month period, per child in household • (Note: Household may include multiple children) • Begins on the date grantee first pays for child care on behalf of participant • Child care assistance can be provided for children under the age of 13, unless a child has a disability. Child care assistance can be provided for children with a disability under the age of 18.
Assistance Limit for Extremely Low-Income Families⁸	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum of 12 months in a 2-year period, per child in household • Maximum of 9 months in a 12-month period, per child in household

⁸ See Section I.C. Definitions: [Extremely Low income](#)

2i. Rapid Resolution Costs

SSVF grantees may make reasonable, one-time payments to support host situations where a Veterans is expected to remain temporarily housed (without a lease) for at least 90 days. This is often when a Veteran is connected to a family member, friend or other temporary host, allowing them to avoid the trauma of staying in shelter or a place not meant for human habitation while enrolled in SSVF and supported in long term housing plans. These payments may include a one-time payment to the host to support housing costs proportionate to the space the Veteran is occupying, one month of utility assistance, or other one-time costs such as groceries or other basic household supplies. Veterans residing in a temporary host situation may also be provided targeted financial assistance such as help with obtaining work clothing, childcare assistance and transportation regardless of the length of time the host has committed to providing temporary accommodation. Veterans must be enrolled in SSVF to receive any sort of financial assistance or supportive services. Once a Veteran is in a lease situation (whether in the host unit or in their unit obtained with SSVF support), all normal financial assistance payments and restrictions apply.

2j. Resources to Secure Permanent Housing (aka Landlord Incentives)

SSVF grantees are allowed to provide up to two months' worth of rent as a direct incentive to landlords or housing owners. These incentives should be used to help overcome housing barriers of individual Veteran households and to mitigate risk and fears among housing owners if Veterans otherwise would have been screened out or their housing units. Landlord incentives are not security deposits and are not bound by security deposit requirements. Landlord incentives may only be used for new leases that are at least 12 months in duration, and where such an incentive would make an appreciable difference in the grantee's ability to quickly connect the Veteran to permanent housing. These payments should generally be made at the beginning of the lease or broken into two parts, with the second installment made no later than 90 days after move in. Landlord incentives may be used, where there is capacity, on any eligible and enrolled Veteran, including Veterans referred by other VA homeless programs or those entering a unit support by a HUD-VASH voucher.

2k. Miscellaneous Move-In Costs (aka Tenant Incentives)

SSVF Grantees are allowed to provide up to \$1,000 in miscellaneous move-in costs for Veteran entering new housing. These incentives are separate from, and more flexible than, traditional GHSA assistance. Tenant incentives can be used to purchase household and comfort items in behalf of Veterans at the beginning of tenancy with the goal of ensuring Veterans have the basic comforts one would expect in a permanent housing unit. Veterans choose the items they wish to receive up to \$1,000 and the SSVF Grantee purchase those items and ensures the Veteran receives the items. Some examples of eligible purchases include but are not limited to furniture, housewares, televisions, tablet computers, bicycles, food, recreational items, air conditioners, etc. Ineligible items include but may not be limited to art/antiques, jewelry, collections, weapons or other items prohibited by local, state or

federal law. These costs may be used, where there is capacity, on any eligible and enrolled Veteran, including Veterans referred by other VA homeless programs or those entering a unit support by a HUD-VASH voucher.

3. Restrictions on Payments

Temporary financial assistance payments cannot be paid to the participant and must be paid directly to a third party on behalf of a participant. In order to prevent temporary financial assistance from consuming a disproportionate amount of grant funds, VA has set a limit in the NOFA of a maximum allowable percentage of funds used for temporary financial assistance. Additionally, timing and other restrictions on the use of eligible temporary financial assistance can be found in 38 CFR 62.33 and 38 CFR 62.34. Grantees may choose to impose additional limitations on such assistance. *Please see [Section VIII.E](#) for a list of ineligible activities, including costs associated with temporary financial assistance.*

4. Documentation Required

Grantees must maintain records that justify the provision of temporary financial assistance. Program Guide [Section VIII.C](#) outlines the case file documentation required to verify the eligibility of a temporary financial assistance payment.

VII. Program Operations

A. Participant Agreements

Prior to providing SSVF assistance to a participant household, grantees enter into a written agreement between their agency and each participant household. This agreement describes the grantee's SSVF grant program and any conditions or restrictions on the receipt of supportive services by the participant. Agreements should not require sobriety, minimum income limits, participation in supportive services or other unnecessary requirements as a condition of assistance. Grantees are strongly encouraged to ensure that all participant agreements are implemented within an equitable, housing first framework that seek to lower barriers to entry and further equitable service access across the community. Participant agreements and conditions should be fully disclosed to potential participants and acknowledged in writing by both parties.

B. Participant Fees

Grantees may not charge a fee to participant households for providing supportive services that are funded using funds from a supportive services grant. Note: this prohibition does not prevent grantees from requiring participants to cost-share, with a grantee, any expenses for which temporary financial assistance is provided, consistent with a progressive approach.

C. Participant Safety and Critical Incident Reports

A critical goal of the SSVF Program is to ensure the safety of all participant households, supportive service coordinators, and their staff. Grantees are required to develop a comprehensive plan to maintain the safety of participants and staff and the confidentiality of the program's participants and their records. In developing a plan, VA recommends that grantees:

- Establish goals and objectives that reduce and eliminate accidents, injuries, and illnesses related to administering supportive services to participants;
- Develop plans and procedures for evaluating the safety program's effectiveness, both at the program office and in the field;
- Develop priorities for remedying the identified factors which cause accidents, injuries and illnesses;
- Ensure that patient records are secured with all such information password protected;
- Ensure that documentation pertaining to victim status, victim emergency transfer requests and victim location are kept confidential;
- Conduct adequate safety and health training for officials at different levels, including supervisory employees, employees responsible for conducting participant home visits and/or habitability inspections (see Habitability Standards section below), employee representatives and other employees;
- Develop an emergency transfer process that outlines internal and external transfer process and expedited consideration in application and approval;
- Ensure that all staff, students, and volunteers receive initial and annual training on how to respond to critical incidents; and
- Develop a clear written procedure for following-up on any incidents that may occur to ensure that the program evaluates how they responded and to ensure any party involved was connected to any services needed.

If a grantee becomes aware of a health or safety issue related to the participant, including unsafe accommodations, the grantee must report the issue to the appropriate authorities. Grantees are expected to comply with all applicable laws. If a participant's actions pose a health or safety risk to that participant or another person, the grantee must notify the police or another appropriate authority. The SSVF Program Office requires that grantees to only submit the most serious of Critical Incidents, such as Suicides, Homicides, and Staff Improprieties including allegations of criminal activity by agency and subcontractor staff. All incidents that receive negative media attention must be reported to the SSVF Program Office. Grantee should notify the SSVF Program Office about any reportable critical incident as soon as possible, but within a timeframe not to exceed 48 hours after the grantee has been made aware of the situation. All SSVF grantee staff must be trained annually in S.A.V.E, a Suicide Prevention training from the VA. Staff should first attempt to request in-person training from their locally certified S.A.V.E. trainer, either a VAMC Suicide Prevention Coordinator or Homeless Program Staff Point of Contact (POC). A list of local Suicide Prevention Coordinators may be found at: <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/local-resources>. If in-person training is unavailable, all staff should view the S.A.V.E training webinar on Suicide Prevention at this link: <https://psycharmor.org/courses/s-a-v-e/> or the SSVF Annual Suicide Prevention Webinar on the SSVF website.

The SSVF Critical Incident process is used for the purpose of reporting serious incidents to VA leadership. If a Grantee is uncertain as to whether the Critical Incident requires SSVF Program Office notification, they should contact the SSVF Regional Coordinator. Critical Incidents are reported to the SSVF Program the Critical Incident form on the SSVF Website. Please note that the form should not contain any Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and Veterans should be identified only by their HMIS ID.

D. Habitability Standards

Grantees using SSVF grant funds to provide rental assistance, payments of utilities fees, security deposits or utilities deposits, (as defined under 38 CFR 62.34) on behalf of a participant moving into a new (different) housing unit will be required to conduct initial and any appropriate follow-up inspections of the housing unit into which the participant will be moving. Grantees assisting a participant to move into a new housing unit should ensure the housing unit meets the conditions set forth in 24 CFR 583.300(b). Households transitioning to Shallow Subsidy services should have had an initial or secondary habitability review within the three months prior to starting Shallow Subsidy. Inspections should occur no later than three (3) working days after the housing unit has been identified to the SSVF grantee, unless the alternative inspection method outlined below is used to meet requirements. The habitability inspection does not need to be performed by a certified inspector. Note: Proof of inspections is not required where participants are using a HUD-VASH or Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher. The inspection would have already been completed by the PHA in both instances.

The habitability standards requirement can be met through an alternative inspection method. If a prior inspection was completed on a property/unit, this will be sufficient to fulfill the [Habitability Standards](#) requirement if all of the following criteria are met:

- The inspection was conducted pursuant to the requirements of a Federal, State, or local housing program (including, but not limited to, the Home investment partnership program under title II of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act or the low- income housing tax credit program under section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986);
- If the inspection was not conducted pursuant to the requirements of a Federal housing program, the public housing agency has certified to the Secretary that such standard or requirement provides the same (or greater) protection to occupants of inspected dwelling units;
- Pursuant to the inspection, the property was determined to meet the requirements regarding housing quality or safety applicable to properties assisted under such program; and
- The inspection was conducted within the past 2 years.

E. Notification to Participants

Before providing SSVF assistance to a participant household, grantees must notify the participant that the supportive services and assistance offered will be paid for, in whole or in part, by VA, through a federal grant award. Grantees must review the range of supportive services available to the participant household through the grantee's program and any conditions or restriction of receipt of supportive services by the participant household. To ensure that Veteran families receiving supportive services under the SSVF Program are receiving quality services, the grantee must enroll each household in a VA-designated satisfaction survey within 30 days of the participant's pending exit from the grantee's program.

F. Conflict of Interest

For many agencies, board members oversee a variety of aspects of business. Many of these board members have ties to the community or other businesses outside of the SSVF agency. For that reason, it is required that organizations operating SSVF grants get signed conflict of interest statements from their board members on an annual basis. (If an agency gathers conflict of interest statements on a timetable exceeding one year, there must be a written internal policy for how often these forms are collected.) The purpose of the conflict of interest forms are to identify any personal or professional affiliations for which the board member may be involved which could have the potential to influence or compromise a decision made by the agency. The agency can identify these potential conflicts and recuse the board member from specific board decisions as needed.

G. Confidentiality

Grantees are required to maintain confidentiality of records kept on participant households. Grantees and subcontractors must comply with all applicable federal and local laws to assure the confidentiality and security of participant's physical and electronic records. Furthermore, grantees must ensure the security of records such that computer systems are equipped with technologies to prevent unauthorized use (such as encryption, strong passwords, and biometrics). Grantees must keep participant information private and are required to obtain signed releases of information for any third party that the grantee speaks to on the client's behalf when discussing personal information such as name and other details.

Grantees that provide family violence prevention or domestic violence treatment services must establish and implement additional procedures to protect participants by ensuring the confidentiality of:

- (1) Records pertaining to any individual provided services, and
- (2) The address or location where the services are provided.

Requests for VAWA protections and emergency transfers must be kept confidential and separate from main tenant records. Information on unit transfers and location of victims must be kept confidential and only shared with authorized individuals when necessary. This information must not be shared with the person named as committing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking.

The SSVF Program Office conducts annual reviews of grantee programs that include an assessment of policies and procedures for protecting client information. Many SSVF grantees utilize a combination of physical and electronic document management procedures, as well as conduct mobile office outreach and services. It is important that grantees assess their privacy and security policies at least once per year in order to ensure the highest level of protection of client information. Grantees utilizing or transitioning to electronic case file management systems, should ensure systems access is available for VA audits and other monitoring activities. Audit and monitoring activities should be given unrestricted access (read-only) to participant case files and related documents.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) protocols include standards for the privacy and security of information entered into HMIS. These standards were developed by HUD based on Health Insurance and Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) standards for securing and protecting client information. HUD has defined baseline standards that are required of all organizations (such as Continuum of Care (CoC) staff, a homeless assistance provider, Veteran service organization, or HMIS software company) that record, use, or process personal protected information (PPI) on homeless clients for an HMIS. Some communities have elected to adopt additional laws, protocols or policies to further enhance the privacy and security of information collected through HMIS. Agencies that participate in HMIS, including SSVF grantees, must comply with the baseline HUD standards and must also comply with any additional federal, state and local laws that require additional confidentiality protections.

Grantees are required to enter data into HMIS for all members of the household receiving SSVF services. The only exception to this is for grantees who are victim service providers as defined by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) who must use a comparable database for collecting and reporting information to funders. Grantees must follow all protocols established by their local CoC for releases of information and privacy notices to clients whose PPI is being entered into the local HMIS.

Under no circumstances should clients' personally identifiable information (PII) (such as names, social security numbers, dates of birth, SSN) be sent to anyone else over unencrypted email. This includes sending information internally or to the SSVF HMIS Technical Assistance Team.

For additional context on this policy and secure ways to work with the SSVF HMIS Technical Assistance Team, see the SSVF Data Security Policy of the [VA Data Guide](#).

H. Veterans Rights

SSVF Grantees are required to display the Veterans Rights Poster. The poster must be visible to all Veterans who are served by SSVF. Locations that the Veterans Rights poster can be displayed include check-in desk, offices where Veterans are screened, Case worker offices, and other areas where Veterans interact with SSVF staff. Future audit, FOIA and other programmatic reviews will ensure each grantee is in compliance with the requirement. Failure to display the poster to each potential Veteran will result in corrective action. An updated poster can be located on the SSVF website at:

http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_Veteran_Rights_Poster_v2023.pdf

The poster specifically address that each Veteran has the right...

1. to be treated equally, professionally, and with respect, regardless of your race, color, religion, national origin, Limited English Proficiency, age, sex (includes gender identity and transgender status), sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital and parental status, political affiliation, disability, or genetic information.
2. to not face harassment or retaliation.
3. to have your cultural and personal values, beliefs, and preferences honored.
We ask that you identify any cultural, religious, or spiritual beliefs or practices that influence your care.
4. to have your privacy protected.
5. to be assessed for available services as a Veteran, whether you have your DD214 or not.
6. to access or be directly referred to services you need for which you are eligible and that are available within your local community.
7. to receive a copy of the grievance policy upon enrollment and upon request.

Each poster must provide a Grantee POC to contact if there are any questions or concerns.

I. Releasing Participants from Program

A grantee may establish reasonable requirements related to participant dismissals or terminations due to serious program rule infractions on the part of the participant or family. However, those requirements must be clearly communicated (in advance, in writing) to all participant households and a copy of the requirements must also be provided to VA. Grantees are strongly encouraged to follow a low-barrier, housing first approach to services and seek to avoid negative terminations wherever possible. In the event a participant violates a grantee's program requirements, a grantee may stop providing assistance to the participant. Grantees may also resume assistance to a participant whose assistance was previously suspended. In terminating assistance to a participant, the grantee must first provide a formal process that recognizes the rights of individuals receiving assistance to due process in the termination decision. This process, at a minimum, must consist of:

- (1) Written notice to the participant containing a clear statement of the reasons for termination,
- (2) Provision of the VAWA Occupancy Rights,
- (3) A review of the decision, in which the participant is given the opportunity to present written or oral objections before a grantee's staff member other than the staff member (or a subordinate of that staff member) who made or approved the termination decision, and
- (4) Prompt written notice of the final decision to the participant including completion of a Program Exit Checklist.

The SSVF Program fully endorses use of a Housing First approach and encourages grantees to target assistance to those Veterans in most need. As such, dismissal or termination policies should avoid unnecessarily terminating assistance due to program violations, unless in extreme cases. Unless basic SSVF Program requirements are not being met, grantees should not otherwise terminate assistance due to program rule infractions if such termination can be avoided. Such instances provide an opportunity for further proactive, progressive service delivery. For example, terminating assistance solely because a Veteran is using substances, refuses treatment or is not fully implementing their housing plan would not be consistent with a Housing First approach.

J. Grievance and Appeals Policy and Procedures

Grantees are required to establish an internal policy for processing and reviewing participant grievances and complaints. This policy should be presented to the participant household upon enrollment for services. Grantees are also required to establish a policy that allows for participant appeals to a rejection for services. The appeals policy requires the agency to provide

the participant with the reason for rejection and the right to appeal it to agency supervisory staff. The policy must also include a review process and a timeframe established for such review. The appeals policy should be presented to the participant at the initial intake appointment.

The SSVF Program Office recognizes the positive and professional manner in which SSVF grantees are responding to Veteran complaints or grievances. In rare instances, it might not be possible to resolve disagreements or grievances within your program or local community. In these rare cases, Veterans can submit complaints or grievances to the SSVF program office at SSVF@va.gov. Grievances received by the SSVF Program Office will be processed internally and require grantees to respond to a request for information from the SSVF Regional Coordinator. Please note that SSVF Regional Coordinators do not provide direct assistance to Veterans as part of the grievance process.

K. Subcontractor Management

Grantees may subcontract to one or more third-party vendors for a variety of services as determined by their program and outlined in their grant agreement. A common subcontracted service may be the requirement of providing legal services for Veterans needing such services to obtain or maintain permanent housing. Each subcontracted relationship must have an Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place prior to any services being provided by the third party. Each Agreement/MOU must include descriptions of the type of activities that the subcontractor will perform, statement about amending the agreement, identify the period of performance, and must be signed by both parties. Additionally, the grantee must outline either in the Agreement/MOU, or in a separate policy and procedure, a description of how the subcontractor will be managed by the grantee and a description of the monitoring practices (i.e. how often, in what format).

Grantees are responsible for ensuring that subcontractors are held to the same standards as the SSVF grantee regarding compliance with the Final Rule and OMB circulars. Grantees are responsible for the monitoring and oversight of subcontractors and must provide documentation of this monitoring and oversight during the grantee annual monitoring review. Grantees must assess subcontractor performance a minimum of quarterly and conduct an official on-site monitoring review of each subcontractor at least annually. Additionally, each subcontractor, regardless of the type of services provided, must maintain their own policies and procedures detailing the services that they will perform for the contract. The subcontractor must provide their SSVF policies and procedures for the grantee that will be reviewed during the annual VA audit.

VIII. Fiscal Administration

A. Overview of HHS PMS Disbursement Platform

Supportive services grant funds are disbursed via the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Payment Management System (PMS). PMS is an internet-based system supported by staff from the HHS Division of Payment Management (DPM). Current HHS Payment Management System account users will use their existing username and password to access the SSVF grant account.

1. PMS Registration

Registration in the PMS is required for new grantees to draw down supportive services grant funds. To become registered users in the system, Grantees should visit the PSC website to request access (<https://pms.psc.gov>) As part of the online access process, grantees need to upload SF-1199A. The SF-1199A provides the grantee's banking information to have funds electronically transmitted to grantee's banking institution. Users of the PMS are required to annually self-certify that they are authorized to use PMS and that they will use it in accordance with federal rules and regulations.

1a. Finalizing PMS Registration

To complete the PMS registration, the SF-1199A must be uploaded to the PMS system after user access is granted. Once received by the PMS, grantee registration takes approximately one to three weeks to finalize. Once registered, the grantee will be sent a temporary password for PMS access via certified mail and can access the system to submit draw down requests, track past draw down transactions, and view the grantee's remaining available funds. Grantees can have up to six (6) user accounts. The SSVF grant funds are categorized in the HHS Payment Management System as Type B accounts. Email is the primary source of communication with PMS and assigned Liaisons. Grantees must ensure PMS users keep email addresses current to receive timely information.

2. Change of PMS Information

If a grantee changes its financial institution or banking account number, a new SF-1199A must be uploaded to the PMS website and the PMS liaison will make the updates to the organization's HHS PMS account. Grantees must also inform their SSVF Regional Coordinator of this change. To add new users or modify contact information for an existing PMS user, the grantee must access the same user access link noted above to update an existing user or add/delete users.

B. Grant Draw Down Process

1. Overview of Disbursement

Grantees may draw down supportive services grant funds via the internet-based PMS in accordance with any restrictions defined in the NOFA. Draw down requests are submitted and processed online via the request functions of the PMS platform. Once a draw down request is submitted, disbursement is completed by electronic funds transfer to the grantee's bank account the following business day. Grantees have three days to expend the funds that are drawn down from the HHS system. If funds are not expended within three days, a grantee must contact the VA to plan for paying interest on those funds.

Grantees must spend 90 percent of grant funds on supportive services, including Temporary Financial Assistance. The SSVF grant program allows grantees to spend a maximum of 10 percent for administrative costs. It is incumbent on the grantee to track all expenditures according to the submitted and approved budget on file with the SSVF Program Office.

To meet obligations for spending of SSVF funds and to ensure effective and efficient grant expenditure, grant drawdowns are limited to the following quarterly maximums:

- Q1 – minimum 15%, maximum 35%
- Q2 – minimum 40% maximum 60%
- Q3 – minimum 65% maximum 80%
- Q4 - 100%

Grantees may request an exception to these maximum quarterly draw down limitations from the SSVF Regional Coordinator. Additionally, per the SSVF grant agreement, grantees must also meet the minimum quarterly draw down percentage milestones. If, during the grant year, VA determines that grantee spending is not meeting the minimum percentage milestones below, VA may elect to recoup projected unused funds and reprogram such funds to provide supportive services in areas with higher need. Please refer to "Funding

Sweeps” for additional information related to quarterly spending milestones.

2. Payment Requests

Grantees must access PMS via the DPM website (<https://pms.psc.gov/>) to draw down SSVF Program grant funds. The PSC offers a New User Guide (<https://pms.psc.gov/training/pms-user-guide.html>) with step by step instructions on how to log in to the PMS online platform and how to make a request for payment. Additionally, PMS hosts Grant Recipient webinar training sessions for PMS users on a monthly basis. These two-hour sessions offer an overview of PMS, how to complete a payment request, how to perform account inquiries, how to run report requests, and how to correctly complete the Federal Financial Report (FFR). Registration requests for these trainings are available online (<https://pms.psc.gov/training/grant-recipient-training.html>).

To make changes to payments or drawdown requests that have been processed, grantees must contact the VA PSC Liaison Accountant to request any reversals to previously approved payments. Any corrections made to the SSVF account will appear on the summary page report.

C. Eligible Expenses

Payment of SSVF grant funds up to the amount specified in the SSVF grant agreement will be made only for appropriately documented eligible expenses that are allowable, allocable, and reasonable costs of operating a program under the Supportive Services grant. Eligible expenses must be in accordance with the applicable Federal Cost Principles set forth in OMB Circular A-122, Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations, codified at 2 CFR Part 235, 2 CFR 200 Subpart E Cost Principles. Additionally, expenses must be eligible per the grantee's approved SSVF budget and within budget limitations. Ineligible expenses are those costs charged by a grantee that VA determines to be unallowable based on applicable Federal cost principles, the SSVF Program regulations or the Supportive Services grant agreement. The following Sections 1 and 2 outline expenses that are eligible under the supportive services requirements of the SSVF Program.

1. Administrative Costs (10% Maximum)

Under the SSVF Program, a minimum of 90% of supportive services grant funds must be used to provide and coordinate the provision of supportive services to very low-income Veteran families who are occupying permanent housing. A maximum of 10% of supportive services grant funds may be used for administrative costs. Per Section 62.70 of the 38 CFR Part 62, administrative costs are defined as all direct and indirect costs associated with the

management of the program. These costs include the administrative costs, both direct and indirect, of subcontractors. SSVF requires grantees to provide support documentation (payroll records, invoices, receipts etc.) for all costs and expenses associated with the administration of the SSVF grant.

Administrative costs should be placed in the Administrative section of an SSVF program budget. An approved Indirect Cost Rate is not considered adequate support or source documentation for costs listed in the Administrative section of the budget. Grantees are required to have a detailed breakout of these administrative costs along with any supporting documents for those expenses for auditing and oversight. Title 2 CFR 200.302 requires the financial management system of each non-Federal entity provide “records that identify adequately the source and application of funds for federally-funded activities. These records must contain information pertaining to Federal awards, authorizations, obligations, unobligated balances, assets, expenditures, income and interest and be supported by source documentation.”

1a. Modified Administrative Cost Approach (MACA) Guidance

While SSVF does not allow or adhere to any indirect cost rate or ratio approved by other federal agencies, SSVF does recognize the administrative efforts to ensure compliance requirements are satisfied and has decided to allow the use of a Modified Admin Cost Approach (MACA) that is similar to the Simplified Allocation Method, Multiple Allocation Base Method, or the Special Indirect Cost Rates as referenced in 2 CFR 200 Subpart F Audit Requirements Appendix IV – Indirect (F&A) Cost Identification and Assignment, and Rate Determination for Nonprofit Organizations. This approach is not tied to an existing Indirect Cost Rate and can be scaled up or down depending on each organizational structure.

Grantees who do not elect to use the Modified Admin Cost Approach, will need to ensure adequate support for administrative cost are properly accounted for and all supporting documents are available (payroll records, invoices, receipts etc.) to satisfy the traditional administrative cost review/test procedures.

Each grantee must ensure that a MACA worksheet is submitted and approved by the SSVF Program Office before the start of the fiscal year in which MACA will be used. All expenses approved for use with the MACA must be detailed and listed within the approved budget on file with the SSVF Program Office. A single line item listing a general/generic “Administrative Expenses” is no longer acceptable and any administrative cost charged to SSVF must be listed by line item to be considered as an approved budget line item. The SSVF Application Budget “Administrative Expenses” section will highlight the approach the grantee elects to follow for their administrative costs for the given award period. Grantees will have the opportunity to select the traditional or MACA approach.

The traditional approach requires grantees provide support documentation (payroll records, invoices, receipts etc.) for all costs and expenses associated with the administration of the SSVF grant.

For MACA, approved expenses are limited to General Administration and General Expenses (GA/GE) that are allowable and reasonable per existing guidance. GA/GE must support and benefit the efforts and mission of SSVF activities within the organization.

GA/GE include overall general executive and administrative offices of the organization and other expenses of a general nature which do not relate solely to any major function of the organization. Examples of this category include central offices, such as the director's office, the office of finance, human resources/personnel, business services, budget and planning, safety and risk management, general counsel, and management information systems.

Administrative cost charged to SSVF via the MACA must be reasonable and properly supported by an objective, quantitative and auditable method of allocating administrative costs that adequately define "Allocation Basis" and "Drivers" that will produce an equitable result in consideration of relative benefits. A spreadsheet is available for use or reference in developing the organizations' MACA Summary highlighting the organizational data, administrative expenses, and drivers used.

Under MACA, additional information may be required, depending on the "Drivers" used to determine reasonableness of the ratios used. For example – to determine the percentage of overall expenses to SSVF expenses, the audit team will require GL detail for the entire organization and not just SSVF GL detail to determine reasonableness and accuracy of the driver ratios used for administrative costs.

Grantees electing to participate in either the traditional method for charging administrative costs or the MACA method, must have a written policy that highlights the grantees approach to be: (1) reasonable and consistently applied; (2) supported by accurate and current data; (3) appropriate to the particular cost being distributed; (4) one which results in an accurate measure of the benefits provided to each activity of the organization; and (5) updated in the event of significant changes in operational or fiscal environment that the MACA will be re-evaluated to ensure existing drivers and calculations remain relevant.

Specific internal controls must be in place, as demonstrated through policy, procedure and practice, to ensure administrative cost are not allocated to indirect cost that have been charged to SSVF as a direct cost (double-charging of expenses).

Through periodic audits of SSVF activities, an analysis of allocation methodologies and related drivers will be conducted to ensure the administrative cost charged to SSVF are reasonable and in proportion to other expenses for shared cost centers and or other federal

funding activities.

Noncompliance or apparent deviation from the intent and reasonable use of the MACA, could result in an enhanced audit approach requiring additional review and testing, amounts in question being subject to recoupment, and the ability to participate in the alternative approach may be limited or withdrawn and the traditional approach requiring all support documentation (payroll records, invoices, receipts etc.) for all costs and expenses associated with the administration of the SSVF grant be retained and available for detailed review. The alternative approach must still conform to the requirements that all administrative cost are allowable, allocable, and reasonable costs of operating a program under the Supportive Services grant. The grantee's CFO, or comparable title/position must certify (annually) that the MACA used by the grantee is in accordance with this guidance and other applicable cost principles to be provided at the time of the audit.

2. Provision and Coordination of Supportive Services (90% Minimum)

2a. Outreach

Eligible expenses associated with providing outreach services may include costs such as outreach staff time, promotional materials limited to business cards, flyers and pamphlets. The expenses must directly connect to the overall SSVF Grantee comprehensive outreach plan.

Items must DIRECTLY contribute to the effectiveness of reducing homelessness or housing placement/prevention. Grantees are encouraged to leverage non-SSVF funding for items that they see as beneficial to the outreach process.

SSVF expenses can be used to create outreach (hygiene) kits when grantee staff are conducting direct outreach to Veterans living on the streets or in encampments, vehicles, or other unsheltered homeless situations. These outreach kits should typically include items that will assist with basic needs of Veterans experiencing homelessness. SSVF grantees are encouraged to solicit donations, volunteer community groups or use other funds to create outreach kits. If this is not possible then SSVF funds are allowable on a limited basis. As with any purchase, bulk purchases that will extend past the current grant year are unallowable as is increasing cost to branding items with the SSVF logo unless it is supported by a lower cost. Typically, a kit can include one or two of the following items:

- Pair of cotton socks
- Pair of underwear
- Travel size first aid kit
- Razor
- Deodorant
- Handwipes

- Bug repellent
- Sunscreen, lip balm
- Feminine hygiene products

Major outreach events such as Stand Downs, County and/or Local engagements should limit outreach materials to items such as pamphlets or informational cards/flyers for community stakeholder's education and referrals. Items such as outreach kits should only be provided to veterans for active engagement into the SSVF program. Other items not defined in an outreach kit or as defined below are not allowable.

Ineligible items include trucker hats, beanies, gloves, scarves, flashlights, sweatshirts, hoodies, jackets, key chains pins, lanyards, pens, and buttons.

Any article of clothing for employee identification used during outreach is required to meet the criteria for "Uniforms" as per the Uniformed Guidance (2 CFR 200). Clothing for outreach must be evaluated to ensure who is receiving the clothing and how is it contributing to outreach activities for Veterans or staff (identify SSVF and reflect the number of employees dedicated to SSVF activities).

2b. Advertising, Marketing, and Public Relations

As these costs do not directly provide benefit to homeless and at-risk Veteran households, expenditures in this area must be carefully planned and targeted to maximize their impact and value.

The term "advertising costs" refers to the costs of advertising media and corollary administrative costs. Advertising media include magazines, newspapers, radio and television, direct mail, exhibits, electronic or computer transmittals, and the like. The only allowable advertising costs are those that are solely for:

The recruitment of personnel required by the non-Federal entity for performance of a Federal award.

- The procurement of goods and services for the performance of a Federal award.
- The disposal of scrap or surplus materials acquired in the performance of a Federal award except when non-Federal entities are reimbursed for disposal costs at a predetermined amount.
- Program outreach and other specific purposes necessary to meet the requirements of the Federal award.

Grantees must ensure care was taken to advertise or market the SSVF program itself and if combining with other agency programs, that the appropriate allocation methods are applied and documented to support expenses. The advertising and marketing must directly connect

to the overall SSVF Grantee comprehensive outreach plan.

The term “marketing materials” include business cards, flyers, pamphlets, and brochures. SSVF may pay for SSVF advertising and or marketing materials to enhance conventional staff- driven outreach provided that all of the following terms are met before incurring such costs:

- Traditional staff-driven methods of outreach were tried but target numbers are still unmet.
- An assessment was performed to ensure chosen marketing method will be effective.
- A comparison was made between effectiveness of staff outreach versus marketing.
- Care was taken to advertise or market the SSVF program itself and if combining with other agency programs, that the appropriate allocation methods are applied and documented to support expenses.
- Marketing was designed to ensure effectiveness in connecting Veterans to SSVF.
- Grantees must develop a “SSVF Cost-Benefit Analysis for Advertising and Marketing” packet to document compliance efforts and address the requirements for both Advertising and Marketing listed above.

Grantees must retain a copy of the marketing materials or an example of the applicable media used with the “SSVF Cost-Benefit Analysis for Advertising and Marketing” packet.

The term “public relations” includes community relations and means those activities dedicated to maintaining the image of the non-Federal entity or maintaining or promoting understanding and favorable relations with the community or public at large or any segment of the public. The only allowable public relations costs are:

- Costs specifically required by the Federal award.
- Costs of communicating with the public and press pertaining to specific activities.
- Accomplishments which result from performance of the Federal award (these costs are considered necessary as part of the outreach effort for the Federal award).
- Costs of conducting general liaison with news media and public relations officers, to the extent that such activities are limited to communication and liaison necessary to keep the public informed on matters of public concern, such as notices of funding opportunities and financial matters, etc.

Unallowable advertising and public relations costs include the following:

- All advertising and public relations costs other than as specified in the paragraphs on reasonableness and unallowable costs under Compensation below.
- Costs of meetings, conventions, convocations, or other events related to other activities of the entity including:
 - Costs of displays, demonstrations, and exhibits.
 - Costs of meeting rooms, hospitality suites, and other special facilities used in conjunction with shows and other special events.
 - Salaries and wages of employees engaged in setting up and displaying exhibits, making demonstrations, and providing briefings.
 - Costs of promotional items and memorabilia, including models, gifts, and souvenirs.
 - Costs of advertising and public relations designed solely to promote the non-Federal entity.

2c. Compensation – personal services

Compensation for personal services includes all remuneration, paid currently or accrued, for services of employees rendered during the period of performance under the Federal award, including but not necessarily limited to wages and salaries. Compensation for personal services may also include fringe benefits. Costs of compensation are allowable to the extent that they satisfy the specific requirements of this part, and that the total compensation for individual employees:

- Is reasonable for the services rendered and conforms to the established written policy of the Non-Federal entity consistently applied to both Federal and non-Federal activities.
- Follows an appointment made in accordance with a non-Federal entity's laws and/or rules or written policies and meets the requirements of Federal statute, where applicable.

2d. Reasonableness:

Compensation for employees engaged in work on Federal awards will be considered reasonable to the extent that it is consistent with that paid for similar work in other activities of the non-Federal entity. In cases where the kinds of employees required for Federal awards are not found in the other activities of the non-Federal entity, compensation will be considered reasonable to the extent that it is comparable to that paid for similar work in the labor market in which the non-Federal entity competes for the kind of employees involved.

2e. Professional activities outside the non-Federal entity:

Unless an arrangement is specifically authorized by a Federal awarding agency, a non-Federal entity must follow its written non-Federal-entity-wide policies and practices concerning the permissible extent of professional services that can be provided outside the non-Federal entity for non-organizational compensation. Where such non-Federal-entity-wide written policies do not exist or do not adequately define the permissible extent of consulting or other non-organizational activities undertaken for extra outside pay, the Federal government may require that the effort of professional staff working on Federal awards be allocated between:

- Non-Federal entity activities, and
- Non-organizational professional activities. If the Federal awarding agency considers the extent of non-organizational professional effort excessive or inconsistent with the conflicts-of-interest terms and conditions of the Federal award, appropriate arrangements governing compensation will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

2f. Special considerations:

Special considerations in determining allowability of compensation will be given to any change in a non-Federal entity's compensation policy resulting in a substantial increase in its employees' level of compensation (particularly when the change is concurrent with an increase in the ratio of Federal awards to other activities) or any change in the treatment of allowability of specific types of compensation due to changes in Federal policy.

2g. Incentive compensation:

Incentive compensation to employees based on cost reduction, or efficient performance, suggestion awards, safety awards, etc., is allowable to the extent that the overall compensation is determined to be reasonable and such costs are paid or accrued pursuant to an agreement entered into in good faith between the non-Federal entity and the employees before the services were rendered, or pursuant to an established plan followed by the non-Federal entity so consistently as to imply, in effect, an agreement to make such payment.

2h. Nonprofit organizations:

For compensation to members of nonprofit organizations, trustees, directors, associates, officers, or the immediate families thereof, determination must be made that such compensation is reasonable for the actual personal services rendered rather than a distribution of earnings in excess of costs. This may include directors' and executive committee members' fees, incentive awards, allowances for off-site pay, incentive pay, location allowances, hardship pay, and cost-of-living differentials.

2i. Timecards-Employee Hours:

Must conform to non-Federal entity's written policies, be reasonable and meet the Standards for Documentation of Personnel Expenses:

- Be supported by a system of internal control which provides reasonable assurance that the charges are accurate, allowable, and properly allocated.
- Be incorporated into the official records of the non-Federal entity.
- Reasonably reflect the total activity for which the employee is compensated by the non-Federal entity, not exceeding 100% of compensated activities.
- Encompass both federally assisted, and all other activities compensated by the non-Federal entity on an integrated basis but may include the use of subsidiary records as defined in the non-Federal entity's written policy.
- Comply with the established accounting policies and practices of the non-Federal entity.
- Support the distribution of the employee's salary or wages among specific activities or cost objectives if the employee works on more than one Federal award; a Federal award and non-Federal award; an indirect cost activity and a direct cost activity; two or more indirect activities which are allocated using different allocation bases; or an unallowable activity and a direct or indirect cost activity.

Budget estimates alone do not qualify as support for charges to Federal awards, but may be used for interim accounting purposes. All payroll documentation must be approved by a responsible official of the organization. Overtime, as defined, is only allowable with prior approval by the awarding agency. However, the SSVF Program Office will not pre-approve overtime authorizations but grantees should ensure that they meet the below guidelines along with having sufficient documentation to support any overtime pay exception.

2j. Overtime, extra-pay shift, and multi-shift premiums:

Premiums for overtime, extra-pay shifts, and multi-shift work are allowable only with the prior approval of the awarding agency except:

- When necessary to cope with emergencies, such as those resulting from accidents, natural disasters, breakdowns of equipment, or occasional operational bottlenecks of a sporadic nature.
- When employees are performing indirect functions, such as administration, maintenance, or accounting.
- In the performance of tests, laboratory procedures, or other similar operations which are continuous in nature and cannot reasonably be interrupted or otherwise completed.

- When lower overall cost to the Federal Government will result.

2k. SSVF Travel Costs Related to Training

Travel is allowable as a direct program cost only when such travel will provide a direct benefit to the SSVF program and grant award. Travel costs have a high audit profile and are routinely examined by auditors and other government stakeholders to determine the reason and scope of the travel. Grantees must be prudent with all funds and must be aware of the perception related to travel costs, grantees should be thoughtful when determining the number of employees to send to each training or conference. Conferences should be directly related to the goal of ending Veteran Homelessness. One example would be sending several staff to national conferences focusing upon ending homelessness. Grantees should cost share training cost with other programs/funding streams within their agency. Grantees should assess currently resources, like the Housing Skills Practice Center (Learning.tacinc.org), or local VA resources like the SAVE training for Suicide Prevention before expending funds on external training. The use of teleconferences should be considered for any meeting before travel funds are used. The grantee/traveler are required to document in their files how the travel directly benefits/relates to the SSVF grant and project. All travel and training expense must adhere to Federal Travel Regulations. Staff travel Per-Diem expense reimbursement is allowable if it meets the reimbursement standards. As a reminder, a budgeted line item for Training/Conference expense for non-VA mandated training cannot exceed 1% of grant award.

Please note, grantees must attend VA-mandated training sessions. Trainings will be conducted by VA and its technical assistance providers. Information on training, including eligible training expenses, will be emailed to grantees. It is also expected that grantees will provide training for case managers and staff who will provide supportive services to very low-income Veteran families. VA mandated training will be provided at no-cost to grantees. In rare instances, VA may also strongly encourage external training that is considered mission critical. In such circumstances, VA will not apply the 1% cap to such training costs.

2l. Case Management and other Supportive Services

Eligible expenses include those associated with providing case management and other supportive services (Healthcare Navigation, Rapid Resolution, etc) such as case manager salaries and other program (non-administrative) staff time. These expenses may include the costs associated with training and supervising case management staff. The time associated with case managers entering participant records into HMIS can also be budgeted in this section.

2m. Assistance in Obtaining VA Benefits

Grantees are required to assist participants in obtaining VA benefits such as vocational and rehabilitation counseling, employment and training service, educational assistance and health care services. This supportive service is a component of each participant's ongoing

needs assessment and, as it is primarily a referral service, does not involve specific expenses beyond non-administrative staff time for the case manager. Use of the Supportive Services Referrals Tracking Tool is required to support assessments and referrals are provided and sufficient outcomes have been achieved.

2n. Assistance in Obtaining and Coordinating Other Public Benefits

Grantees are required to assist participants to obtain, and coordinate the provision of public benefits that are being provided by Federal, State, local, or tribal agencies, or any eligible entity in the area or community served by the grantee. Services included in this section are referrals for health care services, referrals for daily living services, personal financial planning services, transportation services, income support services, fiduciary and representative payee services, legal services, child care services and housing counseling. At a minimum, these services will involve the time of the case manager who provides and coordinates referrals. Professional services are also an eligible expense (e.g., legal services, real estate services). In some cases, grantees may be able to directly provide necessary supportive services; however, it may sometimes be more cost-effective for grantees to provide a referral for participants to obtain a service in the community. Costs involved with administering these services, such as administrative staff time and supplies, are included in the program's administrative costs. Use of the Supportive Services Referrals Tracking Tool is required to support assessments and referrals are provided and sufficient outcomes have been achieved.

2o. Temporary Financial Assistance

A temporary financial assistance payment made on behalf of a program participant must help the participant remain in permanent housing or obtain permanent housing and meet all other requirements set forth in 38 CFR 62.33 and 38 CFR 62.34. Temporary financial assistance must be reasonable and must be provided as part of a plan to address the participant's future ability to pay their own expenses. Outside of such a plan, temporary financial assistance payments are not an eligible use of SSVF Program funds.

Temporary financial assistance payments should augment the grantee's program by supporting the housing stability of participants and should not consume a disproportionate amount of grant funds. Grantees must ensure that temporary financial assistance payments do not exceed the percentage of total grant funds established in the NOFA. Temporary financial assistance must comply with the limitations set out in 38 CFR 62.33 and 62.34. Eligible temporary financial assistance restrictions and suggested documentation are shown in the table below (further restrictions may be set forth in the NOFA).

Temporary financial assistance must be paid directly to a third party on behalf of a participant. Temporary financial assistance must never be paid directly to a participant. Grantees should exercise due diligence to ensure that each payment is made to a legitimate third party vendor. This can be done through gathering W-9s for vendors, checking tax

assessor databases to verify the true owner of a property, gathering property management agreements, or others. Grantees must also assure that suitable internal checks are in place to prevent payments to vendors where a conflict of interest exists; for instance, referrals should not be steered to vendors who have familial relationships to employees or board members of the grantee.

Temporary Assistance

Temporary Assistance	Associated Restrictions	Minimum Documentation Required
<p>Child Care services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided by “eligible child care provider” <p>Low Income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Max. 10 months in a 2-year period, per child • Max. 6 months in a 12-month period, per child <p>Extremely Low Income⁹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Max. 12 months in a 2-year period, per child • Max. 9 months in a 12-month period, per child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of invoice for services • Receipt of payment
<p>Transportation services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No restrictions on public transportation • Max. \$1,200 in car repair in 2-year period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of bill for services • Receipt of payment
<p>Rental assistance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible for payments currently due or in arrears (Number of months in arrears paid for with rental assistance counts towards the max. allowable months of assistance). • Penalties or fees must be reasonable and must directly allow participant to obtain/ remain in permanent housing. <p>In compliance with rent reasonableness¹⁰</p> <p>Low Income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Max. 10 months in a 2-year period. • Max. 6 months in 12-month period. <p>Extremely Low Income¹¹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Max. 12 months in a 2-year period • Max. 9 months in 12-month period <p>Shallow Subsidy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of payment demand from landlord/ management company, clearly identifying participant and unit • Document indicating participant’s portion of rent • Receipt of payment • Signed lease • W9 from landlord required for payment • Required Habitability Standards inspection (if new/different unit)

Temporary Assistance	Associated Restrictions	Minimum Documentation Required
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Max 50% of unit rent for two years for extremely low income Veterans (30% or below AMI) and two year less any number of months of traditional rental assistance provided for Veterans between 31-80% of AMI. 	
<p>Utility payment assistance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eligible for payments currently due or arrears Participant, legal representative or a member of the household must have an account in their name with a utility company or proof of responsibility to make payments. <p>Low Income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Max. 10 months in 2-year period Max. 6 months in 12-month period One time utility assistance to host for Veterans temporarily housed without a lease with a commitment of at least 90 days housing support <p>Extremely Low Income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Max. 12 months in 2-year period Max. 9 months in 12-month period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy of utility bill, itemized by month Proof that participant is responsible for payment Receipt of payment Required Habitability Standards inspection (if new/different unit)
<p>Security deposits/ Utility deposits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security deposit assistance limited to one time during a 2-year period. Multiple months' worth of Security deposits may be provided if such arrangements are in line with local tenant law and market conditions Utility deposit assistance limited to one time during a 2-year period Approved deposits do not count towards maximum rental assistance limitations. Utilities include electricity, heating sources, telephone, and basic internet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written statement from landlord/management or utility company that deposit is required. In cases where water and power are not included in rent and are billed separately, this is to be included in the statement from landlord Signed lease or utility agreement by applicable tenant and landlord/utility company

Temporary Assistance	Associated Restrictions	Minimum Documentation Required
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required Habitability Standards inspection (if new/different unit) • Receipt of payment
Moving costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Max. of cost of one move to permanent housing during a 2-year period • Short-term storage for a max. of 3 months or until participant is in permanent housing, whichever is shorter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of receipts for: moving costs, short-term storage fees • Receipt of payment
General Housing Stability Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Max. of \$1,948 per participant household for “four classes” during 2-year period • Max. of \$500 per participant household for items for life/safety (falls within \$1,948 max) • Broker fees allowable once in a 2-year period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of bill or invoice • Copy of receipts for allowable expenses
Emergency Housing Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Max. 60 days for enrolled household • May be used once during 2-year period • If permanent housing, appropriate shelter beds and transitional housing are not available then a grantee may place a participant in emergency housing. • Subsequent housing has been identified generally but is not immediately available for move-in • May be used as an outreach tool to engage and offer housing to unsheltered homeless Veterans with significant housing needs who refuse to access traditional emergency shelter services in the community. • No viable access to available in local VA (GPD, HCHV) programs or community shelter • Cost must be reasonable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of invoice and receipt • Emergency Housing Assistance Verification Form
Resource to Secure Permanent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Max value of two months of unit rent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All documentation required for rental assistance

Temporary Assistance	Associated Restrictions	Minimum Documentation Required
Housing (aka Landlord Incentive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be used to overcome barriers that would further preclude or delay access to permanent housing unit • Only for new leases of at least 12 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justification of necessity to use incentive to expedite permanent housing linkage
Miscellaneous Move In Costs (aka Tenant Incentive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to \$1,000 per household in purchases of goods and services to promote general comfort one would reasonable expect to have in permanent housing. • Purchases made from third parties and delivered/provided to Veteran at beginning of new permanent housing situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ledger demonstrating cap limit of \$1,000 by individual Veteran household • Proof or note that Veteran received all items purchased

⁹ See Section I.C. Definitions: [Low Income](#).

¹⁰ Rent reasonableness means the total rent charged for a unit must be reasonable in relation to the rents being charged during the same time period for comparable units in the private unassisted market and must not exceed rents charged by the property owner during the same time period.

¹¹ See Section I.C. Definitions: [Low Income](#).

Payments cannot be made on behalf of the participant for the same period and for the same cost types that are being provided for the same participant through another Federal, State or local subsidy program.

Grantees should maintain records that justify the provision of temporary financial assistance payments. Such records should include the details and documentation of the payment as well as the participant’s housing stability plan. The plan provided must justify the provision of the temporary financial assistance in terms of the urgency of the assistance at the time of payment, as well as the participant’s plan to pay the costs for housing in the future.

2p. Other Supportive Services

In accordance with grantees’ grant agreements or otherwise approved by VA, other supportive services may be provided.

D. Financial End of Year Closeouts

All SSVF grant funds must be expended by the end of the contract year. Any remaining funds will be returned to the Department of the Treasury. SSVF grantees will have 45 days from the end of the agreement term to finalize programmatic and financial close outs. Subcontractors are held to the same standards as the SSVF grantee regarding compliance with the Final Rule and OMB circulars. Grantees are responsible for the monitoring and oversight of subcontractors, as well as maintaining appropriate financial and program performance documentation. Grantees must submit all required final reports no later than 45 days after the end of the grant term.

Under 38 CFR 62.71, grantees are required to comply with VA reporting procedures. For SSVF, grantees are required to complete the Federal Financial Report (FFR) or (SF-425). Grantees must complete this report within the Payment Management System. The Federal Financial Report (FFR or SF-425) is a single form that consolidates the Financial Status Report and the Federal Cash Transaction Report and the PMS has a FFR subsystem that allows users to complete the report electronically. SSVF grantees may access the FFR Financial Status Report by logging in to the PMS online platform with their SSVF PMS account number. The SSVF grant funds are categorized in the HHS Payment Management System as Type B accounts. SSVF grantees are not required to submit quarterly cash transaction reports and, therefore, VA requires SSVF grantees to file the FFR Federal Financial Status Report (FSR) for each account on an annual basis, within 45 days of the close of the grant. Grantees must ensure the FFR FSR is submitted in PMS on time. If PMS does not receive your report by the due date (within 45 days of grant end date), funds may not be released for any SSVF grants related to the grantee's account until the report is completed. For SSVF, the reporting period end date shall be the end date of the project or grant period. Grantees who receive an extension from the SSVF program office shall use 45 days from the date the extension ended.

Additional annual reports, such as the Closeout Certification and Financial Expenditure Report, shall be submitted no later than 45 days after the project or grant period end date. The VA's SSVF Program Office will provide instructions to SSVF grantees regarding annual reports.

E. Documentation Required

All expenses must be properly classified by expense category (should mirror approved budget) within the General ledger (GL). TFA expenses should also be classified by expense category (Deposit, Rent, GHSA, EHA, etc.) within the GL, to include adequate documentation supporting which participant received the TFA by Name or Unique ID. Utilizing the GL for recording all expenses reduces the need for secondary TFA tracking tools or mechanisms that most often result in discrepancies in data between accounting department (GL) and the operational team.

Grantees must maintain financial policies and procedures specific to the practices within their agency. Policies should include, but not be limited to, written procedures for: recording financial transactions, approving financial transactions, ensuring separation of staff duties around financial transactions, record retention, secure storage of files, and maintaining a chart of accounts.

F. Ineligible Activities

SSVF grantees are encouraged to read OMB Circular A-122, Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations, to 2 CFR 200 Subpart E. Supportive services grant funds may not be used to pay for any of the following items (Note: this list of ineligible activities is not exhaustive):

- Mortgage costs or costs needed by homeowners to assist with any fees, taxes, or other costs of refinancing;
- Construction or rehabilitation of buildings;
- Credit card bills or other consumer debt;
- Extensive car repairs for participant households (beyond the eligible \$1,200 in repairs/ maintenance);
- Car payments for participants;
- Car or vehicle purchases by the agency for SSVF activity
- Medical or dental care and medicines for Mental health, substance use, or other therapeutic interventions designed to treat Axis I or II diagnostic conditions in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5th Addition;
- Home care and home health aides typically used to provide care in support of daily living activities (Note: This includes care that is focused on treatment for an injury or illness, rehabilitation, or other assistance generally required to assist those with handicaps or other physical limitations.);
- Food, water and beverages including food provided at staff and other meetings or trainings (except as a qualified emergency supply, Rapid Resolution or Miscellaneous Move in Costs);
- Appliances and food, water, or other items purchased for staff use (refrigerators, water dispensers, coffee makers, microwave ovens, ovens, etc.) (except as a qualified Miscellaneous Move in Costs);
- Pet care, including additional deposit for pet;
- Entertainment activities;
- Direct cash assistance to program participants;
- Purchase of gift cards for program participants;
- Court-ordered judgments or fines. Note that late rent fees are an allowable expense.

- Court-ordered fees that are related to a court order/adjudication;
- Petty cash for program staff or
- Gift cards of any kind

No bulk purchases of items are allowed, unless each item is necessary for a specific identified Veteran family at the time of purchase. Any TFA purchases made must be tied directly to an eligible SSVF Veteran family. For example, an agency cannot buy bulk household goods with SSVF funds to be provided to Veterans as needed. An agency would have to purchase items with other agency funds, and reimburse themselves as SSVF Veteran family needs arise, or buy each item as needed.

Funds may not be released directly to the participant. All funds are to be issued to a third party such as a landlord or utility company.

G. Funding Sweeps

VA regularly reviews grantee expenditures to ensure that funds are being used in a manner consistent with programs goals and regulations. It is expected that grantee spending will be consistent across quarters as significant variance, particularly lower than expected spending, may indicate either a lower demand for services or difficulty in managing funds. Per the SSVF grant agreement, if, during the grant year, the VA determines that grantee spending is not meeting the level expected at key milestones indicated below, VA may elect to recoup projected unused funds and reprogram such funds to provide supportive services in areas with higher need. Reductions will be calculated based on the total amount of payment requests submitted in PMS by 5:00 p.m. **Eastern Time** on the last business day of the quarter. Should VA elect to recoup unspent funds, reductions in available grant funds would take place the second business day following the end of the quarter. VA expects grantees to use these targets as guidelines. Grantees may offer, or VA may request, that unspent funding be returned for use in other areas.

- By the end of the first quarter of the grantee's supportive services annualized grant award period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds is fewer than 15% of total supportive services grant award. (During this same period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds may not exceed 35 percent of the total supportive services grant award.)
- By the end of the second quarter of the grantee's supportive services annualized grant award period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds is fewer than 40% of total supportive services grant award. (During this same period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds may not exceed 60 percent of the total supportive services grant award.)

- iii. By the end of the third quarter of the grantee's supportive services annualized grant award period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds is fewer than 65% of total supportive services grant award. (During this same period, the grantee's cumulative requests for supportive services grant funds may not exceed 80 percent of the total supportive services grant award).

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IX. Training and Evaluation

A. SSVF Program Staff Training and Mentor Program

The SSVF Program Office Website and other materials offer a broad introduction to the SSVF program. Each SSVF grantee is expected to share orientation materials with new program staff as part of their organization's onboarding process. New staff should read all materials in their entirety and review the resources and materials. Grantees should confirm that new staff has read required all the required materials during their annual certification process. Further directions may be provided to grantees for onboarding and other required training needs.

The SSVF Program Office offers a Mentor Program, which identifies “Mentor Sites” that have effectively developed interventions that successfully meet VA’s goals of preventing and ending homelessness. Mentor Sites work with new grantees or grantees who have turnover in leadership and need to accelerate their skill development and knowledge acquisition of the SSVF Program. Mentor Sites will provide experiential, rather than didactic training, as the latter will continue to be offered through VA’s technical assistance provider. Grantees are encouraged to have a program manager spend a week at their assigned Mentor Site to observe how that program organizes and delivers SSVF services. It is hoped that by shadowing key Mentor Site SSVF staff, grantees will be better able to apply formal training and quickly organize effective and productive services upon return to their home agency.

In addition, grantees must attend VA-mandated training sessions. Trainings will be conducted by VA and its technical assistance providers. Information on trainings, including eligible training expenses, will be emailed to grantees. It is also expected that grantees provide training for case managers and staff who will provide supportive services to very low-income Veteran families. VA mandated training will be provided at no-cost to grantees. In rare instances, VA may also strongly encourage external training that is considered mission critical. An example of this is mediation training to support SSVF’s Rapid Resolution initiative. In such circumstances, VA will not apply the 1% cap to such training costs.

B. Ensuring Adequate Fiscal and Operational Controls

As a part of ensuring all SSVF staff are aware and trained to understand fraud, waste and abuse the SSVF Program Office requires all staff working in SSVF to review each fiscal year the Fraud Waste and Abuse SSVF Webinar. This is a requirement for all staff, and the webinar is posted on the SSVF website.

The HHS Payment Management System systematically manages the disbursement of SSVF Program funds. The HHS Payment Management System provides the SSVF Program Office with electronic financial reports to ensure effective management of program activities, as well as timely and accurate financial reporting.

SSVF Grantees expending \$750,000 or more in federal awards during their fiscal year has met the audit requirements of 2 CFR 200 for that fiscal year in accordance with the provisions of Subpart F—Audit Requirements and must have a single audit or program-specific audit (previously A-133) conducted for that year. The single audit is then submitted to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse with 9 months of the end of the fiscal year. Grantees that are not over the \$750,000 threshold requiring a single audit cannot use SSVF fund for an audit and are not required to complete a single audit.

VA's Office of Business Oversight (OBO) will ensure grant accountability by performing fiscal audits for selected SSVF Program grantees. These audits will include an evaluation of costs to confirm compliance with applicable OMB circulars, the SSVF Program Final Rule and NOFA. The Payment Data Inquiry within the HHS Payment Management System lists all account transactions for the organization and can be customized by date and specific grant account. The report can be printed and provided to auditors.

X. Reporting Requirements

A. Goals

The reporting requirements in 38 CFR 62.71 have been designed to provide VA with the information required to assess the outcomes associated with grantees' programs. VA anticipates grantees' programs will assist in reducing the number of Veteran families who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. Grantees should strive to meet the goals and expectations laid out in their grant agreement, resolution, and budget, including but not limited to: services provided, geographic regions served, projected households to be served, staffing plans, and others. It is the responsibility of the grantee to contact the VA with any requests for grant agreement amendments, program changes, and/or budget changes.

B. Reporting Process

1. HMIS

Grantees are required to enter data on all participants into HMIS.¹² SSVF grantees are required to either enter directly, or export, SSVF client and household data into the HMIS database(s) for each CoC(s) that they serve with their grant. CoCs utilize this data to track outcomes and gain a full understanding of the landscape of homelessness for their service region. HMIS data is also used to track and help assess grantee performance.

The VA Data Guide¹³ provides comprehensive guidance on HMIS setup for SSVF grants, data collection and data quality requirements, reporting, and other data-related topics to assist grantees and sub-grantees with meeting data collection requirements. Grantees should develop a Data Quality Plan in partnership with their CoC's data quality plan to include completeness, timeliness, and accuracy of HMIS data. The plan should also identify details around staff

responsibility including: timelines for data entry and HMIS Repository uploads, and ongoing quality assurance procedures. If a grantee's HMIS does not allow for data fields included in the VA Data Guide, the grantee should reach out to their HMIS administrator.

On a monthly basis, grantees will upload client-level SSVF data from the HMIS system in which SSVF Program data are managed to a secure SSVF Data Repository (“Repository”) managed by VA. Monthly uploads are required within the first two (2) business days of each month to be considered on time. Modified, corrected and late uploads are accepted by the seventh (7th) calendar day of each month, unless otherwise notified by VA or SSVF HMIS Technical Assistance staff.

Each upload of SSVF data to the Repository will contain a complete data set reflecting grant period-to-date program activity. The end date will always be the date on which the grantee is generating the report.

The format for the upload of SSVF Program data to the Repository is the HUD HMIS Comma- Separated Value (CSV) Format.¹⁴ The VA Data Guide includes detailed information on the files required as well as specific data quality requirements for relevant fields.

Data exported from HMIS should be packaged in a ZIP or RAR file prior to upload to the Repository. For detailed specifications, upload instructions, data quality standards, and data use and disclosure descriptions, please read the most recent VA Data Guide available on the SSVF website: <https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/hmis/>

¹² Only programs whose primary mission is to serve victims of domestic violence are prohibited by VAWA from entering client data into HMIS and must use a comparable database instead. All other SSVF grantees are required to collect and enter data for 100% of SSVF participants into HMIS.

¹³ SSVF HMIS resources can be found at <https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/hmis/>

¹⁴ For complete documentation of the current HUD HMIS CSV format, see <http://www.hudhdx.info/VendorResources.aspx>.

2. SSVF Grants Management System

The SSVF Program Office utilizes an online grants management solution that allows for a streamlined and standardized process for managing all SSVF grant data, from application receipt, review, award, grant oversight, and grant completion. In an effort to automate paper-driven tasks, to improve methods for tracking grantee compliance with guidelines and regulatory expectations, and to allow grantees more time applying their expertise to service provision, all grantees are required to utilize the Grants Management System,

C. Process of Program Remediation

1. Corrective Actions

In accordance with 38 CFR 62.60(b), if a grantee's actual SSVF grant expenditures vary from the amount disbursed for a given quarter or actual SSVF activities vary from the grantee's program description provided in the grant agreement, VA may require that the grantee initiate, develop and submit to VA for approval a Corrective Action Plan (CAP). Such variances in activities are measured according to targets established in the grant agreement, requirements for the use of temporary financial assistance, and mandated SSVF data reporting requirements. The CAP must identify the expenditure or activity source that caused the deviation, describe the reason(s) for the variance, provide specific proposed corrective action(s), and provide a timetable for accomplishment of the corrective action. After receipt of the CAP, VA will send written notification to the grantee indicating that the CAP is approved or disapproved. If disapproved, VA will make helpful suggestions to improve the proposed CAP and request resubmission, or take other actions in accordance with 38 CFR Part 62.

2. Allegations of Impropriety

Any and all allegations of impropriety by the grantee, VA employees, or participant households must be addressed immediately and documented through use of the appropriate VA mechanism (i.e., SSVF Program Office or Office of Inspector General (OIG)).

- i. Information about actual or possible violations of criminal laws related to VA programs, operations, facilities, or involving VA employees, where the violation of criminal law occurs on VA premises, will be reported.
- ii. Criminal matters involving felonies must be immediately referred to VA.

3. Withholding and Suspension of Funds

In accordance with 38 CFR 62.80, when a grantee fails to comply with the terms, conditions, or standards of the Supportive Services grant, VA may, with 7 days' notice to the grantee, withhold further payment, suspend the SSVF grant, or prohibit the grantee from incurring additional obligations of Supportive Services grant funds, pending corrective action by the grantee or a decision to terminate. VA will allow all necessary and proper costs that the grantee could not reasonably avoid during a period of suspension if such costs meet the provisions of the applicable Federal Cost Principles.

4. Funding Recovery and Appeals Process

VA will recover any SSVF grant funds that are not used in accordance with 38 CFR Part 62. The recovery of funds process, as described in 38 CFR 62.80, is as follows:

- i. VA issues a Notice of Indebtedness (NOI) to the Supportive Services grantee to recover recoupable questioned funds. The notice outlines the aspects of the grantee's program that are not in compliance with 38 CFR Part 62 and indicates that VA will recover SSVF grant funds. The grantee has 30 days upon receipt of the NOI to respond and either request a waiver, dispute the debt or make or set up a payment plan to settle the outstanding debt.
- ii. The VA Debt Management Center reviews the response from the grantee and may, if necessary, request additional information.
- iii. The final disposition on the debt is managed solely by the Debt Management Center.

5. Supportive Services Grant Termination

A Supportive Services grant may be terminated in accordance with 38 CFR 62.80 if any of the following three conditions applies:

- i. By VA, if a grantee materially fails to comply with the terms and conditions of an SSVF grant award and of 38 CFR Part 62.
- ii. By VA with the consent of the grantee, in which case VA and the grantee agree upon the termination conditions, including the effective date and, in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated.
- iii. By a grantee upon sending to VA written notification of grant termination, including the reasons for such termination, the effective date, and, in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated. (Note: If VA determines that the remaining portion of the SSVF grant will not accomplish the purposes for which the grant was made, VA may terminate the grant in its entirety if any of the other conditions for termination are met.)

6. De-obligation of Funds

VA may de-obligate all or a portion of the amounts approved for use by a grantee if:

- i. The activity for which funding was approved is not provided in accordance with the approved application and the requirements of 38 CFR Part 62;
- ii. Such amounts have not been expended within a 1 year period from the date of the signing of the supportive services grant agreement; or

- iii. Other circumstances set forth in the SSVF grant agreement authorize or require de- obligation.

At its discretion, in accordance 38 CFR 62.80, VA may re-advertise in a NOFA the availability of funds that have been de-obligated or award de-obligated funds to applicants who previously submitted applications in response to the most recently published NOFA.

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XI. Exhibits

A. Income Inclusion and Exclusion Tables

1. Income Inclusions

This table presents SSVF income inclusions and can be found in Exhibit 5-2 of HUD’s Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook. The following types of income must be counted when calculating annual income for purposes of determining SSVF eligibility:

General Category	Description
1. Earned Income	The full amount, before any payroll deductions, of wages and salaries, overtime pay, commissions, fees, tips and bonuses, and other compensation for personal services. Gig economy work or online income is included.
2. Self Employment/ Business Income	The net income from operation of a business or profession. Expenditures for business expansion or amortization of capital indebtedness shall not be used as deductions in determining net income. An allowance for depreciation of assets used in a business or profession may be deducted, based on straight line depreciation, as provided in Internal Revenue Service regulations. Any withdrawal of cash or assets from the operation of a business or profession will be included in income, except to the extent the withdrawal is reimbursement of cash or assets invested in the operation by the family.
3. Interest & Dividend Income	Interest, dividends, and other net income of any kind from real or personal property. Expenditures for amortization of capital indebtedness shall not be used as a deduction in determining net income. An allowance for depreciation is permitted only as authorized in paragraph (2) of this section. Any withdrawal of cash or assets from an investment will be included in income, except to the extent the withdrawal is reimbursement of cash or assets invested by the

General Category	Description
	family. Where the family has net family assets in excess of \$5,000, annual income shall include the greater of the actual income derived from net family assets or a percentage of the value of such assets based on the current passbook savings rate, as determined by HUD.
4. Pension/ Retirement Income	The full amount of periodic payments received from social security, annuities, insurance policies, retirement funds, pensions, lotteries, disability or death benefits, and other similar types of periodic receipts, including a lump-sum payment for the delayed start of a periodic payment (but see No. 13 under Income Exclusions) (e.g., SSDI).
5. Unemployment & Disability Income	Payments in lieu of earnings, such as unemployment, worker's compensation, and severance pay (but see No. 3 under Income Exclusions).
6. TANF/Public Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. TANF/Public assistance received by the household. b. The amount of reduced TANF/Public assistance income that is disregarded specifically because the family engaged in fraud or failed to comply with an economic self-sufficiency or work activities requirement. c. If the TANF/Public assistance payment includes an amount specifically designated for shelter and utilities that is subject to adjustments by the TANF/Public assistance agency in accordance with the actual cost of shelter and utilities, the amount of TANF/Public assistance income to be included as income shall consist of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The amount of the allowance or grant exclusive of the amount specifically designated for shelter or utilities; plus ii. The maximum amount that the TANF/Public assistance agency could in fact allow the family for shelter and utilities. If the family's TANF/Public assistance is ratably reduced from the standard of need by applying a percentage, the amount calculated under this paragraph shall be the amount resulting from one application of the percentage; (e.g., TANF, AFCD, SSI, and general assistance available through state welfare programs).
7. Alimony & Child Support Income	Periodic and determinable allowances, such as alimony and child support payments, and regular contributions or gifts received from persons not residing in the dwelling.
8. Armed Forces Income	All regular pay, special pay, and allowances of a member of the Armed Forces (whether or not living in the dwelling) who is head of the family, spouse, or other person whose dependents are residing in the unit (but see paragraph (7) under Income Exclusions).
9. G.I. Bill Housing Stipend	The monthly housing stipend received by a Veteran from VA while they are attending school under the G.I. Bill.

2. Income Exclusions

This table presents SSVF income exclusions and can be found in Exhibit 5-2 of HUD’s Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook. The following types of income are not counted when calculating annual income for purposes of determining SSVF eligibility:

General Category	Description
1. Earned Income of Children	Earned income from employment of household members under the age of 18 years (including foster children).
2. Income from Foster Care	Payments received for the care of foster children or foster adults (usually individuals with disabilities, unrelated to the tenant family, who are unable to live alone).
3. Inheritance and Insurance Income	Lump-sum additions to family assets, such as inheritances, insurance payments (including payments under health and accident insurance and worker’s compensation), capital gains and settlement for personal or property losses (except as provided in number 5 of Income Inclusions).
4. Medical Expense Reimbursements	Amounts received by the family that are specifically for, or in reimbursement of, the cost of medical expenses for any family member.
5. Income of Live-in Aides	Income of a live-in aide (as defined in 24 CFR 5.403).
6. Student Financial Aid	The full amount of student financial assistance paid directly to the student or to the educational institution. Note: includes G.I. Bill Student Financial Aid.
7. Armed Forces Hostile Fire Pay	The special pay to a family member serving in the Armed Forces who is exposed to hostile fire.
8. Self-Sufficiency Program Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Amounts received under training programs funded by HUD. b. Amounts received by a person with a disability that are disregarded for a limited time for purposes of Supplemental Security Income eligibility and benefits because they are set aside for use under a Plan to Attain Self-Sufficiency (PASS). c. Amounts received by a participant in other publicly assisted programs that are specifically for, or in reimbursement of, out-of- pocket expenses incurred (special equipment, clothing, transportation, childcare, etc.) and which are made solely to allow participation in a specific program. d. Amounts received under a resident service stipend. A resident service stipend is a modest amount (not to exceed \$200 per month) received by

Section XI – Exhibit A: Income Inclusions and Exclusion Tables



General Category	Description
	<p>a resident for performing a service for the PHA or owner, on a part-time basis, that enhances the quality of life in the development. Such services may include, but are not limited to, fire patrol, hall monitoring, lawn maintenance, resident initiatives coordination, and serving as a member of the PHA's governing board. No resident may receive more than one such stipend during the same period of time.</p> <p>e. Incremental earnings and benefits resulting to any family member from participation in qualifying state or local employment training programs (including training not affiliated with a local government) and training of a family member as resident management staff. Amounts excluded by this provision must be received under employment training programs with clearly defined goals and objectives, and are excluded only for the period during which the family member participates in the employment training program.</p>
	<p>Incremental earnings and benefits resulting to any family member from participation in qualifying state or local employment training programs (including training not affiliated with a local government) and training of a family member as resident management staff. Amounts excluded by this provision must be received under employment training programs with clearly defined goals and objectives, and are excluded only for the period during which the family member participates in the employment training program.</p>
9. Other Non-Recurring Income	<p>Temporary, non- recurring, or sporadic income (including gifts).</p>
10. Reparations	<p>Reparation payments paid by a foreign government pursuant to claims filed under the laws of that government by persons who were persecuted during the Nazi era.</p>
11. Income from Full-time Students	<p>Annual earnings in excess of \$480 for each full-time student 18 years old or older (excluding the head of household or spouse).</p>
12. Adoption Assistance Payments	<p>Adoption assistance payments in excess of \$480 annually per adopted child.</p>
13. Social Security & SSI Income	<p>Deferred periodic amounts from SSI and Social Security benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts.</p>
14. VA Disability Compensation Income	<p>Deferred periodic amounts from VA Disability Compensation (Service Connected Benefits) that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts.</p>

General Category	Description
15. Income Tax and Property Tax Refunds	Amounts received by the family in the form of refunds or rebates under state or local law for property taxes paid on the dwelling unit.
16. Home Care Assistance	Amounts paid by a state agency to a family with a member who has a developmental disability and is living at home to offset the cost of services and equipment needed to keep this developmentally disabled family member at home.
17. Other Federal Exclusions	<p>Amounts specifically excluded by any other federal statute from consideration as income for purposes of determining eligibility or benefits under a category of assistance programs that includes assistance under any program to which the exclusions of 24 CFR 5.609(c) apply, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The value of the allotment made under the Food Stamp Act of 1977; • Payments received under the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (employment through VISTA, Retired Senior Volunteer Program, Foster Grandparents Program, youthful offender incarceration alternatives, senior companions); • Payments received under the Alaskan Native Claims Settlement Act; • Income derived from the disposition of funds to the Grand River Band of Ottawa Indians; • Income derived from certain sub-marginal land of the United States that is held in trust for certain Indian tribes; • Payments or allowances made under the Department of Health and Human Services' Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program; • Payments received under the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act of 1980 (25 U.S.C. 1721); • The first \$2,000 of per capita shares received from judgment funds awarded by the Indian Claims Commission or the U.S. Claims Court and the interests of individual Indians in trust or restricted lands, including the first \$2,000 per year of income received by individual Indians from funds derived from interests held in such trust or restricted lands; • Amounts of scholarships funded under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, including awards under the Federal work study program or under the Bureau of Indian Affairs student assistance programs; • Payments received from programs funded under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1985 (Green Thumb, Senior Aides, Older American Community Service Employment Program); • Payments received on or after January 1, 1989, from the Agent Orange Settlement Fund or any other fund established pursuant to the settlement in the In Re Agent Orange product liability litigation, M.D.L. No. 381 (E.D.N.Y.);

Section XI – Exhibit A: Income Inclusions and Exclusion Tables

General Category	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earned income tax credit refund payments received on or after January 1, 1991, including advanced earned income credit payments; • The value of any child care provided or arranged (or any amount received as payment for such care or reimbursement for costs incurred for such care) under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990; • Payments received under programs funded in whole or in part under the Job Training Partnership Act (employment and training programs for Native Americans and migrant and seasonal farm workers, Job Corps, state job training programs and career intern programs, AmeriCorps); • Payments by the Indian Claims Commission to the Confederated Tribes and Bands of Yakima Indian Nation or the Apache Tribe of Mescalero Reservation; • Allowances, earnings, and payments to AmeriCorps participants under the National and Community Service Act of 1990; • Any allowance paid under the provisions of 38 U.S.C. 1805 to a child suffering from Spina Bifida who is the child of a Vietnam Veteran; • Any amount of crime victim compensation (under the Victims of Crime Act) received through crime victim assistance (or payment or reimbursement of the cost of such assistance) as determined under the Victims of Crime Act because of the commission of a crime against the participant under the Victims of Crime Act; and • Allowances, earnings, and payments to individuals participating in programs under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

B. Documentation Standards

Standards and procedures for documenting eligibility related to income and housing status are further detailed in the tables on the following pages. Documentation requirements are organized according to the following:

- 1. Income Documentation Standards**
- 2. Housing Options / Resources Eligibility Documentation (for all participants)**
- 3. Occupying Permanent Housing Category 1 Eligibility Documentation**
- 4. Occupying Permanent Housing Category 2 Eligibility Documentation**
- 5. Occupying Permanent Housing Category 3 Documentation**

1. Income Documentation Standards

Standards and procedures for documenting eligibility related to income are further detailed in the tables on the following pages. While VA has established standards for various types of income, VA recognizes that in some instances only participant self-declaration may be possible. This method should be used only as a *last resort* when all other verification methods are not possible or reasonable. When using participant self-declaration, grantees should document why a higher verification standard was not used and include this in the case file. Proof of income to determine eligibility is required for the initial and subsequent recertification events (regardless if no change in income exist) that include all declared income sources including federal, state, and local assistance programs. In the event supporting documentation (check stub, written verification, or third-party verification) is not available, bank statements should be obtained to verify and or identify other potential sources of income (Gig Work - Uber, Instacart, Door Dash, etc.).

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
Wages and Salary, etc.	Yes	Copy of most recent paystub(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain copy(ies) of most recent pay stub(s) from participant. Include copy(ies) in participant file.
	Yes	OR Written verification of income.	<p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mail, fax or email written verification of income request directly to the employer(s). Obtain signed and dated verification of income from employer(s). At a minimum, written verification should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of employer and participant name Pay amount and frequency Average hours worked per week Amount of any additional compensation Contact information for authorized employer representative Signed and dated by authorized employer representative Include verification of income in participant file.

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
<p>Wages and Salary, etc. (cont.)</p>		<p>OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Oral verification of income.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the employer(s) by phone or in person to obtain oral verification of income. • Document oral verification of income. At a minimum, oral verification should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name of employer and participant name ○ Date of hire ○ Pay amount and frequency ○ Average hours worked per week ○ Amount of any additional compensation ○ Contact information for authorized employer representative ○ Signed and dated by SSVF staff who obtained oral verification • Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file.
		<p>OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Self-declaration of income.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Source of income ○ Income amount and frequency ○ Signed and dated by SSVF participant ○ Grantee should document attempt to obtain third-party verification (written or

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
			<p>oral) and sign self-declaration of income.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include self-declaration of income in participant file.
Self-Employment / Business income¹⁵	Yes	Copy of most recent federal or state tax return showing net business income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain copy of most recent federal or state tax return from the participant. • Include copy in participant file.
		<p>OR <i>(if written documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Self-declaration of income.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if written documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Source of income ○ Income amount and frequency ○ Signed and dated by SSVF participant ○ Grantee should document attempt to obtain third-party verification (written or oral) and sign self-declaration of income. • Include self-declaration of income in participant file.
Interest and Dividend Income	Yes	Copy of most recent interest or dividend income statement	Obtain copy(ies) of most recent interest or dividend income statement from participant. Include copy(ies) in participant file.

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
		<p>OR Copy of most recent federal or state tax return showing interest, dividend or other net income</p>	<p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain copy of most recent federal or state tax return from the participant. Include copy in participant file.
		<p>OR <i>(if written documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Self-declaration of income.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if written documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source of income Income amount and frequency Signed and dated by SSVF participant Grantee should document attempt to obtain third-party verification (written or oral) and sign self-declaration of income. Include self-declaration of income in participant file.
Pension/ Retirement Income	Yes	Copy of most recent payment statement or benefit notice from Social Security Administration (SSA), pension provider, or other source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain copy(ies) of most recent benefit notice, pension statement or other payment statement from participant. Include copy(ies) in participant file.

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
		<p>OR <i>(if written documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Written verification of income.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if written documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mail, fax or email verification of income request directly to the Social Security Administration, pension provider or other source. • Obtain signed and dated verification of income from income source. At a minimum, written verification should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name of income source ○ Income amount and frequency ○ Contact information for authorized income source representative ○ Signed and dated by authorized income source representative • Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file.
		<p>OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Oral verification of income.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the source(s) by phone or in person to obtain oral verification of income. • Document oral verification of income. At a minimum, oral verification should include the following:

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name of income source ○ Income amount and frequency ○ Contact information for authorized income source representative ○ Signed and dated by SSVF staff who obtained oral verification ● Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file.
		<p>OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Self-declaration of income. 	<p>OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Source of income ○ Income amount and frequency ○ Signed and dated by SSVF participant ○ Grantee should document attempt to obtain third-party verification (written or oral) and sign self-declaration of income. ● Include self-declaration of income in participant file.
Unemployment and Disability Income	Yes	Copy of most recent unemployment, worker’s compensation, SSI, SSDI, or severance payment statement or benefit notice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Obtain copy(ies) of most recent payment statement(s) and/or benefit notice(s) from participant. ● Include copy(ies) in participant file.

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
		<p>OR Written verification of income.</p>	<p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mail, fax or email verification of income request directly to the unemployment administrator, worker’s compensation administrator, or former employer. • Obtain signed and dated verification of income from income source. At a minimum, written verification should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name of income source, and participant name ○ Income amount and frequency ○ Contact information for authorized income source representative ○ Signed and dated by authorized income source representative • Include verification of income in participant file.
<p>Unem- ployment and Disability Income (cont.)</p>		<p>OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Oral verification of income.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the source(s) by phone or in person to obtain oral verification of income. • Document oral verification of income. At a minimum, oral verification should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name of income source, and participant name ○ Income amount and frequency ○ Contact information for authorized income source representative ○ Signed and dated by SSVF staff who obtained oral verification • Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
		<p>OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Self-declaration of income</p>	<p>OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Source of income ○ Income amount and frequency ○ Signed and dated by SSVF participant ○ Grantee should document attempt to obtain third-party verification (written or oral) and sign self-declaration of income. • Include self-declaration of income in participant file.
TANF/ Public Assistance	Yes	Copy of most recent welfare payment statement or benefit notice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain copy(ies) of most recent benefit notice(s) or payment statement(s) from participant. • Include copy(ies) in participant file.
		<p>OR Written verification of income.</p>	<p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mail, fax or email verification of income request directly to the welfare administrator. • Obtain signed and dated verification of income from income source. At a minimum, written verification should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name of income source, and participant name ○ Income amount and frequency

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contact information for authorized income source representative ○ Signed and dated by authorized income source representative ● Include verification of income in participant file.
TANF/ Public Assistance (cont.)		<p>OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Oral verification of income.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact the source(s) by phone or in person to obtain oral verification of income. ● Document oral verification of income. At a minimum, oral verification should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name of income source, and participant name ○ Income amount and frequency ○ Contact information for authorized income source representative ○ Signed and dated by SSVF staff who obtained oral verification ● Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file.
		<p>OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Self-declaration of income. participant file.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following:

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Source of income ○ Income amount and frequency ○ Signed and dated by SSVF participant ○ Grantee should document attempt to obtain third-party verification (written or oral) and sign self- declaration of income. ● Include self-declaration of income in participant file.
Alimony, Child Support Payments	Yes	Copy of most recent alimony and/or child support or other contributions or gift payment statements, notice, or order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Obtain copy(ies) of most recent payment statement(s), notice(s) or order (e.g. court ordered child support) from participant. ● Include copy(ies) in participant file.
		<p>OR</p> <p>Written verification of income.</p>	<p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mail, fax or email verification of income request directly to the child support enforcement agency, court liaison, or other source. ● Obtain signed and dated verification of income from income source. At a minimum, written verification should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name of income source, and participant name ○ Income amount and frequency ○ Contact information for authorized income source representative ○ Signed and dated by authorized income source representative ● Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file.

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
<p>Alimony, Child Support Payments (cont.)</p>		<p>OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Oral verification of income</p>	<p>OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the source(s) by phone or in person to obtain oral verification of income. • Document oral verification of income. At a minimum, oral verification should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name of income source, and participant name ○ Income amount and frequency ○ Contact information for authorized income source representative ○ Signed and dated by SSVF staff who obtained oral verification • Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file.
		<p>OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Self-declaration of income.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Source of income ○ Income amount and frequency ○ Signed and dated by SSVF participant ○ Grantee should document attempt to obtain third-party verification (written or oral) and sign self-declaration of income. • Include self-declaration of income in participant file.

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
Armed Forces Income	Yes	Copy of pay stubs, payment statement, or other government issued statement indicating income amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain copy(ies) of most recent payment stub(s), statement(s), or other government issued statement from participant. Include copy(ies) in participant file.
		<p>OR</p> <p>Written verification of income.</p>	<p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mail, fax or email verification of income request directly to the appropriate armed services representative. Obtain signed and dated verification of income from income source. At a minimum, written verification should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of income source, and participant name Income amount and frequency Contact information for authorized income source representative Signed and dated by authorized income source representative Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file.
		<p>OR</p> <p><i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Oral verification of income.</p>	<p>OR</p> <p><i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact the source(s) by phone or in person to obtain oral verification of income. Document oral verification of income. At a minimum, oral verification should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of income source, and participant name Income amount and frequency



Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contact information for authorized income source representative ○ Signed and dated by SSVF staff who obtained oral verification ● Include SSVF Verification of Income in participant file.
Armed Forces Income (cont.)		<p>OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Self-declaration of income.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Source of income ○ Income amount and frequency ○ Signed and dated by SSVF participant ○ Grantee should document attempt to obtain third-party verification (written or oral) and sign self-declaration of income. ● Include self-declaration of income in participant file.
No Income Reported	N/A	Self-declaration of income.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Statement indicating “no current income” ○ Signed and dated by SSVF participant ○ Have participant sign a self-declaration of no income but seek a third-party verification of job loss or public benefit income loss if possible. ● Include self-declaration of income in participant file.

¹⁵ It can be a challenge for Grantees to obtain 3rd party verification of self-employment income. When 3rd party verification is not available, the Grantee should always request a notarized tenant declaration that includes a perjury statement.

2. Housing Options/Resources Eligibility Documentation

Note: Grantees are encouraged to assess and document other housing options and resources for all SSVF participants.

Housing Options and Resources	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
<p>Other Subsequent Housing Options</p>	<p>Assessment form or other documentation (e.g., case notes) of housing options by SSVF case manager or other authorized SSVF staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indication by Veteran or anticipated housing loss within 30 days sufficient for documenting eligibility under Stage 1 of the Homelessness Prevention Screener. • Assess with participant all other appropriate (i.e., safe, affordable, available) subsequent housing options. • Verify that no other appropriate subsequent housing options are available. • Assessment Form or Other Documentation should be documented by SSVF case manager or other authorized staff. • Include assessment summary or other statement indicating that participant has no other appropriate housing options. • Be signed and dated by SSVF case manager or other authorized SSVF staff. • Include assessment indicating no other subsequent housing options in participant case file.
<p>Financial Resources and Support Networks</p>	<p>Assessment form or other documentation (e.g., case notes) of financial resources and support networks by SSVF case manager or other authorized SSVF staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess with participant all financial resources AND support networks (i.e., friends, family or other personal sources of financial or material support) • Verify that participant lacks financial resources and support networks to obtain other appropriate subsequent housing or remain in their housing. • Assessment Form or Other Documentation Should • Be documented by SSVF case manager or other authorized staff. • Include review of current account balances in checking and savings accounts held by participant household. • Include assessment summary or other statement indicating that participant lacks financial resources and support networks to obtain other appropriate subsequent housing or remain in their housing.

Housing Options and Resources	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be signed and dated by SSVF case manager or other authorized SSVF staff • Include assessment indicating insufficient financial resources and support networks in participant case file.
<p>Other Subsequent Housing Options</p>	<p>Assessment form or other documentation (e.g., case notes) of housing options by SSVF case manager or other authorized SSVF staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indication by Veteran or anticipated housing loss within 30 days sufficient for documenting eligibility under Stage 1 of the Homelessness Prevention Screener. • Assess with participant all other appropriate (i.e., safe, affordable, available) subsequent housing options. • Verify that no other appropriate subsequent housing options are available. • Assessment Form or Other Documentation Should • Be documented by SSVF case manager or other authorized staff. • Include assessment summary or other statement indicating that participant has no other appropriate housing options. • Be signed and dated by SSVF case manager or other authorized SSVF staff. • Include assessment indicating no other subsequent housing options in participant case file.

3. Occupying Permanent Housing Category 1 Eligibility Documentation

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation (in order of preference)	Documentation Standards
<p>Rented by Participant</p> <p>Potential loss of housing due to non-payment of rent</p>	<p>Copy of formal, written notice that terminates housing, or eviction letter from landlord/lessor that notifies the participant that they must leave the unit in 30 days or less.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Copy of written lease; oral lease (if all that exists) only to verify housing status</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain a copy of formal written notice that terminates housing, or eviction letter (typed or handwritten) AND copy of lease. Note: Applicants who have only received a verbal notice from landlord and applicants who are only behind on utilities and have not received a formal written eviction notice are not eligible for SSVF HP assistance. • Lease should identify the payee, the SSVF participant as tenant, the terms of the agreement (dates of tenancy, monthly amount due, etc.), and be current, signed by both parties and dated. • Documentation of SSVF staff conversation with current landlord if all that exists at time is an oral lease. This option for an oral lease documentation is only allowable when local housing law confirms that tenants' rights are protected without a written lease. Grantees must research local housing law in their jurisdictions. Please see note below regarding on-going financial assistance. • Note that a written lease is required for on-going financial assistance. If a written lease does not exist, one should be executed before on-going financial assistance can be provided. Self-declaration and third-party verification of a pre-existing oral agreement cannot be used as a substitute when providing on-going financial assistance. • Include any documentation related to non-payment of rent in participant file.
<p>Rented by Participant</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Other Housing Occupied by</p>	<p>Copy of notice indicating building in which participant is renting or otherwise residing is being foreclosed on within 30 days</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain copy of foreclosure notice (may include notice from landlord/property manager, court, published in local newspaper or other print or on-line public record documentation) AND copy of lease. • <i>Lease Should:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify the payee, SSVF participant (or host family / friend) as tenant, the terms of the agreement

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation (in order of preference)	Documentation Standards
<p>Participant without Paying Rent (including housing shared with friends or family)</p> <p><i>Potential loss of housing due to foreclosure on rental property</i></p>	<p>AND Copy of written lease Oral lease (if all that exists) only to verify housing status</p> <p>OR Copy of written lease between the owner and host family/friend</p>	<p>(dates of tenancy, monthly amount due, etc.), and be current, signed by both parties and dated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If oral lease, documentation of SSVF staff conversation with current landlord if all that exists at time is an oral lease. Please note written lease required for on-going financial assistance. • Foreclosure Notice Should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify the building or unit where SSVF participant is the leaseholder or is otherwise residing ○ Indicate that housing is being foreclosed on ○ If written notice to participant be signed and dated by the landlord or property manager. • Include notice and copy of lease in participant file
<p>Other Housing Occupied by Participant without Paying Rent (including housing shared with friends or family)</p> <p><i>Potential loss of housing due to housing termination by host family/friend</i></p>	<p>Copy of notice that terminates housing, or eviction letter from host family or friend who owns or rents the housing that notifies the participant that they must leave within 30 days</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Copy of written lease between the owner and host family/friend; oral lease if all that exists only for verification of housing status</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain copy of notice that terminates housing or eviction letter (typed or handwritten) AND copy of lease. • Lease Should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify the payee, the SSVF host family/friend as tenant, the terms of the agreement (dates of tenancy, monthly amount due, etc.), and be current, signed by both parties and dated. • If oral lease, documentation of SSVF staff conversation with current landlord if all that exists at time is an oral lease. Please note written lease required for on-going financial assistance. • Eviction Letter Should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify the SSVF participant and unit where SSVF participant is residing ○ Indicate that participant must leave owner's/renter's housing ○ Be signed and dated by the host owner/renter • Include eviction letter and copy of lease in participant file. • Documentation of SSVF staff conversation with current host regarding verbal eviction if all that exists at time is an oral lease. Please note written lease required for on-going financial assistance.

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation (in order of preference)	Documentation Standards
<p>Rented by Participant</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Other Housing Occupied by Participant without Paying Rent (including housing shared with friends or family)</p> <p><i>Potential loss of housing due to uninhabitable conditions</i></p>	<p>Copy of notice from landlord/property manager, public health, code enforcement, fire marshal, child welfare or other government entity that housing is condemned</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Copy of written lease; oral lease if all that exists only for verification of housing status</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain copy of notice (may include notice published in local newspaper or government jurisdiction’s website) AND copy of lease. • <i>Lease Should:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify the payee, the SSVF participant (or host family/friend) as tenant, the terms of the agreement (dates of tenancy, monthly amount due, etc.), and be current, signed by both parties and dated. • If oral lease, documentation of SSVF staff conversation with current landlord if all that exists at time is an oral lease. Please note written lease required for on-going financial assistance. • <i>Notice Should:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify the building or unit where SSVF participant is the leaseholder or is otherwise residing ○ Indicate that housing is condemned (i.e., unfit for human habitation) ○ If written notice, be signed and dated by the landlord, property manager, public health, code enforcement, fire marshal, child welfare or other government entity. • Include notice and copy of lease in participant file.
<p>Owned by Participant</p>	<p>Copy of deed or mortgage and if applicable, copy of foreclosure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain copy of deed or mortgage and if applicable, foreclosure notice. • <i>Foreclosure Notice Should:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Be on financial institution letterhead ○ Identify the SSVF participant and residence where SSVF participant is the homeowner ○ Indicate that participant must leave their housing ○ Be signed and dated by financial institution • Include documentation in participant file.

4. Occupying Permanent Housing Category 2 Eligibility Documentation

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
Sleeping in an Emergency Shelter	Written documentation or oral third- party verification that the Veteran family is scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain letter from future landlord / housing provider OR SSVF staff certification that housing will be developed or located within 90 days or letter to the file.
	AND HMIS record of shelter stay.	AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain HMIS record showing shelter stay concurrent with SSVF project entry date. • Include HMIS record in SSVF participant file.
	OR <i>(if HMIS record cannot be obtained)</i> Written literal homeless certification.	OR <i>(if HMIS record cannot be obtained)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or standard Homeless Certification from shelter provider. This is a form that, at a minimum, contains the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name of the shelter program ○ Include statement verifying Emergency Shelter program is in the local CoC inventory or otherwise recognized by the CoC. ○ Statement verifying current shelter occupancy of SSVF participant ○ Signed and dated by authorized shelter provider representative • Include SSVF Literally Homeless Certification in file.

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
<p>Sleeping in an Emergency Shelter (cont.)</p>	<p>OR <i>(if HMIS record and SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Emergency shelter provider letter.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if HMIS record and SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain letter from emergency shelter provider. • <i>Letter Should:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Be on shelter provider letterhead ○ Identify shelter program ○ Include statement verifying current shelter occupancy of SSVF participant, including most recent entry and exit (if applicable) dates. ○ Be signed and dated by shelter provider • Include emergency shelter provider letter in participant file.
	<p>OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Self-declaration of literal homelessness.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration from participant. • Grantee should document attempt to obtain written third-party verification and sign self-declaration forms. • Include self-declarations in participant file. • Self-declaration is considered best practice in cases of domestic violence.

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
Place Not Meant for Human Habitation (e.g., cars, parks, abandoned buildings, streets/sidewalks)	Written documentation that the Veteran family is scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain letter from future landlord / housing provider OR SSVF staff certification that housing will be developed or located within 90 days or letter to the file.
	AND Written literal homeless certification.	AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or standard Homeless Certification from homeless street outreach provider (may include other third-party referral source, such as a local law enforcement agency). This is a standardized form that, at a minimum, contains the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name of the outreach program ○ Statement verifying current living situation of SSVF participant ○ Signed and dated by authorized outreach provider representative • Include Literally Homeless Certification in file.
	OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i> Homeless street outreach provider or referral source letter.	OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain letter from homeless street outreach provider or referral source (e.g. local law enforcement agency). The letter may be from the SSVF-funded rapid re-housing provider if the provider also provides outreach to persons on the street as part of engagement and admission activities.

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Letter Should:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Be on outreach provider or referral agency letterhead ○ Identify outreach program or referral agency ○ Include statement verifying current homeless status of SSVF participant ○ Be signed and dated by outreach provider or referral agency • Include letter in participant file.
	<p>OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Self-declaration of literal homelessness.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration • from participant. • Grantee should document attempt to obtain written third-party verification and sign self- declaration forms except in cases of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking where third-party verification may cause danger to the victim. • Include self-declarations in participant file.
Hospital or Other Institution	Written documentation that the Veteran family is scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain letter from future landlord / housing provider OR SSVF staff certification that housing will be developed or located within 90 days or letter to the file.

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
	<p>AND Letter from hospital or other institution</p>	<p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain letter from hospital or other institution. • <i>Letter Should:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Be on hospital or other institution letterhead ○ Include statement verifying current hospital/institution stay of SSVF participant ○ Include hospital/institution admission and discharge dates verifying that stay has been for 90 days or less ○ Be signed and dated by hospital/institution representative • Include hospital/institution letter in participant file.
<p>Hospital or Other Institution (cont.)</p>	<p>AND <i>(to verify literal homeless status prior to hospital or other institution admission)</i></p> <p>HMIS record of shelter stay (if previously sleeping in emergency shelter).</p>	<p>AND <i>(to verify literal homeless status prior to hospital or other institution admission)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain HMIS record showing shelter stay. • HMIS record should indicate shelter stay immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) hospital/institution admission date. • Include HMIS record in SSVF participant file.
	<p>OR <i>(if HMIS record cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Written literal homeless certification.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if HMIS record cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or standard Homeless Certification from shelter provider or homeless street outreach provider. • Certification should verify literal homelessness (residing in shelter or place not meant for human habitation) immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) hospital/institution admission date. • Include Literally Homeless Certification in file.

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
	<p>OR <i>(if HMIS record or SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Emergency shelter provider or homeless street outreach provider letter (if previously sleeping in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation).</p>	<p>OR <i>(if HMIS record or SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain emergency shelter provider letter. • Letter Should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Be on shelter provider letterhead ○ Identify shelter program ○ Include statement verifying shelter stay immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) hospital/institution admission date. ○ Be signed and dated by shelter provider • Include documentation in SSVF participant file.
<p>Hospital or Other Institution (cont.)</p>	<p><i>(if HMIS record, SSVF Literally Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Self-declaration of literal homelessness.</p>	<p><i>(if HMIS record, SSVF Literally Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration from participant. • Self-declaration should verify literal homelessness (residing in shelter or place not meant for human habitation) immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) hospital/institution admission date. • Grantee should document attempt to obtain written third-party verification and sign SSVF Self-Declaration forms. Except in the circumstances of Domestic Violence and Intimate Partner Violence. • Include self-declarations in participant file.

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
Transitional Housing	Written documentation that the Veteran family is scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain letter from future landlord / housing provider OR SSVF staff certification that housing will be developed or located within 90 days or letter to the file.
	AND Written literal homeless certification.	<p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or standard Homeless Certification from transitional housing provider. This is a standardized form that, at a minimum, contains the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name of the transitional housing program ○ Statement verifying current transitional housing occupancy of SSVF participant. ○ Statement indicating the SSVF participant is graduating from or timing out of the transitional housing program ○ Statement verifying the SSVF participant was residing in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately prior to transitional housing admission ○ Signed and dated by authorized transitional housing provider representative • Include Literally Homeless Certification in file.

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
	<p>OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Transitional housing provider letter.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain letter from transitional housing provider. • Letter Should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Be on transitional housing provider letterhead. ○ Identify transitional housing program. ○ Include statement verifying current transitional housing program is in the local CoC inventory or otherwise recognized by the CoC. ○ Include statement verifying current transitional housing occupancy of SSVF participant. ○ Include statement verifying that SSVF participant is graduating from or timing out of transitional housing program. ○ Include statement verifying SSVF participant was residing in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately prior to transitional housing admission. ○ Be signed and dated by transitional housing provider. • Include transitional housing provider letter in participant file.
<p>Transitional Housing (cont.)</p>	<p>OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Self-declaration of literal homelessness.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration from participant. • Self-declaration should verify literal homelessness (residing in shelter or place not meant for human habitation) immediately prior to (i.e. the day before

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
		or same day as) transitional housing admission date. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grantee should document attempt to obtain written third-party verification and sign SSVF Self-Declaration forms. • Include self-declaration in participant file.
Fleeing/ Attempting Flee a Domestic Violence Situation	Self-declaration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-report by client of actively fleeing or attempting to flee a domestic violence situation.

5. Occupying Permanent Housing Category 3 Eligibility Documentation

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
Sleeping in an Emergency Shelter	Written documentation or oral third-party verification of the participant’s exit from permanent housing within 90 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain letter from prior landlord / housing provider / friend / family member or SSVF staff certification or letter to the file.
	AND HMIS record of shelter stay.	AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain HMIS record showing shelter stay concurrent with SSVF project entry date. • Include HMIS record in SSVF participant file.
	OR <i>(if HMIS record cannot be obtained)</i> Written literal homeless certification.	OR <i>(if HMIS record cannot be obtained)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or a standard Homeless Certification from shelter provider. This is a standardized form that, at a minimum, contains the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of the shelter program • Statement verifying current shelter occupancy of SSVF participant • Signed and dated by authorized shelter provider representative • Include Literal Homeless Certification in SSVF participant file.

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
	<p>OR <i>(if HMIS record and SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Emergency shelter provider letter.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if HMIS record and SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain letter from emergency shelter provider. • Letter Should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be on shelter provider letterhead • Identify shelter program • Include statement verifying emergency shelter program is in the local CoC inventory or otherwise recognized by the CoC. • Include statement verifying current shelter occupancy of SSVF participant, including most recent entry and exit (if applicable) dates. • Be signed and dated by shelter provider • Include emergency shelter provider letter in participant file.
<p>Sleeping in an Emergency Shelter (cont.)</p>	<p>OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Self-declaration of literal homelessness.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated original self- declaration from participant. • Grantee should document or attempt to obtain written third-party verification and sign self- declaration forms. • Include self-declarations in participant file.

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
<p>Place Not Meant for Human Habitation (e.g., cars, parks, abandoned buildings, streets/ sidewalks)</p>	<p>Written documentation of the participant’s exit from permanent housing within 90 days.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain letter from previous landlord/ housing provider/ friend / family member or SSVF staff certification or letter to the file.
	<p>AND Written literal homeless certification.</p>	<p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or standard Homeless Certification from homeless street outreach provider (may include other third-party referral source, such as a local law enforcement agency). This is a standardized form that, at a minimum, contains the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of the outreach program • Statement verifying current living situation of SSVF participant • Signed and dated by authorized outreach provider representative • Include Literally Homeless Certification in file.
	<p>OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Homeless street outreach provider or referral source letter.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain letter from homeless street outreach provider or referral source (e.g. local law enforcement agency). The letter may be from the SSVF-funded rapid re-

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
		<p>housing provider if the provider also provides outreach to persons on the street as part of engagement and admission activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter Should: • Be on outreach provider or referral agency letterhead • Identify outreach program or referral agency • Include statement verifying current homeless status of SSVF participant • Be signed and dated by outreach provider or referral agency • Include letter in participant file.
<p>Place Not Meant for Human Habitation (e.g., cars, parks, abandoned buildings, streets/ sidewalks) (cont.)</p>	<p>OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Self-declaration of literal homelessness.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration from participant. • Grantee should document attempt to obtain written third-party verification and sign self- declaration forms. • Include self-declarations in participant file.
<p>Hospital or Other Institution</p>	<p>Written documentation of the participant’s exit from permanent housing within 90 days.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain letter from previous landlord / housing provider/friend /family member or SSVF staff certification or letter to the file.
	<p>AND Letter from hospital or other institution</p>	<p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain letter from hospital or other institution. • <i>Letter Should:</i> • Be on hospital or other institution letterhead • Include statement verifying current hospital/institution stay of SSVF participant

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include hospital/institution admission and discharge dates verifying that stay has been for 90 days or less • Be signed and dated by hospital/institution representative • Include hospital/institution letter in participant file.
Hospital or Other Institution (cont.)	<p>AND <i>(to verify literal homeless status prior to hospital or other institution admission)</i></p> <p>HMIS record of shelter stay (if previously sleeping in emergency shelter).</p>	<p>AND <i>(to verify literal homeless status prior to hospital or other institution admission)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain HMIS record showing shelter stay concurrent with SSVF project entry date. • HMIS record should indicate shelter stay immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) hospital/institution admission date. • Include HMIS record in SSVF participant file.
	<p>OR <i>(if HMIS record cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Written literal homeless certification.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if HMIS record cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated original SSVF • Literally Homeless Certification or standard Homeless Certification from shelter provider or homeless street outreach provider. • Certification should verify literal homelessness (residing in shelter or place not meant for human habitation) immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) hospital/institution admission date. • Include Literally Homeless Certification in SSVF participant file.

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
<p>Hospital or Other Institution (cont.)</p>	<p>OR <i>(if HMIS record or SSVF Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Emergency shelter provider or homeless street outreach provider letter (if previously sleeping in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation).</p>	<p>OR <i>(if HMIS record or SSVF Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain emergency shelter provider letter. • Letter Should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be on shelter provider letterhead • Identify shelter program • Include statement verifying shelter stay immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) hospital/institution admission date. • Be signed and dated by shelter provider • Include documentation in SSVF participant file.
	<p>OR <i>(if HMIS record, SSVF Literally Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Self-declaration of literal homelessness.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if HMIS record, SSVF Literally Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration from participant. • Self-declaration should verify literal homelessness (residing in shelter or place not meant for human habitation) immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) hospital/institution admission date. • Grantee should document attempt to obtain written third-party verification and sign SSVF Self-Declaration of Housing Status forms. • Include self-declarations in participant file.

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
Transitional Housing	Written documentation of exit from permanent housing within 90 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain letter from previous landlord / housing provider / friend / family member or SSVF staff certification or letter to the file.
	AND Written literal homeless certification.	AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or standard Homeless Certification from transitional housing provider. This is a standardized form that, at a minimum, contains the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of the transitional housing program • Statement verifying current transitional housing occupancy of SSVF participant. • Statement indicating the SSVF participant is graduating from or timing out of the transitional housing program • Statement verifying the SSVF participant was residing in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately prior to transitional housing admission • Signed and dated by authorized transitional housing provider representative • Include Literally Homeless Certification in file.
	OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i> Transitional housing provider letter.	OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain letter from transitional housing provider. • Letter Should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be on transitional housing provider letterhead. • Identify transitional housing program. • Include statement verifying current transitional housing program is in the local CoC inventory or otherwise recognized by the CoC.

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include statement verifying current transitional housing occupancy of SSVF participant. • Include statement verifying that SSVF participant is graduating from or timing out of transitional housing program. • Include statement verifying SSVF participant was residing in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately prior to transitional housing admission. • Be signed and dated by transitional housing provider. • Include transitional housing provider letter in participant file.
<p>Transitional Housing (cont.)</p>	<p>OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i></p> <p>Self-declaration of literal homelessness.</p>	<p>OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain signed and dated original self- declaration from participant. • Self-declaration should verify literal homelessness (residing in shelter or place not meant for human habitation) immediately prior to (i.e., the day before or same day as) Transitional Housing admission date. • Grantee should document attempt to obtain written third-party verification and sign SSVF Self-Declaration of Housing Status forms. • Include self-declarations in participant file.

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C. Collaborative Delivery of GPD/HUD-VASH/HCHV/SSVF Services

1. Background

The VA has a variety of resources available to serve Veterans experiencing homelessness. These resources must be deployed in an efficient and coordinated manner to support the VA's goal of ending homelessness among Veterans. Housing First is the guiding approach to the delivery of these services, so it is critical that program resources are employed as supports to housing placement, not barriers. The ability of program staff to screen and assess effectively, will allow Veterans to access the intervention appropriate to their needs.

2. SSVF Coordination with VA Medical Centers

SSVF provides rapid rehousing and homelessness prevention services with the primary intention of those services resulting in sustainable permanent housing opportunities for Veterans. The SSVF Program Office recognizes there are certain instances where other VHA Homeless Programs interact with, and support, Veterans with housing stability. There are circumstances in which multiple VHA Homeless Programs must coordinate to provide adequate housing support. SSVF Grantees should follow all [current guidance](#) provided by the SSVF Program Office on allowances and expectations surrounding VAMC collaboration.

SSVF grantees are expected to work in coordinated partnership with their local Veterans Administration Medical Centers (VAMC). Each VAMC offers a range of housing programs including HUD-VASH, GPD, and HCHV (Health Care for Homeless Veterans offers both outreach and emergency housing). The organizational structure for each VAMC can vary – it is up to the SSVF grantee to reach out to the VAMC so that regular contact is established with local homeless services.

VA Regional Coordinators assigned to SSVF grantees, can help organize regular planning meetings with SSVF grantees that standardize processes for referrals both to SSVF grantees and from grantees to VAMCs, as well as help educate staff about accessing available services. Furthermore, through the SSVF Regional Coordinator, SSVF grantees can turn to their Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Homeless Coordinator for assistance in service collaboration.

1a. HUD-VASH Rapid- Rehousing and Grant and Per Diem Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) Only

The Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program provides supportive services and financial assistance to very low-income Veterans and their families who are literally

homeless or at risk of becoming literally homeless. The purpose of the Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) or Grant and Per Diem (GPD) referral packet (“the packet”) is to reduce the burden to Veterans in collecting duplicate information during program intakes in situations where SSVF will only provide temporary financial assistance (TFA) to assist HUD-VASH or GPD Veterans in obtaining housing or, in HUD-VASH, where a Veteran is being co-enrolled for other purposes and SSVF needs certain data elements to enroll the Veteran.

Generally, the packet cannot be solely used for supportive services that would require ongoing SSVF supportive services. Veterans being co-enrolled for other services must engage directly with the SSVF grantee, but the packet may be used for basic information gathering.

HUD-VASH staff must use the packet when seeking one-time TFA for literally homeless Veteran households who would remain homeless "but for" SSVF assistance. Eligible TFA includes Security Deposits and Utility Deposits; additional types of TFA, including Rental Assistance may be requested and provided on a case-by-case basis. Landlord and tenant incentives may be requested as appropriate. However, the Packet should not be seen as a replacement for local coordination and communication practices that will be a key element of the referral process and the local distribution of resources. SSVF and HUD-VASH are expected to coordinate the types, frequency and amounts of prioritized referrals for SSVF TFA. The packet does not apply to Homelessness Prevention Assistance.

[For GPD Veterans](#), prior to referring a Veteran household to SSVF for TFA only, it is important to assess whether additional services may be needed to support a family’s ability to successfully maintain their housing placement. If it is determined that there is not a need for ongoing financial assistance, and there is a Grant and Per Diem Case Management grantee in your community, then the Veteran household should be referred to this grantee for ongoing (up to 6 months) case management. The packet must be used by GPD staff when seeking one-time TFA for literally homeless Veteran households who would remain homeless "but for" SSVF assistance. Eligible TFA includes Security Deposits and Utility Deposits; additional types of TFA, including general housing stability assistance (outlined below), may be requested and provided on a case-by-case basis. SSVF grantees are not required to serve Veterans from GPD and may ask the VA to prioritize referrals if TFA funds become limited.

Both packets can be found at <https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/forms/>

1b. HUD-VASH and SSVF Homelessness Prevention Services

All Homelessness Prevention Veterans must be screened using the Homelessness Prevention Screening tool. Information about prevention screening can be found at <https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/ssvf-initiatives/>

Based on the screening, the SSVF grantee may:

- Accept the referred household into services and provide temporary financial assistance (TFA);
- Accept the referred household into service, but limit services to SSVF specific case management (such as legal services or assistance for family members);
- Decline enrollment and refer back to HUD-VASH.

If enrolled in SSVF, a condition for enrollment is the development of a written plan must be developed by the HUD-VASH case worker, working in coordination with the SSVF grantee that will lead to a path of sustainability for the Veteran in their current housing. This plan must include clear targets for rent repayment/relief and include a revised rent amount if required to sustain current housing. It may also include requirements for money management classes, treatment for substance abuse disorders, credit counseling, resolution of outstanding legal issues, and other appropriate interventions.

If a HUD-VASH referral is for a current resident in rental or utility arrears, it is strongly recommended that the Veteran must have a third-party financial representative who can ensure that over the intermediate term, rent will be paid. The third-party financial representative arrangement should continue until the Veteran meets agreed upon targets demonstrating their ability to resume control over their finances.

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D. Guide for Pending Verification of Veteran Status (PVVS)

1. Issue

As per 38 CFR 62.2, enrolling participant households in SSVF requires that grantees verify Veteran status to determine program eligibility. This entails a documentation collection process that can take weeks. The VA recognizes that the crisis nature of SSVF services often means that Veteran families require immediate intervention.

2. Resolution

At the time of screening, SSVF grantees may make a determination of Pending Verification of Veteran Status. This determination allows for the immediate provision of supportive services, other than temporary financial assistance (TFA).

3. Process and Restrictions

1. TFA cannot be offered during the period of Pending Verification of Veteran Status. TFA can only be offered once Veteran status is confirmed.
2. Pending Verification of Veteran Status must be documented by an affidavit of eligibility signed by the participant.
3. Until Veteran status is confirmed, Pending Verification of Veteran Status must be re-certified at least once every three months. If participant is found to be ineligible for SSVF, the participant must be discharged with appropriate community referrals.
4. Enter client data in HMIS, as required for all SSVF clients, and include all HMIS data in monthly uploads to the HMIS Repository.
5. Service data will count towards program outcomes and final service numbers, regardless of final determination of Veteran Status.

E. Links to SSVF Forms

The SSVF Program Office will continue to update SSVF Forms on the SSVF Website. Please visit <https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/forms/> for the current SSVF Forms.



F. SSVF Domestic Violence Guidance for HMIS Reporting

1. What is the policy on entering information about SSVF participant households that are victims of domestic violence into HMIS?

Agencies whose primary mission is to serve victims of domestic violence are prohibited by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) from entering client data into HMIS and instead should enter data into a comparable database. All other SSVF grantees are required to collect and enter data for 100% of SSVF participants into HMIS, even if the person being served has a history of domestic violence. Grantees who perceive this SSVF requirement to be in conflict with state law, local law, or local HMIS policy must contact their Regional Coordinators with documentation of the specific law and/or policy. VA will review and, when possible, take additional action to facilitate the entry of this data into HMIS. If there is any doubt about a conflict, grantees should contact their Regional Coordinators immediately rather than waiting until a participant with a history of domestic violence requests SSVF assistance.

2. Why does VA require grantees to enter information about victims of domestic violence into HMIS?

National-level counts of SSVF participants and tracking of outcomes are based on HMIS data. Only clients for whom data is entered into HMIS and successfully uploaded to the Repository can be counted by VA as having been served by your program.

3. What steps can grantees take to ensure the security of HMIS data?

It is the responsibility of the grantee to take precautions to protect the client information of all of those served. Grantees should always adhere to their local HMIS policies, procedures and protocols and work with the Continuum of Care to ensure consistency in applying these practices. Information in HMIS tends to be more secure than information in paper files. There are basic information security practices that you should follow to keep all personally identifying information secure:

1. Protect any computer that stores or accesses identifying information about any client – which includes accessing HMIS or data exported from HMIS for upload to the Repository – with a username and password.
2. Do not share the username and password for your computer or your HMIS account with anyone, and do not keep them written down in a place where anyone else could find them.
3. Log out or lock your computer when you are not at your desk.

4. The only VA-approved method of transmitting exported HMIS data for SSVF clients is by upload to the Repository; exported files may not be emailed.

4. Are there special safeguards grantees can implement for data related to victims of domestic violence?

If there is reason to believe that an abuser has or could gain access to HMIS data, contact your Regional Coordinator, who will work with you to develop a plan to enter data without compromising your participant's safety; it may be appropriate to delay data entry until after the participant has been discharged. In addition, although data required by VA for SSVF participants does not include an address or other contact information, some HMIS applications have the capacity to track such data, as well as information about employers, etc. In instances where there is reason to believe that an abuser may have access to HMIS data, none of that additional information should be entered into HMIS.

G. Important Federal Policies

1. Eligibility of Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Household for HUD funded permanent supportive housing (PSH)

In June 2013, HUD issued guidance on Eligibility of Rapid Rehousing (RRH) Households for HUD funded permanent supportive housing (PSH). In general, when individuals and families are placed in permanent housing, they are no longer considered homeless. However, program participants that receive rapid-re-housing assistance, including rapid re-housing participants in the SSVF program maintain their homeless status for the purpose of eligibility for HUD funded PSH programs funded through the Continuum of Care (CoC) Program or HUD- provided that they meet other eligibility requirements for those programs. Program participants maintain their homeless status during the time period in which they are receiving the rapid re-housing assistance. In addition, program participants receiving rapid re-housing who met the definition of experiencing chronic homelessness upon entry into the project may also maintain their status as experiencing chronic homelessness during the period in which they are receiving rapid rehousing assistance. Therefore, these individuals and families remain eligible for PSH units that have been dedicated to serve the chronically homeless. The guidance memo is available on the SSVF website at https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/?page=/official_guide/supportive_services.

2. Routine Use #30 VHA -Disclosure of Veteran information

Routine Use #30 states that VA may disclose relevant health care and demographic information to health and welfare agencies, housing resources, and community providers, consistent with good medical-ethical practices, for Veterans assessed by or engaged in VA Homeless Programs for purposes of:

1. Coordinating care;
2. Expediting access to housing;
3. Providing medical and related services;
4. Participating in coordinated entry processes;
5. Reducing Veteran homelessness;
6. Identifying homeless individuals in need of immediate assistance; and
7. Ensuring program accountability by assigning and tracking responsibility for urgently-required care.

This routine use provides legal authority for VHA Homeless Program staff to disclose pertinent Veteran information, excluding 38 U.S.C. 7332-protected information **without a formal data sharing agreement or prior signed, written authorization** from the Veteran

if the requirements of the legal authority are followed.

VHA does NOT have legal authority to share health information protected under 38 U.S.C 7332 (any information related to the diagnosis of infection with HIV or sickle cell anemia, or the diagnosis of and treatment for drug abuse, alcohol abuse or alcoholism) with community partners UNLESS a signed, written authorization is obtained from the Veteran. If a Veteran is being treated for, or has any of these diagnoses, this information or any information that would imply these diagnoses cannot be shared without the Veteran's signed authorization, including information such as, the name of a residential treatment facility that would infer the Veteran is being treated for substance abuse.

This legal authority supports effective and efficient collaboration between VA and outside agencies by allowing disclosure of information documented in the Homeless Operations Management and Evaluation System (HOMES) for the purpose of improving timeliness and access to necessary services for Veterans in the homeless continuum.

H. History of Revisions Made to the Program Guide

1. Revisions made of the October 2023 Version

1. Updates throughout the Guide to reflect new Veteran definition and income eligibility
2. Updated guidance related to new SSVF services including Health Care Navigation, Shallow Subsidy, Rapid Resolution, Landlord and Tenant Incentives and permanent housing resources, Legal Services, Etc.
3. Updated Emergency Housing Assistance guidance
4. Updates and consolidation of service descriptions and overviews
5. Updates to General Housing Stability Assistance limits
6. Updates to utility cost types
7. Updates to regulatory changes and references
8. Removal of direct links to Forms replaced with reference to SSVF website
9. Other updates to reflect program changes since 2021

2. Revisions made for the March, 2021 Version

10. Page 12: Clarified CoC Coordination costs must be eligible
11. Page 13: Add reference to 2020 VA Integration to Coordinated Entry guidance
12. Page 17: Clarified two year Shallow Subsidy allowable without recertification.
Removed reference to previous NOFA
13. Page 19: Clarified Accreditation costs must be allocable to the SSVF portion of the accreditation
14. Page 21: Clarified some in person and virtual trainings may be required via the SSVF website, webinars or the Housing Skills Practice Center.
15. Page 25: Clarified that a DD214 is not required if one or more of the other approved Veteran status documents are obtained
16. Page 28: Clarified that federal stimulus payments in response to COVID-19 are not considered part of the households income for eligibility determination
17. Page 37: Clarified that SSVF recertification must occur every 90 days, rather than “every three months”
18. Page 38: Clarified that the SSVF Program Exit checklist is required, not optional
19. Page 39: Clarified that case file documentation should be reflected in HMIS where such documentation is a required data collection element in HMIS
20. Page 39: Removed reference to Participant Satisfaction Survey
21. Page 43: Added emphasis for outreach to historically underserved populations
22. Page 45: Added expectation that SSVF grantees have capacity to screen and enroll Veterans on the same day services requested
23. Page 49: Added emphasis on rapidly assisting unsheltered Veterans with immediate

- safe housing option, including but not limited to, Rapid Resolution connections and emergency housing. Added reference to March 2021 SSVF Emergency Housing Guidance.
24. Page 74: Clarified submission process for Critical Incident Reports
 25. Page 76: Clarified conflict of interest and confidentiality needs for electronic records
 26. Page 77: Added new section focused on Veterans Rights
 27. Page 83: Added CFR references and provided clarification related to administrative costs. Included January 2021 MACA guidance
 28. Page 85: Replaced Outreach and Marketing with September 2020 amended changes
 29. Page 90: Added clarification to overtime pay requirements
 30. Page 89: Added clarification on documentation of required supportive services
 31. Page 96: Added “Appliances for food, water, or other ineligible activities (refrigerators, water dispensers, coffee makers, microwave ovens, ovens, etc.)” to ineligible costs
 32. Page 99: Added reference to the SSVF website and Housing Skills Practice Center Learning Management System to be used for suggested and required training needs
 33. Page 102 and throughout: Removed references to GIFTS and replaced with “SSVF Grants Management System”. Clarified use of Grant Management System throughout.
 34. Page 102: Removed reference to Participant Satisfaction Surveys
 35. Page 171: Added Squares 2.0 Printout as eligible Veteran status documentation
 36. 172: Added Squares 2.0 to Affidavit of Eligibility form
 37. Throughout: Changed “monitoring references” to “annual audit”

3. Revisions made for the December 1, 2019 Edition

1. Addition of links to DUSHOM Coordinated Entry Memo and Checklist (Section III, pg. 13)
2. Addition of Returning Home Initiative Overview (Section III, pg. 16)
3. Addition of Rapid Resolution Overview (Section III, pg. 16)
4. Addition of Shallow Subsidy Overview (Section III, pg. 16)
5. Updated Guidance related to Verifying Veteran Status (Section V, pg. 24)
6. Clarification of Recertification Requirements for those receiving Shallow Subsidy (Section V, pg. 36)
7. Clarification of Need to Use Program Exit Checklist (Section V, pg. 38)
8. Addition of Exit Checklist requirement (Section V, pg. 39)
9. Addition of requirements related to S.A.V.E Suicide Prevention Training (Section VII, pg. 73)
10. Additional guidance related to Program Exit Checklist (Section VII, pg. 76)
11. Addition information regarding PMS Registration (Section VIII, pg. 78)
12. Additional information regarding Disbursements (Section VIII, pg. 79)

**Section XI – Exhibit H: History of Revisions
Made to the Program Guide**

13. Clarification of eligible Outreach Expenses (Section VIII, pg. 81)
14. New guidance related to Training and Travel related costs (Section VIII, pg. 85)
15. Additional Guidance related to Fiscal Controls (Section IX, pg. 94)
16. Clarification regarding HMIS – HOMES Upload Requirements (Section X, pg. 98)
17. Added requirements of proof of registration for Satisfaction Surveys (Section X, pg. 99)
18. Clarification of Recertification Requirements when Pending Veteran Status (Section XII, pg. 154)
19. Guidance related to Homelessness Prevention Companion Guide (Section XII, pg. 155)
20. Addition of Exhibit H “Important Federal Policies”

4. Revisions made for the December 1, 2018 Edition

1. Updated Definition of Veteran (Section I.C., pg. 6)
2. Revised Coordination with CoCs narrative (Section II.F., pg. 12)
3. Added 'VA Homeless Program Expectations for Coordinated Entry Participation' section (Section II.H., pg. 13)
4. Removed home visit language (Section II.I., pg. 14)
5. Revised Post-Award technical assistance description and clarified new staff training requirements (Section IV.C., pg. 19)
6. Updated Veteran definition description (Section V.B.1., pg. 22)
7. Updated SQUARES information (Section V.B.1., pg. 23)
8. Updated Homeless Prevention Eligibility Description and added Rapid Resolution eligibility guidance (Section V.D.1., pg. 32-33)
9. Clarified SSVF Program Exit Checklist requirement (Section V.F., pg. 36)
10. Clarified expectation of contacting Veteran households prior to exit (Section V.F., pg. 36)
11. Removed documentation checklists (Section V.G., pg. 37)
12. Added Coordinated Entry expectations (Section VI.B.1., pg. 40)
13. Updated Legal Services description and unallowable costs (Section VI.E.1.e., pg. 52 and 54)
14. Updated Suicide Prevention description and requirements (Sections VII.C., pg. 69)
15. Updated PMS Registration and Information instructions (Section VIII.A.1 and 2., pg. 75-76)
16. Updated PMS Account Information, quarterly requirements and closeout allowable actions (Section VIII.B.1., pg. 76)
17. Changed Administrative Costs description (Section VIII.C.1., pg. 77)
18. Clarified report due date (Section VIII.D., pg. 86)
19. Added ineligible activities (Section VIII.E., pg. 86-87)
20. Clarified training requirements (Section IX.A., pg. 93)
21. Updated Definition of Veteran and matched HP Companion Guide (Section XII. Exhibit E., pg. 151)
22. Updated RRH waiver process (Section XII. Exhibit G., pg. 157)
23. Removed Self-Declaration of Housing Status Form (formerly Section XIII)

5. Revisions made for the March 2018 Partial Update

1. Updated Definition of Veteran (Section I.C., pg. 6)
2. Clarified Homelessness Prevention Threshold Score expectations (Section II.E, p.10)
3. Updated Definition of Veteran (Section V.B.1., pg. 20)
4. Changed HP Form version reference (Section V.D, p.30)
5. Updated HP Screening Instructions (Section XII. Exhibit E, p. 139)

6. Updated HP Screening Form (Section XIII.E, p. 160)

6. Revisions made for the October 1, 2017 Edition:

- 1) Updated Definition of Veteran (Section I.C., pg. 6)
- 2) Added prevention service description to overview (Section II.E, pg. 10)
- 3) Updated SSVF Coordination with VA Medical Center guidance (Section II.F., pg. 10)
- 4) Clarified household file expectations (Section V., pg. 19)
- 5) Updated Definition of Active service (Section V.B.1., pg. 20)
- 6) Clarified court martial distinctions Veteran Status (Section V.B.1., pg. 20)
- 7) Added additional documentation options for Veteran Status (Section V.B.1., pg. 21)
- 8) Added income exclusion for VA disability lump sum and prospective amounts (Section V.C.2., pg. 24)
- 9) Added guidance on changing threshold score (Section V.D.1., pg. 30 - 31)
- 10) Added description of Service-Directed Housing Intervention (SDHI) (formerly “Light Touch Services”) (Section V.D.1., pg. 31)
- 11) Added guidance on recertification (Section V.E., pg. 32)
- 12) Added program exit guidance (Section V.F., pg. 34)
- 13) Clarified documentation standard guidance (Section V.G.3., pg. 36)
- 14) Clarified outreach and documentation guidance (Section VI.B.1., pg. 38)
- 15) Clarified guidance on for non-eligible households (Section VI.B.3.d., pg. 42)
- 16) Added Housing Partnership/Landlord Relationship guidance (Section VI.B.5., pg. 42)
- 17) Clarified guidance on housing stability plan (Section VI.C.2.b., pg. 43 - 44)
- 18) Added guidance on SOAR/SSVF relationships (Section VI.E.1.d., pg. 48)
- 19) Clarified General Housing Stability Assistance allowable and unallowable costs (VI.E.1.e., pg. 50)
- 20) Added guidance on rent reasonableness (Section VI.F.2.a., pg. 54)
- 21) Added guidance on shared housing (Section VI.F.2.a., pg. 56)
- 22) Added guidance on allowable relocation costs (Section VI.F.2.d., pg. 58 - 59)
- 23) Added allowability of criminal background check and tenancy screening (Section VI.F.2.e, pg. 60)
- 24) Clarified allowable EHA expenses (Section VI.F.2.f., pg. 61)
- 25) Added language to prohibit barriers (VII.A., pg. 65)
- 26) Changed Critical Incident expectations, reportable events and documentation requirements (Section VII.C., pg. 66)
- 27) Clarified when inspections are required (VII.D., pg. 66)
- 28) Clarified Veteran notification guidance (VII.E., pg. 67)
- 29) Added section on Conflict of Interest (Section VII. F., pg. 67)
- 30) Added guidance regarding obtaining release of information (Section VII.G., pg. 68)
- 31) Revised releasing participant guidance (Section VII.H., pg. 68 - 69)
- 32) Clarified grievance and appeal procedure regarding how to reach SSVF Program Office (Section VII.I., pg. 69)

- 33) Added section on subcontractor management (Section VII.J., pg. 69 - 70)
- 34) Updated Financial procedures (Section VIII.A, pg. 71)
- 35) Added allowable financial variance guidance (VIII.B.1., pg. 72)
- 36) Clarified how expenses are determined eligible (Section VIII.C., pg. 73)
- 37) Clarified documentation requirements for administrative charges (VIII.C.1., pg. 73 - 74)
- 38) Added guidance on payroll documentation and overtime authorizations (VIII.C.2.c., pg. 77)
- 39) Updated travel and training request procedure (Section VIII.C.2.d., pg. 77 - 78)
- 40) Added guidance related to paying third-party vendors (Section VIII.C.2.h., pg. 79)
- 41) Clarified allowability of application fees (Section VIII.C.2.h., pg. 80)
- 42) Updated Financial Close-Outs procedure (Section VIII.D., pg. 82)
- 43) Updated Financial record keeping guidance (Section VIII.E. pg. 83)
- 44) Removed reallocation costs from ineligible list (Section VIII.F., pg. 83)
- 45) Added guidance on allowability and procedures for bulk purchases (Section VIII.F., pg. 84)
- 46) Revised Funding Sweep guidance (VIII.G., pg. 84)
- 47) Added guidance regarding training new staff (Section IX.A., pg. 86)
- 48) Added guidance related to participating in each CoCs HMIS (Section X.B.1., pg. 88)
- 49) Added guidance related to Data Quality Plan (Section X.B.1., pg. 88)
- 50) Updated guidance on Participant Satisfaction Survey (Section X.B.4., pg. 90)
- 51) Revised Collaborative Delivery of HCHV/GPD/HUD-VASH/SSVF Services, Section XII.Exhibit C., pg. 135 - 137)
- 52) Added description of Service-Directed Housing Intervention (SDHI) (formerly “Light Touch Services”) (Section XII.Exhibit E., pg. 139 and 141)
- 53) Clarified RRH Waiver process (Section XII. Exhibit G., pg. 145 - 146)
- 54) Revised HP Screening Form (Section XIII. E., pg. 160)
- 55) Removed Critical Incident Form – s (formerly Section XIII.R)

7. Revisions made for the October 1, 2016 Edition:

- 1) Adjusted definition of "Continuum of Care" based on HUD definition (pg. 2)
- 2) Removed guidance that ELI determination is only made at program entry (pg. 3 and pg. 12)
- 3) Added that Persons Fleeing Domestic Violence as eligible under Rapid Re-housing assistance (pg. 3)
- 4) Updated description of expectations for SSVF to coordinate with local Continuum(s) of Care (pg. 10)
- 5) Added guidance related to serving Victims of Domestic Violence (pg. 12)
- 6) Updated information related to CARF and COA Accreditation (pg. 14)
- 7) Clarified Category 1 Homelessness Prevention Eligibility Guidance (pg. 28 - pg. 30)
- 8) Updated guidance related to Continuing Assessment of Participant Needs (pg. 31 -

- pg. 32)
- 9) Updated Self-Certification Documentation standards to align with HUD (pg. 35)
 - 10) Added that prioritization is only necessary in RRH when RRH capacity is insufficient to meet community need (pg. 38)
 - 11) Updated Critical Incident Report description based on most recent guidance (pg. 61)
 - 12) Updated HMIS guidance to reflect data security expectations (pg. 63)
 - 13) Added guidance related to SSVF Travel Costs Related to Training, per most recent guidance (pg. 74)
 - 14) Updated HMIS guidance related to monthly upload timelines (pg. 84)
 - 15) Updated guidance noting need for formal written notice for homelessness prevention eligibility (pg. 113-115)
 - 16) Removed eligibility for utility only households in homelessness prevention (pg. 113)
 - 17) Exhibit E: Replaced with most recent Homelessness Prevention Eligibility Screening Instructions
 - 18) Exhibit F: Updated to reflect guidance that victims of domestic violence be categorized as rapid re-housing
 - 19) SSVF Eligibility Self Certification Form: Updated to reflect adjusted guidance for victims of domestic Violence
 - 20) SSVF Homelessness Prevention Screening Disposition Form: Replaced with new Homelessness Prevention Screening Form as of October 1st
 - 21) Domestic Violence Certification Form: Added reference to rapid re-housing enrollment

8. Revisions made for the May 1, 2016 Edition:

- 1) Added SSVF Coordination with VA Medical Centers (pg.10)
- 2) Clarified Extremely Low Income policy for income fluctuations (pg.12)
- 3) Clarified Verifying Veteran Status period of service (pg.18)
- 4) Added SQUARES description for Veteran status inquiries (pg.18)
- 5) Updated types of income that must be counted for calculating income (pg.21)
- 6) Clarified use of gross income (pg.21)
- 7) Updated types of income that are not counted for calculating income (pg.21)
- 8) Updated guidance on connections to legal services (pg.44)
- 9) Clarified policy on rental assistance for debts owed on former leases (pg.49)
- 10) Updated requirements related to comparable units for rental assistance (pg.50)
- 11) Clarified policy on utility assistance for debts owed related to former leases (pg.52)
- 12) Clarified Housing Stability Assistance to pay for bedding (pg.55).
- 13) Updated Section VIII. Fiscal Administration (pg.65-66, 70-74)
- 14) Updated Section X. Reporting Requirements (pg.83-87)
- 15) Clarified Category I Eligibility Documentation (pg.112)
- 16) Added Exhibit G: Rapid Re-housing Waiver (pg.135-136)
- 17) Added all copies of all forms with SSVF VA website live links (pgs.141-188)

9. Revisions made for the March 26, 2015 Edition:

- 1) Updated and added to Definitions for emergency housing, emergency housing assistance, extremely low income, homeless, literally homeless, occupying permanent housing, permanent housing, rapid re-housing, and Veteran
- 2) Updated Occupying Permanent Housing
- 3) Added segment on Extremely Low Income
- 4) Added Veteran Choice Card to documentation options for Veteran Status
- 5) Updated Helpful Links
- 6) Updated Case File Documentation Requirements with an addition of Emergency Housing Verification
- 7) Added segments on Families Fleeing Domestic Violence and Documenting Domestic Violence
- 8) Expanded Case Management Services - Description of Services
- 9) Expanded Assistance in Obtaining and Coordinating Other Public Benefits - Description of Services
- 10) Clarified use of online platforms for rent reasonableness in Restrictions on Rental Assistance
- 11) Updated time limits for Temporary Financial Assistance used for rental assistance, utility payment assistance, deposit payment assistance, moving cost payment assistance, transportation assistance, and childcare assistance
- 12) Added Extremely Low Income category for Temporary Financial Assistance used for rental assistance, utility payment assistance, and childcare payment assistance
- 13) Updated specifics of General Housing Stability Assistance
- 14) Updated specifics of Emergency Housing Assistance
- 15) Updated maximum for car repair in Transportation Assistance
- 16) Updated Habitability Standards
- 17) Expanded Confidentiality
- 18) Updated and streamlined summary chart of Temporary Financial Assistance
- 19) Updated Ineligible Activities with clarification on mortgage costs, construction, rehabilitation, extensive car repairs, and court-ordered judgments or fines
- 20) Updated live links in Program Operations charts
- 21) Revised name of Homeless Verification to Literally Homeless Verification
- 22) Updated live links throughout guide
- 23) Revised minor wording for clarification purposes throughout guide

10. Revisions made for the October 31, 2014 Edition:

- 1) Modified formats throughout Program Guide for readability.
- 2) Shifted order of sections V and VI for readability
- 3) Added “literally homeless” definition
- 4) Clarified summary of Supportive Services Provided
- 5) Categorized Temporary Financial Assistance as “Required”
- 6) Added summaries of Rapid Re-housing, Coordination with CoCs, Housing First
- 7) Added Accreditation and Renewal Awards
- 8) Clarified Recertification of Eligibility
- 9) Clarified Case File Documentation Requirements
- 10) Added Eligible Expenses for Outreach
- 11) Clarified Eligible Temporary Financial Assistance
- 12) Clarified Restrictions on Rental Assistance
- 13) Clarified Restrictions on Deposit Payment Assistance
- 14) Clarified General Housing Stability Assistance
- 15) Clarified Confidentiality security of records
- 16) Added Grievance and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- 17) Clarified Finalizing PMS Registration and Change of PMS Information
- 18) Clarified Overview of Disbursement
- 19) Updated Reporting Process for HMIS
- 20) Clarified Exhibit C: Section 2.3)
- 21) Added Exhibit G: History of Revisions to Program Guide

11. Revisions made for the March 31, 2014 Edition:

- 1) Removed all references to Veteran Healthcare Administration eligibility as a requirement for SSVF eligibility
- 2) Addition of Exhibit F: Domestic Violence Guidance for HMIS Reporting
- 3) Addition of Federal Financial Report (FFR) guidance

12. Revisions made for the March 20, 2014 Edition:

- 1) Changed “Presumptive Eligibility” to “Pending Verification of Veteran Status” to more accurately identify the group
- 2) Exhibit C: Collaborative Delivery of GPD/HUD-VASH/SSVF Services added
- 3) Exhibit D: Guide for Pending Verification of Veteran Status added
- 4) Exhibit E: Homelessness Prevention Eligibility Screening Instructions added

13. Revisions made for the March 4, 2014 Edition:

- 1) Eligibility language adjusted to ensure consistency with new guidance (Veterans Health Administration) and documentation requirements
- 2) Electronic survey methods and guidelines clarified
- 3) Clarification regarding restrictions and uses of Emergency Housing Assistance
- 4) Clarification regarding restrictions and uses of Emergency Supplies, a subcategory of General Housing Stability Assistance
- 5) Removal of medical supplies in some areas in order to bring entire guide in line with current policy
- 6) Removal of current Exhibits B, C and D (samples, tools, and templates). All samples and tools will, as of this publishing, be on the SSVF website, Exhibits A1, A2, A3 reassigned as Exhibits A, B, and C, respectively

14. Revisions made for the December 19, 2013 Edition:

- 1) Clarification of Veteran eligibility status, including updated forms and resources for determining SSVF eligibility
- 2) Further defined eligible homeless status conditions (i.e.: staying at a shelter or place not meant for human habitation)
- 3) Clarification of maximum TFA expenditures as related to total Supportive Service Grant Award (50%)
- 4) Addition of Homelessness Prevention Eligibility Screening Disposition Form and Instructions with guidance on eligibility and threshold screening requirements

15. Revisions made for the October 22, 2013 Edition:

- 1) Medical supplies removed as an allowable expense
- 2) Clarification on presumptive eligibility guidelines and documentation
- 3) Updated HPRP vs. SSVF comparison to clarify previous changes in allowable activities

16. Revisions made for the August 26, 2013 Edition:

- 1) Clarification of allowable mobile lot rent payments, rental assistance limitations, specification of gas voucher payments and utility arrear payments
- 2) Added new Housing Stability Assistance financial assistance category
- 3) Added new Emergency Housing Assistance category and incorporated this type of assistance as a subcategory of Housing Stability Assistance
- 4) Provided further guidance on Veteran eligibility status and documentation
- 5) Clarified that W-9s from landlords are required prior to any rental assistance payments