

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

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

PROGRAM GUIDE



Notes:

The SSVF Program Guide is intended to provide a unified overview of the SSVF Program for grantees, applicants, staff members, and other interested third parties. This guide does not override any laws, executive orders, OMB circulars, or regulations. Guidelines should not be construed to supersede, rescind, or otherwise amend such laws, Executive Orders, OMB Circulars, or regulations. SSVF grantees are responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirements of SSVF grant regulations, the supportive services grant agreement, and other applicable laws and regulations.

Terms that appear in **red, bold italics** may be found in the Glossary. Text that is **purple, with a dotted underline**, indicates an internal link to another section of the Program Guide. Text that is **blue, with an unbroken underline**, indicates an external link to a website url or digital document viewable online or available via direct download.

Clicking on some of the linked resources in this Program Guide will directly download a document or spreadsheet, rather than connecting to a web page. These links, indicated by this direct download icon , may function better in some browsers than others; in some organizations, downloading them may also require assistance from your IT team.

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Glossary

1

Introduction

The *Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)* grant program was launched by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in Fiscal Year 2012 in response to concerns regarding homelessness and housing instability among *Veterans*. Since 2012, SSVF has been an innovator in providing *trauma-informed* services that are flexible and Veteran-centered to meet the individual housing needs of Veterans and their families. The program, which began with 85 grantees in 40 *states* and the District of Columbia and was funded with \$60 million, aimed to quickly rehouse Veterans who were *literally homeless* and to prevent Veterans from becoming *homeless*. A combination of *rapid re-housing* and *homelessness prevention* services offers Veterans a wide range of opportunities to secure and retain *permanent housing*.

With SSVF, Veteran families are cared for through a Veteran-centered and *housing with supportive services* approach. SSVF's proven model focuses on helping Veterans and the members of their *households* access and sustain permanent rental housing as quickly and efficiently as possible, without preconditions, while facilitating access to needed health care, employment, legal services, and other supports to maintain permanent housing and improve their quality of life. *Veteran households* are offered a wide range of services to address housing barriers as well as sustain Veterans and Veteran families in housing once the presenting housing crisis has been resolved.

Homeless, "literally" vs. homeless

SSVF rapid re-housing requires Veterans to be "literally homeless" in order to qualify. All participants in SSVF rapid re-housing (categories 2 and 3) qualify under the "literally homeless" criteria. Veterans who are living in a situation known as "doubled up" or "couch surfing" in permanent housing, or otherwise living in permanent housing, would not be considered "literally homeless." This definition is narrower than the meaning given to "homeless" by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in [24 CFR 576.2](#).

Housing with supportive services –

Refers to housing as a basic need that should be met as quickly as possible, without any preconditions such as income, sobriety or mental health treatment.

1.1. Purpose of the Program Guide

The SSVF Program Guide provides an overview of the SSVF grant and detailed information on program eligibility; services and service delivery; operations; and fiscal administration.

The guidelines in this Program Guide comply with SSVF grant regulations ([38 CFR Part 62](#)) and other relevant laws, Executive Orders, OMB Circulars, and VA regulations. This guide does not override any laws, executive orders, OMB circulars, or regulations. Guidelines should not be construed to supersede, rescind, or otherwise amend such laws, Executive Orders, OMB Circulars, or regulations.

**Low-income Veteran family –**

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

Eligible entity –

(1) private nonprofit organization, or (2) consumer cooperative. Refer to [glossary entry](#) for fuller descriptions of each.

Rapid Resolution –

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

Crisis response –

Consists of responding to the crisis of homelessness with urgency. It may include providing emergency housing assistance when no other options are available. It also includes same-day enrollment, trauma-informed services, and immediate linkages to permanent housing to end crisis.

Veteran choice –

Veterans choose their housing goals, services, and living situations, within federal funding guidelines and market conditions.

SSVF grantees are responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirements of SSVF grant regulations, the **supportive services grant agreement**, and other applicable laws and regulations.

1.2. 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 grant. **Supportive services grants** are awarded to **eligible entities** (selected **private nonprofit organizations** and **consumer cooperatives**) that assist **low-income Veteran families** residing in or transitioning to permanent housing. SSVF grantees provide a range of **supportive services** to eligible Veteran families through rapid re-housing or homelessness prevention interventions.

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

1.3. SSVF Goals and Core Concepts

The goal of the SSVF grant is to advance housing stability services to low-income Veteran families who are experiencing homelessness or at imminent risk of experiencing homelessness. It is important for SSVF grantees to center their services on four core concepts to ensure effective service delivery. 1) **Housing with supportive services** asks SSVF grantees to provide services to the Veterans who are most vulnerable through a **trauma-informed** approach, without preconditions such as employment, minimum income, participation in treatment, or evidence of sobriety. 2) **Crisis response** focuses on responding immediately and urgently to the housing crisis at hand. 3) **Veteran choice** enables Veterans to make decisions regarding their housing plans and goals with the assistance of SSVF grantees, including decisions about where and with whom they wish to live. 4) Progressive engagement begins with light services (**Rapid Resolution**) and increases interventions to respond to individual needs and desires.

By focusing on the unique needs of **Veteran families**, SSVF grantees are positioned to make a significant impact in preventing homelessness and promoting long-term housing stability. SSVF grantees play a key role in the ultimate success of the program by demonstrating commitment to the mission and providing compassionate and responsive services that meet the variety of needs of those whom they serve.



Important Policy Consideration

SSVF grantees are strongly encouraged to establish policies and procedures that both describe the four core concepts and specify how staff are taught about them.

1.4. Veteran-Centered Compliance

Veteran-Centered Compliance refers to a comprehensive approach within SSVF that prioritizes the needs and experiences of Veterans in all aspects of compliance activities. It's about ensuring that Veterans receive the highest quality of care in a manner that is respectful, transparent, and accountable. Compliance provides the "guardrails" to allowability, while the focus is on meeting the needs of the Veteran and "doing the right thing" for the **Veteran household** within the requirements of the SSVF rules and regulations.

Putting Veterans first is an SSVF principle. All compliance activities should be designed with the best interests of Veterans in mind. This means considering their unique needs and circumstances and ensuring that they are treated with dignity and respect, without preconditions.

Overall, Veteran-Centered Compliance is an essential part of the SSVF program's commitment to providing Veterans with the best possible care and services. By putting Veterans first in all aspects of compliance, SSVF can help to ensure that Veterans receive the services they need.

Veteran family, or **Veteran household** – 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. The Veteran may define who is a part of their household. Self-declarations and intake worker observations are acceptable. Please note that proof of family status is not required but may serve as proof of household status. Eligibility is confirmed by reviewing both the character of discharge and type of service. The minimum duty requirements do not apply.

For the purposes of this guide, **Veteran family** and **Veteran household** are equivalent terms.

1.5. Section Summary

This section describes the Program Guide and its purpose. It outlines the legislation that authorized VA to develop the SSVF grant, and its intended target population. It highlights the importance of compliance with relevant laws and regulations, particularly the SSVF grant regulations ([38 CFR Part 62](#)). Program Description and Background provides context for the SSVF grant, which aims to improve housing stability for Veterans and Veteran families who are either residing in or transitioning to permanent housing. The SSVF program provides homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing, assisting Veteran families in securing and maintaining permanent housing.



This section explains that it is essential for SSVF grantees to align their services with four core concepts to ensure effective delivery: housing with supportive services, Crisis Response, Veteran Choice, and Progressive Engagement. By employing these four core concepts, the SSVF grant seeks to provide housing stability services to low-income Veteran families facing homelessness or at imminent risk of homelessness. The overarching goal of the SSVF program is to enhance housing stability for these Veterans and Veteran families.

Lastly, this section emphasizes the critical role of SSVF grantees in implementing the program's core concepts and ensuring the effective delivery of services. Grantees must adhere to all regulatory and compliance requirements, including the proper administration of funds and maintaining accountability in service provision. SSVF grantees focus on the unique needs of Veterans and Veteran families to prevent homelessness and promote housing stability.

Tools and Resources

- ⚙ [38 CFR Part 62 – Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program](#)
- ⚙ [Veterans' Mental Health and Other Care Improvements Act of 2008](#)
- ⚙ [VA Resources for Veterans](#)

Key Words

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ✓ Crisis response | ✓ Low-income Veteran family |
| ✓ Eligible entity | ✓ Progressive engagement |
| ✓ Homeless | ✓ Rapid Resolution |
| ✓ Homeless, "literally" | ✓ Veteran choice |
| ✓ Housing with supportive services | |

2 Access and Enrollment

2.1. Introduction

This section of the SSVF Program Guide outlines the requirements for SSVF grantees in conducting outreach to **Veterans** throughout their service area. Grantees should focus on **low-income Veteran families** who are either **homeless** or at imminent risk of homelessness. Grantees are required to document where and how often outreach occurs, and to collaborate with other local service providers, including fellow SSVF grantees, **Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Centers (VAMCs)**, and **Continuum of Care (CoC)** teams, to ensure comprehensive, coordinated, and effective support.

Beyond outreach, SSVF grantees must also implement **Rapid Resolution** services to quickly resolve housing crises and help Veterans avoid homelessness. This can involve mediation with landlords, connecting Veterans to family or community support, or accessing local resources. Grantees are encouraged to train staff in trauma-informed care and conflict resolution, and to engage peer organizations in their outreach efforts. It is also important for grantees to assess Veterans' eligibility for services promptly, with a goal of same-day enrollment, particularly when the Veteran's health or safety is at risk. By following these practices, grantees can provide timely and comprehensive support to Veterans in need.

2.2. Outreach

SSVF grantees must perform **outreach** across the entire area as defined in their grant agreement. Outreach should include tailored efforts to reach Veteran households and other specific target Veteran populations prioritized by the grantee. SSVF grantees must maintain documentation of where outreach is conducted and how often it occurs. Outreach can be site-based to locations such as emergency shelters, transitional housing, drop-in centers, food pantries, laundromats, and libraries. Grantees should also engage in direct street outreach in coordination with the VAMC, CoC, and the community.

VAMC –

VA Medical Centers provide traditional hospital-based services such as surgery, critical care, mental health, orthopedics, pharmacy, radiology and physical therapy. It is important to learn and understand what services are provided by the VAMCs in the geographical areas that your SSVF grant covers.

Continuum of Care (CoC) –

A group of organizations and other entities responsible for implementing the requirements outlined in the CoC program regulations, as detailed in [24 CFR Part 578](#). Refer to [glossary entry](#) for a fuller description.



Outreach services include identifying low-income Veteran families and conducting screening to determine their eligibility for **supportive services**. In order to ensure effective outreach, SSVF grantees should work with each other, with local VAMCs, and with CoC outreach teams. SSVF grantees are required to participate in their local CoC's Coordinated Entry (CE) process for Veterans, and must align all outreach and referral activities with local CE policies and procedures to the greatest extent possible. For more information, see [VA Integration in Coordinated Entry \(CE\): Troubleshooting Delays in Care](#).

Important Best Practice & Programming Consideration

To ensure effective outreach, SSVF grantees should collaborate with other SSVF grantees in their area, as well as with local Veterans Affairs Medical Centers and Continuums of Care.

Trauma-informed – recognizes how trauma affects individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, aiming to prevent re-traumatization.

It is strongly recommended that SSVF grantees ensure that staff conducting outreach complete training centered in engaging and providing services from a **trauma-informed** perspective. SSVF grantees are encouraged to partner with peers and peer organizations as much as possible for outreach purposes as well.

Important Monitoring Consideration

Outreach to Veterans in a housing crisis must be a significant part of SSVF grantees' regular activities. SSVF grantees need to maintain a log of their outreach activities. This should include a description of where the outreach is conducted and how often it occurs.

2.3. Rapid Resolution

Rapid resolution services can help Veterans to avoid episodes of homelessness, or to exit homelessness as quickly as possible. Rapid resolution is not a separate program, but rather a collection of approaches and services that SSVF grantees are required to utilize in their overall engagement with Veterans in crisis. SSVF grantees engage Veterans in conversations that explore alternatives to experiencing literal homelessness such as staying with family or friends, negotiating with landlords, or accessing community resources. Staff should learn about the Veteran's housing crisis and support networks through active listening. Services may include mediation with a landlord, resolving family con-



active listening. Services may include mediation with a landlord, resolving family conflicts, connecting to other resources, or providing limited financial assistance. Once the Veteran has a safe place to stay, whether for one night, a few nights, or longer, staff can address other housing stability needs.

A Rapid Resolution conversation requires staff to be skilled at mediation, negotiation, conflict resolution, and active listening. To support Rapid Resolution, it is strongly recommended that SSVF grantees assess their progress in training staff, and identify affordable web-based and in-person training opportunities on these topics.

2.4. Participant Eligibility

All Veterans seeking assistance through SSVF must be eligible for services. SSVF grantees must screen them for eligibility prior to enrollment, using the [SSVF Staff Certification of Eligibility Form](#). Veteran households seeking SSVF assistance must have an eligible Veteran status, have a qualifying housing status, and meet income eligibility. For more details about participant eligibility please review [Exhibit A](#) and [Exhibit B](#).

SSVF grantees must develop a brief screening tool to assist them in documenting and confirming:

- Veteran status
- Income eligibility
- Current housing status
- Degree of need

Wherever possible, SSVF grantee screening methods and targeting criteria should be consistent and align with local Coordinated Entry (CE) policies and procedures. However, it is VA's expectation that SSVF grantees will make a determination and enroll eligible 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 Veteran families at risk for or literally experiencing homelessness.

Important Policy Consideration

VA expects SSVF grantees to make a determination of eligibility and enroll Veteran families the same day they are screened, particularly in cases where there is a danger to the health or safety of the Veteran household. Grantees should have policies and practices that support same-day enrollment.



2.4.1. Determining Veteran Status

For SSVF eligibility purposes, the term **Veteran** 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 general court-martial ([38 U.S.C. 2002\(b\)](#)).” VA homeless programs, including SSVF, may serve Veterans who were active duty for training only, including basic training.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) – Refer to [Chapter 5](#) for definition and context.

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

Department of Defense Form DD214 – 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. Act of 1959 ([12 U.S.C. 1701q](#)).

Important Policy Consideration

Please be aware that the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) definition of Veteran requires a day of active duty beyond training, but this is not a requirement for SSVF participation.

The Veteran may define who is a part of their **household**. Self-declarations and intake worker observations are acceptable. Proof of family status is not required but may serve as proof of household status.

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

National Guard and Reserves:

- National Guard members who were active duty only for training (ACDUTRA) 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.

Due to the complexity in the definition of active military service, it is important for SSVF grantees to have strong communication with their local VAMC, to verify a potential participant’s active military service discharge type.

To confirm a participant’s Veteran status, SSVF grantees should obtain one of the following documents:

- SQUARES 2.0 printout
- **DD-214**, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty
- NA Form 13038, Certification of Military Service for the National Archives and Records Administration
- Veterans Health Administration (VHA) ID card
- VA Veterans Choice card



- VA Photo ID card
- Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) Statement of Service
- 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.

Important Best Practice & Programming Consideration

A DD-214 is not required for enrollment. However, working with a Veteran to obtain their DD-214 is important and should be a fundamental responsibility of case managers. A DD-214 will help a Veteran to access other key supportive services.

If any document is not immediately available, a [Pending Verification of Veteran Status](#)  affidavit signed by the Veteran can be used by grantees to temporarily enroll Veterans and initiate supportive services including the process of securing documentation. However, **Temporary Financial Assistance** (TFA) will not be provided until the grantee obtains required documentation of Veteran status. For more information about Pending Veteran Status documentation requirements, please review [Exhibit D](#).

Important Monitoring Consideration

Should a Veteran later be determined ineligible, grantees should document the information clearly in a participant's file and work to transition the household to other VA or community supports that can address their needs.

2.4.2. Determining Housing Status

Veteran households applying for SSVF assistance must undergo a housing status eligibility determination. Veteran households must meet the criteria for either **Homelessness Prevention** (Category 1) or **Rapid re-housing** (Category 2 or 3).

Homelessness prevention –

Help for Veterans and their families residing in permanent housing and at risk of becoming literally homeless without assistance from the SSVF grantee. (See [Section 2.4.2.1](#) or [Occupying Permanent Housing – Category 1](#)).

Rapid re-housing –

Help for Veterans and their families to transition from homelessness into permanent housing. Neither employment, income, criminal history, nor sobriety is a prerequisite for receiving rapid re-housing assistance. Participants receive individualized support services to facilitate a rapid move to permanent housing. Rapid re-housing consists of identifying housing, offering rent and move-in assistance, and providing case management and related services. See also [Section 2.4.2.2](#).

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

Domestic violence –

Refers to felonies or misdemeanors committed by the victim's current or former spouse or intimate partner under local family or domestic violence laws. It covers physical or sexual abuse, as well as any other coercive behaviors used to gain power and control over the victim. These include verbal, psychological, economic, and technological abuse that may not be criminal. The perpetrator could be a current or former spouse, an individual similar to a spouse, a person whose relationship with the victim was intimate, someone sharing a child with the victim, or someone who violates local family or domestic violence laws against a protected youth or adult victim.

2.4.2.1. Category 1 Eligibility (Homelessness Prevention)

Veteran families who indicate they are at imminent risk of literal homelessness (within the next 30 days) may be eligible for homelessness prevention assistance. To qualify under Category 1, a Veteran household must be “residing in **permanent housing**” but at imminent risk of literal homelessness. This encompasses many different housing situations, including:

- Leased unit
- House with a mortgage
- Unit shared with others (i.e., doubled-up/couch surfing)
- Hotel or motel not paid for by federal, **state**, or local government programs for low-income individuals or by charitable organizations

Rapid resolution services should be utilized to explore support networks that may also prevent entry to the homeless system. Veteran families who are applying for SSVF assistance must be assessed using the SSVF Homeless Prevention Screening Form.

2.4.2.2. Categories 2 and 3 Eligibility (Rapid Re-housing)

Veteran families, at time of application or at reassessment, are eligible for SSVF's rapid re-housing assistance if they are experiencing literal homelessness according to the following definition:

- 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 campground; 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
- Fleeing or attempting to flee a **domestic violence** situation.

To qualify under Category 2, the Veteran household 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 eligible under Category 1.

To qualify under Category 3, a Veteran household must also:

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



2.4.3. Determining Income Eligibility

The SSVF Program Office defines an eligible low-income Veteran household as one whose annual income, as determined in accordance with [24 CFR 5.609](#), does not exceed 80% of the median income for an **area** or **community**. Unless VA announces otherwise in the SSVF **Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)**, SSVF grantees should develop a process for checking the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) annually updated income limits for all areas being served by the grant. Adjustments may be made to the required income level based on family size and other mitigating factors listed in the NOFO. The SSVF grantee must establish the size of Veteran households to verify that the Veteran household meets the income eligibility requirement for its size.

Important Policy Consideration

If primary documents proving eligibility are not immediately available, an Affidavit of Veteran Income and Housing Status signed by the Veteran can be used to allow grantees to temporarily enroll Veterans who are pending verification, and to initiate supportive services. However, TFA will not be provided until the grantee or the Veteran can obtain documentation proving Veteran status. SSVF grantees must have policies that support obtaining primary documents in a reasonable timeframe.

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 low-income Veteran families.distribution within a specific area, calculated annually by HUD.

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) –

A NOFO is published in the Federal Register in accordance with [38 CFR 62.40](#), which announces the availability of funds for supportive services grants. SSVF also shares the NOFO at [Grants.gov](#) and on the [SSVF website](#).

2.4.3.1. Area Median Income

According to SSVF regulations, Veterans must earn no more than 80% of **Area Median Income (AMI)** to be eligible for SSVF assistance. Some SSVF grantees may have indicated in their grant application that they would target Veterans with 30% of AMI or less. AMI is based on 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). [Find the AMI by state and community](#). The HUD data set is updated annually, and SSVF grantees must use the most recent data. Grantees can [sign up with the HUD Office of Policy Development & Research](#) to be notified of data releases, such as new income limits, via email.

Area Median Income –

A crucial measure in affordable housing. It is the midpoint of income distribution within a specific area, calculated annually by HUD.

2.4.3.2. Income Definition

The SSVF income definition specifies which type of income will be counted (inclusions) and which types of income will not be counted (exclusions) for SSVF purposes. The term annual income refers to all the income received by, or on behalf of, a household member over a 12-month period. SSVF assesses annual income at entry and at recertification. The online [Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook](#), as well as [Exhibit A](#) and [Exhibit B](#) of this Program Guide, contain the complete definitions of annual income inclusions and



exclusions as published in the regulations and Federal Register notices. Annual income includes sources not specifically excluded by law.

For SSVF eligibility purposes, annual income must be determined based on the following inclusions and exclusions, which may be amended by HUD from time to time.

Table A: Annual Income – Inclusions & Exclusions

Inclusions	Exclusions
▪ Earned Income: wages, salaries, etc. for any adult member of the household including online or gig economy work (note: wages that are garnished are considered earned income) ▪ Any and all taxable income as defined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), including but not limited to Bitcoin or other electronic incomes derived from platforms such as (Uber, social media, etc.) ▪ Self-Employment/Business Income ▪ Interest and 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 designated for children ▪ Alimony and Child Support Income ▪ Armed Forces Income ▪ VBA Service Connection & Non-Service Connection Benefit ▪ Post-9/11 GI Bill Subsistence Payment (housing stipend) ▪ Chapter 11 Transition Assistance	▪ 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 & Supplemental Security Income (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 ▪ 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



The income calculations described in [“Examples for Annualizing Wages and Periodic Payments”](#) (see next page) use gross income. However, an exception occurs when a household receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), or VBA income benefits has been overpaid and is receiving a monthly check with a deduction to rectify the overpayment. In this case, SSVF grantees use net income to determine eligibility. All other cases use gross income. Garnishments or payments by SSVF participant households for child support or debt owed to the IRS or insurance premiums will not reduce gross income.

For a detailed list with explanations of all inclusions and exclusions, see [Exhibit A](#).

SSVF 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 Section 2.4.3.4, [“Determining Income from Assets.”](#)

2.4.3.3. Income Calculation

After determining and documenting specific sources of current income that must be included in the calculation for each household, SSVF grantees then calculate the household's (not just the Veteran's) annual income. The SSVF Program Office also encourages grantees to use the [SSVF Income Eligibility Calculation Worksheet](#) .



Examples for Annualizing Wages and Periodic Payments

The SSVF program office offers a couple of examples on how to annualize wages and periodic payments. SSVF grantees need policies and procedures that describe how they annualize wages and periodic payments. All staff who are verifying eligibility need to be trained on these policies.

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

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

- A. Project annual income by annualizing current income, OR
- B. Use available information to average anticipated income from all known sources, including those that are active during only part of the year

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

1. Calculate a projected annual income based on current income: If the initial eligibility determination takes place during the school year, this would be $\$1,300 \times 12$ months, or \$15,600. Later, if recertification falls during summer recess, the SSVF grantee would recalculate the Veteran household's income at a reduced annualized amount of \$7,200 ($\600×12 months).
2. Calculate Annual Income Based on Average Experience

$$\begin{array}{r} \$11,700 (\$1300 \times 9 \text{ months}) \\ + 1,800 (\$600 \times 3 \text{ months}) \\ \hline \$13,500 \end{array}$$

In the first method, only one source of income needs to be documented; in the second method, both sources of income need to be documented.

For income that has an annual cap, SSVF grantees should not annualize benefits/pay beyond the maximum level that can be received.

- **For example**, a person receives \$100 of unemployment benefits each week, but unemployment income is capped in your state at \$4,000 per year. For the SSVF income calculation, annualized unemployment benefits will therefore be \$4,000, not $\$100 \times 52 = \$5,200$. As another example, the person receives \$500 weekly during only one quarter in the year. A person's annualized pay should be \$6,000, not $\$500 \times 52 = \$26,000$. This is because there are 12 weeks in a quarter and in the example, the Veteran only earned \$500 per week for one quarter. The calculation would be $12 \times \$500 = \$6,000$.

When determining a household's financial resources, future income should be taken into account to the extent that it is predictable. Remember that SSVF grantees should assess all circumstances and demonstrate that without SSVF assistance, the household would become homeless or remain homeless. Case managers should carefully assess the circumstances and probability of future income.

- **For example**, a seasonal worker may expect to earn income during an upcoming season. If they have no promise of future employment beyond that time, the potential for future income should not be counted as a resource. In contrast, if a schoolteacher has a promise of future employment (through a renewed employment contract), the potential for future income should be taken into account. However, this does not mean the schoolteacher would automatically be determined ineligible. Rather, SSVF 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 household's financial resources.

It is also important for SSVF grantees to conduct a new income calculation if a participating Veteran household's income is reduced between initial eligibility determination and recertification to ensure that they have access to resources for which they may be eligible.

Documentation of a Veteran household's annual income, and the percentage of AMI that this income represents, must be recorded in the participant's case file as documentation of eligibility. For more information about documentation standards, review [Exhibit B](#).



2.4.3.4. 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 whichever of the following two methods that yields the highest amount:

- Actual income from assets
- Imputed income from assets: A percentage of total assets value based upon the current [passbook savings rate](#) as established by HUD.

Table B: Assets – Inclusions and Asset Exclusions

Asset Inclusions	Asset Exclusions
A. Amounts in savings and checking accounts B. Stocks, bonds, savings certificates, money market funds and other investment accounts including cryptocurrency accounts C. Financial equity in real property or other capital investments. Financial 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. D. The cash value of trusts that may be withdrawn by the family. E. IRA, Keogh, and similar retirement savings, even if withdrawal would result in a penalty. F. Some contributions to company retirement/pension funds. G. Assets, which although owned by more than one person, allow unrestricted access by the applicant. H. Lump sum receipts such as inheritances, capital gains, lottery winnings, and insurance settlements. I. Personal property held as an investment such as gems, jewelry, coin collections, or antique cars. 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.	1. Necessary personal property, except as noted in Inclusion I. 2. Interest in Indian trust lands. 3. Assets that are part of an active business or farming operation. 4. Assets not controlled by or accessible to the family and which provide no income for the family. 5. Vehicles especially equipped to accommodate a disability. 6. Financial equity in owner-occupied cooperatives and manufactured homes communities in which the family lives.



2.5. Recertification of Eligibility

At minimum, the SSVF Program Office requires **recertification** every three months to ensure that a participant's housing barriers, housing situation, and eligibility for services are fully evaluated. For this process, the grantee should use the [Staff Recertification of Eligibility](#) form. At a minimum during recertification, SSVF grantees should update the Veteran's **Housing Stability Plan** (see Section 3.3.1, "[Housing Stability Planning](#).") For access to more forms required by SSVF see [Exhibit E](#).

The only exception to this requirement is for Veteran families receiving **Shallow Subsidy services** described in [38 CFR Part 62.34\(a\)\(8\)](#). See Section 4.2.2.3, "[Shallow Subsidy services](#)," for details.

A progressive engagement approach is used for determining the length and amount of assistance given to each Veteran household to overcome barriers to obtaining and retaining permanent housing. To determine whether the Veteran household requires continued services or should be exited, a recertification procedure must be completed. A Veteran household may transition out of SSVF assistance if the Veteran household no longer requires or qualifies for the assistance.

At recertification, SSVF grantees must reassess, and document in case files, the following areas:

1. **Income Eligibility:** At recertification, SSVF grantees must recalculate and document household income as they did during the initial certification. If a household's income exceeds 80% AMI at the time it is reassessed, that household is no longer eligible for SSVF assistance.
2. **Housing Status:** A Veteran is categorized at the start of their SSVF enrollment for either Housing Prevention (Category 1) or Rapid Re-housing (Category 2 or 3). That categorization determines their initial HMIS project enrollment, and at recertification if the Veteran has changed housing status from Category 1 to Category 2 or 3, their loss of housing should be documented appropriately and they should be exited from the Housing Prevention project in HMIS and enrolled in the Rapid Re-housing project. However, if the housing status of Category 2 or 3 households changes because they move into housing, no new documentation or changes in HMIS project enrollment is needed.
3. **Need for Services:** At recertification, SSVF grantee staff must assess — and document in a participant's Housing Stability Plan — any ongoing financial assistance and case management necessary for them to either obtain or remain in housing. If a Veteran household exhausts its allowable financial assistance but continues to need case management and other services to address their housing needs, grantees should not exit the household until those needs are addressed or the household has been referred out for ongoing services. In order to continue receiving SSVF services,

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.



participants must still need these services to support housing stability. This means SSVF staff must again assess and document whether without the help of SSVF, the participant would continue to lack sufficient financial resources and support networks to either obtain new housing or remain in housing.

4. **Household Status:** At recertification, the SSVF grantee must confirm whether the participant remains part of a Veteran household. If the Veteran becomes absent from a household or dies while other members of the Veteran household are receiving supportive services or temporary financial assistance, these services may continue for the remaining family members for a grace period established by the SSVF grantee. The grace period cannot exceed one year from the date of absence or death of the Veteran, and all other requirements for eligibility remain the same. The SSVF grantee must notify the Veteran's family members of the grace period's duration. Documentation standards for eligibility can be found in [Exhibit B](#). Please note that the temporary financial assistance limits still apply.
5. **Progressive Services:** Supportive services and TFA should be tailored to a participant's specific barriers to housing and needs. SSVF grantee staff should routinely consider whether circumstances have changed and how much assistance a household currently requires to address housing barriers. As a result, services should be administered in a progressive manner, with the intensity and duration of services or financial assistance adjusted to the household's updated needs and eligibility.

If the recertification process determines that a Veteran household is no longer eligible to receive SSVF services, the Veteran household must be exited and provided with information about other available programs and resources.

For each participant's case file, the [SSVF Staff Recertification of Eligibility](#) form must be completed along with other recertification documents noted above.

2.6. Program Exit

The goal of the SSVF grant is to promote *housing stability* for *low-income Veteran families* who reside in or are transitioning to permanent housing. VA understands that every household's exit is different; however, SSVF grantees should strive to ensure that households exiting from SSVF into permanent housing are stable and have the resources and supports to sustain housing, at least in the near term. When grantees are considering exiting a Veteran household, the SSVF grantee and the Veteran should:

- Review the housing stability plan goals; discuss progress and next steps for any remaining goals.
- Review a final budget and discuss any additional referrals that may be appropriate.



- Review housing counseling elements such as lease requirements and home maintenance.
- Register the Veteran household within 30 days of exit for the Veteran Satisfaction Survey.
- Provide final referrals to local VAMC and community resources as needed. The referrals should specify the person or office to contact if a housing emergency occurs in the future.

When exiting any Veteran household, SSVF grantees must use the [SSVF Program Exit Checklist](#)  to ensure appropriate exit steps are carried out. SSVF grantees are required to develop procedures for exiting Veterans for other reasons (e.g., reunited with family, jail, re-located, etc.). You can find more information under “Releasing Participants from Program.”

Important Policy Consideration

SSVF grantees must have policies and procedures in place for exiting a Veteran who has been out of contact with their program. Grantees must ensure that every effort is made (“due diligence”) to communicate in multiple ways (email, phone, letter, for example) with the Veteran prior to exiting them for this reason.

2.7. Section Summary

This section described the requirements for all SSVF grantees to conduct outreach across their geographic area. Effective outreach should be trauma-informed and collaborative with local VAMCs and CoCs.

When SSVF grantees first engage with Veterans, they should provide Rapid Resolution services to Veterans who are at real risk of becoming homeless. The goal of Rapid Resolution is to support Veterans and prevent them from entering into local homeless services — or to exit them from homelessness as rapidly as possible.

To provide support services, SSVF grantees must verify that a given Veteran is eligible for SSVF assistance using three criteria: Veteran status, housing status, and income eligibility. Documenting eligibility is very important, and recertifications must be performed every three months. At recertification, SSVF grantees must verify income eligibility, housing status, and continued need for assistance, and must confirm Veteran household status. Clear documentation of meeting these eligibility criteria must be maintained in a Veteran’s case file for monitoring purposes. For more information on documentation standards, please see [Exhibit B](#).



Lastly, SSVF grantees should make sure that households exiting SSVF into permanent housing are stable and have resources to sustain housing. SSVF grantees must review housing stability plan goals with participants when they determine they will soon leave SSVF, review final budgets, explain housing counseling elements such as lease requirements and home maintenance, and provide final referrals.

Tools and Resources

- ⚙ [VA Integration in Coordinated Entry \(CE\): Troubleshooting Delays in Care](#)
- ⚙ [SSVF Staff Certification of Eligibility form](#)
- ⚙ [Pending Verification of Veteran Status](#)
- ⚙ [HOME Income Limits](#)
- ⚙ [SSVF Income Eligibility Calculation Worksheet](#) ⬇
- ⚙ [SSVF Staff Recertification of Eligibility form](#)
- ⚙ [SSVF Program Exit Checklist](#)

Key Words

- | | |
|---|--|
| ✓ Area or Community | ✓ Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) |
| ✓ Area Median Income | ✓ Permanent Housing |
| ✓ Continuum of Care | ✓ Rapid Resolution |
| ✓ Department of Defense Form DD-214 | ✓ Rapid Re-housing |
| ✓ Domestic violence | ✓ Trauma-informed |
| ✓ Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) | ✓ Veteran |
| ✓ Homelessness prevention | ✓ Veteran household |
| | ✓ Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) |

3

SSVF Case Management & Core Supportive Services

3.1. Introduction

SSVF grantees are committed to helping eligible **Veterans** and their families by identifying practical solutions to housing instability within service delivery. At the core of SSVF service delivery is case management, which follows a **housing with supportive services** approach to help Veterans secure and maintain stable housing. **Case managers** work closely with each Veteran to identify housing barriers, create personalized **housing stability plans** (HSPs), and connect them with essential resources, including temporary financial assistance (TFA), legal services, and health care.

Beyond case management, grantees offer a variety of **supportive services** to meet both immediate and long-term housing needs. These include Housing Navigation, **Shallow Subsidy services**, Legal Assistance, and **Health Care Navigation**. **Emergency Housing Assistance** (EHA) is provided to ensure immediate shelter for **homeless** Veterans, while Rapid Resolution services and Incentives support fast stabilization of housing.

Additionally, SSVF grantees help Veterans access critical VA benefits and public benefits, such as health care, income support, and vocational services. By working in collaboration with local VA Medical Centers (VAMCs) and community organizations, grantees provide a holistic, coordinated approach to service delivery. Through this combination of case management and comprehensive supportive services, SSVF grantees empower Veterans to overcome housing crises, regain stability, and work toward long-term self-sufficiency.

3.2. Core Supportive Services

SSVF grantees are required to provide a set of core services, and also have the option of providing additional SSVF services such as TFA to improve the housing stability of **low-income Veteran families**. Case management should be the leading service offered



to Veterans who may be experiencing a housing crisis. Supportive services are the tools that case managers may use to support Veterans through their housing crisis. The following section will go into more detail about case management and supportive services. The table below outlines services that are either required by statute, or recommended by VA.

Services Required by Statute or Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)	Recommended Services
▪ Outreach ▪ Case management ▪ Connection to VA benefits ▪ Connection to public benefits and mainstream community resources ▪ Health care navigation ▪ Legal services	▪ Housing navigation ▪ Childcare services ▪ Transportation ▪ Incentives and enhanced financial assistance ▪ Rapid resolution ▪ Shallow subsidy ▪ Emergency housing assistance

3.3. Case Management

Participant household –

A low-income Veteran household occupying permanent housing and receiving supportive services from an SSVF grantee.

Case manager –

Work to use various strategies to help Veterans address barriers faced by program participants in obtaining and keeping housing, including historical and systemic obstacles.

Utilizing a housing with supportive services approach, SSVF grantees will effectively assist **participant households** to obtain and retain housing. The loss of or imminent loss of a household's housing is a specific crisis, and SSVF is a **crisis response** program whose goal is to resolve that crisis.

Role of the Case Manager: The case manager is the Veteran's primary point of contact within the SSVF grant. **Case managers** should utilize a wide array of approaches to resolve or minimize program participants' barriers to obtaining and retaining housing. Housing goals and activities are Veteran-driven with education, resources, and recommendations provided by the case manager to support successful housing outcomes. It is imperative that case managers assertively and positively engage with Veteran households, by assisting them to achieve the housing they want and can sustain. Case managers are responsible for the coordination and provision of supportive services including TFA, legal services, income and health benefits, income maximization supports, and health care navigation. Case managers must have knowledge of current community resources to assist Veteran households in securing and retaining housing, as additional housing barriers and supportive service needs may arise that cannot be addressed by the SSVF grantee or that can be provided more efficiently/effectively elsewhere.



An effective case manager should be familiar with the *area or community* in which the program operates, and must actively cultivate a working knowledge and connections to relevant area resources such as affordable housing providers; emergency, medical, and other care professionals; VAMC resources; public benefits offices; employment training and job placement programs; affordable childcare; legal or credit counseling services; and transportation.

Important Best Practice & Programming Consideration

Hiring veterans who have experienced homelessness as case managers or in other roles can provide valuable leadership and resources. Their insights improve program outcomes and service delivery. The SSVF Program Office highly encourages this practice.

Needs Assessment: After confirming eligibility, the case manager will complete a *needs assessment* of, at a minimum, the household's emergency needs and identification of housing barriers, including but not limited to health or legal barriers.

The assessment becomes the basis for plans to obtain and retain housing. Some program participants will have relatively few housing barriers beyond problems with their credit and rental history. Others may lack essential knowledge, skills, and supports necessary to fulfill their responsibilities as tenants.

- **Emergency needs:** It is expected that Veteran households experiencing literal homelessness will not spend any additional time on the street, and will be offered at least one option of temporary or *permanent housing* immediately. The need for safe shelter must be met immediately, and generally requires an intervention such as placement in a VA temporary housing program, or *emergency housing* assistance. Other emergency needs should be assessed such as obtaining medication, significant illness, or injury and mental health crisis. These needs should be prioritized.
- **Tenant screening barriers:** Elements of a person's income, credit, rental, or criminal history that fail local criteria and could cause the person's rental application to be rejected.
 - Rental history
 - Credit history
 - Criminal history
 - Persistent and untreated mental health concerns
 - Substance use

Such records can be obtained through public databases or purchased from a rental screening company (an eligible SSVF expense).

Needs assessment –

The careful examination of a household's needs to ensure effective service delivery.

Emergency housing –

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

Tenant screening barriers –

Refers to barriers in a Veteran's history that could make it harder to find housing.

***Housing retention barriers*** –

Refers to barriers in a Veteran's circumstances that may make maintaining housing more difficult.

- ***Housing retention barriers***: Activities or behaviors that may reduce or jeopardize a person's ability to maintain housing:
 - Not paying rent on time and in full
 - Poor landlord/tenant interactions
 - Upkeep and cleanliness of unit
 - Lease violations

Important Best Practice & Programming Consideration

Case managers are expected to help a Veteran understand how their personal history can affect their access to housing (due to landlord screening criteria) and on 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). SSVF grantees work from a strengths-based perspective. Discussions on tenant screening and housing retention barriers should focus on awareness while also identifying strengths such as good communication skills or knowing when to ask for help.

Housing Stability Plan –

a personalized plan tailored to Veterans' strengths, barriers, and priorities in order to improve effective service delivery.

3.3.1. Housing Stability Planning

Case managers will work with participant households to develop individualized ***housing stability plans (HSPs)*** based on the household's strengths, housing barriers, and priorities, as identified through a needs assessment. Case managers and Veteran households will set goals to address barriers to housing stability. The HSP should be utilized by the case manager to maximize the effectiveness of service delivery.

Veteran households are more likely to participate in services when they are actively engaged in the planning process. Goals should be appropriate, time-oriented, and reasonable, with specific action steps to be taken by the Veteran and case manager to identify and reduce ***tenant screening barriers*** and ***housing retention barriers***. The case manager should ensure that proposed goals and objectives are manageable for the Veteran and focused on the immediate needs of securing and sustaining housing. Overly ambitious plans can easily overwhelm participants who are already suffering from stress overload. It is anticipated that plans may change over time, and the Housing Stability Plan is a living document. Breaking up bigger goals like completing a housing search into smaller, actionable steps like reaching out to one landlord can help both the Veteran and the case manager to experience success.

The case manager and Veteran will monitor progress toward achieving the established goals through regular communication, including home visits. The HSP should be updated when action steps and goals are met, and at recertification. As the Veteran house-



hold's needs change, new goals and action steps should be developed. Regular communication with the participant's landlord may uncover needs for additional assistance to maintain housing stability.

Housing search and placement goals specify the steps taken by the Veteran and case manager to identify suitable housing. The goals include strategies for approaching the landlord or property manager. SSVF grantees should have policies and practices that support transporting Veterans to appointments and apartment showings if the Veteran does not have access to transportation themselves.

Important Best Practice & Programming Consideration

Veteran households will often need the active involvement of SSVF grantee staff to secure housing. Landlords may consider a household with high barriers to be too risky to accept as a tenant, but the SSVF grantee can approach 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 (where permitted by law), etc.

Landlord partnerships are essential to assure access to appropriate housing for every Veteran household, and every SSVF grantee 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.

Housing maintenance goals specify the action steps the household must focus on to assure fulfillment of tenancy requirements. Housing maintenance goals will often include how to ensure rent is paid on time, how to have effective interactions with landlords, and how to be a good tenant by following the lease and maintaining the unit. However, there may also be underlying issues that contribute to housing instability and that should be included in goal development.

Many tenants will have successful experience as renters and may need little help to fulfill their responsibilities. Regular communication with the participant's landlord can confirm those or uncover additional assistance needed to maintain housing stability.

Housing stability plans should use a progressive approach. Participants are offered only as much assistance as needed and only as long as needed to end the housing crisis and stabilize. Over time, the intensity and duration of services can be 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



Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) –

A federal program for Veterans.

For complete details, visit

<https://www.va.gov/homeless/hud-vash.asp>.

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 educate the Veteran about SSVF, VA, and community services available to overcome barriers to housing and address household needs. Referrals to other community and VA resources should be provided with the agreement of the program participant. This may include the use of shallow subsidy services or referrals to more intensive or permanent services such as ***Housing and Urban Development -Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)*** or other voucher programs.

3.3.2. Assistance Obtaining VA Benefits

Description of Benefits/Services: As part of participant intake, the SSVF grantee should determine whether the participant household is already receiving services from VA. If the participant is already receiving services, the SSVF grantee's assessment should focus on which additional services the participant may need, desire, and be eligible for, and the participant should be referred to the appropriate VA office for assistance. If the participant is not already receiving services from VA, the SSVF 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. SSVF grantees should document referrals to local programs and resources in the Veteran's case file, using the [Referral Tracking Sheet](#) . The list of resources and services should be local to the grantee's catchment area.

Potential VA benefits and services may include, but are not limited to:

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

Income assistance, employment, training, and educational resources are especially important for the target population of the SSVF grant. 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, and readjustment counseling centers.

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 SSVF grantee should, with the Veteran's consent, provide assistance in the enrollment process.



SSVF grantees are required to have in-house counsel or contractual agreements with legal service providers. SSVF grantees may leverage local resources or a contractual agreement to assist a Veteran in obtaining VA benefits; this may be in the form of referral or payment to an accredited claims agency or attorney. Although SSVF grantees will assist participants in obtaining available benefits from VA, SSVF grantees are not permitted to represent Veterans in benefit claims before VA, unless the individual providing representation is an accredited claims agent or attorney. Additional information on VA health care and benefits can be found on the [Veterans Health Administration](#) website and the [Veterans Benefits Administration](#) website.

Using Community Linkages to Enhance Effectiveness: SSVF grantees should develop relationships with local VA facilities, *State Veterans Affairs Offices*, and *Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs)*. SSVF grantees that 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 can make or receive referrals as appropriate. VA provides a [list of State Veterans Affairs offices](#) and maintains a [searchable database of VSOs](#).

3.3.3. SSVF Coordination with VA Medical Center Services

There are times when multiple Veterans Health Administration (VHA) homeless programs need to coordinate to provide adequate housing support. SSVF grantees should follow the current guidance provided by the SSVF Program Office regarding allowances and expectations associated with VAMC collaborations.

SSVF grantees are expected to work collaboratively with their local VAMCs (both with VA Homeless Programs at the local level as part of the One Team approach and also to coordinate care with services offered at the VAMC beyond homeless programs). As part of the One Team approach, SSVF grantees work closely with HUD-VASH for permanent supportive housing; with *Grant and Per Diem (GPD)* for emergency housing and services; and with *Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV)* for outreach, coordinated entry, and emergency housing. SSVF grantees also collaborate with Homeless Veterans Community Employment Services (HVCEs), Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO), and Homeless Patient Aligned Care Teams (HPACT). Since each VAMC has its own organizational structure, it is up to the SSVF grantee to establish regular contact with local homeless services by reaching out to VAMC. For more guidance on collaborating with VHA homeless programs, see [Exhibit C](#).

Grant and Per Diem (GPD) program –

A federal program for Veterans.
For complete details, visit <https://www.va.gov/homeless/gpd.asp>.

Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) –

A federal program for Veterans.
For complete details, visit <https://www.va.gov/homeless/hchv.asp>.

Important Policy Consideration

Sharing Veteran-specific information with VA partners is permissible in limited instances as defined under [Routine Use #30](#). Grantees should have policies and procedures that support sharing information under Routine Use #30 guidance (see [Exhibit G](#)).



3.3.4. Assistance in Obtaining and Coordinating Other Public Benefits

Description of Services: SSVF grantees are required to assist participant households in accessing 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 use disorder 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 services; representative payee services; and childcare. SSVF grantees should document referrals to local programs and resources in the Veteran’s case file, using the [Referral Tracking Sheet](#) . The list of resources and services should be local to the grantee’s catchment or service area.

The goals for connecting with 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. The SSVF grantee can use any of the three following methods to ensure that the Veteran household has access to resources that will help them help maintain housing:

1. **Direct:** By SSVF 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 the SSVF grantee utilizing a conventional information and referral approach and building upon in-house knowledge of external resources.
3. **Both:** By SSVF grantee staff or by subcontract to partner organization and referred out to external resources, with the SSVF grantee utilizing a conventional information and referral approach and building upon in-house knowledge of external resources.

The following section identifies several services and indicates whether the services can be provided directly by the grantee, indirectly (referral to external provider/resource) or both.

Important Monitoring Consideration

SSVF grantees should use the [Referral Tracking Sheet](#) to track their efforts in obtaining and coordinating VA and public benefits. The referral tracker should be tailored to reflect the resources available in the CoC and any services in the specific part of the CoC where the Veteran is engaged. For example, if the Veteran is located in a balance of state CoC that covers an expansive geographical area, providing information on services local to the Veteran would support them in their path to permanent housing.



3.3.4.1. Connection to Health Care and Daily Living Services Options

2. Indirect

SSVF health care navigators support participants in accessing health care and daily living services from their local VAMC and other health care providers. Such services include primary care; mental health treatment; substance use disorder services; daily living services (also known as home care); geriatric and extended care; caregiver support; VA women's health services; suicide prevention; intimate partner violence assistance; and other specialty care that an individual participant needs and chooses to utilize.

SSVF grantees, primarily via SSVF health care navigators, must:

- Cultivate strong relationships with their points of contact at local VAMCs and community-based outpatient clinics, and utilize those relationships to make and monitor referrals.
- Identify non-VA health care resources for Veterans and non-Veteran household members who may be ineligible for VA health care.
- Assist participants in applying for Medicaid or subsidized insurance through local health care exchanges created by the Affordable Care Act.

For participants with a history of reluctance to seek care from VA settings, case managers and health care navigators must build trust with participants to support them in reestablishing connections.

Health Care Navigation –

Work with Veterans on a variety of issues to assist them in identifying and overcoming challenges to accessing the healthcare system or adhering to recommended health care plans.

3.3.4.2. Connections to Affordable Housing via Housing Counseling Options

1. Direct; 2. Indirect; 3. Both

SSVF participants must be supported in searching for appropriate housing. Whether the SSVF grantee assigns specialized staff, such as housing navigators, 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 and securing the lease. Specific tasks may include:

- Researching available market-rate and subsidized housing units that match a participant's housing budget and needs
- Ensuring Veterans have transportation necessary to view housing units
- 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
- Reading, understanding, and lease signing with Veteran and Landlord
- Devising move-in plans

Subcontractor –

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



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
- Efficient use of home systems such as heat

Housing navigation also involves advance work with participants on financial education, creating a budget, scheduling regular and timely payments including rent, and preparing contingency plans for an emergency.

To optimize Veteran access to housing opportunities, housing counseling and navigation services require that SSVF grantees build staff expertise on the availability of both affordable private market-rate units and publicly subsidized affordable housing. To further enhance access, grantees should prioritize geographic distribution in housing placements to ensure Veteran households are not concentrated in the same neighborhoods, promoting community integration and access to varied resources and opportunities.

Important Best Practice & Programming Consideration

SSVF grantees should leverage information and resources available through their local CoC and CE systems. For success in the private market, the grantee must cultivate a network of 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, grantees should explore housing opportunities available through information clearinghouses, online locators, and other housing programs dedicated to Veterans, households exiting homelessness, low- and extremely low-income households, and other programs targeted to special populations such as persons who are elderly or with disabilities. Furthermore, grantees must be knowledgeable of admissions preferences in any and all subsidized housing.

3.3.4.3. *Connections to Employment and Vocational Services Options*

1. Direct; 2. Indirect; 3. Both

Where appropriate, SSVF participants should be connected with services that foster workforce participation, job readiness, and job opportunities with the aim of income maximization and, in turn, 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 the American Job Centers (may have a different name in your *state* or territory) and other Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) programs, VA-sponsored workforce development programs such as Homeless Veterans Community and Employment Services (HVCES), and Department of Labor's (DOL) Veterans Employment and Training Services including the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP). These programs may offer assistance with resume writing, job search, job interviewing, and job skill development. Grantees should also explore local job fairs, particularly those dedicated to Veterans, and local employers advertising new job development specifically for Veterans.

Note that refusal to participate in employment services should not be a barrier to access SSVF services nor a reason to terminate assistance.

3.3.4.4. *Connections to Income Support (Public and VA Benefits) Options*

1. Direct; 2. Indirect; 3. Both

SSVF participants should be supported to obtain public benefits including:

- Social Security Disability Income (SSDI)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Veterans Benefits Administration benefits
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/food stamps)
- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- Subsidized Childcare

Such benefits can be an essential resource for maximizing participants' income and thereby increasing housing stability.

For applications to the Veteran Benefits Administration (VBA), participants should be assisted via referrals to local VSOs or via direct application through the SSVF liaison for the local VBA 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 an interagency federal 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 SSI and SSDI for adults and children who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness and who have a mental illness or medical impairment, including those with 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.

Important Best Practice & Programming Consideration

Every SSVF grantee should have a clear, formal relationship with SOAR-trained providers or train its 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 SSVF grantees utilize SOAR through either direct provision, a subcontract relationship, or a specific Memorandum of Understanding that clearly outlines referral processes and expectations across partners.

3.3.4.5. *Connections to Legal Services Options*

1. Direct; 2. Indirect; 3. Both

SSVF 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. When providing legal services directly, either through in-house counsel or by contract, the SSVF 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 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 or court fees
7. Assistance in obtaining VA benefits 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 the Veteran is already enrolled in SSVF and current, and the upgrade is directly connected to their housing stability plan.)

The most commonly utilized service models are described below. SSVF grantees must use in-house or contracted counsel, and should also provide referrals to legal services that cannot be paid for with SSVF funds.

1. ***In-House Counsel:*** SSVF grantees may choose to hire licensed counsel as part of their SSVF staff to provide legal services to program participants. This model constitutes **direct service** provision, and costs fall under the “Provision and Coordination of Supportive Services – Personnel” category of the budget.
2. ***Contracted Counsel:*** Many SSVF grantees elect to subcontract services out to a legal services provider (Private Attorney, Legal Aid Provider, etc.). This model constitutes **indirect 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 SSVF grantee’s participants. Costs under this model fall under the “Provision and Coordination of Supportive Services – Non-Personnel” category of the budget.

SSVF grantees are encouraged to include specific reporting requirements (services provided, length of service, etc.) in the contract and to request that the subcontractor train the grantee’s case managers in issue-spotting.

Please note, pursuant to [38 CFR Part 62.33](#), SSVF 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, SSVF 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.

a. Allowable and Unallowable Costs for Legal Services

SSVF grantees must ensure that legal services provided are allowable costs and are linked to housing stability. See below for a list of allowable and unallowable costs. Due to the complexity of legal issues and the differing capacity of each SSVF grantee and community, SSVF grantees should always contact their Regional Coordinator with any questions/issues regarding allowable and unallowable costs.

Direct services –

Services that are provided directly by an SSVF grantee.

Indirect services –

services that are provided through a referral to resource other than the SSVF grantee.



Allowable Costs for Legal Services

Supportive services that promote housing stability:

- Intake
- Consultation
- Representation 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 <https://www.stateside-legal.org/va-accredited-advocates>.

Income assistance paid under General Housing Stability Assistance:

- Court filing fees. (e.g., fees associated with filing a written response to the landlord's complaint)
- Ad hoc fees associated with the provision of supportive services, including legal representation (e.g., fees associated with driver's license reinstatement)
- Staff training and education

Unallowable Costs for Legal Services*

Income assistance paid under General Housing Stability Assistance:

- Court filing fees. (e.g., fees associated with filing a written response to the landlord's complaint)
- Ad hoc fees associated with the provision of supportive services, including legal representation (e.g., fees associated with driver's license reinstatement)
- Staff training and education

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

Important Best Practice & Programming Consideration

Additional Training, Tools, & Resources for SSVF Grantees

SSVF grantees are encouraged to regularly visit the Legal Services section of the SSVF website [SSVF Initiatives](#) in order to build capacity in this area of service provision. The Legal Services section is always being updated and provides SSVF grantees with access to resources and templates, as well as examples of successful collaborations and best practices.



3.3.4.6. *Connections to Transportation Options*

1. Direct; 2. Indirect; 3. Both

SSVF grantees should connect participants with transportation assistance on an as-needed basis, for housing stability purposes when the Veteran lacks access to a car or public transportation. Where possible, SSVF grantees should help participants take advantage of subsidized transportation and free bus or public transportation passes in their area. These are typically offered for low-income people who have disabilities or are elderly. Participants should also be connected to local shuttle services to VAMCs or shuttles supported by VSOs. It is understood that public transportation may be less available in rural and tribal communities and the U.S. territories. For this reason, SSVF grantees should be knowledgeable about local transportation resources as well as gaps. To supplement local transportation assistance, SSVF grantees have the option to transport participants themselves to service appointments, health appointments, and housing-search-related destinations.

When transportation is provided, SSVF grantees must create 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 require 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 TFA. When transportation is needed, the SSVF grantee can use ride sharing companies (Uber, Lyft, etc.); on these occasions, SSVF grantees must provide documentation of the purpose and indicate that no other traditional public transportation options were available or feasible given the timing of the need, for example, several appointments on the same day or a two-hour ride both ways to get to an appointment that is 15 minutes away.

Important Best Practice & Programming Consideration

Providing housing search assistance to Veterans by transporting them to apartment viewings is considered a best practice. The SSVF Program Office strongly encourages all grantees to have policies, procedures, and resources established to transport Veterans.

3.3.4.7. *Connections to Personal Financial Planning and Credit Counseling Services Options*

1. Direct; 2. Indirect; 3. Both

Where appropriate and desired, SSVF participants should be connected with services that improve their day-to-day finances and help them achieve long-term budgeting and financial goals. These services may include individualized counseling or workshops that

**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.

teach critical skills such as budgeting, setting up bank accounts, managing money in the long term, accessing a free credit report, and repairing credit. SSVF grantees may also assist participants who wish to open personal savings and checking accounts. The cost of a class on financial literacy or personal credit may also be paid for directly by SSVF TFA 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 or able to acquire skills and information until they have recovered from stress overload. Financial literacy may be a longer-term goal and one to focus on after a Veteran or Veteran family is in permanent housing and the initial crisis has been resolved.

SSVF grantees should seek services for participants who need and want to resolve poor credit to reduce the negative influence of such histories on tenant selection and employment decisions. Community action agencies, adult education programs, community centers, local banks and credit unions, and nonprofit workforce development organizations often provide financial education services. The [National Foundation for Credit Counseling](#) is an accredited nonprofit resource that can directly negotiate interest rates, package loans, and obtain favorable debt settlement terms. For additional tools and resources, grantees should go to the [National Veterans Financial Resource Center](#).

3.3.4.8. Connections to VA Fiduciary & Representative Payee Services Options

1. Direct; 2. Indirect; 3. Both

SSVF grantees should support participants with the option of enlisting a VA fiduciary or other representative payee services on an as-needed basis. SSVF grantees should support education for participants who may be interested in this option. SSVF must 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 VBA benefits, SSDI, SSI, or other income on their behalf. The designated party uses the individual's income to consistently pay for their current and foreseeable needs including rent.

3.3.4.9. Connections to Childcare Services Options

1. Direct; 2. Indirect; 3. Both

SSVF grantees should support participants in accessing childcare services. Childcare may be especially helpful to participants with school-aged children for before or after school and during summer breaks, as well as during the housing search process. To meet this need, SSVF grantees should research the availability of subsidized or free childcare for low-income and homeless households in their area.



Important Best Practice & Programming Consideration

Ideally, SSVF grantees will find emergency childcare services that could assist participants through a period of instability until longer-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 TFA. SSVF grantees can pay for childcare out of TFA when no free or reduced-cost options can be found in the participant's community or when those services might be available in the medium to long-term but are not available immediately to meet the need.

3.3.4.10. Using Community Linkages to Enhance Effectiveness

SSVF grantees should actively develop linkages with community organizations to effectively connect participants to public benefits. In deciding whether to provide a needed service or refer the participant out, the SSVF grantee must consider the availability of local offerings, as well as the SSVF grantee's own level of expertise in providing the service/benefit. SSVF grantees are required to follow referrals using a [referral tracker](#)

⬇️ SSVF grantees can improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness by utilizing the community services and benefits available to them in the communities they serve in order to conserve funds for other supports that may not be readily available. There may be instances when a service exists in a community, but cannot meet the urgent needs of a Veteran household. In this situation, SSVF should support the need if it is directly related to housing stability and is an allowable service or cost.

3.4. Section Summary

This section provided an in-depth analysis of Core SSVF Services that are required by statute and the NOFO. The section also explained the recommended allowable supportive services that can be utilized to support Veterans on their journey to housing stability.

As discussed in [Section 3.2](#), the case manager's role is to utilize an array of approaches to identify and address barriers a Veteran household may experience as they work to obtain or maintain housing. Through positive and assertive engagement, the case manager should assess the emergency needs as well as the **tenant screening barriers** and housing retention barriers of the Veteran household.

Through assessment, the case manager and Veteran household will collaborate to create a housing stability plan that will set goals and monitor progress towards the Veteran household's housing stability. It is important to note that all housing stability plans for



rapid re-housing Veteran households should have a housing search and placement goal. Additionally, every household that is permanently housed should have housing maintenance goals to address any housing retention barriers that have been identified.

Case managers are encouraged to provide progressive assistance based on the Veteran household's identified needs. To ensure that the Veteran household's needs are addressed, case managers can provide services directly, indirectly, or both. It is crucial for case managers to be aware of resources so they can appropriately provide or coordinate services and referrals.

Tools and Resources

- ⚙ [Sample Housing Stability Plan](#) ⬇
- ⚙ [Referral Tracking Form](#) ⬇
- ⚙ [VA Health Care Benefits](#)
- ⚙ [Veterans Health Administration](#)
- ⚙ [State Veterans Affairs Offices](#)
- ⚙ [VSO Database](#)
- ⚙ [SSVF Health Care Navigators](#)
- ⚙ [SSVF SOAR Integration Toolkit](#)
- ⚙ [SSVF Legal Services FAQ](#)
- ⚙ [National Veterans Financial Resource Center \(VA\)](#)
- ⚙ [National Foundation for Credit Counseling](#)

Key Words

- | | |
|--|--|
| ✓ Case manager | ✓ Indirect services |
| ✓ Direct services | ✓ Needs assessment |
| ✓ Emergency needs | ✓ Notice of Funding Opportunity |
| ✓ Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCVH) | ✓ Progressive assistance |
| ✓ Health Care Navigation | ✓ Rapid re-housing |
| ✓ Housing maintenance goals | ✓ Subcontractor |
| ✓ Housing retention barriers | ✓ Supportive services |
| ✓ Housing search and placement goals | ✓ Tenant screening barriers |
| ✓ Housing stability plan | ✓ Veteran family, or Veteran household |

4

Temporary Financial Assistance

SSVF provides **Temporary Financial Assistance** (TFA), also sometimes called financial assistance, to help **Veterans** secure and maintain stable housing. TFA can be used for items like rent, utility payments, security deposits, moving expenses, childcare, transportation, and **emergency housing**. TFA is always provided to a third party, not issued directly to the Veteran or **Veteran family**.

SSVF provides TFA based on the individualized **housing stability plan**. TFA is not a required SSVF service, but it can be a tool to help stabilize a housing situation. This approach is different from other programs that may have strict limits on the amount or duration of assistance. **Rapid Resolution**, Shared Housing, Shallow Subsidy, and Returning Home may have components of TFA included in the services that are provided. Shared Housing allows Veterans to share housing costs with others, while shallow subsidy offers partial rental assistance for Veterans who are working on increasing their income to afford rent on their own or with a longer-term non-SSVF subsidy. Shallow subsidy can be a resource for prevention as well as navigating challenges like affordable housing.

By addressing immediate financial needs, TFA helps Veterans overcome housing barriers while working towards long-term housing stability and self-sufficiency.

Temporary Financial Assistance –

refers to the financial assistance grantees may offer to Veteran household to support housing access and stabilization. TFA should not be the only services offered by a grantee and it should always be paired with case management services and part of collaborative developed housing stabilization plan.

4.1. Temporary Financial Assistance

Grantees can provide TFA on behalf of **participant households**. Such assistance may not be necessary for all households. TFA, which comes in various forms, should be provided to promote housing stability for the Veteran household. In the case of homelessness prevention, TFA is only available when the SSVF grantee's approved targeting threshold is met or when the grantee has approved housing prevention TFA using the [SSVF Homelessness Prevention Exceptional Circumstance Waiver](#). It is crucial that grantees assess whether or not the household would become **homeless** or continue to experience homelessness without SSVF TFA. 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
- Childcare
- Rapid resolution targeted TFA to hosts providing 90 day or more of housing supports;
- Shallow subsidy
- Landlord incentives/resources to secure permanent housing
- Tenant incentives and miscellaneous move-in costs

Important Monitoring Consideration

An SSVF grantee's homelessness prevention targeting threshold must be approved by the Regional Coordinator through the Grants Management System.

For most SSVF households, TFA is a critical resource. Until they are able to secure enough income through benefits or employment to support housing on their own, Veteran households often need TFA such as rental assistance, security deposits, utility deposits, moving costs, or emergency supplies.

According to SSVF's guiding principle, TFA should be used only as necessary to secure and stabilize housing, and only for as long as necessary. This principle may stand in contrast to other federal programs with rigid caps on the amount or duration of assistance. TFA is often a critical resource coupled with supportive services to assist Veteran households with housing stability. Please review the [TFA table](#) provided in this Program Guide.

Important Best Practice & Programming Consideration

TFA limitations do not apply to other parts of the program, meaning Veterans may remain enrolled in SSVF for non-TFA services even if they have exhausted their TFA or do not need TFA as part of their housing stability plan.



4.1.1. Rapid Resolution, Shared Housing, Shallow Subsidy, and Returning Home TFA

4.1.1.1. Rapid Resolution Costs

Earlier in the guide, [Rapid Resolution](#) was explained in detail. In some instances, TFA can be helpful in supporting Rapid Resolution plans. In cases where a Veteran will stay for at least 90 days (without a lease), SSVF grantees may pay a one-time fee. This allows Veterans to avoid the trauma of living in a shelter or a place not intended for human habitation while enrolled in SSVF and supported in developing long-term housing plans. One-time payments can include housing costs in proportion to the space the Veteran occupies, utility assistance for one month, or other one-time expenses. No matter how long the host has committed to providing temporary lodging, Veterans living in temporary hosting situations can receive TFA for such necessities as work clothing, childcare, and transportation. Only Veterans who are enrolled in SSVF qualify for financial assistance. Financial assistance payments and restrictions will apply as soon as a Veteran obtains a unit with SSVF support.

4.1.1.2. Shared Housing

Shared housing is an affordable housing option permitted by SSVF. Shared housing is where two or more people share the costs associated with maintaining their housing, such as rent and utilities. A Veteran must be listed on the lease (SSVF does not prescribe lease status for non-SSVF tenants) and the Veteran's portion of rent must be proportional to how much private space they have relative to other tenants. The size of the unit is determined by the tenants' preferences, their income, and utilities costs. Although most tenants will prefer a private bedroom, some may voluntarily share. In shared housing, the Veteran is a tenant on the lease with full tenancy rights. Therefore, they could be eligible for SSVF TFA such as rental assistance, for example, if it was directly related to their housing stability plan.

4.1.1.3. Shallow Subsidy

Veterans at or below 30% AMI may qualify for a "shallow subsidy" that covers up to 50% of their rent for two years, while Veterans between 31% and 80% AMI are eligible for two years less the number of months of traditional rental assistance provided. Although SSVF grantees must record household income changes in HMIS as they occur, this service does not require three-month recertification. **Shallow Subsidy services** allow Veterans to stabilize over time without losing assistance eligibility. The Veteran household can be recertified to "traditional" (more flexible) assistance if its situation changes, or its needs evolve. A Veteran must have been recertified within 90 days before beginning shallow subsidy services. For more details about shallow subsidy, grantees should consult the [SSVF Shallow Subsidy Compliance Guide](#).



4.1.1.4. *Returning Home*

Returning Home is a program designed to help homeless Veterans return to their community of origin or a community where they have support systems, facilitated by the SSVF program. The program aims to reduce homelessness, support family reunification, and alleviate housing competition in low-vacancy areas.

Eligible Veterans include those seeking family reunification, those with employment opportunities, and those with affordable housing awaiting them. The program provides transportation assistance, housing search support, and financial aid for housing-related expenses. Coordination between departure and arrival community grantees is essential for successful implementation. For more information on Returning Home, grantees are encouraged to review the [Returning Home Technical Manual and Request Form](#).

4.1.2. Rent Reasonableness

Prior to providing assistance, an SSVF grantee must determine reasonableness of rent by conducting a market study. This step involves documenting details on three comparable advertised rental units. SSVF grantees may substitute a letter from the property manager of the unit under consideration that cites details of three comparable units within the manager's portfolio. Rent reasonableness must be completed on new units, and on existing units in the case of homelessness prevention. Rent reasonableness is not required in SSVF cases where the participant is using a HUD-VASH voucher. However, for other subsidized housing placements (e.g., Housing Choice Voucher [a.k.a. Section 8]), rent reasonableness must be verified either by the administering agency (i.e., the public housing agency that issues the vouchers), or completed by SSVF staff. Details for each comparable unit cited in the market study must include:

- Rent
- Location
- Number of bedrooms
- Whether utilities are included

In general, rent for the assisted unit must be comparable to rents charged during the same time period for similar units in the private, unassisted market. Additionally, rent for 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.



4.1.3. Habitability Standards

Important Regulation

[38 CFR 62.34](#) requires grantees using SSVF grant funds to provide rental assistance, payments of utilities fees, security deposits, or utilities deposits on behalf of a participant moving into a new (different) housing unit 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\(b\)](#).

Inspections should occur no more than three (3) working days after the SSVF grantee identifies the housing unit, unless a prior inspection meeting the standards outlined below is used to meet requirements. The habitability inspection does not need to be performed by a certified inspector.

If a prior inspection was completed on the property/unit, that 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 a Federal housing program, the public housing agency 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 a program; and
- The inspection was conducted within the past 2 years.

Important Policy Consideration

Proof of inspections is not required if participants are using a HUD-VASH or Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher, as an inspection would have already been completed by the public housing agency in both instances.



4.1.4. Temporary Financial Assistance Table

Temporary Assistance	Description of Service	Associated Restrictions	Documentation Requirements	Important Program or Policy Considerations
Child Care services	Child Care Services refers to the ability of SSVF grantees to make payments on behalf of participants to eligible child care providers.	- Must be provided by "eligible child care provider" Low Income - Max. 6 months in a 12-month period, per child - Max. 10 months in a 2-year period, per child Extremely Low Income - Max. 9 months in a 12-month period, per child - Max. 12 months in a 2-year period, per child	- Copy of invoice for services - Receipt of payment	Grantees should consider the impact that a lack of affordable child care can have on both short-term and long-term housing stability.
Transportation services	Transportation services refer to SSVF grantees' ability to pay for transportation on behalf of participants. In the absence of sufficient public transportation options, grantees may provide car repair or maintenance assistance. Grantees may use ride sharing options when public transportation is not available so long as it is cost effective.	- No restrictions on public transportation. For item bought in bulk, such as multiple single ride bus passes, a tracking log needs to document assistance provided to participant. - Max. \$1,200 in car repair in 2-year period	- Copy of invoice for services - Receipt of payment	Grantee should take a participant's unique situation into consideration, as well as the area's transportation options. If the participant has no means to provide transportation for themselves, the SSVF grantee should work with the Veteran to develop other plans for long-term transportation needs.



Temporary Assistance	Description of Service	Associated Restrictions	Documentation Requirements	Important Program or Policy Considerations
Rental Assistance	Rental assistance includes rent, lot rent for mobile homes, and fees or penalties to help remain in or obtaining permanent housing. Rent that includes utilities will be considered "rental assistance" and subject to applicable conditions. A rental assistance payment can cover amounts that are currently due (including the first month's rent or prorated rent paid prior to or at move in) or are in arrears, as well as penalties or fees incurred by the participant and required by the lease or court.	- Penalties or fees must be reasonable and must directly allow participant to obtain/ remain in permanent housing. Low Income - Max. 6 months in 12-month period - Max. 10 months in a 2-year period Extremely Low Income - Max. 9 months in 12-month period - Max. 12 months in a 2-year period Shallow Subsidy - Max. 50% of unit rent for two years for extremely low income Veterans (30% or below AML) and two years less any number of months of traditional rental assistance provided for Veterans between 31–80% of AML.	- Copy of payment demand from landlord/management company, clearly identifying participant and unit - Documentation of Rent Reasonableness - Document indicating participant's portion of rent (Shallow Subsidy only) - Copy HP Screening Tool (Homelessness Prevention (HP) only) - Receipt of payment - Signed lease - W-9 (where required) or other evidence supporting ownership of the proposed rental unit, such as public records, deed, or mortgage documents - Required Habitability Standards inspection (if new/different unit)	A rental cost sharing approach may help participants avoid a cliff effect when rental assistance ends. This should be done as part of an individualized housing plan to ensure sustainability in permanent housing. In addition, SSVF grantees are encouraged to negotiate with landlords and utility companies to waive fees and establish security deposits. In this way, SSVF grantees conserve SSVF funds and empower participants.



Temporary Assistance	Description of Service	Associated Restrictions	Documentation Requirements	Important Program or Policy Considerations
Utility payment assistance	Utility payment assistance includes assistance with heat, electricity, internet, water, sewer, phone/cell phone and garbage collection to help obtain or retain a place to live. Utility assistance may cover basic internet, telephone, and cell phone services. Utility assistance can be provided for amounts currently due or in arrears.	Eligible for payments currently due or in 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. Low Income - Max. 6 months in 12-month period - Max. 10 months in 2-year period Extremely Low Income - Max. 9 months in 12-month period - Max. 12 months in 2-year period Rapid Resolution - A one-time utility assistance payment to a host can be made when a Veteran household is temporarily housed without a lease through Rapid Resolution. The host must commit to housing the Veteran household for 90 days or longer.	- Proof that participant is responsible for payment - Receipt of payment - Required Habitability Standards inspection (if new/different unit) - Documentation of 90-day commitment by host in case file, if applicable for Rapid Resolution - If a security deposit exceeds more than 1 month's rent, the reason must be clearly documented	VA expects that utility payment assistance is offered when a reasonable plan to address the participant's future ability to pay has been created. SSVF grantees should assist participants in implementing such plans by providing direct assistance or by helping them obtain any public or private benefits or services needed. It is important to consider seasonal fluctuations in utility costs when creating the plan.



Temporary Assistance	Description of Service	Associated Restrictions	Documentation Requirements	Important Program or Policy Considerations
Security deposits/ Utility deposits	Deposit payment assistance includes payment of security or utility deposits. The SSVF grantee may provide deposit payment assistance on behalf of eligible participants. Deposit payment assistance does not affect rent and utility assistance restrictions.	- Payment must be made by the grantee directly to the third party. - 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. - When the cost type is different than what is paid by the housing subsidy, SSVF deposit payment assistance may be used. - Max. 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.	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 - 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)	Depending on household income, an SSVF grantee can require participants to share in the cost of a deposit payment for assistance. Typically, no more than two months' rent should be required as a deposit. If a state prescribes a maximum deposit, the SSVF grantee must follow it local laws.



Temporary Assistance	Description of Service	Associated Restrictions	Documentation Requirements	Important Program or Policy Considerations
Moving costs	The moving costs include assistance with the costs associated with moving to help a participant obtain permanent housing. Moving costs may include the rental of a truck, the hiring of a moving company, or the storage of goods for a maximum of three months (unless it is critically needed) or until permanent housing can be found.	- 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	- Quotes from 3 moving companies - Copy of invoice for services - Receipt of payment	A participant may need a rental truck to move their belongings into storage and then move them again once permanent housing is secured, which is still considered part of the one move for SSVF. SSVF grantees should review SSVF Returning Home guidance for the relocation expenses that are allowable.
General Housing Stability Assistance	General Housing Stability Assistance refers to the provision of goods or payment of expenses related to supporting housing stability. These goods are not included in any other SSVF TFA category	- Max. of \$2,081 per participant household during 2-year period - Max. of \$500 per participant household for items for life/safety (falls within \$2,081 max) - Applications and other associated fees are allowable to secure the unit	- Copy of invoice for services - Receipt of payment	GHSA expenses are related to gaining or maintaining employment or permanent housing. Assistance can be provided if mainstream resources have been proven and documented to be unavailable. Third parties must be paid directly for this assistance (not participants). 1. Expenses associated with gaining or keeping employment: - uniforms; - tools; - driver's license fees; - license/certification costs required for employment; - documentation acquisition fees, such as Social Security Numbers and birth certificates, court filing fees, and short-term training; and - low-cost, budget-friendly phone

Temporary Assistance	Description of Service	Associated Restrictions	Documentation Requirements	Important Program or Policy Considerations
General Housing Stability Assistance				2. Expenses associated with moving into permanent housing: - Delivery costs, - furniture bank fees, - bed frames, - conventional mattresses or air mattresses and box springs, - bedding, and - kitchen utensils, and cleaning supplies 3. Expenses necessary for securing appropriate permanent housing: - background checks, - housing inspections, - credit checks, - credit counseling, - criminal background checks, tenancy screening reports, - financial literacy classes, - court filing fees, and 4. Expenses necessary for life or safety: These items are eligible on a temporary basis: - Fees for rental applications, - Food and baby formula, - diapers, and - winter clothing. These items are allowed up to \$500 per household per year and are included in the cap.



Temporary Assistance	Description of Service	Associated Restrictions	Documentation Requirements	Important Program or Policy Considerations
Emergency Housing Assistance	Emergency housing assistance refers to the ability of SSVF grantees to provide temporary housing in a hotel or motel for participants who are experiencing literal homelessness. Veterans may access this resource only if no other reasonable alternative is available.	Max. 60 days for participant household - May be used once during 2-year period. - 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. If there is an unplanned break in the EHA stay, then it is possible to continue the stay. For example, if the Veteran is hospitalized, EHA can continue when the Veteran is released, and can continue up to 60 days (does not reset).	- Copy of invoice and receipt - Emergency Housing Assistance Verification Form	When permanent housing, shelter beds, and transitional housing are not available, and rental housing has been identified in general, but is not immediately available, or where an individual's health and safety are at risk, a grantee may place them in emergency housing. EHA may also be provided by SSVF grantees under 38 CFR 62.34(f). Grantees can offer "transition in place" services when a permanent housing voucher is available but cannot be accessed because inspections and other administrative processes are delayed. The EHA payment cannot exceed the amount that would be paid if the voucher was used. Note that the Emergency Housing Assistance Verification is NOT used for this request.

Temporary Assistance	Description of Service	Associated Restrictions	Documentation Requirements	Important Program or Policy Considerations
Resources to secure or maintain permanent housing (aka Landlord Incentive)	Resources to secure or maintain Permanent Housing refers to the ability of SSVF grantees to provide up to two months' worth of rent as a direct incentive to landlords or housing owners. It can be used to originate, and on a case-by-case basis, renew a lease. Grantees should consult with their Regional Coordinator.	- Max value of two months of unit rent once per lease - Must be used to overcome barriers that would further preclude or delay access to permanent housing unit - Requires lease of not less than one year	- All documentation required for rental assistance - Landlord incentive required documentation to support payment (separate from security deposit) - Justification of necessity to use incentive to expedite permanent housing linkage	These incentives are 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.
Miscellaneous Move in costs (aka Tenant Incentive)	Miscellaneous move-in costs are incentives that may be covered by SSVF grantees up to \$1,000. Incentives such as these are distinct from traditional GHSA assistance and are more flexible. Tenant incentives ensure that participants are provided with the basic comforts of a permanent residence from the beginning of their tenancy.	- Up to \$1,000 per household in purchases of goods and services to promote general comfort one would reasonably expect to have in permanent housing. - Incentive must be paid within the first 90 days of moving-in. - Purchases made from third parties and delivered/provided to Veteran at beginning of new permanent housing situation. - Requires lease of not less than one year.	- Ledger demonstrating cap limit of \$1,000 by individual Veteran household - Proof or note that Veteran received all items purchased	Among eligible purchases are furniture, housewares, televisions, tablets, cell phone, bicycles, food and recreational items. Some items are ineligible, including art/antiques, jewelry, collections, weapons, and other items prohibited by local, state, or federal law.



4.2. Section Summary

This section explored the various forms of TFA and the supportive services it can support. As a reminder, TFA should be used only as necessary to secure or stabilize housing.

Key forms of TFA include rental, utility, and deposit assistance, as well as specialized aid like landlord incentives and tenant move-in costs.

Tools and Resources

- ⚙ [Guidance on Establishing an Initial Threshold Score](#)
- ⚙ [SSVF Homelessness Prevention Exceptional Circumstance Waiver](#)
- ⚙ [Rapid Resolution Service Compliance Guidance](#)
- ⚙ [Shallow Subsidy Compliance Guide](#)
- ⚙ [Emergency Housing Assistance \(EHA\) Form](#) 
- ⚙ [Returning Home Technical Manual and Request Form](#)

Key Words

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ✓ Homelessness prevention | ✓ Shared housing |
| ✓ Landlord incentives | ✓ Shallow subsidy |
| ✓ Rapid Resolution | ✓ Targeting threshold |
| ✓ Rent reasonableness | ✓ Temporary financial assistance |
| ✓ Returning Home | ✓ Tenant incentives |

5

File Maintenance & Training

5.1. Introduction

SSVF grantees play a key role in ensuring program success by maintaining detailed and accurate case files for each **participant household** while they work from a framework of Veteran-centered care and compliance. These files not only serve to track the progress and services provided to each participant but are also essential for compliance with federal regulations. Proper documentation in the case files must align with data entries in the **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)** to ensure both effective service delivery and accurate reporting.

During scheduled program reviews, or Financial and Operational Fitness Audits (FOFAs), case files are thoroughly examined for compliance with SSVF documentation standards. These standards require that grantees maintain a comprehensive set of forms, including intake screenings, **housing stability plans**, case notes, and specific SSVF forms such as eligibility certifications and income verification templates. Grantees are expected to ensure that all forms are organized efficiently, allowing for easy access and monitoring.

SSVF grantees adhere to rigorous eligibility documentation standards to verify that each participant household meets SSVF criteria. This includes obtaining written third-party verification whenever possible, though participant self-declarations may be used in emergency cases. Proper documentation of income, housing status, and any incidents of **domestic violence** are crucial for program compliance. Failure to maintain sufficient case file documentation may result in a finding of non-compliance during VA reviews.

In this context, grantees are encouraged to develop internal policies that support accurate, timely documentation while ensuring that **Veterans** receive the services they need to prevent or end homelessness. Grantees should have quality assurance plans in place, train staff on these plans, and update their plan regularly to continue to create improvements.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) –

A system for collecting data on homeless individuals and families, as well as data on housing and services provided by a Continuum of Care, that conforms to HUD's data collection, management, and reporting standards. Using HMIS allows a community to integrate and deduplicate data across projects. To understand the size, characteristics, needs, and trends of homeless populations, HMIS data can be used at multiple levels: project, system, local, state, and national.



Important Monitoring Consideration

As of July 2, 2024, all enrolled and prospective Veterans must receive written notification of the Veteran Rights Pact (VRP). VRPs must be posted in common areas where direct services are provided to Veterans (staff offices, front desk and intake areas). Grantees must maintain updated operating procedures and document compliance. They should be prepared to show documentation during reviews and audits.

5.2. File Maintenance

SSVF grantees are responsible for maintaining case files for each participant household. This information must also be reflected in Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) uploads with appropriate HMIS fields set up to capture this data. During a scheduled FOFA, case files will be inspected for the following components and 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	✓	NA
2. Staff Certification of Eligibility for SSVF	✓	✓
3. Critical Incident Report	As needed	As needed
4. Veteran's Rights Pact (VRP)	✓	✓



Important Policy Consideration

Grantees are encouraged to organize their files as described in the table. Case files can be organized and monitored more easily if each form is separated with a tab or divider. Grantees may have electronic files and are not required to have a paper file or to duplicate work. Electronic signatures are acceptable with policy and procedures which outline the standards and guidelines in their use.

The SSVF Program Office requires grantees to use the following forms:

Form	Homelessness Prevention	Rapid Re-housing
Official ¹ SSVF Forms – Download recommended format from SSVF website or Exhibit E		
Staff Recertification of Continued Assistance	✓	✓
Pending Verification of Veteran Status	As needed	As needed
Income Verification Template or Self-Declaration of Income ²	✓	✓
Asset Income Calculation Worksheet	✓	✓
Literally Homeless Certification Template or Domestic Violence Certification Form or Self-Declaration of Literal Homelessness ²	NA	✓
Rent Reasonableness Checklist ²	✓	✓
Housing Habitability Standards 	Required for new (different) units	Required for new (different) units
Emergency Housing Assistance Verification	As needed	As needed
Exit Checklist	Required	Required

1. “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.
2. Self-declaration formats are only to be used when third-party documentation cannot be obtained.



5.2.1. Eligibility Documentation Standards

SSVF grantees are responsible for verifying and documenting the eligibility of all **Veteran households** prior to providing SSVF assistance. They are also responsible for maintaining this documentation in the SSVF participant's case file once they have been approved for assistance. Grantees with insufficient case file documentation may be found "out of compliance" with SSVF grant regulations during a VA FOFA. It is important for grantees to develop local policies and procedures and establish adequate internal controls to ensure that appropriate documentation is obtained and included in SSVF participants' files.

For the 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 circumstance being documented. See [Exhibit B](#) for detailed documentation standards. Use of a lower level of third-party verification (verbal or participant) requires a higher level of documentation that is approved by a supervisor or management official.

General documentation standards, in order of preference, are as follows:

- a. **Written Third-Party** — Verification in writing from a third party (e.g., an individual employer, the Social Security Administration, a welfare office, an emergency shelter provider, etc.) provided to SSVF grantee staff either directly or via the Veteran household. Third-party verification of income, such as a deposit slip for a paycheck, might show income after deductions have been made; however, 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. **Verbal Third-Party** — Verification from a third party (e.g., an individual employer, the Social Security Administration, a welfare office, etc.) provided over the telephone or in person directly to SSVF grantee staff who, in turn, create a written record in the case file. Verbal 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 in the SSVF participant's file the reasons why third-party written verification could not be obtained.
- c. **Participant Self-Declaration** — An affidavit of income or housing status as reported by the household is allowable but only if written or verbal third-party verification cannot be obtained in time to resolve the housing crisis. Self-declaration of housing status (e.g., eviction) should be rare. SSVF grantee staff must document reasons why third-party written, or verbal 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.

Important Policy Consideration

SSVF grantees should have policies to support enrolling and assisting a Veteran whose immediate health or safety is at risk and whose only options for documenting eligibility are self-declarations.

VA encourages grantees to carefully review participant case files through periodic monitoring, and be sure they include sufficient documentation that each household meets all eligibility criteria. While self-declaration may have to be accepted to resolve a housing crisis, SSVF grantee staff must continue to work with the Veteran household to obtain a higher level of documentation when possible. Finalizing eligibility may require additional assessments at different stages to ensure compliance with program requirements.

Participants must meet all criteria, and evidence that they have done so must be included in the case file.

Important Monitoring Consideration

Participants must have documentation indicating that they meet SSVF grant eligibility requirements and are occupying permanent housing. If during a FOIA or program review it is determined that a grantee does not have sufficient case file documentation, the grantee may be found “out of compliance” with SSVF grant regulations. Grantees must develop policies and procedures to ensure appropriate documentation is included in participant case files.

Additionally, SSVF requires recertification at least every three months (90 days). The one exception to this requirement is for 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. Grantees are encouraged to use this Program Guide to ensure that appropriate and sufficient information is collected, documented, and maintained in participant case files.

5.2.2. 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 determined eligible for SSVF assistance. The form should be completed and signed by both the person determining eligibility and their supervisor for all



households. The VA is providing an administrative requirement that allows up to seven business days for a supervisor to review and sign. Each grantee should develop a policy on acceptable forms of signatures (electronic, email, inked). TFA cannot be issued until a supervisory review is completed. It is critical to maintain an audit trail of efforts to maintain compliance with regulatory guidance.

5.2.3. Determining Acceptable Level of Documentation

The SSVF Program Office expects that all grantees will make a conscientious and reasonable effort to meet 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 its own existing resources (e.g., funding, capacity, and pre-existing income verification processes 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 the short-term nature of the assistance. It is not 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 to be averted.

Important Monitoring Consideration

SSVF grantees will not be penalized for using self-declarations to provide assistance if a Veteran's immediate health and safety are at risk, even if it is later determined that the household was not eligible.

Rental assistance over multiple months, or other forms of ongoing assistance (e.g., 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 A](#) 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 (i.e., third-party documentation), as shown in [Exhibit B](#). This record may be created 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. The SSVF Program Office 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 this information or the participant is experiencing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking). In these cases, grantees should clearly document the situation in the case file including all attempts to obtain verification of housing status in writing or verbally. Efforts to obtain third-party documentation (written and verbal), 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 a finding of non-compliance with the SSVF grant.

5.2.4. Timeliness of Income Documentation

The definition of income reflects a Veteran household'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.

5.2.5. Documenting Domestic Violence

For all participant households newly created under circumstances of domestic violence, SSVF resets the temporary financial assistance (TFA) tolling period for the separating household. For participants to whom this policy applies, SSVF grantees must certify a participant's domestic violence situation using the HUD Domestic Violence Certification Form. Under the *Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)*, victims may choose the way they prefer to document victimization. They may choose from any of the following:

- Self-certification, must use the [HUD Domestic Violence Certification Form HUD-5382](#).
- A document that must be signed both by (1) the applicant or tenant requesting VAWA protection, and (2) one of the following professionals: an employee, agent, or volunteer of a victim service provider; an attorney; or a medical/mental health 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

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) –

A federal law that, in part, provides housing protections for people who are 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.



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.

For documenting domestic violence in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), see [Exhibit F](#).

5.3. Training

A strong staff training plan is essential to running a successful SSVF grant and to retaining staff. Each SSVF grantee should have a set of policies and procedures that detail the onboarding training for new staff, as well as continued professional development activities for staff who have been a part of the program's operations for some time. The current SSVF Practice Standards, Program Guide, and Core Concepts with their supporting resources on the SSVF website has much of what is needed to successfully train and on-board new staff. SSVF strongly encourages grantees to utilize training materials from the Program Managers Academy (PMA) 101 and 201 and a train-the-trainer model. The SSVF Program Office also strongly encourages grantees to fully participate in national webinars, trainings, communities of practice, VA Homeless Programs Office (HPO) calls, regional meetings, and regional calls to continue to learn and refine their program.

New staff members may be paired with an experienced 'mentor' to guide them through the onboarding process and provide insight. Staff will need strong support and consultation from supervisors in all aspects of program philosophy and orientation. As in any emergency response program, the staff is immersed in crises that often do not have simple resolutions. Staff members should have opportunity to bring difficult cases to supervisors or to a group of other staff member and request assistance with problem-solving. Any staff training plan should include online VA resources that can be used to support orientation and training.

There are a set of specific topics that SSVF grantees are strongly encouraged to include in their training and onboarding policies and procedures. The SSVF Program Office strongly advises that SSVF grantees make certain that all personnel have undergone training focused on interacting with clients and offering services from a **trauma-informed** perspective.



5.3.1. Core Practices and Training Considerations

- **Housing with Supportive Services:** Staff may have past training and experience in methods that are inconsistent with a housing with supportive services approach. As a result, they may struggle with understanding the SSVF approach to **rapid re-housing** and homelessness prevention (be sure to include discussion of harm reduction).
- **Crisis Response:** Staff may not have experience or training in crisis intervention theory or practice. While staff will not be providing clinical services, they are providing a short-term intervention to people who are in the midst of acute or chronic stress.
- **Participant Choice:** This concept is normally acknowledged by staff as a value, but staff may find it difficult to put into practice in a housing with supportive services, rapid re-housing, and homelessness prevention program.
- **Targeting, Outreach and Screening:** The SSVF Program Office focuses on targeting resources to those individuals and households with the greatest barriers to housing.
- **Case Management in the SSVF Grant:** As a **crisis response** program, the SSVF Program Office requires significantly different case management approaches from programs that are longer-term or that employ “wraparound” service delivery.
- **Housing Identification, Placement and Landlord Cultivation:** Unlike many other programs, SSVF focuses on finding permanent housing with private sector landlords even for those participants with zero income.
- **Data Collection, Management, and Utilization:** SSVF believes that data is a tool to be used (not just collected) to inform program design and ensure that services are being provided in the most effective manner.



5.4. Section Summary

In this section, the importance of file maintenance and effective training were explained. Grantees must maintain a comprehensive set of forms that includes everything from intake screening to exit checklists. Clearly documenting eligibility and maintaining organized files facilitate easy access and monitoring. The SSVF Program Office permits a variety of documentation methods. While third-party written verification is the standard, grantees may use self-declaration for documenting housing status, income, and Veteran verification when there may be a risk to a Veteran's health and safety. For participants who have been victims of domestic violence, grantees must certify the participant's domestic violence situation using the HUD Domestic Violence Certification Form. Finally, a well-structured training plan and curriculum are crucial for grantees to provide consistently effective services.

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Tools and Resources

- ⚙ [Staff Certification of Eligibility for SSVF Assistance](#)
- ⚙ [Veteran Rights Pact](#) ⬇
- ⚙ [HUD Certification of Domestic Violence form HUD-5382](#) ⬇

Key Words

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| ✓ Participant self-declaration | ✓ Veteran Rights Pact |
| ✓ SSVF documentation standards | ✓ Verbal third-party |
| ✓ Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) | ✓ Written third-party |

6

Operations, Compliance, & Grant Administration

Chapter 6 provides grantees with operational and fiscal administrative guidance to supplement the requirements found in the grant agreement and *Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)*.

6.1. Program Operations

6.1.1. Overview

SSVF grantees are expected to administer programs in a manner that is consistent with the requirements of the grant agreement, resolution, and budget; this expectation includes but is not limited to the types of services provided, geographic regions served, projected households to be served, and staffing plans. It is the responsibility of the SSVF grantee to contact the SSVF Program Office with any requests for grant agreement amendments, program changes, or budget changes. In an effort to streamline and standardize this process, the SSVF Program Office utilizes an online grants management system (UDPass). The SSVF Program Office requires all SSVF grantees to utilize the grants management system which manages all SSVF grant data, from application receipt to review, award, grant oversight, and grant completion. This automated system provides an improved method for tracking SSVF grantee compliance with guidelines and regulatory expectations, and allows SSVF grantees more time to apply their expertise to service provision.

SSVF grantees must develop and implement participant safety, participant notification, confidentiality, documentation and reporting, and *subcontractor* grants management program policies and procedures consistent with guidance in this chapter.



Important Best Practice & Programming Consideration

The SSVF Program Office website, [Supportive Services for Veteran Families](#), and other materials offer a broader introduction to the SSVF program. The SSVF Program Office expects each SSVF grantee 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. SSVF grantees must confirm that new staff members have read all the required materials during their annual certification process. The SSVF Program Office may provide further directions to SSVF grantees for onboarding and other required training needs.

6.1.2. Participant Notifications

The SSVF Program Office strongly encourages SSVF grantees to follow a low-barrier, **housing with supportive services** approach to services and assistance offered through SSVF to **participant households**. To ensure awareness of the **supportive services** available through the SSVF grantee's program and of the Veteran's rights in this program, the SSVF grantee must provide each participant household with the following written notifications:

6.1.2.1. Participant Agreement

This agreement describes the SSVF grantee's SSVF program and any participation conditions or restrictions. Participant agreements should be fully disclosed to potential participants and acknowledged in a document signed by all parties prior to providing SSVF assistance to the participant household. Veteran signatures are expected for documentation with exceptions in rare circumstances where verbal acknowledgment may be accepted.

Important Best Practice & Programming Consideration

In order to ensure programs are low-barrier, agreements should not require sobriety, minimum income limits, participation in supportive services, or other unnecessary conditions in order to receive SSVF assistance. Participant agreements should reference the organization's grievance policy.

6.1.2.2. *Veterans Rights Pact*

SSVF grantees are required to distribute the Veterans Rights Pact (VRP) to all **Veteran households** served by SSVF, and to visibly display the notice in all locations where **Veterans** are served. This includes but is not limited to the check-in desk, offices where Veterans are screened, and case worker offices.

Important Monitoring Consideration

Future audit, Financial and Operational Fitness Audit (FOFA), and other programmatic reviews will ensure each SSVF grantee is in compliance with the VRP requirement. Failure to display and distribute the VRP may result in an audit finding.

6.1.2.3. *Grievance and Appeals Policy and Procedures*

The SSVF Program Office requires SSVF grantees to establish a policy for processing and reviewing participant grievances and complaints. SSVF grantees must also establish a policy that allows participants to appeal the rejection or termination of services; this policy should be provided to participants at their initial intake appointment. The appeals policy must ensure the participant is provided with the reason for rejection and the right to appeal this decision to agency supervisory staff. The policy must also include a review process and timeframe.

- 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. The SSVF Program Office will internally process these grievances. SSVF grantees are required to respond to requests 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.

6.1.2.4. *Program Termination*

SSVF fully endorses the use of a housing with supportive services approach and encourages SSVF grantees to target assistance to those Veterans in greatest need. Grantees should avoid unnecessarily terminating assistance due to program violations, except where the participant is not meeting basic program requirements, or in extreme cases. All opportunities for continued enrollment through progressive engagement and service delivery should be explored prior to termination. In the event a participant violates an SSVF grantee's program requirement as outlined in the participant agreement, the SSVF grantee may suspend services while working with the Veteran family to comply



with the program agreement. SSVF grantees may resume assistance to a participant whose assistance was previously suspended, as appropriate. When terminating assistance to a participant, the SSVF grantee must first provide a termination and an explanation of the SSVF grantee's appeal process. This notification and appeal process must at a minimum, consist of:

1. Written notice to the participant containing a clear statement of the reasons for termination.
2. An opportunity to appeal the decision, in which the participant can present written objections before a staff member of the SSVF grantee organization who is neither the staff member who made or approved the termination decision nor a subordinate of that staff member.
3. Prompt written notice to the participant of the final decision, as well as any referrals to recommended community resources.

6.1.3. Participant Safety

A critical goal of the SSVF program is to ensure the safety of all participant households, supportive service coordinators, and their staff. The SSVF Program Office requires SSVF grantees to develop a comprehensive plan to maintain the safety of participants and staff. In developing a plan, VA requires that SSVF grantees:

- Establish policies and procedures that reduce and eliminate accidents, injuries, and illnesses related to administering supportive services to participants;
- Develop plans and procedures for evaluating the safety policies' effectiveness, both at the program office and in the field;
- Develop priorities for remedying the identified factors which cause accidents, injuries, and illnesses;
- Conduct adequate safety and health training for officials at different levels, including supervisory employees, employees responsible for conducting participant home visits or habitability inspections (see [Habitability Standards](#) section), employee representatives, and other employees;
- Develop an emergency transfer process that outlines internal and external transfer processes 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 it responded and that any party involved was connected to any services needed.

Important Policy Consideration

If an SSVF grantee becomes aware of a health or safety issue related to a participant, including unsafe accommodations, the SSVF grantee must report the issue to the appropriate authorities such as local health department, code enforcement, or Emergency Medical Technicians. SSVF 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 SSVF grantee must notify the police or another appropriate authority.

Required Training

The SSVF Program Office requires all SSVF grantee staff to be trained annually in S.A.V.E, a suicide prevention training from the VA. Staff should first 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. Additional suicide prevention resources can be found on the [VA website](#).

6.1.3.1. Confidentiality

- The SSVF Program Office requires SSVF grantees and subcontractors to maintain confidentiality of records kept on participant households. Grantees must ensure that patient records are secured, or if electronic, that all such information is password protected and that any documentation pertaining to victim status, victim emergency transfer requests, or victim location are kept confidential.
- SSVF grantees must comply with all applicable federal and local laws to assure the confidentiality and security of participants' physical and electronic records. Furthermore, SSVF grantees must ensure the security of records such that computer systems are equipped with technologies (such as encryption, strong passwords, and biometrics) to prevent unauthorized use. SSVF grantees must keep participant information private and are required to obtain signed releases of information for any third party to which the SSVF grantee speaks on the participant's behalf when discussing personal information such as name and other details.
- **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)** protocols include standards for the privacy and security of information entered into HMIS. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) developed these standards based on Health Insurance and Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) standards for securing and protecting participant 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 participants experiencing homelessness for 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 baseline HUD standards and with federal, state, and local laws that require additional confidentiality protections.

- ▶ SSVF 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 participants' PPI (such as names, social security numbers, dates of birth) 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](#).
- It is important that SSVF grantees assess their privacy and security policies at least annually in order to ensure the highest level of protection of participant information. SSVF 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 require unrestricted access (read-only) to participant case files and related documents. [Information Security Self-Assessment – FY 2015](#)

6.1.4. Documentation and Reporting

6.1.4.1. Conflict of Interest

The SSVF Program Office requires that organizations operating an SSVF grant maintain conflict-of-interest statements from their board members, updated on an annual basis. The purpose of the conflict-of-interest disclosures is to identify any personal or professional affiliations that could have the potential to influence or compromise a decision made by the agency or even the appearance of such influence. With the disclosures, the agency can identify these potential conflicts and recuse the board member from specific board decisions as needed.

6.1.4.2. Critical Incident Reporting

The SSVF Critical Incident process is used to report serious incidents to VA leadership. If an SSVF grantee is uncertain as to whether the Critical Incident requires SSVF Program Office notification, they should contact the SSVF Regional Coordinator. Critical Incidents reported to the SSVF Program Office must include a completed [Critical Incident Form](#)  on the SSVF website. Please note that the form should not contain any PPI and Veterans should be identified only by their HMIS ID.

Important Policy Consideration

The SSVF Program Office requires that SSVF grantees 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. An SSVF grantee must report all incidents that receive negative media attention to the SSVF Program Office. SSVF grantees 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 SSVF grantee has been made aware of the situation.

6.1.4.3. Repository Uploads

On a monthly basis, SSVF grantees must upload client-level SSVF data from the HMIS in which SSVF program data are managed to a secure SSVF HMIS Repository ("Repository") managed by VA. The SSVF Program Office requires monthly uploads within the first two (2) business days of each month to be considered on time. The SSVF Program Office may accept modified, corrected, and late uploads up to 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 should contain a complete data set reflecting grant program activity to date. The end date will always be the date on which the SSVF 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.

The VA Data Guide provides comprehensive guidance on HMIS setup for SSVF grants, data collection and data quality requirements, reporting, and other data-related topics to assist SSVF grantees and subgrantees with meeting data collection requirements. SSVF grantees should develop a Data Quality Plan consistent with their CoC's data quality plan to include completeness, timeliness, and accuracy of HMIS data. The plan should also identify details on staff responsibility such as timelines for data entry and HMIS Repository uploads, and ongoing quality assurance procedures. If an SSVF grantee's HMIS does not allow for data fields included in the [VA Data Guide](#), the SSVF grantee should reach out to their HMIS administrator.

The VA Data Guide also 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 refer to the most recent [VA Data Guide](#) on the SSVF website.

- The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) prohibits programs whose primary mission is to serve victims of **domestic violence** from entering participant data into HMIS;



these programs must use a comparable database instead. The SSVF Program Office requires all other SSVF grantees to collect and enter accurate and complete data for 100% of SSVF participants into HMIS.

6.1.5. Subcontractor Management

SSVF grantees may subcontract with third-party vendors for a variety of services as determined by their agency and outlined in their grant agreement. Each subcontracted relationship must have an Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place prior to any service provision by the third party. Each Agreement/MOU must be signed by both parties and must include descriptions of the type of activities that the subcontractor will perform; a statement about amending the agreement; and the period of performance. Additionally, the SSVF 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 SSVF grantee and a description of the monitoring practices (i.e., how often, in what format). SSVF grantees are responsible for ensuring that subcontractors are held to the same standards as the SSVF grantee regarding compliance with the Final Rule and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars. SSVF grantees are responsible for the monitoring and oversight of subcontractors and must provide documentation of this monitoring and oversight during the SSVF grantee biannual Financial and Operational Fitness Audit (FOFA). SSVF grantees must assess subcontractor performance at least 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 the SSVF grantee with the SSVF policies and procedures that will be reviewed during the biannual FOFA.

6.2. Fiscal Administration

SSVF grantees must ensure programmatic costs are in compliance with applicable OMB circulars, the SSVF Program Final Rule, and the NOFA under which they received their award. The SSVF Program Office utilizes the HHS Payment Management System (PMS) to systematically document the disbursement of SSVF program funds and to ensure effective management of program activities, as well as timely and accurate financial reporting. The Payment Data Inquiry within the HHS PMS lists all account transactions for the organization and can be customized by date and specific grant account. An SSVF grantee can print the report and provide it to VA's Office of Business Oversight (OBO). OBO monitors grant accountability by performing fiscal audits for selected SSVF grantees, ensuring adequate fiscal and operational controls.

The SSVF program requires all staff working in SSVF to review the [Fraud, Waste, and Abuse SSVF Webinar](#) each fiscal year.

Important Regulation

SSVF grantees expending \$1 million or more in federal awards during their fiscal year must meet 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 SSVF grantee shall submit the single audit to the [Federal Audit Clearinghouse](#) within nine (9) months of the end of the fiscal year. SSVF grantees that are not over the \$1 million threshold cannot use SSVF funds for an audit and the SSVF Program Office does not require them to complete a single audit.

6.2.1. HHS PMS Disbursement Platform

Supportive services grant funds are disbursed via the HHS PMS, an internet-based system supported by staff of the HHS Division of Payment Management.

6.2.1.1. PMS Registration

a. Initial PMS Registration

The SSVF Program Office requires new SSVF grantees to register in the PMS to draw down supportive services grant funds. To become registered users in the system, SSVF grantees should visit the [PMS website](#) to request access. As part of the online access process, SSVF grantees need to upload an [SF-1199A](#). The SF-1199A provides the SSVF grantee's banking information to have funds electronically transmitted to the SSVF grantee's banking institution. The SSVF Program Office requires users of the PMS to annually self-certify that they are authorized to use PMS and that they will use it in accordance with federal rules and regulations.

b. Finalizing PMS Registration

To complete the PMS registration, an SSVF grantee must upload the SF-1199A to the PMS system after user access is granted. Once received by the PMS, SSVF grantee registration takes approximately one (1) to three (3) weeks to finalize. Once registered, the SSVF grantee can access the system to submit drawdown requests, track past drawdown transactions, and view the SSVF grantee's remaining available funds. SSVF grantees can have up to six (6) user accounts. PMS categorizes the SSVF grant funds as a Type B account. Email is the primary source of communication with PMS. The PMS assigns a liaison for each SSVF grantee. SSVF grantees must ensure PMS users keep email addresses current to receive timely information.



c. Current Users

Current HHS PMS account users should use their existing username and password to access the SSVF grant account.

d. Change of PMS Information

If an SSVF 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. SSVF 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 SSVF grantee must access the same user access link noted above.

6.2.2. Eligible Expenses

Important Regulation

Eligible expenses must be in accordance with the applicable Federal Cost Principles set forth in [2 CFR 200 Subpart E – Cost Principles](#).

Payment of SSVF grant funds will be made only for appropriately documented eligible expenses that are allowable, allocable, and reasonable costs of operating a program under the SSVF grant. Additionally, expenses must be eligible per the SSVF grantee's approved SSVF budget and within budget limitations specified in the grant agreement. Non-compliance or deviation from allocable allowable costs could result in an enhanced audit approach requiring additional review and testing. Amounts in question may be subject to recoupment.

6.2.2.1. Administrative Costs (10% Maximum)

Important Regulation

Per [38 CFR Part 62.70](#), the Uniform Administrative Requirements defines administrative costs as all direct and indirect costs associated with the management of the program.

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 low-income



Veteran families who are **occupying permanent housing**. A maximum of 10% of supportive services grant funds may be used for administrative costs. These costs include the administrative costs, both direct and indirect, of subcontractors as well. SSVF requires grantees to provide supporting documentation (payroll records, invoices, receipts, etc.) for all costs and expenses associated with the administration of the SSVF grant.

Important Regulation

Title [2 CFR 200.302](#) requires that 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.”

At initial budget submission, the SSVF grantee must choose which of three (3) methods will be used to calculate and document administrative costs. Regardless of the method used, administrative costs must be segregated in the General Ledger (GL) and are capped at 10%.

6.2.2.2. SSVF Administrative Cost Methods

a. Traditional Administrative

- Administrative costs are detailed in the administrative section of an SSVF grant program budget. The administrative section will include separate line items for each cost category.
- The SSVF Program Office requires grantees to maintain detailed records and supporting documentation of the itemized administrative expenses.

b. De minimis

- Simplified option to use in charging indirect admin costs.
- The de minimis rate is the percentage of the Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) that can be used by SSVF grantees that do not have a negotiated Indirect Cost Agreement. This approach allows a grantee to apply a flat 10% rate to a designated base of direct costs. This method avoids the need to document and negotiate an indirect cost rate with a cognizant federal agency or pass-through entity.
- Programs that choose the de minimis option must use the rate consistently for all federal awards until the organization chooses to negotiate its own indirect cost rate.
- No documentation is required to justify the 10% [de minimis](#) indirect cost rate.

Occupying permanent housing –

A low-income Veteran household will be considered to be occupying permanent housing if they are:

- (1) Residing in permanent housing and at risk of becoming literally homeless without assistance from the SSVF grantee;
- (2) Literally homeless, at risk of remaining so without assistance from the SSVF grantee, and scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days pending the location or development of a suitable unit; or
- (3) Literally homeless after exiting permanent housing within the previous 90 days to seek other housing that is responsive to their needs and preferences.



- A modified total direct cost calculation worksheet (MTDC) must be completed to support the ongoing amount calculated via the MTDC worksheet and made available during the FOFA.

c. Indirect Cost Rate (ICR)

- An SSVF grantee establishes an indirect cost rate on the basis of a federally approved indirect cost rate proposal and supporting documentation submitted by the organization.
- An indirect cost rate is simply a device for determining fairly and conveniently, within the boundaries of sound administrative principles, the proportion of indirect cost that each program should bear.
- An indirect cost rate is the ratio between the total indirect expenses and some direct cost base.
- The cognizant agency for indirect costs is the federal agency that is responsible for establishing cost allocation plans or indirect cost proposals on behalf of all federal agencies ([2 CFR 200.1](#)). The cognizant agency for indirect costs is typically the federal awarding agency that provides the largest amount of direct funding (as listed on the schedule of expenditures of federal awards, see [2 CFR 200.510\(b\)](#)) to a non-federal entity unless OMB designates a specific cognizant agency for audit.
- Organizations must apply for a negotiated ICR and receive an Indirect Cost Certification from VA.
- Organizations must prepare and submit the Indirect Cost Proposal within 90 days of the start of the fiscal year budget period.
- Grantee must submit an [indirect cost rate](#) (ICR) proposal to VA to negotiate its indirect rate.
- OMB caps the ICR rate at 10%.
- SSVF will provide guidance on submitting a negotiated ICR through VA.
- If VA is not the organization's cognizant federal agency, the organization must submit an approved and active ICR proposal to VA.

Once grantees choose an administrative cost method, they will receive additional guidance on the process and submission of their program budget. Questions may be emailed to vaobossvfadmincost@va.gov.



6.2.3. Ineligible Expenses

Important Regulation

The SSVF Program Office encourages SSVF grantees to read from [2 CFR 200 Subpart E – Cost Principles](#).

Ineligible expenses are those that VA determines to be unallowable based on applicable federal cost principles, SSVF program regulations, or the SSVF grant agreement.

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 Edition
- 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, or 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 Cost)
- Pet care, including additional deposit for pet
- Entertainment activities
- Direct cash assistance to program participants
- Purchase of gift cards for program participants (may be allowable for Returning Home)
- Court-ordered judgments or fines (Note that late rent fees are an allowable expense)
- Court-ordered fees related to a court order/adjudication
- Petty cash for program staff



The SSVF Program Office does not allow bulk purchases of items, unless each item is necessary for a specific identified Veteran family at the time of purchase. Any Temporary Financial Assistance purchases 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 buy each item as needed or purchase items in bulk with other agency funds and reimburse itself as SSVF Veteran family needs arise.

SSVF grantees may not release funds directly to the participant. SSVF grantees must issue all funds to a third party such as a landlord or utility company.

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

6.2.4.1. Supportive Services

a. Outreach

Eligible expenses associated with providing outreach services may include costs such as outreach staff time, and 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. The SSVF Program Office encourages SSVF grantees 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 SSVF 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.

The SSVF Program Office encourages SSVF grantees to solicit donations from 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 the cost of branding items with an SSVF or organization logo. 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
- Menstrual products



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

Ineligible items include but are not limited to trucker hats, beanies, gloves, scarves, flashlights, sweatshirts, hoodies, jackets, key chains, pins, lanyards, pens, and buttons.

Important Regulation

The Uniform Administrative Requirements ([2 CFR 200](#)) require any article of clothing for employee identification used during outreach to meet the criteria for "Uniforms." The SSVF grantee must evaluate clothing for outreach to ensure which employee is receiving the clothing, the need for the clothing for each employee, and how the item contributes to outreach activities for Veterans or staff (identify SSVF and reflect the number of employees dedicated to SSVF activities).

b. Advertising, Marketing, and Public Relations

As advertising, marketing, and public relations costs do not directly provide benefit to Veteran households experiencing or at risk of experiencing literal homelessness, SSVF grantees must carefully plan and target expenditures in this area 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.
- Program outreach and other specific purposes necessary to meet the requirements of the federal award.

SSVF grantees must ensure care is 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” includes 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:

- An SSVF grantee engages in traditional staff-driven methods of outreach but target numbers are still unmet.
- An SSVF grantee performs an assessment to ensure chosen marketing method will be effective.
- An SSVF grantee makes a comparison between effectiveness of staff outreach versus marketing.
- An SSVF grantee takes care to advertise or market the SSVF program itself and if combining with other agency programs, ensures that the appropriate allocation methods are applied and documented to support expenses.
- An SSVF grantee designs marketing to ensure effectiveness in connecting Veterans to SSVF.
- An SSVF grantee must develop an “SSVF Cost-Benefit Analysis for Advertising and Marketing” packet to document compliance efforts and address the requirements for both Advertising and Marketing listed above.

SSVF 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, the 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.
- The promotion of 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 maintaining contact with news media and public relations officers, limited to communication and liaison activities 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:

- All advertising and public relations costs other than as specified in the paragraphs on reasonableness and unallowable costs under the [Compensation section](#) 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.

c. Case Management and Other Supportive Services

Eligible expenses include those associated with providing case management and other supportive services (health care 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.

d. Temporary Financial Assistance

Important Regulation

A Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) payment made on behalf of a program participant must help the participant obtain or remain in permanent housing and must meet all other requirements set forth in 38 CFR 62.33 and 38 CFR 62.34.

Additionally, TFA must comply with the limitations set out in [38 CFR 62.33](#) and [38 CFR 62.34](#).

Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) payments should augment the SSVF grantee's program by supporting the housing stability of participants and should not consume a disproportionate portion of grant funds. SSVF grantees must ensure that TFA payments do not exceed the percentage of total grant funds established in the NOFA.



TFA must be paid to a third party on behalf of a participant. TFA must never be paid directly to a participant. SSVF 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 legal owner of a property, gathering property management agreements, and other methods. SSVF grantees must also ensure that suitable internal checks are in place to prevent payments to vendors where a conflict of interest exists; for instance, referrals should not be made to vendors who have familial relationships to employees or board members of the SSVF grantee.

Payments cannot be made on behalf of a participant for the same period and for the same costs that are being provided to the participant through another federal, state, or local subsidy program.

SSVF grantees should maintain records that justify the provision of TFA payments. Such records should include the details and documentation of the payment as well as the participant's *housing stability plan*. This housing stability plan must justify the provision of the TFA 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.

e. Other Supportive Services

In accordance with SSVF grantees' grant agreements or otherwise approved by VA, SSVF grantees may provide other supportive services.

6.2.4.2. Documentation Required

All expenses must be properly classified by expense category (i.e., they should mirror the 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, which often result in discrepancies in data between the accounting department and the operational team. SSVF 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.

6.2.5. Staff Compensation, Benefits, and Travel

Compensation for personnel services includes all remuneration, paid currently or accrued, for services rendered by employees during the period of performance under the federal award, including but not necessarily limited to wages and salaries. Compensation for personnel services may also include fringe benefits. Costs of compensation are allow-



able to the extent that they satisfy the specific requirements of this part, and that the total compensation for individual employees meets these two conditions:

- The compensation 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.
- The compensation for a hire is made in accordance with a non-federal entity's laws, rules, and written policies and meets the requirements of federal statute, where applicable.

a. Reasonableness

The SSVF Program Office considers compensation for employees engaged in work on federal awards 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, the SSVF Program Office considers compensation 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.

b. Special Considerations

The SSVF Program Office will give special considerations in determining allowability of compensation 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.

c. Incentive Compensation

Agency policy may include incentive compensation to SSVF employees based on cost reduction or efficient performance, suggestion awards, safety awards, etc. Such compensation 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.

d. 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 personnel 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.

e. Overtime Pay

The SSVF Program Office authorizes SSVF grantees to use overtime pay for staff as needed without prior approval from the SSVF Program Office. The SSVF Office requires overtime pay to be used in accordance with federal, state, or local laws, whichever is most favorable to employees. The SSVF Program Office defines overtime pay as the amount of time someone works beyond normal working hours.

Please note that the use of overtime pay is an agency decision and is not subject to SSVF Program Office approval. The use of overtime will not impact grantee funding levels and must be used within the current existing approved budget. Agencies should develop and follow internal policies and procedures. The SSVF Program Office will not consider individual agency overtime plans and will refer questions on use of overtime to federal, state, or local laws.

f. SSVF Travel Costs Related to Training

The SSVF Program Office allows travel 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 auditors and other government stakeholders routinely examine these costs to determine the reason and scope of the travel. SSVF grantees must be prudent with all funds and must be mindful of how travel costs may be perceived. SSVF 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. If several staff are sent to national conferences focusing on ending homelessness more broadly, SSVF grantees should divide this cost with other programs/funding streams within their agency to which some of the staff members may have time allocated. SSVF grantees should consider current resources, the SSVF website, local VA resources like the S.A.V.E. training for suicide prevention, and other local or free trainings before expending funds on external training. The SSVF grantee should consider the use of teleconferences for any meeting before travel funds are used. The SSVF Program Office requires the SSVF grantee to document in their files how the travel directly benefits or relates to the SSVF grant and project. All travel and training expenses must adhere to federal travel regulations. Staff travel per diem expense reimbursement is allowable if it meets current reimbursement standards as outlined by the General Services Administration (GSA).

SSVF grantees are required to attend VA-mandated training sessions. The SSVF Program Office and its technical assistance providers conduct these trainings. The SSVF Program Office emails information on training, including eligible training expenses, to SSVF grantees. The SSVF Program Office provides these VA-mandated trainings at no cost to SSVF grantees. As a reminder, a budgeted line item for Training/Conference expenses for non-VA-mandated training cannot exceed 1% of grant award. 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 training costs.

g. 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 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 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 conflict-of-interest terms and conditions of the federal award, appropriate arrangements governing compensation will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

6.2.5.1. Documentation Required

Documentation of employee time must conform to the non-federal entity's written policies, be reasonable, and meet the following 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 a 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. A responsible official of the organization must approve all payroll documentation.



6.2.6. Grant Drawdown Process

6.2.6.1. Payment Requests

SSVF grantees must access PMS via the [PMS website](#) to draw down SSVF program grant funds. The PMS offers a [New User Guide](#) 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.

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

6.2.6.2. Overview of Disbursement

SSVF grantees may draw down supportive services grant funds via the internet-based PMS in accordance with any restrictions defined in the NOFA. SSVF grantees submit drawdown requests which are processed online via the request functions of the PMS platform. Once a drawdown request is submitted, the PMS system completes the disbursement by electronic funds transfer to the SSVF grantee's bank account the following business day. SSVF grantees have three days to expend funds that are drawn down from the HHS system. If funds are not expended within three days, the SSVF grantee must contact the SSVF Program Office to plan for paying interest on those funds. SSVF grantees must spend 90% of grant funds on supportive services, including Temporary Financial Assistance. The SSVF grant program allows SSVF grantees to spend a maximum of 10% for administrative costs. It is incumbent on the SSVF grantee to track all expenditures according to the approved budget on file with the SSVF Program Office. To meet obligations for spending SSVF funds and to ensure effective and efficient grant expenditure, the SSVF Program Office restricts grant drawdowns to the following quarterly maximums:

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

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

Please refer to the following section for additional information related to quarterly spending milestones.

6.2.7. Funding Sweeps

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

6.2.8. Financial End of Year Closeouts

Important Regulation

Under [38 CFR 62.71](#), SSVF grantees are required to comply with VA reporting procedures.

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

The SSVF Program Office requires SSVF grantees to complete the FFR (SF-425) in the PMS. The FFR is a single form that consolidates the Financial Status Report and the Federal Cash Transaction Report, and the PMS has an 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 PMS categorizes SSVF grant funds as Type B accounts. The PMS does not require SSVF grantees to submit quarterly cash transaction reports. SSVF grantees must ensure the FFR Financial Status Report is submitted in PMS on time. If PMS does not receive the report by the due date (within 45 days of grant end date), the PMS may not release any other SSVF grant funds related to the SSVF grantee's account until the SSVF grantee completes the report. For SSVF, the reporting period end date is the same as the end date of the project or grant period. SSVF grantees that receive an extension from the SSVF Program Office shall use 45 days from the date the extension ends.

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

6.2.9. Mentorship Opportunities

The SSVF Program Office provides training and mentorship opportunities to support appropriate utilization and execution of the SSVF grant. "Mentor Sites" are SSVF grantees that have effectively developed interventions that successfully meet VA's goals of preventing and ending homelessness. The SSVF Program Office assigns Mentor Sites to work with new SSVF grantees and also with SSVF grantees that have a turnover in leadership and need to accelerate their skill development and knowledge acquisition of the SSVF program. The SSVF Program Office encourages SSVF grantees to have a program manager schedule an onsite visit at their assigned Mentor Site to observe how that program organizes and delivers SSVF services. By shadowing key Mentor Site SSVF staff, SSVF grantees will be better able to apply formal training and quickly organize effective and productive services upon return to their home agency.



6.2.10. Program Remediation Process

The SSVF Program Office's program remediation process includes:

6.2.10.1. Corrective Actions

Important Regulation

In accordance with [38 CFR 62.60\(b\)](#), if an SSVF grantee's actual SSVF grant expenditures differ from the amount disbursed for a given quarter, or if actual SSVF activities are different from the SSVF grantee's program description provided in the grant agreement, the SSVF Program Office may require that the SSVF grantee initiate, develop, and submit to VA for approval a Corrective Action Plan (CAP).

If the CAP is not approved, the SSVF Program Office will make helpful suggestions to improve the proposed CAP and request resubmission, or take other actions in accordance with [38 CFR Part 62](#).

The SSVF Program Office assesses activities according to targets established in the grant agreement, requirements for the use of Temporary Financial Assistance, and mandated SSVF data reporting requirements. If the SSVF Program Office requests a CAP, the CAP must identify the expenditure or activity source that did not match these standards, describe the reason(s) for the difference, provide specific proposed corrective action(s), and provide a timetable for accomplishment of the corrective action. After receipt of the CAP, the SSVF Program Office will send written notification to the SSVF grantee indicating whether or not the CAP is approved.

6.2.10.2. Allegations of Impropriety

The SSVF Program Office will immediately address any and all allegations of impropriety by the SSVF grantee, staff, or participant households and document these allegations through the use of the appropriate VA mechanism (i.e., SSVF Program Office or Office of Inspector General [OIG]).

- i. Contact the SSVF Program Office via email at SSVF@va.gov.
- ii. Contact the VA Office of the Inspector General at 1-800-488-8244 or email vaoighotline@va.gov.



6.2.10.3. *Withholding and Suspension of Funds*

Important Regulation

In accordance with [38 CFR 62.80](#), when an SSVF grantee fails to comply with the terms, conditions, or standards of the SSVF grant, the SSVF Program Office may, with seven days' notice to the SSVF grantee, withhold further payment, suspend the SSVF grant, or prohibit the SSVF grantee from incurring additional obligations of SSVF grant funds, pending corrective action by the SSVF grantee or a decision to terminate.

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."

The SSVF Program Office will allow all necessary and proper costs that the SSVF grantee could not reasonably avoid during a period of **suspension** if such costs meet the provisions of the applicable Federal Cost Principles.

6.2.10.4. *Funding Recovery and Appeals Process*

The SSVF Program Office 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. The SSVF Program Office issues a Notice of Intent to Recover Supportive Services grant funds to the SSVF grantee to recover recoupable questioned funds. The notice outlines the aspects of the SSVF grantee's program that are not in compliance with [38 CFR Part 62](#) and indicates that VA will recover SSVF grant funds. The SSVF grantee has 30 days upon receipt of this notice 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 SSVF grantee and may, if necessary, request additional information.
- iii. The VA Debt Management Center will manage the final disposition of the debt.

6.2.10.5. *SSVF Grant Termination*

The SSVF Program Office may terminate an SSVF grant in accordance with [38 CFR 62.80](#) if any of the following three conditions applies:

- i. By the SSVF Program Office, if an SSVF grantee materially fails to comply with the terms and conditions of an SSVF grant award and of [38 CFR Part 62](#) and [2 CFR Part 200](#).
- ii. By the SSVF Program Office with the consent of the SSVF grantee, in which case the SSVF Program Office and the SSVF grantee agree upon the termination conditions, including the effective date and, in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated.



- iii. By an SSVF 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 the SSVF Program Office determines that the remaining portion of the SSVF grant will not accomplish the purposes for which the grant was made, the SSVF Program Office may terminate the grant in its entirety.)

6.2.10.6. *Deobligation of Funds*

Important Regulation

At its discretion, in accordance with [38 CFR 62.80](#), the SSVF Program Office may readvertise in a NOFA the availability of funds that have been deobligated, or award deobligated funds to applicants who previously submitted applications in response to the most recently published NOFA.

The SSVF Program Office may deobligate all or a portion of the amounts approved for use by an SSVF 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. The SSVF grantee has not expended such amounts within a 1-year period from the date of the signing of the SSVF grant agreement; or
- iii. Other circumstances described in the SSVF grant agreement authorize or require deobligation.

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

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7 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 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.



General Category	Description
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	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: 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 <u>dependents</u> 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	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.



General Category	Description
8. Self-Sufficiency Program Income (cont.)	d. Amounts received under a resident service stipend. A resident service stipend is a modest amount (not to exceed \$200 per month) received by 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. 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. f. 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.
9. Other Non-Recurring Income	Temporary, non-recurring, or sporadic income (including gifts).
10. Reparations	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.
11. Income from Full-time Students	Annual earnings in excess of \$480 for each full-time student 18 years old or older (excluding the head of household or spouse).
12. Adoption Assistance Payments	Adoption assistance payments in excess of \$480 annually per adopted child.
13. Social Security & SSI Income	Deferred periodic amounts from SSI and Social Security benefits that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts.
14. VA Disability Compensation Income	Deferred periodic amounts from VA Disability Compensation (Service Connected Benefits) that are received in a lump sum amount or in prospective monthly amounts.

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	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: ▪ 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.); ▪ 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;



General Category	Description
17. Other Federal Exclusions (cont.)	■ 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 Eligibility 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)	- Obtain copy(ies) of most recent pay stub(s) from participant. - Include copy(ies) in participant file.
		OR Written verification of income	OR - 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: - 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
Wages and Salary, etc. <i>(cont.)</i>	Yes	OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i> Oral verification of income	OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i> ▪ 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: ▶ 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.
		OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i> Self-declaration of income	OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i> ▪ Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: ▶ 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
Self-Employment/ Business Income ¹	Yes	Copy of most recent federal or state tax return showing net business income	- Obtain copy of most recent federal or state tax return from the participant. - Include copy in participant file.
		OR <i>(if written documentation cannot be obtained)</i> Self-declaration of income	OR <i>(if written documentation cannot be obtained)</i> - Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: - 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.
		OR Copy of most recent federal or state tax return showing interest, dividend or other net income	OR - Obtain copy of most recent federal or state tax return from the participant. - Include copy in participant file.

1. 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.

Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
Interest and Dividend Income <i>(cont.)</i>	Yes	OR <i>(if written documentation cannot be obtained)</i> Self-declaration of income	OR <i>(if written documentation cannot be obtained)</i> - Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: - 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	- 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
Pension/ Retirement Income (cont.)	Yes	OR <i>(if written documentation cannot be obtained)</i> Written verification of income	OR <i>(if written documentation cannot be obtained)</i> - 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: - 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.
		OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i> Oral verification of income	OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i> - 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: - 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.



Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
Pension/ Retirement Income <i>(cont.)</i>	Yes	OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i> Self-declaration of income	OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i> - Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: - 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	- 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
Unemployment and Disability Income (cont.)	Yes	OR Written verification of income	OR - 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: - 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.
		OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i> Oral verification of income	OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i> - 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: - 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
Unemployment and Disability Income (cont.)	Yes	OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i> Self-declaration of income	OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i> - Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: - 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	- Obtain copy(ies) of most recent benefit notice(s) or payment statement(s) from participant. - Include copy(ies) in participant file.
		OR Written verification of income	OR - 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: - 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.



Type of Income	Include in Income Calculation?	Acceptable Types of Documentation	Documentation Standards
TANF/ Public Assistance (cont.)	Yes	OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i> Oral verification of income	OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i> ■ 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: ▶ 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.
		OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i> Self-declaration of income	OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i> ■ Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: ▶ 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
Alimony, Child Support Payments	Yes	Copy of most recent alimony and/or child support or other contributions or gift payment statements, notice, or order	- 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.
		OR Written verification of income	OR - 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: - 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.
		OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i> Oral verification of income	OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i> - 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: - 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
Alimony, Child Support Payments (cont.)	Yes	OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i> Self-declaration of income	OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i> - Obtain signed and dated original self- declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: - 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.
Armed Forces Income	Yes	Copy of pay stubs, payment statement, or other government issued statement indicating income amount	- Obtain copy(ies) of most recent payment stub(s), statement(s), or other government issued statement from participant. - Include copy(ies) in participant file.
		OR Written verification of income	OR - 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: - 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
Armed Forces Income (cont.)	Yes	OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i> Oral verification of income	OR <i>(if written third-party documentation cannot be obtained)</i> ▪ 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: ▶ 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.
		OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i> Self-declaration of income	OR <i>(if written documentation or oral third-party verification cannot be obtained)</i> ▪ Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: ▶ 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
No Income Reported	N/A	Self-declaration of income	- Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration of income from participant. At a minimum, self-declaration should include the following: - 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.

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
Other Subsequent Housing Options	Assessment form or other documentation (e.g., case notes) of housing options by SSVF case manager or other authorized SSVF staff	■ 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.
Financial Resources and Support Networks	Assessment form or other documentation (e.g., case notes) of financial resources and support networks by SSVF case manager or other authorized SSVF staff	■ 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. ▶ 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.



3. Occupying Permanent Housing Category 1 Eligibility Documentation

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation (in order of preference)	Documentation Standards
Rented by Participant <i>(Potential loss of housing due to non-payment of rent)</i>	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 AND Copy of written lease; Oral lease (if all that exists) only to verify housing status	- 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.



Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation (in order of preference)	Documentation Standards
Rented by Participant OR Other Housing Occupied by Participant without Paying Rent (including housing shared with friends or family) <i>(Potential loss of housing due to foreclosure on rental property)</i>	Copy of notice indicating building in which participant is renting or otherwise residing is being foreclosed on within 30 days AND Copy of written lease; Oral lease (if all that exists) only to verify housing status OR Copy of written lease between the owner and host family/friend	▪ 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. ▪ Lease should: ▶ Identify the payee, 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. ▪ Foreclosure Notice should: ▶ 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



Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation (in order of preference)	Documentation Standards
Other Housing Occupied by Participant without Paying Rent (including housing shared with friends or family) <i>(Potential loss of housing due to housing termination by host family/friend)</i>	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 AND Copy of written lease between the owner and host family/friend; oral lease if all that exists only for verification of housing status	- Obtain copy of notice that terminates housing or eviction letter (typed or handwritten) AND copy of lease. - Leases should: - 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: - 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.
Rented by Participant OR Other Housing Occupied by Participant without Paying Rent (including housing shared with friends/family) <i>(Potential loss of housing due to uninhabitable conditions)</i>	Copy of notice from landlord/property manager, public health, code enforcement, fire marshal, child welfare or other government entity that housing is condemned AND Copy of written lease; oral lease if all that exists only for verification of housing status	- Obtain copy of notice (may include notice published in local newspaper or government jurisdiction's website) AND copy of lease. - Lease should: - 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. - Notice should: - 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.

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
Owned by Participant	Copy of deed or mortgage and if applicable, copy of foreclosure	▪ Obtain copy of deed or mortgage and if applicable, foreclosure notice. ▪ Foreclosure Notice should: ▶ 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 (in order of preference)	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	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 - Obtain HMIS record showing shelter stay concurrent with SSVF project entry date. - Include HMIS record in SSVF participant file.
	OR (if HMIS record cannot be obtained) Written literal homeless certification	OR (if HMIS record cannot be obtained) - 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: - 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
Sleeping in an Emergency Shelter <i>(cont.)</i>	OR <i>(if HMIS record and SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i> Emergency shelter provider letter	OR <i>(if HMIS record and SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i> - Obtain letter from emergency shelter provider. - Letter should: - 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.
	OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i> Self-declaration of literal homelessness	OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i> - 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.
Place Not Meant for Human Habitation <i>(e.g., cars, parks, abandoned buildings, streets/sidewalks)</i>	Written documen- tation that the Veteran family is scheduled to become a resident of permanent hous- ing within 90 days	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
Place Not Meant for Human Habitation (e.g., cars, parks, abandoned buildings, streets/sidewalks) <i>(cont.)</i>	AND Written literal homeless certification	AND - 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: - 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> - 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. - 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.

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) <i>(cont.)</i>	OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i> Self-declaration of literal homelessness	OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i> - 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 documen- tation that the Veteran family is scheduled to become a resident of permanent hous- ing within 90 days	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 Letter from hospital or other institution	AND - Obtain letter from hospital or other institution. - Letter should: - 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.



Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
Hospital or Other Institution (cont.)	AND <i>(to verify literal homeless status prior to hospital or other institution admission)</i> HMIS record of shelter stay (if previously sleep- ing in emergency shelter)	AND <i>(to verify literal homeless status prior to hospital or other institution admission)</i> - 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.
	OR <i>(if HMIS record cannot be obtained)</i> Written literal homeless certification	OR <i>(if HMIS record cannot be obtained)</i> - 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.
	OR <i>(if HMIS record or SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i> Emergency shelter provider or home- less street outreach provider letter (if previously sleep- ing in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation)	OR <i>(if HMIS record or SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i> - Obtain emergency shelter provider letter. - Letter should: - 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.

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
Hospital or Other Institution (cont.)	OR <i>(if HMIS record, SSVF Literally Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i> Self-declaration of literal homelessness	OR <i>(if HMIS record, SSVF Literally Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i> - 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.
Transitional Housing	Written documentation that the Veteran family is scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days	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
Transitional Housing <i>(cont.)</i>	AND Written literal homeless certification	AND ▪ 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: ▶ 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> ▪ Obtain letter from transitional housing provider. ▪ Letter should: ▶ 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.



Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
Transitional Housing (cont.)	OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i> Self-declaration of literal homelessness	OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i> - 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 forms. - Include self-declaration in participant file.
Fleeing/ Attempting to Flee a Domestic Violence Situation	Self-declaration	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 (in order of preference)	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	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 - Obtain HMIS record showing shelter stay concurrent with SSVF project entry date. - Include HMIS record in SSVF participant file.
	OR (if HMIS record cannot be obtained) Written literal homeless certification	OR (if HMIS record cannot be obtained) - 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: ▶ 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 (in order of preference)	Documentation Standards
Sleeping in an Emergency Shelter (cont.)	OR (if HMIS record and SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained) Emergency shelter provider letter	OR (if HMIS record and SSVF Literally Homeless Certification cannot be obtained) - Obtain letter from emergency shelter provider. - Letter should: - 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.
	OR (if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained) Self-declaration of literal homelessness	OR (if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained) - 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.
Place Not Meant for Human Habitation (e.g., cars, parks, abandoned buildings, streets/ sidewalks)	Written documentation of the participant's exit from permanent housing within 90 days	Obtain letter from previous landlord/ housing provider/friend/family member or SSVF staff certification or letter to the file.



Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation (in order of preference)	Documentation Standards
Place Not Meant for Human Habitation <i>(e.g., cars, parks, abandoned buildings, streets/sidewalks)</i> <i>(cont.)</i>	AND Written literal homeless certification	AND - 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: - 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> - 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. - 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.

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation (in order of preference)	Documentation Standards
Place Not Meant for Human Habitation <i>(e.g., cars, parks, abandoned buildings, streets/sidewalks)</i> <i>(cont.)</i>	OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i> Self-declaration of literal homelessness	OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i> - 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.
Hospital or Other Institution	Written documentation of the participant's exit from permanent housing within 90 days	- Obtain letter from previous landlord/housing provider/friend/family member or SSVF staff. - Include letter in participant file
	AND Letter from hospital or other institution	AND - Obtain letter from hospital or other institution. - Letter should: - 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.



Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation (in order of preference)	Documentation Standards
Hospital or Other Institution (cont.)	AND (to verify literal homeless status prior to hospital or other institution admission) HMIS record of shelter stay (if previously sleeping in emergency shelter)	AND (to verify literal homeless status prior to hospital or other institution admission) - 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.
	OR (if HMIS record cannot be obtained) Written literal homeless certification	OR (if HMIS record cannot be obtained) - 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.
	OR (if HMIS record or SSVF Homeless Certification cannot be obtained) Emergency shelter provider or homeless street outreach provider letter (if previously sleeping in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation)	OR (if HMIS record or SSVF Homeless Certification cannot be obtained) - Obtain emergency shelter provider letter. - Letter should: - 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.

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation (in order of preference)	Documentation Standards
Hospital or Other Institution (cont.)		OR (if HMIS record, SSVF Literally Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained) - 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.
Transitional Housing	Written documentation of exit from permanent housing within 90 days	- Obtain letter from previous landlord/housing provider/friend/family member or SSVF. - Include letter in participant file.
	AND Written literal homeless certification	AND - 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: - 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 (in order of preference)	Documentation Standards
Transitional Housing (cont.)	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> ▪ Obtain letter from transitional housing provider. ▪ Letter should: ▶ 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.
	OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i> Self-declaration of literal homelessness	OR <i>(if SSVF Literally Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i> ▪ 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.

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 with supportive services 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 re-housing 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.

2a. HUD-VASH Rapid Re-housing 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 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/grants-management/>

2b. 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.

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 Re-housing (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 re-housing 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/docs/SSVF_Program_Guide.pdf.

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.

VA



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of Veterans Affairs

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8

Glossary

Applicant – An eligible entity that submits an application for a supportive services grant announced in a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

Area Median Income (AMI) – A crucial measure in affordable housing. It is the midpoint of income distribution within a specific area, calculated annually by HUD.

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 low-income Veteran families.

Case Manager – Work to use various methods that address barriers faced by program participants in obtaining and keeping housing, including historical and systemic obstacles.

Consumer cooperative – See section 202 of the Housing Act of 1959 ([12 U.S.C. 1701q](#)).

Continuum of Care (CoC) – A group of organizations responsible for implementing the requirements outlined in the CoC program regulations, which are detailed in [24 CFR Part 578](#). This group is made up of representatives from various sectors, including nonprofit homeless providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, government agencies, businesses, advocates, public housing authorities, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, organizations that support Veterans with lived experience of homelessness, and individuals who have experienced homelessness. CoCs collectively represent the relevant parties in a specific geographic area.

Crisis Response – Consists of responding to the crisis of homelessness with urgency. It may include providing emergency housing assistance when no other options are available. It also includes same-day enrollment, trauma-informed services, and immediate linkages to permanent housing to end crisis.

Department of Defense Form DD-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 aligns 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 the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Note: A Veteran may identify adult dependents as part of their "household." These adult dependents may be served as part of the Veteran household, but for SSVF and HMIS reporting purposes, would not be reported as dependents.

Direct Services – Services that are provided directly by an SSVF grantee.

Domestic Violence – Refers to felonies or misdemeanors committed by the victim's current or former spouse or intimate partner under local family or domestic violence laws. It covers physical or sexual abuse, as well as any other coercive behaviors used to gain power and control over the victim. These include verbal, psychological, economic, and technological abuse that may not be criminal. The perpetrator could be a current or former spouse, an individual similar to a spouse, a person whose relationship with the victim was intimate, someone sharing a child with the victim, or someone who violates local family or domestic violence laws against a protected youth or adult victim.

Eligible childcare provider – Refers to 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 nonprofit 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 (EHA) – The provision of up to 60 days of temporary housing for a Veteran household 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 household whose annual income, in accordance with [24 CFR 5.609](#), does not exceed 30% 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 (GPD) Program – A federal program for Veterans. For complete details, visit <https://www.va.gov/homeless/gpd.asp>.

Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) – A federal program for Veterans. For complete details, visit <https://www.va.gov/homeless/hchv.asp>.

Health Care Navigation – Work with Veterans on a variety of issues to assist them in identifying and overcoming challenges to accessing the healthcare system or adhering to recommended health care plans.

Homeless – The “homeless” definition has the meaning given by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in [24 CFR 576.2](#).

Homeless, “Literally” – This definition is narrower than “Homeless.” SSVF rapid re-housing requires Veterans to be “literally homeless” in order to qualify. Therefore, all participants in SSVF rapid re-housing (categories 2 and 3) qualify under the “literally homeless” criteria. Veterans who are living in a situation known as “doubled up” or “couch surfing” in permanent housing, or otherwise living in permanent housing, would not be considered “literally homeless.” Note: People in this category may qualify for homelessness prevention services. In addition, households fleeing domestic violence should be considered homeless and served as rapid re-housing households.

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:
 - 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;
 - 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);
 - 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) – A system for collecting data on homeless individuals and families, as well as data on housing and services provided by a Continuum of Care, that conforms to HUD’s data collection, management, and reporting standards. Using HMIS allows a community to integrate and deduplicate data across projects. To understand the size, characteristics, needs, and trends of homeless



populations, HMIS data can be used at multiple levels: project, system, local, state, and national.

Homelessness Prevention – Help for Veterans and their families residing in permanent housing and at risk of becoming literally homeless without assistance from the SSVF grantee. See “[Occupying Permanent Housing](#)” category 1.

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) – A federal program for Veterans. For complete details, visit <https://www.va.gov/homeless/hud-vash.asp>.

Housing with supportive services – Refers to housing as a basic need that should be met as quickly as possible, without any preconditions such as income, sobriety or mental health treatment.

Housing Retention Barriers – Refers to barriers in a Veteran’s circumstances that may make maintaining housing more difficult.

Housing Stability Plan – Refers to a personalized plan tailored to Veterans’ strengths, barriers, and priorities in order to improve effective service delivery.

Indirect Services – Services that are provided through a referral to resource other than the SSVF grantee.

Low-income Veteran family – A Veteran household whose annual income, as determined in accordance with [24 CFR 5.609](#), does not exceed 80% of the median income for an area or community.

Needs Assessment – Refers to the careful examination of a household’s needs to ensure effective service delivery.

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) – A NOFO is published in the Federal Register in accordance with [38 CFR 62.40](#), which announces the availability of funds for supportive services grants. SSVF also shares the NOFO at Grants.gov and on the SSVF website.

Occupying Permanent Housing – A low-income Veteran household will be considered to be occupying permanent housing if they are:

(Category 1) Residing in permanent housing and at risk of becoming literally homeless without assistance from the SSVF grantee;

(Category 2) Literally homeless, at risk of remaining so without assistance from the SSVF grantee, and scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days pending the location or development of a suitable unit; or



(Category 3) Literally homeless after exiting permanent housing within the previous 90 days to seek other housing that is responsive to their needs and preferences.

Participant Household – A low-income Veteran household occupying permanent housing and receiving supportive services from an SSVF 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 housing or apartment with a month-to-month or annual lease term, or home ownership.

Private nonprofit organization – Any of the following:

- (1) An incorporated private institution or foundation that:
 - Has no part of the net earnings that inure to the benefit of any member, founder, contributor, or individual;
 - Has a governing board that is responsible for the operation of the supportive services provided under the SSVF grant; and
 - 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 – Help for Veterans and their families to transition from homelessness into permanent housing. Neither employment, income, criminal history, nor sobriety is a prerequisite for receiving rapid re-housing assistance. Participants receive individualized support services to facilitate a rapid move to permanent housing. Rapid re-housing consists of identifying housing, offering rent and move-in assistance, and providing case management and related services.

Rapid Resolution – SSVF services that promote housing problem solving strategies to assist Veterans in diverting or rapidly exiting 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 [38 CFR 62.30–62.34](#).

Supportive services grant – A grant awarded under the SSVF grant.

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."

Temporary financial assistance (TFA) – Refers to the financial assistance grantees may offer to Veteran household to support housing access and stabilization. TFA should not be the only services offered by a grantee and it should always be paired with case management services and part of collaborative developed housing stabilization plan.

Tenant screening barrier – Refers to barriers in a Veteran's history that could make it harder to find housing.

Trauma-informed – Recognizes how trauma affects individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, aiming to prevent re-traumatization.

VA – U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VBA – Veterans Benefits Administration

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 Choice – Veterans choose their housing goals, services, and living situations, within federal funding guidelines and market conditions.

Veteran family, or ***Veteran household*** – 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. The Veteran may define who is a part of their household. Self-declarations and intake worker observations are acceptable. Please note that proof of family status is not required but may serve as proof of household status. Eligibility is confirmed by reviewing both the character of discharge and type of service. The minimum duty requirements do not apply.

For the purposes of this guide, ***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 who are 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 adequate documentation 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.



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Colophon:

The SSVF Program Guide was set in Myriad Pro and Georgia in conformity with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs [Tier 1 Graphic Standards: Foundation for Brand Maintenance and Evolution](#) (VA Directive 0023).

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