



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration

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

## **Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) Workshop for Existing Grantees Only**

**February 2015**



## Allocation (Section “II. Award Information” of NOFA)

- \$300 million available for renewals
- No awards to new grantees
- No cap on grant sizes to allow for grant consolidation, expansion into unserved areas, and inflation
- Grants may be reduced electively or at VA discretion based on previous spending (i.e., if grant funds returned unspent)
- Inflation increase *may* be up to 2% if funding allows, will apply uniformly (do not include on submissions)

## Supportive Services Grant Award Period

- SSVF grants awarded for a one-year period for successful renewal grantees with less than 1 full year of previous operations (those who began services around October 1, 2014)
- Grantees with at least one full year of operational experience may be eligible for 3 year grant renewals



## Three Year Renewal Consideration

- Must have completed 1 *full* year of operations to qualify.
- Grantee demonstrated substantial compliance with grant agreement
- Grantee consistently met program targets including:
  1. Required proportion of resources for rapid re-housing
  2. Successful placement into or retention in permanent housing (allowances given for complexity)
  3. Appropriate expenditure of funding
  4. Timely compliance with data submission requirements, including HMIS uploads
  5. Satisfactorily resolving corrective actions plans

and



## Three Year Renewal Consideration

- SSVF Program gets full accreditation by either:
  1. The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) for Employment and Community Services – program accreditation for Employment & Community Services.
  2. The Council on Accreditation (COA) – organizational accreditation for Case Management.
  3. Joint Commission – standards on rapid re-housing and prevention to be announced.
- Cost for program (not organization, must pro-rate for COA) accreditation can be included as a budget expense.
- Accreditation process can take up to a year and may not be feasible prior to March 17. May want to consider beginning the process for next NOFA.
- For existing multi-year grantees in good standing (with at least one additional year of grant term), only need to submit intent form by March 17. If seeking expansion funding as per II.C.2 & 3, must still submit 1 page narrative and budget. SSVF Program Office will provide instructions directly to these SSVF grantees. Application submission is not required.



# Accreditation Contact Information

## CARF:

Pete Hathaway, Employment and Community Services

CARF International

6951 E. Southpoint Rd, Tucson, AZ 85756

Toll-Free: 888-281-6531, ext. 7113 or

Phone: 520-325-1044, ext. 7113

Fax: 520-495-7113

E-mail: [phathaway@carf.org](mailto:phathaway@carf.org); CARF Websites: <http://www.carf.org>

## COA:

Zoë Hutchinson

COA

Associate Director of Client Relations

Phone: 866-262-8088, ext. 242

Email: [zhutchinson@coanet.org](mailto:zhutchinson@coanet.org) ; COA's Website: <http://www.coanet.org>



## **Award Information described in Section II of the NOFA:**

- Eligibility requires program concept to remain “substantially the same” with current grant award.
- Potentially, grants could be renewed at the same level, a decreased level, or an increased level of funding.
- Renewal grant requests can seek increase of up to 2% without justifying increase (COLA). This is not to be request in budget submission. VA will apply, if funding available.
- Expansion funding is available if expanding into adjacent areas of existing grant **not currently served by a SSVF grantee**. Requested expansion cannot exceed 20% of current award and must be justified. Applicant will ask to submit narrative and separate “expansion” budget.



## **Funding is not automatic.**

- Application score must be at least 75 points.

## **Application must meet threshold requirements**

- Included in Executive Summary, Section B in renewal application

**Renewal applications are focused on program outcomes and implementation. Be sure answers focus on this, rather than the organizational experience and program concept that is typically described for new applications.**



# Why Target – What We Know

- “Prevention makes the most difference for those at highest risk. There is no level of risk that is too high.”\*
- Screening is two stage process, use data to refine stage two target
- Development of an instrument: use of risk factors to screen in those w/most acute risk, screen out those w/fewer risk factors
  - Serving smaller pool of families more intensively
  - Light touch (no TFA) case management now allowed at agency discretion for those at-risk who do not meet threshold.

\*NYC commissioned a study, *Understanding Family Homelessness*, (release date for 2012).



- Housing Specialists
- Legal Assistance
- Income through
  - Employment/vocational support
  - Benefits counseling and assistance such as SOAR
- Support for coordinated entry and assessment activities
- Access to health and mental health services for Veterans not eligible for VHA and family members



- TFA budget can be 50% of overall budget.
- Appropriate to ask for co-pays. Payments to third party only.
- Limitations on time and amounts described in Final Rule.
- It is very likely that proposed rule will be effective for all of FY 2016. Proposed Rule can be found on [www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp). *Consider when budgeting!*

## TFA Spending:

- *60% or more* must be spent on Rapid Re-Housing (serving categories 2 and 3)
- *A maximum* of 40% can be spent on prevention
- Waivers considered after one full year of operations and are based on VA gap analysis and progress in PIT



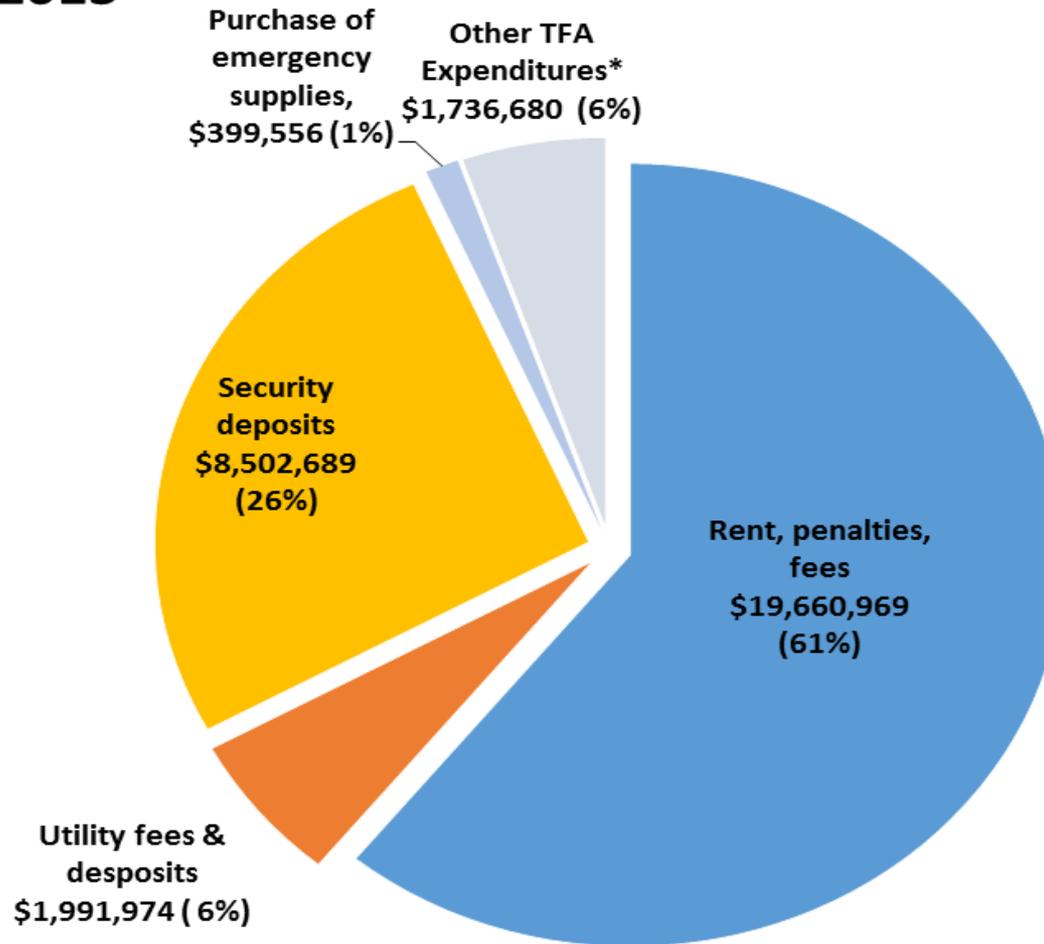
# SSVF Financial Assistance

Type of Temporary Financial Assistance	Time/Amount Limitation
Rental Assistance	Max. of 8 months in a 3-year period; no more than 5 months in any 12-month period
Utility-Fee Payment Assistance	Max. of 4 months in a 3-year period; no more than 2 months in any 12-month period
Security Deposits or Utility Deposits	Max. of 1 time in a 3-year period for security deposit; Max. of 1 time in a 3-year period for utility deposit
Moving Costs	Max. of 1 time in a 3-year period
General Housing Stability Assistance	Max. \$1500 during a 3-year period
Child Care	Max. of 4 months in a 12-month period
Emergency Housing	Max of 30 days – families with children under 18 only
Transportation	Tokens, vouchers, etc. – no time limit Car repairs/maintenance – \$1,000 max in 3-year period



# Budget Considerations: TFA Expenditures by Type

**FY 2013**



NOTE: Does not include new categories introduced in FY 14.

\*Other TFA Expenditures include transportation costs, moving costs, other costs as approved by the VA and Child Care. Each of these other expenditure types was less than 3% of total TFA costs in FY 2012-2013.



This NOFA includes two TFA areas not described in final Rule.

<b>Type of Temporary Financial Assistance</b>	<b>Time/Amount Limitation</b>
Emergency Housing Assistance*	Max. of 30 days of temporary housing when no space is available at community shelter, and where permanent housing has been identified and secured for participant but is not immediately available. Limited to families with children under the age of 18.
General Housing Stability Assistance*	Includes items necessary for participants life or safety (includes Emergency Supplies with max. \$500 during a 3-year period); expenses associated to employment gain or maintenance; expenses associated with moving into permanent housing; and expenses necessary for securing appropriate permanent housing.

\*See NOFA Section I.B. for additional requirements and restrictions. Expectation that single Veterans will use GPD or HCHV temporary housing.



## Payments of Supportive Services Grant Funds

- Payments will be made to grantees electronically via the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Payment Management System
- Grantees may request payments as frequently as they choose, subject to the following limitations:

<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Limitation on Cumulative Requests for Grant Funds</b>
During 1st Qtr of Grant Award Period	May not exceed 35% of the annual grant award without written approval by VA
End of 2nd Qtr of Grant Award Period	May not exceed 60% of the annual grant award without written approval by VA
End of 3rd Qtr of Grant Award Period	May not exceed 80% of the annual grant award without written approval by VA
End of 4th Qtr of Grant Award Period	May not exceed 100% of the annual grant award



## Scoring Criteria

Section	Points	Elements
A. Program Outcomes	55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Housing Stability</li><li>•Participant Satisfaction</li><li>•Program Timeline</li><li>•Homelessness Prevention</li><li>•Reduction in Homelessness</li></ul>
B. Cost-Effectiveness	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Cost per Household</li><li>•Program Budget</li></ul>
C. Compliance with Program Goals and Requirements	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•SSVF Program Goals</li><li>•Laws, Regulations, and Guidelines</li><li>•Grant Agreement</li></ul>



## DO:

- Apply using the new online application tool available at [www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp).

**Please Sign In**

- If you have an account, please log in using your E-mail Address and Password.
- To create an account, please use the "New Applicant" link found below.
- This grant application system uses the following email domain: ssvf@va.gov. Please add it to your safe-senders list to be sure you receive all communications.

E-mail  Password

[New Applicant?](#) [Forgot Password?](#)



Grantees can create an account and return later to finish applications.

### New Applicant?

An account allows you to access your saved and submitted applications at any time. It also allows us to send you a submission confirmation e-mail and notify you if additional information is necessary to process your application.

E-mail

Confirm E-mail

Password (must contain at least 5 characters, with both letters and numbers)

Confirm Password

[Return to login](#)



## DO:

- Focus on current grant performance
- Describe program's impact on homelessness
- Where performance could be improved, explain barriers to success and remediation efforts

If necessary, you may request a PDF copy of the application packet for paper submission at [SSVF@va.gov](mailto:SSVF@va.gov).



▪  
*DON'T:*

- Rewrite and/or re-justify original grant
- Spend time explaining need, unless proposing expansion
- Describe program concept, as existing program concept is understood
- Wait until March 17<sup>th</sup> to submit to VA!



Section A has highest point value, worth 55 points.

- The VA is funding these programs to end homelessness among Veterans so our primary focus is on outcomes.  
*What did you achieve?*
- Critical to provide answer with data demonstrating effectiveness in meeting objectives in grant proposal.

## *Explain results*

- Demonstrate program's effectiveness in reducing homelessness and promoting housing stability.
- Detail how proposed modifications will improve program interventions.



## *Section A: Program Outcomes*

- Ability to meet implementation timeline. Describe barriers to delayed implementation & remediation efforts. Be specific, *for example*, “Program coordinator resigned after 1 month, so...”
- Participant satisfaction. Describe feedback and efforts to improve service.
- Break down outcomes for prevention (question 4) and rapid re-housing (question 5).
- Describe how you are working within your CoC to coordinate services. What is your involvement in Coordinated Assessment/Entry efforts?



Section B is worth 30 points.

- Provide data demonstrating cost efficiency.
- Did you serve the number of participants you expected?
- If not, explain result and remediation efforts. *For example*, “Grant target was that 20% of all served would have AMI less than 30%, but we ended up serving 70% with AMI less than 30%, so...”
- **For question 2, the “Note” only applies to the second half of the question.** i.e. programs with at least one full year of operations.



## *Section B: Cost Effectiveness* *(continued)*

- Explain if program was not implemented according to approved budget (approved changes to the grant agreement do not need to be addressed).
  - **60/40 requirement to emphasize Category 2 & 3 (RRH), measured by TFA use, not households. Must still meet grant agreement targets for Priority 2 & 3.**
- Grantees should include estimated costs related to utilization of HMIS including system access and training, if necessary. HUD issued revised HMIS Standards for SSVF effective October 1, 2014. (Contact VA for technical assistance, if needed).



# *Section C: Compliance*

Section C is worth 15 points.

1. Did you meet grant requirements (serve target population, follow use of funding regulations, satisfy time criteria, deliver required services)?
2. Straightforward certification, but explain any issue.
3. Grant agreement, including your proposal, is part of overall compliance. Did you follow what you promised in your grant proposal? If not, explain deviation.



- Applications should be submitted electronically
- Only renewal applications accepted
- Opportunity to expand into adjacent, unserved areas. See instructions for separate narrative and budget requirement.
- Grants may be consolidated (VA will determine post-submission)
- Awards may be decreased based on previous spending
- Budget increases *may* allow for 2% increase (COLA)
- Available 3-year funding if meeting performance goals and CARF, COA, or Joint Commission accredited
- Need to describe participation in Coordinated Assessment/Entry
- May wish to modify budgeted line items based on need for impact services and/or upcoming implementation of revised SSVF Final Rule (optional)



**For questions regarding the renewal application and 2015 NOFA:**

**Email: [SSVF@VA.gov](mailto:SSVF@VA.gov)**

**Deadline for application submission is 4:00 PM Eastern Time on March 17, 2014.**