

Responding to the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA) for New and Returning Grantees

Q&A Fact Sheet UPDATED

The following questions were asked during or following teleconferences held by the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans' Technical Assistance Center on April 5, 2012 and April 10, 2012 for new applicants and on April 6, 2012 for current grantees in response to the publication of the HVRP SGA. All questions have been answered by the Technical Assistance Center using guidance in the SGA. On some questions, additional clarification will be provided by the Department of Labor-Veterans' Employment and Training Service (DOL-VETS) and is marked as such.

1. Can HVRP participants be simultaneously enrolled in employment services and with mental health partners (substance abuse, counseling, etc.), or does HVRP enrollment have to happen once these treatments have been completed?

Your assessment and intake process will need to show how your program will address the barriers to employment faced by program participants, including how potential participants are connected to supportive services, irrespective of whether or not they are enrolled in the program.

Additionally, as part of your participant flow chart, you will want to describe the supportive services that are part of your strategy to "promote, prepare, and improve" job readiness for your program participants. See p. 44 of the SGA for more details.

2. When is the HVRP application due?

The application is due April 30 at 4:00 p.m. EST. See pp. 1 and 27-33 of the SGA, the grants.gov page for this solicitation, and/or the "HVRP Application" section of the presentation materials for further details on submitting your application. **NOTE:** Be sure to read p. 33 about late applications!

3. Where can I download the application materials?

Additional application packages and amendments to this SGA may be obtained from the VETS website at www.dol.gov/vets, or the Federal Grant Opportunities website at www.grants.gov. All applicants are responsible for checking www.grants.gov and the VETS website regularly to ensure that they have all of the latest information regarding any updates to this solicitation.

4. We currently do not have an Indirect Cost Agreement. As a new grantee, do we have 120 days to obtain this if we were awarded the grant?

If an organization requires a new ICR, they will be awarded a temporary billing rate for 90 days until a provisional rate can be issued, which is based on the fact that an organization has not established an ICR agreement. Within this 90 day period, the organization must submit an acceptable indirect cost proposal to their Federal Cognizant Agency to obtain a provisional ICR. See p. 33 of the SGA for more information.

5. If we are still eligible to submit grant without the Indirect Cost Agreement, can we include indirect costs in our budget, perhaps at a rate of 10% until such agreement is obtained?

To claim any administrative costs that are also indirect costs, the applicant must obtain an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement from its Federal Cognizant agency.

6. Can the appendices be single spaced or does everything need to be double spaced?

The complete application should be double-spaced. See p. 19 of the SGA for more information.

7. Can you provide clarification on Page 53 in the SGA in the section that mentions “provisions must be made for program participants...” What does this mean?

Your application should demonstrate the PROCESS and RESOURCES for connecting your program participants to appropriate housing options, including emergency, temporary, transitional, and permanent housing (including supportive and affordable permanent housing) that meets their individual housing needs. See pp. 53-55 of the SGA for more information.

8. Do we need to be registered as an Employment Network with the Ticket to Work program prior to applying or being awarded this grant?

Grantees are expected to register as Employment Networks (ENs) under the Social Security Administration's (SSA) Ticket to Work program. For applicants interested in starting this process now, please see the resources on becoming an EN, which can be accessed here:

<http://www.nchv.org/page.cfm?id=336> and here: <http://www.nchv.org/page.cfm?id=338>.

Following grant awards, the TA Center will conduct additional trainings and individual consultations on this process, in collaboration with MAXIMUS, SSA's Technical Assistance Provider for this program.

9. Are we allowed to include in our numbers served veterans who are currently enrolled in either the HUD-VASH program or the VA's transitional housing program (Grant and Per Diem) for homeless vets?

Homeless veterans in a Grant and Per Diem (GPD) program are considered homeless and are therefore eligible for enrollment in HVRP if they meet the other eligibility requirements listed on pp. 11-14 of the SGA.

Veterans with executed HUD-VASH vouchers, however, are considered housed and are therefore not eligible for enrollment in HVRP unless they meet the definition of homeless on p. 12 of the SGA, which states that “under the HEARTH Act, the term also includes an individual or family who will imminently lose their housing, can identify no subsequent residence, and which lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing. Evidence that an individual or family will imminently lose their housing includes: a court order resulting from an eviction action that notifies the individual or family that they must leave within 14 days; having current primary nighttime residence that is a room in a hotel or motel, but lacking the resources necessary to reside there for more than 14 days; or credible evidence, including a credible oral statement from the individual or family, indicating that the owner or renter of the housing will not allow the individual or family to stay for more than 14 days.”

Additionally, homeless veterans who have a HUD-VASH voucher that has not yet been executed are still considered homeless and are eligible for enrollment in HVRP. HVRP grantees and applicants must be aware of this enrollment process to ensure that homeless veterans are enrolled in HVRP **BEFORE** the HUD-VASH voucher has been fully executed.

10. Our statewide organization is preparing two grant applications for two different geographic locations. Can you anticipate any problems with that?

There is a limit of one application per submitting organization and physical location serving the same HVRP participant population and in the same geographic service area. If the organization is serving different geographic locations with different HVRP participants, the applicant is eligible to submit more than one application.

11. Last year, we talked about performance measures. Are measurement goals still expected?

Yes, we did not go into performance measures this year, but they are clearly laid out on the SGA on pp. 60-62. I strongly suggest that you read these pages and in the Technical Assistance Guide (TAG); in summary, grantees are required to be fully compliant with all planned performance goals by meeting, at a minimum, 85% of planned cumulative quarterly goals. In addition to other important performance information, grantees will be expected to meet the following three main outcome measures:

- Minimum placement rate of 65% and a minimum entered employment rate of 65%
- Minimum retention rate of 65% at three quarters following placement
- Cost per placement performance target of \$2,800

12. I've created an organizational chart, which is not part of the overall 50-page limit. Is it okay if it's the margins are narrower than one-inch?

The complete grant application should only contain documents with 1-inch margins. See p. 19 of the SGA for more information.

13. The Survey and the Audit are in both the Technical (SGA page 26) and the Cost Proposals (SGA page 29). Where do we insert them or do they need to be in both sections?

Both the Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants (Appendix F) and the recent financial audit statement should be in Part III: Attachments to the Technical Proposal.

14. Does 4th quarter TPR and TPN mean June of 2011?

For previous/current HVRP grantees, you will want to use your most recently completed 4th quarter Technical Performance Report and Technical Performance Narrative and your planned goals spreadsheet for the year that corresponds with these reports.

15. Should the service provider government contracts and grants include state and county or only federal (SGA page 26)?

The SGA requests ALL employment and training government grants and contracts for the last three years. Keep in mind that this does NOT count toward your 15 page maximum for the Technical Proposal.

16. Can you provide additional clarification on co-enrollment with HVRP and VWIP?

Eligibility for enrollment in HVRP and VWIP is dependent on the service provider, not the veteran. An organization with both an HVRP and a VWIP grant cannot co-enroll one participant in both programs. However, a veteran can be enrolled in your HVRP program and a separate, non-affiliated VWIP program. See p. 38 for more information.

17. What happens if a veteran's housing status changes after enrollment? For example, what happens if a homeless veteran is enrolled in the HVRP grant for employment related training and then receives housing through a HUD-VASH voucher?

As long as the homeless veteran is eligible for the HVRP program when he is enrolled in HVRP, he is eligible to receive services until he is exited from the program/the end of the 4th quarter.

18. I would like to know if there is a specific guide for completing the SF-424 for the HVRP?

The last two pages of the SF-424 give comprehensive instructions for each piece.

19. What are “staff capability statements”? Is this about the individual capability of staff based on their backgrounds, or a statement that we have enough qualified staff to realistically achieve our stated outcomes?

Staff capability statements refer specifically to the capabilities of your staff members, and this will show how you can meet your stated outcomes as an organization. In the “Organizational Capability and Experience” section of the proposal, you will focus on both staff capacity and organizational capacity. When discussing staff capacity, you will want to showcase the skills, work history, knowledge, qualifications, and educational credentials/certified capabilities of your key operational staff members; to achieve this objective, staff capability statements can replace or supplement the resumes you provide for key staff members. See p. 50 for more information.

20. Are local area service delivery network lists a list of our community partners?

The “local area network of service providers” list includes all providers that offer services used by your HVRP participants, which includes your community partners. You will want to make sure to identify 1. who the service provider is 2. what the funding source is for the specific services provided by the service provider to HVRP participants and 3. the type of connection you have with that service provider; be sure to describe the type of linkage or referral and state whether this is established already or is being proposed. See pp. 49-50 of the SGA for more details.

21. The participant flow chart is a new item. Do you have any examples from grantees from last year that could be shared?

NCHV does not have access to previous grantee applications. However, if an existing grantee would like to share a sample participant flow chart, the TA Center will post it along with other HVRP resources.

22. I can’t find the slideshow presentation from the conference call today. Where is it?

You can find all resources for the three HVRP Application teleconferences here:

<http://www.nchv.org/page.cfm?id=128>.

23. The SGA calls for an attachment of a list of employment and training grants administered over the last 3 years. The information to be provided includes the grant name and number, and the grant monitor contact info. Please confirm that this is the only information required on this attachment.

You will want to follow the SGA specifically, so be sure to include a list of all employment and training government grants and contracts from the last three years, including contact information for grant/contract.

24. I noticed that the Appendix D (the TPR goal sheet) is the format from 1/5/11. Is this the correct form, or is there a newer one?

You will want to use the materials provided on the SGA website for DOL-VETS and on grants.gov. On a related note, keep in mind that it is the applicant’s responsibility to check back regularly to make sure you are aware of any and all changes!

25. The SGA states that all copies of the application should be “copy ready” yet requests tabs to divide the sections of the application. Can you please clarify this?

If you are not submitting your application through grants.gov, you must include one original set of your application materials, with all signatures in blue ink, that is appropriately divided and clearly identified (see p. 19 for more information). You also need two copies of this original, and these two copies should be “copy ready”, meaning they are free of bindings, staples, and tabs so they are easy to copy.

26. The SGA states that you can not request more than the maximum amount for your program based on your urban vs. non-urban classification. However, what if it costs more to run your program or if you receive funds from other grants/sources? Can you please clarify this section of the budget?

Applications submitted above of the given ranges, \$100,000-\$300,000 for urban programs and \$100,000-\$200,000 for non-urban programs, will be considered non-responsive. Only funding requests from HVRP should be included in this section; NO leveraged resources should be included in the SF-424 and the Sf-424A. See pp. 22-23 for more information.

27. At one point in the SGA it says that applicants “outside of these ranges” will be unresponsive (p.3), but at another point it says “applicants may propose an amount that is less than the minimum....” What if I want to request less than \$100,000 for either category, urban or non-urban?

Please visit amendment to HVRP PY 2012 SGA, located here:
<http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/hvrp/main2012.htm>.

28. If an organization has just received their 501c3 status and are just starting out, are they eligible to apply for HVRP funding?

From the SGA (p.52): “VETS prefers that grantees be well-established service providers and not in the initial start-up phase or process; however, new applicants offering innovative and cost effective methods related to successfully serving the employment needs associated with homeless veteran participants are encouraged to apply.”

29. For the audit, are there other documents separate from the official CPA that will suffice?

From the SGA (p. 25): “All applicants must submit evidence of satisfactory financial management capability, which must include a recent financial audit statement for the organization applying for the grant. The audit must have occurred within the last 18 months.... All successful grantees are required to utilize Generally Accepted Accounting Practices, maintain a separate accounting for these grant funds, and have a checking account.”

30. What materials should be on the CD? Is there a specific way or order that these documents should be saved?

If you are submitting a hard copy application, you must include a copy of the proposal on a compact disk (CD). The order of documents on the CD should mirror exactly the order of documents in your hard copy proposal. Keep in mind that you may lose points if these are different, and that the CD version will be the accepted version if there are discrepancies.

31. According to Section E: Funding Restrictions, Part 5. Use of Grant Funds for Participant Wages, HVRP grantees cannot use grant funds to directly pay for the wages of or stipends to participants in training activities. However, on p. 46 of the SGA, applicants are directed to demonstrate “how they will directly provide for or refer participants to... on-the-job-training (OJT).” Many grantees have formal OTJ arrangements with employers and have traditionally used HVRP funds for OTJs as a training expense, with much success in eventual placement with employers outside of the grantee itself. Can applicants use the

formal OJT relationship with employers to justify these expenses without violating Section E, Part 5?

Please visit amendment to HVRP PY 2012 SGA, located here:

<http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/hvrp/main2012.htm>.

32. Is there a list of recipients of last year's grant?

Last year's first year grantees are listed here:

<http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/vets/VETS20111184.htm>. Last year's renewal grantees are listed here: <http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/vets/VETS20110814.htm>.

33. Appendix D, the Planned Goals Chart, is provided in HVRP application materials as an Excel file. However Excel files are not listed as a file type recommended as attachments to grants.gov submitted HVRP applications. Will uploading a completed Appendix D in Excel, as provided in application materials, present problems for HVRP applications submitted through grants.gov?

All files must be saved as .doc, .rtf or .pdf files. You can save your completed excel files as .pdf files using a document converter, many of which can be found online at no cost.