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Veterans Health Administration

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)

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1. Designing SSVF on available research, consumer and practitioner experience
 - Demographics
 - Needs
2. The SSVF Program
3. Context of SSVF - Understanding VA Programs
4. Year 1 Feedback



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Location of Homeless Veterans*

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

U.S. Department of HUD and U.S. Department of VA. *Veteran Homelessness: A Supplemental Report to The Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress.* October 2011.



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Homeless Veterans Older Than General Homeless Population

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



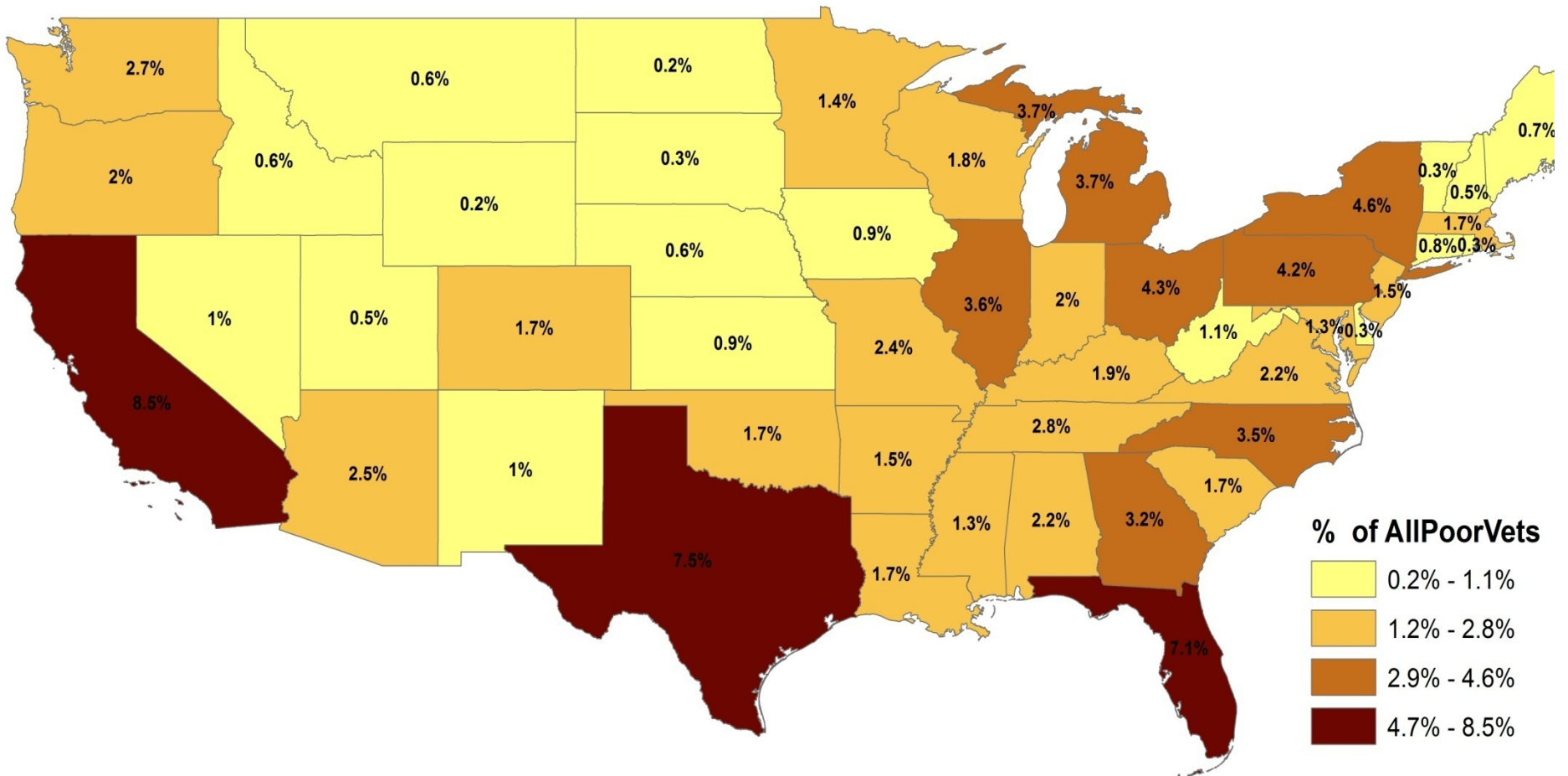
Populations at Higher Risk

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



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Distribution of the 1,356,610 Veterans in Poverty

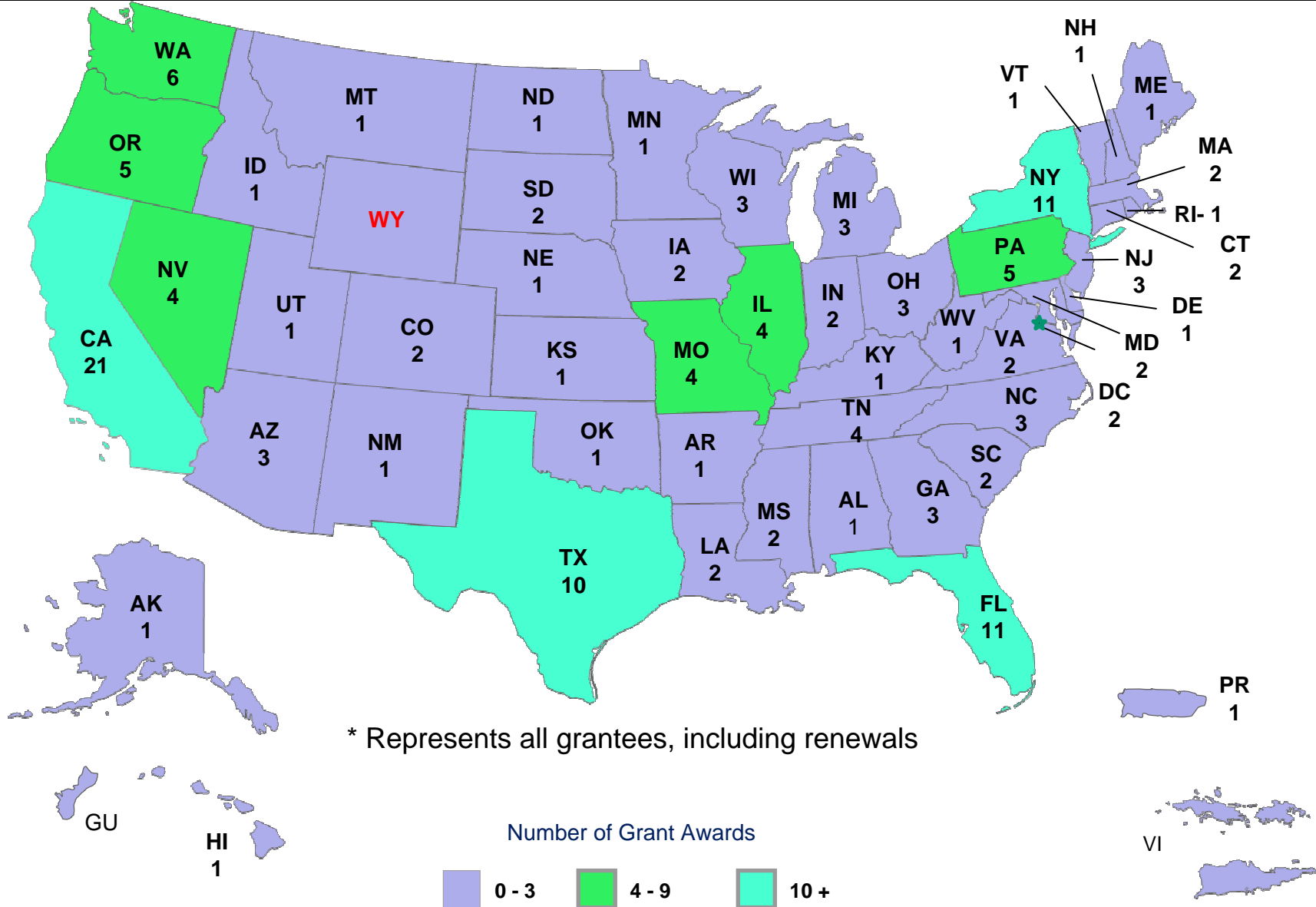




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SSVF Grant Award Sites

FY 2012*



* Represents all grantees, including renewals



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The Existential Question

- SSVF projects to serving 42,000 people in FY 2013 and there are over 1.3 million impoverished Veteran households.
- How do we ensure that SSVF is an effective program to end and prevent homelessness, and not suffer “mission creep” and become an anti-poverty program?



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Needs



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



Table: San Mateo/Redwood City Prevention Assistance and Shelter Entry Comparison

	Applied for Prevention assistance	Number who subsequently entered shelter (within 3 year period)	Percent of group
Households that were turned down for prevention assistance *	1019	40	3.9%
Households that received prevention assistance	243	12	4.9%
Total	1262	52	4.1%

***Most common reason for being refused assistance was not having adequate ongoing income (i.e. *too poor*).**

Slide courtesy NAEH



IMPLICATIONS

Most important: “Prevention makes the most difference for those at highest risk. There is no level of risk that is too high.”

Use of data to refine targeting

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
- Lightened, almost minimal touches for other families

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



Threshold is x+ points

1 point: rental and/or utility arrears

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

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

Effective Targeting of Homeless Prevention Services for Families.
Marybeth Shinn & Andrew Greer. 2011.



Homelessness Risk Screeners

1. In the past 2 months, have you been living in stable housing that you own, rent, or stay in as part of a household? (If no, skip to 3.)

2. Are you worried or concerned that in the next 2 months you may NOT have stable housing that you own, rent, or stay in as part of a household? (If no, end screener. If yes, go to 3.)

3. Where have you lived for MOST of the past 2 months?
 - Apartment/House/Room – no government subsidy
 - Apartment/House/Room – with government subsidy
 - With Friend/Family
 - Motel/Hotel
 - Hospital, Rehab. Center, Drug Treatment Center...
 - Homeless Shelter
 - Anywhere outside, e.g. Street, Vehicle, Abandoned Building
 - Other * _____



Positive screen require further assessment

- 33% screened positive
- 91% male
- Mean age 50.8 years



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Homelessness Risk Screener

- The screener will target those who are at imminent risk of homelessness.
- The Homelessness Risk Screener will be deployed nationwide.
- Social Work staff will assess needs of those at-risk and provide assistance and/or refer to specialized homeless services.
- Veterans at imminent risk of homelessness and for whom homelessness can be prevented at various points, including the VA's new series of prevention initiatives:
 - The HUD-VA Veterans Homelessness Prevention Demonstration (VHPD)
 - Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF).



- 1. Given the severe recession and increases in poverty, homelessness should have increased**
- 2. Homelessness has declined, particularly among Veterans**
 - HUD-VASH
 - HPRP



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Consumer Choice

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

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



Veterans Literally Homeless (shelter, street, unfit for habitation) (n=3,184)	Veterans in Transitional Housing (VA Grant and Per Diem and Domiciliary) (n=6,111)	Veterans in Permanent Housing (including HUD-VASH) (n=2,672)
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Long-term, permanent housing2. Welfare payments3. Dental Care4. Guardianship (financial)5. Legal assistance for child support issues6. Job training7. Legal assistance for outstanding warrants/fines8. SSI/SSD process9. Family reconciliation assistance10. Job finding	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Welfare payments2. Child care3. Legal assistance for child support issues4. Family reconciliation assistance5. Guardianship (financial)6. SSI/SSD process7. Long-term, permanent housing8. Legal assistance for outstanding warrants/fines9. Discharge upgrade10. Women's health care	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Dental care2. Legal assistance for child support issues3. Welfare payments4. Child care5. Legal assistance for outstanding warrants/fines6. Family reconciliation assistance7. Credit counseling8. Re-entry services for incarcerated Veterans9. Legal assistance to help restore a driver's license10. Job training



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The SSVF Program



Participant Eligibility Summary

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



- ***Focus on housing stability*** with resources and services designed to produce immediate impact.
- Efficient use of resources concentrates efforts on securing and maintaining housing.
- Grant funding weighted towards rapid re-housing.
- Case management will assist Veteran and family with employment and benefit resources that will promote long-term stability.
- Program able to address critical barriers to housing: legal issues, transportation, child care, family issues.



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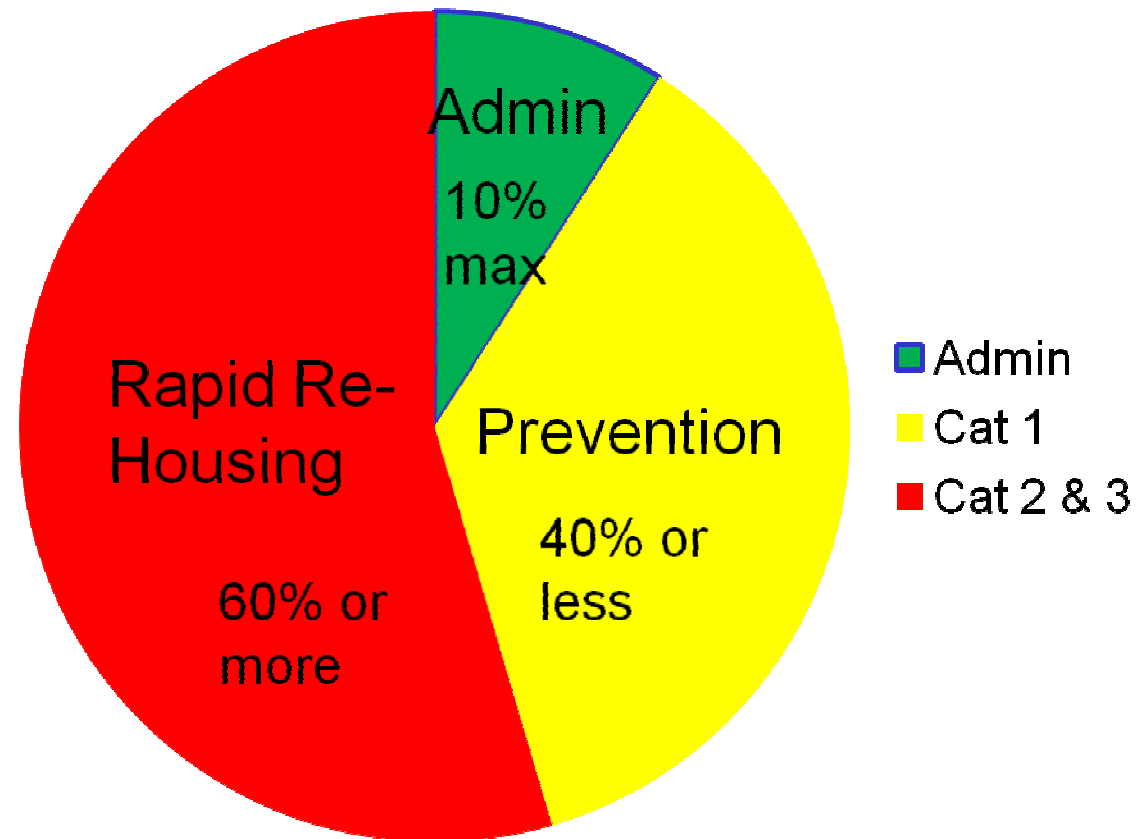
SSVF Supportive Services (Universal)

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



Use of Grant Funds

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





SSVF Program Overview

Supportive Services (cont'd)

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

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

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



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



How SSVF Differs from Other VA Programs

- Remember the goal is Housing Stability and is not contingent on treatment. A Housing First philosophy is focus of both the homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing interventions.
- Grantees will be community-based organizations
- Grantees will serve *Veterans and their families*. Families can continue to receive services for up to a full year if the Veteran leaves due to institutionalization, death, or other causes.
- Temporary financial assistance payments may be provided to third parties on behalf of participants



How SSVF Complements Other Programs

- A services “bridge”/enhancement to permanent supportive housing (e.g. in conjunction with the HUD-VASH or GPD Program).
- A stand-alone, short-term, case management model. Could be used to support Critical Time Intervention (CTI) initiative.
- A homelessness, eviction, or housing crisis prevention program (such as HUD’s HPRP or ESG initiatives).



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Overview of SSVF Program

How SSVF Complements Other Programs

In addition to VA supports, SSVF grantees access universal prevention services, entitlements, and other available community resources.

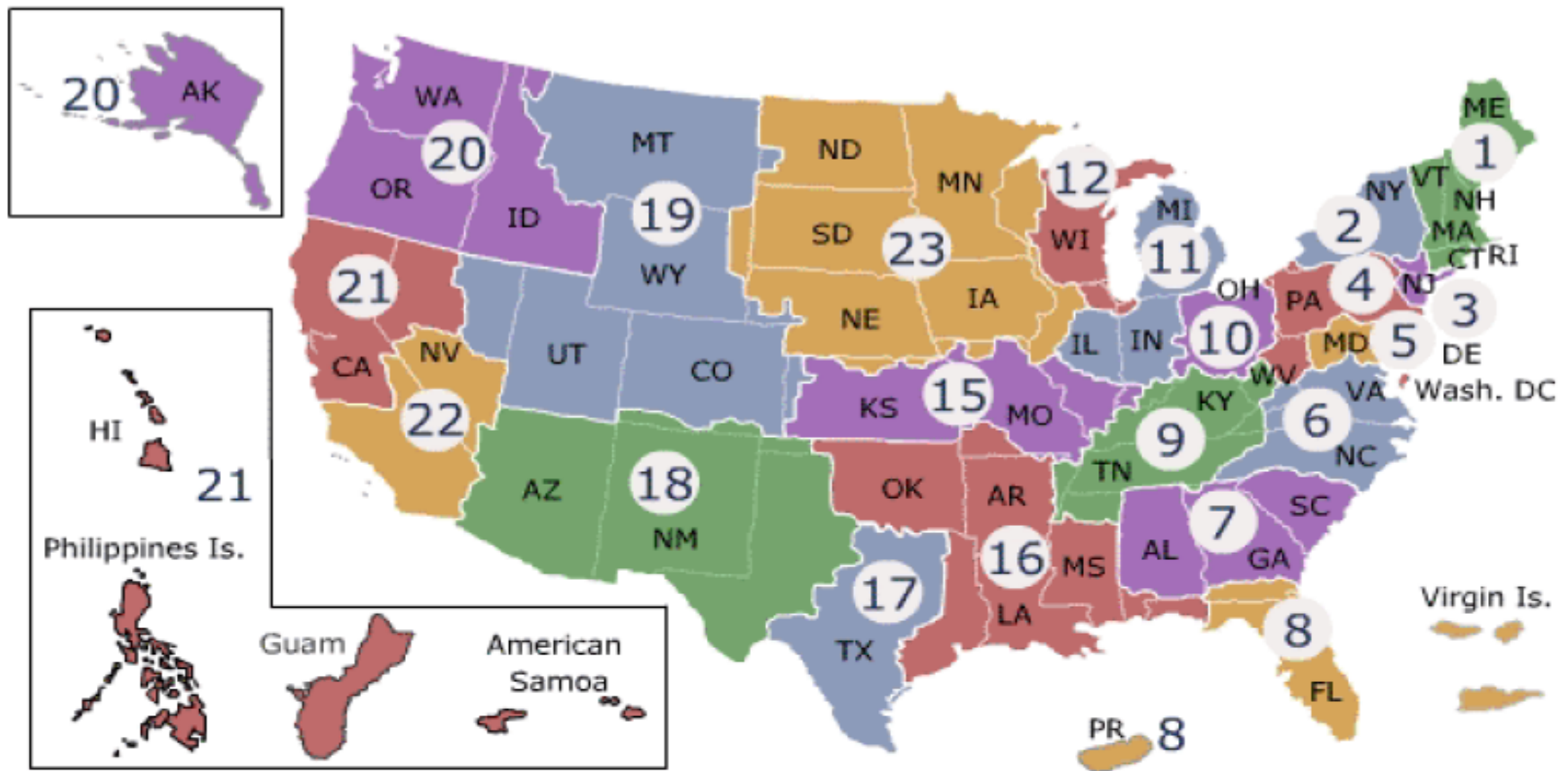
- National Foundation for Credit Counseling, www.nfcc.org, a counselor can be reached at (800)388-2227
- Legal Assistance: www.lawhelp.org,
<http://statesidelegal.org>
- SOAR (SSI/SSD):
www.prainc.com/SOAR/soar101/states.asp
- National Resource Directory:
www.nationalresourcedirectory.gov
- Available income, health, educational and other supportive services benefits: www.govbenefits.gov



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Context of SSVF

Understanding VA Programs



- VISN 1: VA New England Healthcare System
- VISN 2: VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York
- VISN 3: VA NY/NJ Veterans Healthcare Network
- VISN 4: VA Healthcare - VISN 4
- VISN 5: VA Capitol Health Care Network
- VISN 6: VA Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network
- VISN 7: VA Southeast Network
- VISN 8: VA Sunshine Healthcare Network
- VISN 9: VA Mid South Healthcare Network

- VISN 12: VA Great Lakes Health Care System
- VISN 15: VA Heartland Network
- VISN 16: South Central VA Health Care Network
- VISN 17: VA Heart of Texas Health Care Network
- VISN 18: VA Southwest Health Care Network
- VISN 19: Rocky Mountain Network
- VISN 20: Northwest Network
- VISN 21: Sierra Pacific Network
- VISN 22: Desert Pacific Healthcare Network



VA's Alphabet Soup

Veteran Integrated Service Network (VISN)

Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC)

Homeless Outreach (HCHV)

National Call Center (NCCHV)

Prevention (HCRV, VJO, SSVF, HUD-VA Pilot)

Transitional Housing (GPD, CWT/TR, HCHV Contract Housing)

Residential Rehab (RRTP)

Voc Rehab (CWT)

Permanent Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)

Services described at www.va.gov/homeless



A Continuum of Care (cont.)

Prevention	Outreach and Referral	Residential Treatment	Transitional Housing	Permanent Housing
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SSVF Prevention* 2. Veteran Justice Outreach (VJO) 3. Health Care for Re-Entry (HCRV) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health Care for the Homeless (HCHV) 2. National Call Center (NCCHV) <p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vet Centers • Veterans Benefits (VBA) • VA Medical Centers (VHA) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HCHV contracts 2. Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Programs (RRTPs) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grant & Per Diem (GPD) 2. Compensated Work Therapy Transitional Residences (CWT/TR) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SSVF Rapid Re-housing 2. HUD-VASH



VBA provides services for homeless Veterans at all 56 regional offices. Claims expedited for homeless Veterans.

VBA can provide disability benefits, educational assistance, home loans, insurance, and benefits for dependents.

- ✓ Disability Benefits/General Information: 1-800-827-1000
- ✓ Insurance: 1-800-669-8477
- ✓ Education: 1-888-442-4551
- ✓ Health Care Eligibility: 1-877-222-8382



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Vet Centers

Community-based counseling centers located in all 50 states, DC,
Puerto Rico, and Guam

Provide readjustment counseling & outreach services to all Veterans
who served in any combat zone;

Staffed by small multi-disciplinary teams of dedicated providers,
many of which are combat Veterans themselves.

<http://www.vetcenter.va.gov/index.asp>





- Assessment must address if SSVF is appropriate in the context of the range of available options in both VA (such as GPD & HUD-VASH) and the community.
- Assessment based on Veteran's needs, not program convenience.
- Resources need to be well targeted so they are available for those in need.
- SSVF has unique capacities to serve families and provide financial support.



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Year 1 Feedback and Proposed Changes to SSVF Regulations



- Populations and their needs are not static.
- Programs must continue to adapt until homelessness is solved.
- Approximately 2500 SSVF consumer surveys collected.
- Regional meetings with all grantees to get feedback on how to improve grant rules and regulations.
- Feedback critical in both directions – use of data, performance metrics (accountability).



1. Full year projection was to serve 22,000. With still 2 months left in the fiscal year, by July 31, already over 28,000 served.
2. Significant impact on Veteran families with 6,912 children assisted.
3. 14.6% of Veterans served are women.
4. 15.7% of Veterans served are OIF/OEF/OND.
5. Of those who have exited SSVF, 84.3% or 12,078 are in permanent housing and 1,410 or 9.8% are off the streets in temporary or institutional settings.
6. Average LOS for discharged participants is 87 days.



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Requested Changes In Regulations

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



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Requested Changes In Regulations (continued)

1. Opportunity for established, successful grantees to get awards with longer terms. Currently all awards are 1-year.
2. Help with establishing screening criteria to improve targeting.
3. Reduce reporting burdens.



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Requested Changes In Access

1. Expand access. Currently SSVF resources available in portions of 49 states, Puerto Rico and District of Columbia. Goal is to make access available in all CoCs with homeless Veterans where needs are unmet.
2. Shift resources to prevention when communities have made significant reductions in homelessness.
3. Coordinate care for Veterans served by HUD-VASH and GPD, insuring that coordination helps meet the overall goal of ending Veteran homelessness while operating programs in an efficient and effective manner.



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SSVF Opportunities

- *Working through community providers, SSVF has unique capacities for collaboration, serving families, and providing a range of financial supports.*
- Letter of Intent published in the Federal Register!
- Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) should come out early in FY 2013.
- Training will be available for interested applicants.



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

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



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Contact Information

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Website:

www.va.gov/HOMELESS/SSVF.asp