

SSVF COVID 19 Guidance

The Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) has historically prioritized its efforts on rapidly rehousing literally homeless Veterans followed by a priority to deliver homelessness prevention services to Veteran families at imminent risk of homelessness. With the onset of the COVID 19 public health crisis, VA modified its regulatory and policy requirements to give SSVF grantees far broader flexibility in delivering SSVF services. SSVF's primary mission is to provide services and assistance that lead to permanent housing outcomes; however, given the public health crisis at hand and this infusion of resources, VA is prioritizing other types of services that were traditionally more scarce. The following priorities and program guidelines are in effect until further notice; VA will communicate any changes to this regulatory relief as needed.

Services

- * Services can be delivered remotely.
- * Verbal and electronic documentation, including self certifications, are allowable as long as SSVF grantees show due diligence in obtaining documentation.
- * Recertification is still required but SSVF grantees can document inability to recertify Veterans in person due to COVID 19.
- * Permanent Housing plans should continue to be prioritized and individualized for each Veteran including housing search, placement, and stabilization services.

HUD VASH Coordination

- * Can assist with housing navigation and placement services for HUD VASH participants.
- * Rental assistance allowable when there are delays for new HUD VASH participants and until PHA begins subsidy payments.
- * Engage with HUD VASH on needs of SSVF Veterans to ensure longer term housing plan developed.



Homelessness Prevention (HP)

- * Can serve Veterans even with eviction moratorium in place if can document that household is accumulating significant debt that will result in rapid housing loss when the moratorium is lifted.
- * Stage 2 prevention screener is suspended but Veteran must meet Stage 1.
- * HP Veterans may remain enrolled and receive ongoing rental assistance, in addition to arrears paid, to ensure ongoing housing stability.
- * Demonstrating risk can include a letter or invoice indicating past due rent even with moratorium in place.
- * 40% Grant limit on HP TFA waived.

Emergency Housing Assistance (EHA)

- * 45 day limit for families in EHA in motel/hotels is suspended.
- * 72 hour limit for individuals in EHA in motels/hotels is suspended.
- * Expanded EHA capacity, including hotels/motels.
- * One time emergency housing assistance for Rapid Resolution has been suspended.

Rental and Financial Supports

- * Limits on number of months for rental and utility assistance are suspended, including for HP arrears.
- * Limits on number of months for Rental Assistance, Utility Assistance, and EHA have been waived.
- * Enrolled and newly enrolled Veterans may maintain enrollment with financial support regardless of caps established in traditional SSVF regulations. Veterans are still limited to one deposit in a two year period.
- * Veterans who had previously exhausted TFA limitations may be re-enrolled in the program without limitations as long as they meet the basic eligibility requirements of SSVF.
- * \$500 food limit waived where other food options or hotel food services are not available. Food assistance does not count toward the General Housing Stability Assistance limit.
- * Ability to purchase prepaid cell phones or phone numbers to facilitate delivery of supportive services remotely.
- * 50% budget cap on TFA waived.

The resource above identifies major policy or regulatory changes as summarized by the SSVF Technical Assistance teams. SSVF Grantees must continue to attend periodic office hours, review FAQ documents, and communicate with their Regional Coordinator about more nuanced or specific questions. Please visit SSVF Website at <https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp> for more information.