

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
	templates.	party verification and sign self-declaration forms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include self-declarations in participant file.
Hospital or Other Institution	Written documentation that the Veteran family is scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain letter from hospital or other institution. ▪ Letter Should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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.
	AND <i>(to verify homeless status prior to hospital or other institution admission)</i>	
	HMIS record of shelter stay <i>(if previously sleeping in emergency shelter)</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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 homeless certification.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain signed and dated original Homeless Certification from shelter provider or homeless street outreach provider. ▪ Certification should verify 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 Homeless Certification in SSVF participant file. 	
OR <i>(if HMIS record or SSVF Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i>		
Emergency shelter provider or homeless street outreach provider letter <i>(if previously sleeping in</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain emergency shelter provider letter. ▪ Letter Should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 or Other Institution	emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation).	<p>hospital/institution admission date.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Be signed and dated by shelter provider ▪ Include documentation in SSVF participant file.
	<p>OR</p> <p><i>(if form needed, SSVF Homeless Certification, or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i></p>	
	Self-declaration of homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration from participant. ▪ Self-declaration should verify 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. ▪ 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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.
	<p>AND</p>	
	Written homeless certification.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain signed and dated original Homeless Certification from transitional housing provider. A Homeless Certification is a standardized form that, at a minimum, contains the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 Homeless Certification in SSVF participant file.
<p><i>(if SSVF Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i></p>		

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	Transitional housing provider letter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain letter from transitional housing provider. ▪ <i>Letter Should:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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.
Transitional Housing	OR (if SSVF Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)	
	Self-declaration of homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration from participant. ▪ Self-declaration should verify 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.
Domestic Violence	Written documentation that the Veteran family is scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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	
Self-declaration of homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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. 	

5. Occupying Permanent Housing Category 3 Eligibility Documentation

Sleeping in an Emergency Shelter	Written documentation or oral third party verification of the participant's exit from permanent housing within 90 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain letter from prior landlord / housing provider / friend / family member or SSVF staff certification or letter to the file.
	HMIS record of shelter stay.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain HMIS record showing shelter stay concurrent with SSVF program entry date. ▪ Include HMIS record in SSVF participant file.
	<i>(If HMIS record cannot be obtained)</i>	
	Written homeless certification.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain signed and dated original Homeless Certification from shelter provider. A Homeless Certification is a standardized form that, at a minimum, contains the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name of the shelter program ○ Statement verifying current shelter occupancy of SSVF participant ○ Signed and dated by authorized shelter provider representative ▪ Include Homeless Certification in SSVF participant file.
	<i>(If HMIS record and SSVF Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i>	
Emergency shelter provider letter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain letter from emergency shelter provider. ▪ <i>Letter Should:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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. 	
<i>(If HMIS record and SSVF Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i>		
Self-declaration of homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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. 	

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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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain letter from previous landlord / housing provider / friend / family member or SSVF staff certification or letter to the file.
	AND	
	Written homeless certification.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain signed and dated original Homeless Certification from homeless street outreach provider (may include other third-party referral source, such as a local law enforcement agency). A Homeless Certification is a standardized form that, at a minimum, contains the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name of the outreach program ○ Statement verifying current living situation of SSVF participant ○ Signed and dated by authorized outreach provider representative ▪ Include Homeless Certification in SSVF participant file.
	OR (if SSVF Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)	
	Homeless street outreach provider or referral source letter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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. ▪ <i>Letter Should</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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.
	OR (if SSVF Homeless Certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)	
	Self-declaration of homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain letter from previous landlord / housing provider / friend / family member or SSVF staff certification or letter to the file.
	AND	

Hospital or Other Institution	Letter from hospital or other institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain letter from hospital or other institution. ▪ Letter Should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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.
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	HMIS record of shelter stay (if previously sleeping in emergency shelter).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain HMIS record showing shelter stay concurrent with SSVF program 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.
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	Written homeless certification.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain signed and dated original Homeless Certification from shelter provider or homeless street outreach provider. ▪ Certification should verify 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 Homeless Certification in SSVF participant file.
	<i>(If homeless certification or provider letter cannot be obtained)</i>	
Emergency shelter provider or homeless street outreach provider letter (if previously sleeping in emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain emergency shelter provider letter. ▪ Letter Should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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. 	
<i>(If emergency shelter provider or homeless street outreach provider letter cannot be obtained)</i>		
Self-declaration of homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration from participant. ▪ Self-declaration should verify homelessness (residing in shelter or place not meant for human habitation) 	

Living Situation	Acceptable Types of Documentation <i>(in order of preference)</i>	Documentation Standards
		immediately prior to (i.e. the day before or same day as) hospital/institution admission date. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain letter from previous landlord / housing provider / friend / family member or SSVF staff certification or letter to the file.
	Written homeless certification.	<p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain signed and dated original Homeless Certification from transitional housing provider. A Homeless Certification is a standardized form that, at a minimum, contains the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 Homeless Certification in SSVF participant file.
	Transitional housing provider letter.	<p style="text-align: center;">OR <i>(if SSVF Homeless Certification cannot be obtained)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain letter from transitional housing provider. ▪ <i>Letter Should:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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.
		(as obtained)
	Self-declaration of homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain signed and dated original self-declaration from participant. ▪ Self-declaration should verify 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.
Domestic Violence	Written documentation of exit from permanent housing within 90 days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain letter from previous landlord / housing provider / friend / family member or SSVF staff certification or letter to the file.
	Self-declaration of homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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.

Exhibit D: Collaborative Delivery of GPD/HUD-VASH/SSVF Services

A. Background:

The VA has a variety of resources available to serve homeless Veterans. These resources must be deployed in an efficient and coordinated manner to support the VA's goal of ending homelessness among Veterans by 2015. Housing First 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.

B. Housing Resources:

This guidance addresses three VA specialized homeless programs: Grant and Per Diem (GPD), HUD-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH), and Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF). In general, these programs act along a continuum of care where each program places Veterans into permanent housing without drawing on resources from each other. The ability of these programs to function as designed allows resources to be made available for more Veterans, increasing the VA's ability to reduce homelessness among Veterans. However, due to the high barriers faced by some homeless Veterans, program collaboration is at times necessary to end a Veteran's homelessness. The requirements for such collaboration are as follows.

- 1) For SSVF Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) for HUD-VASH or GPD, participants must at a minimum meet all of the following criteria.
 - i) Veteran referred by HUD-VASH must be chronically homeless.
 - ii) Veteran household must have an area median income of less than 30 percent.
 - iii) GPD participant must be a resident of a GPD program for no longer than 30 days prior to referral to SSVF. The Veteran would be designated for Rapid Rehousing in SSVF and therefore should have an individualized plan in GPD reflecting this approach.
 - iv) HUD-VASH participants must be referred prior to housing placement.
 - v) If a HUD-VASH referral is for a current resident in arrears,
 - (1) The Veteran must have a third party financial representative who can insure that over the intermediate term, rent will be paid.
 - (2) The third party financial representative arrangement should continue until the Veteran meets agreed upon targets demonstrating their ability to resume control over their finances.
 - (3) 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 SUDs, credit counseling, resolution of outstanding legal issues, and other appropriate interventions.
- 2) An appropriate collaboration with a SSVF grantee may include the delivery of non-temporary financial assistance services when such services are not available to GPD or HUD-VASH participants. In such instances, the assessment must document the need for such services to support housing stability and chart notes must also document the

lack of available community resources to meet identified needs. Some examples may include:

- i) SSVF legal services,
 - ii) Targeted case management services for non-Veteran family members.
- 3) Exceptions can only be requested in writing by the VA HUD-VASH or GPD liaison through the appropriate VA Network Homeless Coordinator to the SSVF grantee where assistance is being requested. Requests must clearly describe efforts to seek alternative assistance. These efforts need to demonstrate that no practical alternatives exist to SSVF and without assistance homelessness shall result for the referred Veteran household.

C. Designation of a SSVF Point of Contact:

Each VAMC shall designate a SSVF point of contact who will have the responsibility to support the integration of SSVF services with local VAMC health care, mental health, and other specialized homeless services. In addition, the POC's responsibilities shall include:

- 1) Participating in regular planning calls with VA Regional Coordinators assigned to SSVF grantees;
- 2) Participating in regular planning meetings with SSVF grantees that standardize processes for referrals both to SSVF grantees and from grantees to VAMCs;
- 3) Facilitate presentations by SSVF grantees at VAMCs to educate staff about accessing available services; and
- 4) Coordinate this work with the VISN's Network Homeless Coordinator

Exhibit E: Guide for Pending Verification of Veteran Status (PVVS)

Issue:

As per 38 CFR 62.2, enrolling participants 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.

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).

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 90 days. If participant is found to be ineligible for SSVF, the participant must be discharged with appropriate community referrals.
4. Upload client data in HMIS, as required for all SSVF clients, and include in monthly reports.
5. Service data will count towards program outcomes and final service numbers, regardless of final determination of Veteran Status..

Exhibit F: Homelessness Prevention Eligibility Screening Instructions

**Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)
Homelessness Prevention
Eligibility Screening Disposition Form
Instructions**

Persons applying for SSVF homelessness prevention assistance (i.e., category 1 of persons occupying permanent housing) must first be screened for VA eligibility. Eligibility must be documented using the SSVF Eligibility Screening Disposition Form. Forms must be completed by SSVF grantee staff using information obtained from the head of household. Screening disposition forms should be supported by additional assessment and documentation of the eligibility conditions and targeting factors indicated. All screening forms must be signed and dated by the authorized SSVF staff person completing the form.

STAGE 1: VA ELIGIBILITY

SSVF grantee staff should assess each applicant household according to the eligibility requirements listed below. Applicants must meet all eligibility requirements in order to receive SSVF assistance.

SSVF Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for SSVF homelessness prevention assistance, each of the following VA conditions must be met. Note that SSVF grantees may require additional eligibility criteria in addition to the VA criteria listed below.

A member of a Veteran family: Applicant households must either be a Veteran or a member of a family in which the head of household, or the spouse of the head of household, is a Veteran. Veteran is *defined as* "a person who served in the active military, , or air service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable." ***Very low-income: Household*** gross annual income does not exceed 50% of area median income based on the income limits most recently published at <http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il.html>.

Imminently at-risk of literal homelessness: Applicant households must (1) be imminently losing their primary nighttime residence, (2) have no other residence, and (3) not have sufficient resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, immediately available to prevent them from becoming literally homeless. To further qualify for services under category 1, the grantee must (4) document that the participant meets at least one of the following conditions:

- a) Has moved because of economic reasons two or more times during the 60 days immediately preceding the application for homelessness prevention assistance;
- b) Is living in the home of another because of economic hardship;
- c) Has been notified in writing that their right to occupy their current housing or living situation will be terminated within 21 days after the date of application for assistance;

- d) Lives in a hotel or motel and the cost of the hotel or motel stay is not paid by charitable organizations or by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals;
- e) Is exiting a publicly funded institution, or system of care (such as a health-care facility, a mental health facility, or correctional institution) without a stable housing plan;
- f) Otherwise lives in housing that has characteristics associated with instability and an increased risk of homelessness, as identified in the recipient's approved screening tool.

STAGE 2: TARGETING

Each grantee must establish priorities for prevention assistance based upon the targeting factors and point system included in the form. Targeting factors have been identified to help further assess risk of literal homelessness and to prioritize the provision of supportive services to those very low-income veteran families most in need. Points have been assigned to factors based on research and practical experience. ***SSVF grantees must use these targeting criteria to prioritize or limit SSVF services for applicant households who score higher or above a minimum threshold. SSVF targeting criteria and thresholds must be approved by the VA.***

SSVF grantees should establish thresholds based upon the number of applicants vs. SSVF resources available. Community resources will also be a factor in determining a threshold score. A grantee may establish that the higher the ratio of applicants to capacity, the higher the point threshold. For example, a program that can only accept and assist 10% of the number of eligible households who apply for prevention assistance could set a minimum score of 9 or higher to assign priority, while a program that has capacity to accept and assist 75% of eligible applicants may require only a score of 4.

Additionally, grantees may establish and score other targeting factors with applicants. The Stage 2 scoring sheet includes rows for this purpose. Grantee established factors must be approved by the VA and should be scored using a 1 to 3 scale. The targeting threshold score must be approved by the VA. Grantees may develop a policy and provide for a waiver to the threshold score. This should incorporate a methodology to monitor and change threshold score, as indicated.

Grantees may use this tool to determine which households will receive the full array of SSVF services, including temporary financial assistance, as indicated on the housing stability plan. **Only households that meet the established threshold score may receive temporary financial assistance.**

Households that pass Stage 1 eligibility but don't meet threshold may receive "light touch" SSVF services. "Light touch" assistance includes case management, without temporary financial assistance, to prevent literal homelessness. These households should be entered in the SSVF program and must be provided assistance in creating a housing stability plan.