



NATIONAL COALITION *for* HOMELESS VETERANS

*1001 Connecticut Avenue NW • Suite 840 • Washington, DC 20036
(202) 546-1969 • Email: info@nchv.org*

Policy Statement: Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program

WASHINGTON, May 23rd, 2025— The Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program, administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, is the only national, veteran-specific program to help at-risk veterans avoid becoming homeless, and rapidly re-house those veterans who lose their housing. The program was authorized by P.L. 110-387, the veterans' mental Health and Other Care Improvements Act of 2008, and is also the most critical resource for very low-income veterans who are able to quickly transition out of homelessness into permanent housing.

SSVF grantees are nonprofit, community-based organizations that connect very low-income veterans and their families with services in the following areas: health services, legal aid, child care, transportation, fiduciary and payee services, daily living assistance, benefits, and housing counseling. The program allows for time-limited payments to third parties – such as landlords, utility companies, moving companies, and licensed child-care providers – to ensure housing stability for veteran families at risk of losing their housing. SSVF funds are leveraged with local Continuums of Care and other community partners at no extra cost to the federal government.

Why is SSVF critical?

Modeled after HUD's Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP), the SSVF Program serves low-income veterans and their families residing in or transitioning to permanent housing. The HUD-published report "HPRP: Year 1 Summary" showed that only 2% of adults served by the program were veterans, even though veterans accounted for 16% of the adult homeless population in that year. SSVF was developed to address this unmet need.

At the outset, VA's homeless programs were geared toward rehabilitation with more than half of the homeless veteran population suffering from physical disabilities, mental illness, substance abuse, or co-occurring disorders. Since SSVF's inception it has remained a highly and increasingly successful program. In 2023, 80,400 veteran households served exited to permanent housing outcomes. Over the course of the program's year, **74% of all participants exited to permanent housing.**

VA's prevention efforts are dependent upon the SSVF Program, which has become the core of the department's future homeless veteran service delivery system. With a growing and

unpredictable population of at-risk OEF/OIF and now Afghanistan veterans and the aging of Vietnam-era veterans, SSVF will be the workhorse of veteran homelessness prevention programs for years to come.

More than 1.4 million American veterans live in poverty and are more vulnerable to becoming homeless than their civilian counterparts. VA research shows that one in 10 veterans living in poverty is likely to experience homelessness. VA expanded SSVF's *Shallow Subsidy* initiative nationwide. The Shallow Subsidy provides two years of rental assistance to very low-income Veteran households. This rental support remains the same throughout the entire two-year period regardless of changes in household income, incentivizing income growth.

What should Congress do?

NCHV recommends that Congress permanently authorize the SSVF Program and increase its appropriation to \$800million.

Congress should also consider legislation that would remove SSVF's program caps while also allowing providers sufficient use of administrative fees at 15% which are currently being limited to 10%.