

## Background

In 2018, Congress passed two pieces of legislation that significantly impacted the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP)<sup>1</sup> by expanding the definitions for program eligibility: [The Departments of Defense and Labor \(DOL\), Health and Human Services \(HHS\), and Education \(ED\) Appropriations Act, 2019 and Continuing Appropriations Act of 2019](#) and [The Veterans Benefits and Transition Act of 2018](#). These eligibility changes took effect in HVRP Program Year 2019, which began on July 1, 2019.

In July 2019, DOL's Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) issued [VPL 06-19](#) to provide guidance on the eligibility changes. Thereafter, VETS directed the National Veterans' Technical Assistance Center (NVTAC) to conduct a series of webinar trainings on the new eligibility requirements for VETS' regional staff, HVRP grantees, and partners from the U.S. Departments of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This document consolidates the questions received during these trainings, at HVRP Post Award Conferences (PACs), through email and stakeholder feedback, and presents a summarized process for determining eligibility for HVRP.

## Process for Determining HVRP Eligibility:

### Step 1: Veteran Status

The definition of veteran is different for other programs (e.g. Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)) and Grant and Per diem (GPD), so HVRPs should verify veteran status first. In order to meet the HVRP definition of a veteran, the individual must meet the following criteria:

- At least one day of active duty, not including training:
  - Clearly indicated on DD-214
  - National Guard and Reserve must have been federally activated for duty, not including training
- Discharge other than Dishonorable

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<sup>1</sup> Includes HVRP, Incarcerated Veterans' Transition Program (IVTP) and Homeless Female Veterans' and Veterans' with Families Program (HFVWF), collectively referred to as HVRP.

## Step 2: Homeless or Participant in Partner Services

If the individual meets the HVRP definition of veteran, the next step is to see if they meet any of the following:

- Homeless per the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009
  - Includes individuals who were homeless but found housing during the 60-day period preceding the date of HVRP enrollment (recently housed);
  - Includes those at imminent risk (within 14 days) of homelessness; OR
- Participant in Partner Services
  - Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH); Tribal HUD-VASH
  - Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act of 1996
  - Transitioning from Incarceration
  - SSVF Prevention or Rapid Rehousing

If the veteran meets one of these categories, move on to Step 4. If not, continue to Step 3.

## Step 3: At-Risk of Homelessness

Is the veteran at-risk of homelessness within the next 15–60 days? Answering this question requires the HVRP to assess the veteran's current situation to determine their risk. Simply losing a job or separating from a spouse is not enough to justify enrollment in HVRP. If you are unsure, reach out to your Grant Officer's Technical Representative (GOTR) or NVTAC for assistance. Individuals who are not eligible for HVRP should be referred to other services including the American Job Center.

## Step 4: Need or Would Benefit from Employment Services

HVRP is an employment program; a veteran who meets the eligibility requirements should not automatically be enrolled in HVRP. The veteran must need employment services. There are many reasons why a veteran who meets all the eligibility requirements for HVRP may not be a good fit for the program. A good assessment process will help with that decision.

### Steps To Determine HVRP Eligibility



## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. When do the HVRP eligibility changes go into effect?

The changes in HVRP eligibility began on July 1, 2019.

### 2. Who is eligible to participate in HVRP?

In order to participate in HVRP, an individual must be a veteran *and* either homeless *or* participating in a partner service, *or* at-risk of homelessness within 60 days (explanations provided above) *and* in need of or would benefit from employment services.

### 3. Has the definition of veteran changed?

No, HVRP's definition of veteran has not changed. For HVRP, a veteran is an individual with at least one day of active duty not including training and discharge status other than dishonorable.

### 4. Has the definition of homeless changed?

Yes. The new HVRP definition of homeless includes everyone previously identified as homeless under the HEARTH Act. In addition to those individuals, the definition of homeless has been expanded to include veterans who were homeless but found housing during the 60-day period preceding the date of HVRP enrollment (recently housed).

### 5. Are veterans who do not meet the new definition of homeless eligible for HVRP?

It depends. Veterans who are not homeless are eligible for HVRP if they meet one of the following criteria (collectively referred to as participating in partner services):

- Participant in HUD-VASH or Tribal HUD-VASH
- Receiving assistance under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act of 1996
- Participating in the VA's SSVF program
- Transitioning from Incarceration

Veterans who are not participating in a partner service may be eligible for HVRP if they are at-risk of homelessness within 60 days.

## 6. Who is considered at risk of homelessness?

Veterans who are at risk of becoming homeless within 15–60 days after the date of HVRP program enrollment. *Veterans who are within 14 days of homelessness are considered at “imminent risk” and are defined as homeless.* HVRP grantees are limited to 10% of their planned yearly enrollments in this category without prior approval from their GOTR. NVTAC is developing additional resources on how to evaluate a veteran’s risk of homelessness.

### *Participants in Partner Services*

## 7. Does the 10% restriction on enrolling veterans who are 60–days at risk of homelessness apply to participants in partner services (HUD-VASH, SSVF, etc.)?

No. Once veteran status is established, meeting any aspect of the homeless definition, or participating in partner services (per question 5, above), means that the veteran does not fall within the 10% restriction. The restriction is *only* applied to veterans who are at-risk of homelessness in the next 15–60 days. Eligible veterans who are not included in the 10% restriction include veterans who meet any one of the following:

- Are currently homeless;
- Have been housed in the last 60 days;
- Are a participant in partner services; or
- Are at *imminent* risk (i.e., within 14 days) of homelessness.

## 8. If a veteran has been housed through HUD-VASH for more than 60 days is, he/she still eligible for HVRP?

Yes, see explanation in questions 5 and 7 above.

## 9. Are individuals receiving SSVF Prevention services part of the at-risk category?

No, as mentioned above, any veteran who is receiving SSVF (either Prevention or Rapid Rehousing) assistance is eligible as a participant in partner services. These individuals are not considered at risk and do NOT count toward the 10% limit.

## *Documentation*

### **10. How should HVRPs document veteran status? Can a VA Hospital Inquiry (HINQ) or SQUARES 2.0 be used in lieu of a DD-214 for veteran verification? Can enrollment in a VA program be used in lieu of a DD-214?**

HVRP grantees are required to document veteran status with a DD-214. In cases where the DD-214 was destroyed by fire, a Certificate of Service is an acceptable alternative. HINQ is not acceptable because the VA, in limited circumstances, can serve a veteran with a dishonorable discharge. Those veterans, by definition, are not eligible for HVRP.

### **11. How should at-risk status be documented?**

HVRP grantees should include documentation to justify the determination of at-risk status. This may include eviction notices, income (as defined in VPL 06-19), and other information relevant to the veteran's situation. Self-attestation can be used as a limited resource. NVTAC is working with VETS to develop additional resources around at-risk determination.

### **12. Is there any training on these changes for HVRP grantees or VETS staff?**

Yes. In July/August 2019, NVTAC worked closely with VETS National Office to develop and deliver trainings on the new eligibility definitions for VETS' regional staff, HVRP grantees, and partners from the VA and HUD. Recordings of these webinars are available [here](#). If you need additional training, please email [contact@nvtac.org](mailto:contact@nvtac.org).

### **13. How should veterans at-risk of homelessness be recorded on the Technical Progress Report (TPR)?**

For veterans enrolled in the at-risk category, answer "no" for the Technical Progress Report (TPR) homeless element. You should then explain in your Technical Progress Narrative (TPN) that the participant was enrolled in the at-risk category.