

- [Ade] Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Ade Adeniji with MSG. I want to take this opportunity to welcome you to this virtual learning classroom. And hopefully, we will be able to collaborate and learn a lot from this webinar. But before we start, we want to do a little bit of housekeeping. And for that, I'll turn it over to Rita to take us through the housekeeping notes.

- [Rita] Thank you, Ade. Before we get started, we do have a few announcements. This event is being recorded. By continuing to participate you are consenting to be recorded. Please open the participant and chatbox located at the bottom right of your screen. If technical assistance is needed, send a chat message to the Webex host.

To ask content-related questions, select All Panelists from the drop-down menu in the chatbox. Enter your question in the chatbox and Send. To ask a verbal question, for our downloaded application users, please, select the hand raise icon located within the Participant tab next to your name.

If you have joined in from a web browser, please, select the 3-dot icon located at the bottom of your screen, and then select the raise hand icon. To turn on closed captioning, click on the CC icon on the bottom left of the screen, or click on the 3-dot icon on the bottom right and select Captions and Highlights. I will now turn the event back over to Ade.

- Thank you, Rita. Our next slide. For this virtual learning class, we have four sessions planned. And the first session, as you can see, is today. And the topic that we're going to be looking at today is introduction to HVRP and NVTAC, and also veteran outreach.

And the presenters today would be myself, Ade Adeniji, and Cindy. We also have a session on the 10th which would cover assessment, case management. And we're also going to be addressing barriers. And the presenters for that day would be Amy, Nicole, and Ade, myself. And the next session is coming up on the 15th, and that also covers partnership and collaboration with Cindy and Cori leading out.

The last session is on the 17th, and that session would cover training, placement, and retention. Also, Cori and Cindy will be leading out. So if you have colleagues that have not registered for these sessions, please, remind them

to register, and we also are going to be sending out reminders for people to register.

Next slide. The NVTAC team comprises of five individuals, myself, I work with MSG. I'm the program manager for this NVTAC contract. Also, we have Nicole.

Nicole Klein, she works for Atlas Research, is also going to be co-lead for the Boston and Chicago region as myself. We also have Amy Miller, sorry, we do not have a picture right now. But she's a co-lead for the Chicago area. Also, part of the team, we have Cindy Borden. She's the lead person for Atlanta region, Philadelphia, and San Francisco.

Last but not the least, we have Cori Di Biase who's also a lead for the Dallas region. These are the voices that you're going to be hearing through the course of the presentation. We look forward to having these collaborative sessions with you. Next slide.

As we continue on the webinar today, we would like to get to know who's in attendance. So for that, we want you to use, on the chat, the chat interface, please, tell us your name, the agency you work with, the state, and how long you've worked on HVRP. An example is in the blue window, your name if possible, your title, your company, and how long you've been with HVRP.

And when you do that, send the information to all so that all the participants can see and know who you are. Next slide. So for the NVTAC basics, this is a contract with Veterans Employment and Training Services, also known as VETS, at the department of labor, DOL.

And this contract is in partnership with MSG, Atlas Research, and the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, also known as NCHV. Our mandate is to provide training and technical assistance to about 148 active homeless veteran reintegration project grantees that we have nationwide on this NVTAC project.

Next slide. The five-member team comes with a lot of expertise covering outreach to veterans, building partnership, veteran assessment and planning, working with American Job Centers, working with Jobs for Veterans State Grants, working with disabled veteran outreach programs, and local veteran employment representatives.

We also cover areas pertaining to career placements, employer services and partnerships, training and career pathways. Last but not the least, we also address supporting retention. Next slide. The services we're going to be providing during this contract cover, but not limited to, virtual training and technical assistance.

We're also going to hold a community of practice meetings, occasional webinars to cover topics that are of interest to the grantees, and topics that vets would like for us to cover. We're also going to be providing documentation of best practices as we interact with you grantees. We're going to gather best practices and promising practices, so we can share with other grantees who may be struggling in one area or the other that might benefit from those best practices.

Also, we'll be sending out monthly newsletters and bulletins as needed. We're going to be using our nvtac.org website to communicate various kinds of information. It could be program updates, it could be news, it could be anything that pertains to the HVRP project and other areas that would be important for the grantees to know about.

Next slide. I'm going to turn it over now to my colleague Cindy to take us into what HVRP is. Over to you, Cindy.

- [Cindy] Thanks so much, Ade. And good afternoon or good morning, everyone, depending on where you are. I was trying to really quickly read through all the introductions, keep them coming. I've seen a lot of folks who are within, say, one month to four months in their work on HVRP. The more most recent hire that I saw was three weeks. But if there's somebody who's been in their position less than three weeks, please, post and let us know.

And I think the most tenured person that I saw was about seven or eight years. So keep those coming. We're glad you're all here. And as Ade said, this is part of a series, and before I get into the next section and the content for today, one thing I want everybody to understand is that this is...you know, we have an hour and 15 minutes today and same with the other three sessions.

So some of what we're doing is going to be fairly...we're not going to get into as much detail in every single topic as we would like to do and as I'm sure that you would like. So, please, make sure you ask questions. But the other thing that I want to say is after the session or, you know, if you really feel like oh, I would

love to have more information about eligibility, or outreach, or whatever it is, please, reach out to your NVTAC contact lead at the end.

We'll have everybody's email and contact information for all the leads that Ade mentioned. Please reach out to us so that we can do more in-depth things individually with your team or with other grantees in your region or your state or whatever that might be. Next slide, please. So what is HVRP? Even the folks who are new a month, two months, four months.

So what is HVRP? When we're talking about HVRP in this session, and in these classes, we're really talking about three programs. We're talking about the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program, which is HVRP. But then we're also talking about the two population-specific programs as well. The Homeless Female Veterans and Veterans with Families Program and the Incarcerated Veterans Transition Program.

So when we use HVRP over these next few sessions, we are meaning collectively all three of those programs. So if you're a grantee that has one of those population-specific programs, that's sort of encompassed in that term. HVRP is a competitive grant that's administered by DOL VETS, the department of labor's veterans' employment and training service.

And it's actually authorized under Title 38 of the U.S. Code, Sections 2021, 2021 (a), and 2023. Next slide, please. So HVRP has really two purposes. The first purpose is the one that most people identify with initially, because of the nature of HVRP, and that is to provide services to reintegrate homeless veterans into the labor force.

So we're talking about getting veterans, who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, and getting them back into the competitive labor force. And that's the one most people think of because it's about employment and getting veterans jobs, right. But there's a second purpose as well.

And as we go through the next three and a half days of classes, we'll be talking about this. And that is to be part of this delivery system that addresses the multiple facets and challenges that lead someone to be either at risk or experiencing homelessness. So HVRP is here to help veterans reintegrate into the labor force, but also to stimulate the creation of this integrated service delivery system that can address the multiple issues that led to their experiencing homelessness in the first place.

Next slide, please. So very high level, and over the next four days, we'll be going into each of these in a little bit more detail. But what are the sort of core elements of HVRP? Every program is different, every HVRP program is different based on the local environment, the local job market, the particular veterans you may serve, all of those things are different.

And there is flexibility in HVRP to allow programs to customize what they do to meet the needs of the veterans they're serving. But there are some core elements that every HVRP does in some way or another. So the first one of those is this outreach and engagement of veterans. And we're going to be talking a little bit about veteran outreach in the second half of today's session.

But really, it's figuring out how to find, identify, and engage veterans who might be eligible for the program. So that's the first element. The second one is about intake and assessment. So that involves determining whether a veteran is eligible for the program. But then also whether the program is a good fit for that veteran. And whether it makes sense for that veteran to be part of the program.

Next is case management, and that's the idea of using a veteran-centered approach to develop an individual employment plan or IEP, that's based on that individual's strengths, needs, barriers, but also interests and preferences for employment. Next slide.

The next core element is the employment and job training piece. So this is really providing either internally or externally through partnership, access to training that is connected to jobs that are locally available. So training that is connected to actual jobs in the local community.

And that training can be provided, as I said, in-house, or virtually, or through partners, or whatever that might be. The next core component of HPRP...and in fact, we have almost a whole session on this component because it's so important, is linkages and support services. So it's this idea of partnering and collaborating with other agencies, governments, private partners, public partners to give the veterans access to the other services they may need, including housing.

Next is employment adjustment services, also sometimes referred to as retention, it's the same thing. But employment adjustment services or retention is really that ongoing support, both to track the outcomes of the participants, of

the veterans, to see if what we're doing is effective, and then getting and maintaining employment.

But also to make sure...to help them keep their jobs and retain those jobs over the long term. Whether it's that job or even moving on to a bigger and better job in the future. And then last but not least, the other core element of HVRP here is employer engagement. And we'll be talking about employers in later sessions. But really connecting to employers and understanding that employers are our partners in HVRP, but they're also our clients as well.

Next slide, please. Okay, so what we're going to talk about next... I'm seeing lots of familiar names in the chat, so it's great to have everybody here, is HVRP eligibility. This is one of those sections that we're going to do this fairly...as detailed as possible, but also fairly quickly.

So if you have questions, please, make sure you ask. And you can also follow up with your lead and your GOTR as well, your Grant Officer Technical Representative, about specific questions, about eligibility, or if you want more in-depth training on this topic. Next slide, please. So this first slide is going to be at the beginning and also at the end because it's kind of a nice quick visual to think about when you're thinking about whether a veteran is eligible for HVRP.

And there's really kind of...if you look to the box, on the right-hand side of the slide you'll see there's kind of three things that you have to check off for a veteran to be a good enrollment and be enrolled in HVRP. The first is they have to be a veteran. And we're going to go through each of these in more detail.

So they have to be a veteran by HVRP standards. They have to be either homeless which includes recently housed, and we'll talk about that. Or participating in a partner service or one of the other eligibility categories, and we'll talk about that. Or at risk of homelessness. And then they also have to be someone who would benefit from employment services.

So if you look on the right side, you'll see, are they a veteran? Check yes. If they meet veteran, we'll talk about what that means. And then the middle box is any one of those things. So, are they homeless, or participating in a partner service, or at risk? If they meet any of those three, you check off that box. And then lastly, are they in need of employment services?

So it's that three part, and there's multiple steps, but it's really those three parts. So next slide, please. And we'll get into this in a little bit more detail. So when we're looking at HVRP eligibility a little closer, we're going to think about all of these things that you see here. So who does HVRP serve? They serve veterans, we're going to talk about homelessness, we're going to talk about those partner service participants, we're going to talk about at risk of homelessness.

For those of you who are in one of those special programs, you have to meet all the other eligibility stuff that we talk about, plus the specific eligibility requirements for your program. So whether you're a homeless vet, female veteran with families program, the HFVWF, which I still think is the toughest acronym for anybody to remember, but that one or if you're an IVTP.

You have to meet the general HVRP eligibility requirements, plus the requirement for your specific program. Okay, next slide, please. So, when you're thinking about eligibility...and Dinay I see your question. If somebody can mark her question about basic training, and we'll come back to that in just a second.

Hopefully, we'll answer that. There's kind of...I like to think of this as five steps. So step one is veteran status. Step two is homelessness. Step three is the participant in partner services. Step four is at risk of homelessness. And then step five is the benefiting from employment services.

So we're going to walk through each of these steps in a little more detail. Next slide, please. So step one is veteran status. We suggest that you always look at veteran status first, because if the individual who's coming to join your program does not meet the definition of veteran, then there's no reason to go any further.

So we always suggest that you look at the veteran status first. So what you're going to do to verify veteran status is in order to be a veteran for HVRP, they need at least one day of active duty. That will be indicated on their DD-214, and I'll talk a minute, in a second, about DD-214s because we know about the challenge with DD-214s.

But they need one day of active duty. If they enlist in active duty, so if they enlist in active duty, not in the guard or reserves, basic counts as that one day of active duty. If they enlist as a guard or reservist, then they need to be federally activated for duty that is not including training, okay.

So I'm going to repeat that again. If they enlist for active duty, one day includes basic, they do not have to have finished basic. If they enlist in the guard or reserve, they need to be federally activated for duty outside of training in order to be eligible for HVRP.

I know there's a lot of confusion around that. So if folks have questions about that, please, make sure you reach out to us and to your GOTR as well. Hopefully, that's a little bit more clear. And then the last piece here for veteran status is they have to have a discharge status that is not dishonorable, okay.

Any other discharge status other than dishonorable makes them a veteran for HVRP criteria, for eligibility. Next slide, please. So step two, when you're looking at HVRP eligibility is to determine if they are currently...if they are homeless if they meet the HVRP definition of homeless.

And there's two pieces to the HVRP definition of homeless. The first piece is if they meet the definition of the HEARTH Act, which is the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act. If they meet the definition of homeless per the HEARTH Act, they're considered homeless. Rita, could you go to Slide 38 quickly, sorry,

[inaudible] Slide 38 and we'll look at what the HEARTH Act...I am not going to go through every single bullet here for the HEARTH Act, but it is here for reference later. But this is how the HEARTH Act defines homeless. It includes lacking a fixed, regular, adequate nighttime residence. It also includes anybody who is in a shelter, that's designed to be a temporary living shelter.

Somebody who's living in a place that's not meant for human habitation, if somebody's living in a park, or a car, or any of that. Next slide, please. The first bullet on this slide is really important. This is called imminent risk.

So if someone is at imminent risk of losing their housing, they are considered homeless. And imminent risk is defined as within the next 14 days. So if someone is at imminent risk of losing their housing within the next 14 days, they are considered homeless per the HEARTH Act. Next slide, please, Rita.

This one is also...and again, I'm not going through every bullet, but I'm summarizing this bullet here. Is about someone who is either fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence. They are also by definition, homeless,

okay. If they are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, or stalking, or any of those kinds of things. Next slide.

The other piece, remember I said there's two parts of the homeless definition for HVRP. The first part is homeless per the HEARTH Act. The second part is someone who is considered recently housed. And according to the law, to Title 38, a veteran who met the definition of homeless, so any of those bullets that I just went through, in the previous 60 days is considered recently housed, and by HVRP standards, they are considered homeless.

And so there's a little calendar here to help you. It's kind of a cheat sheet. Today is November 8th, if someone came into your program today, your HVRP program today and is housed today. But at any time between today and September...I'm looking at the...it's hard to see that 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

Looks like it's the 9th. In the previous 60 days met that definition, by HVRP standards, they are homeless, okay. So currently homeless for the HEARTH Act, or were homeless at some point in the 60 days before enrollment. Could we go back to Slide 22 now, Rita? So you can see here those are the two pieces.

If a veteran is homeless per this, you're going to then skip all the way to whether they need employment services. But if not, we're going to go to the next slide. So if they aren't homeless right now, they don't meet the definition by HEARTH, and they haven't been homeless in the last 60 days, the next potential way to make them eligible for HVRP is to look at whether they are currently participating in a partner service, or if they're in one of the other categories of eligibility.

The partner services are listed here. That means HUD-VASH which is the HUD-VA Supportive Housing Program. Tribal HUD-VASH, if they're receiving assistance under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996. Or if they are in SSVF, either prevention or rapid rehousing, it doesn't matter which one. If they're in any of those programs, they are considered eligible for HVRP.

They meet this step three. Or the other categories are if they are transitioning from incarceration. So transitioning, they're currently incarcerated and they are transitioning out. Or if they were recently released from incarceration. Any of those, it doesn't matter, meets any of these categories they're also eligible, and you would skip to the employment services section.

But if not, next slide, we have one more way that veterans could be eligible for HVRP. And this is whether if they are determined to be at risk of homelessness. At risk of homelessness is basically if a veteran is at risk of losing their housing within the next 60 days. However, if you remember a few minutes ago, I said, if you're at imminent risk in the next 14 days, you're homeless.

So when you're thinking about this at-risk of homelessness category, it's, is this veteran at risk of homelessness in the next 15 to 60 days? So we have our calendar here, you can see today's the 8th, if a veteran is at imminent risk of losing their housing between today and the 20...I'm not sure if my math is right there yet.

Yeah, it's the 20, I think the... Anyway... I have the math on there. In the next 14 days, they are considered homeless. If they are at risk between Day 15, so it's like the 23rd maybe, and Day 60, then they are considered at risk of homelessness. This category, this at-risk of homelessness category, is limited to 10% of your enrollments.

So if your yearly enrollment is 100, it's 10% of 100. So that's 10 veterans. If your quarterly enrollment is 25, it's 2.5 veterans for that quarter unless you get permission from your GOTR.

You can go to your GOTR and ask for permission to exceed that 10%. Otherwise, this category is only 10% of your enrollments. Next slide, please. As I mentioned, for those of you who are in one of our special population categories, you have to have met all of those things I just talked about, plus whatever is here. So if you're in the homeless female veteran, veteran with families grant, they also have to either be a female veteran, or a homeless veteran who has a dependent child or children.

If you're in IVTP program, you have to have met all of those eligibility requirements. And all of your participants have to either be veterans transitioning from incarceration or recently released from incarceration. Next slide, please. So last, if the veteran has been determined that they're eligible based on whatever the other steps we've gone through, then you need to decide if they would need or benefit from employment services.

HVRP is an employment program so it is not an entitlement program. So just because someone is eligible, it doesn't necessarily mean they should be enrolled. They really have to be someone who would benefit from the

employment services that HVRP has to offer with the goal of them getting placed in employment.

Next slide, please. And I see lots of good questions, we're going to try to enter as many as we can today. And then we'll also categorize the questions too and reach out to folks if we can't get to all of them. Quick word about documentation that I promised that I would get to. You have to verify veteran status first.

Traditionally, in HVRP, you had to have a DD-214 to show that, that veteran was, in fact, a veteran. Because of the challenges with archives being closed during the COVID pandemic, there is, it's a grant officer memo, 01-21 Change 1 basically says that you are allowed to use either the HINQ report, the Hospital Inquiry Report from the VA, or SQUARES instead of the DD-214 through June 30 of 2022.

You can use either of those in lieu of the DD-214 to document veteran status. I saw a lot of questions here about this. Reminder here about no more than 10% of planned enrollments can come from that at-risk category unless you're approved by the GOTR. Remember, if somebody is qualified as being a participant in a partner service like SSVF or HUD-VASH, they do not count as that 10%.

That 10% at risk is for folks who are not either homeless or in a partner program. It's sort of the eligibility of last resort. So just to keep that in mind. Next slide. And I know I'm going through this pretty quickly, but we want to make sure we have some time to talk about outreach today, too.

We've got a lot to cover. So just going back here again to this summary slide again. The reason we suggest that you do the eligibility in those steps is because you're going to...the hardest to, sort of, to document first so that when you get to that at risk of homelessness, you are only using that in the cases where a veteran is not eligible for HVRP any other way.

That at-risk category is really saved for those folks who are truly at risk but not in one of the other categories. So, again, first step is to make sure they are a veteran. And that is one day of active duty, and a discharge status other than dishonorable. And remember, guard and reservists have to be federally activated for duty, not including training.

Next, you are going to pick one of these three categories. So if they're a veteran, you are going to then see first, are they homeless or recently housed. If they are, then you move on and see if they need employment services. If they are not, then you check to see if they're in a partner service like SSVF, or HUD-VASH, or one of those other categories of eligibility transitioning from incarceration or recently incarcerated.

If they are not that either, so they're not homeless, they're not in a partner service, then you would look to see if they are at risk of homelessness in the next 60 days. So that's sort of your eligibility of last resort. And that's the one that is limited to 10% unless you get that GOTR approval. And then lastly, would they benefit from HVRP employment services? We are going to be talking about outreach in just a minute.

And I know that enrollment is a challenge, but we don't want you to enroll people just to enroll them to make your enrollment numbers. They really have to be veterans who would benefit from the employment services that HVRP is here to offer and to provide. Next slide. So I'm going to pause for a second and see if...there are tons, I don't know if Cori, if Ade, if anybody sees any questions that they feel like we should address here before we move on to our veteran outreach section, because I know there was a lot there in that eligibility piece.

- There's the opportunity for people to kind of raise their hands to ask question. I also wanted to mention that we are, indeed, tracking all the questions that are coming in. And if for some reason your questions are not addressed today, we'll put together a question and answer sheet that we're going to share with everyone at the end of all the webinars we're presenting.

So if you want to ask a question now, Cindy, if that's okay with you, feel free to raise your hand or...yeah, raise your hand so we can address your question.

- Okay, and I do see, I'm also conscious of the time, Ade, that we have, that we're at 2:35, so we have about 35 minutes. So I want to make sure...we're about halfway through, I guess, maybe a little bit more than halfway through time for today. So I want to make sure we have some time to get to the next section.

I know there's a lot of questions on here that I'm seeing, just in glancing through, around the HINQ or the DD-214. And perhaps we can find somebody

else from NVTAC can help me find the link to the training we had done on how to access the HINQ report or SQUARES. And again, the other thing I will say whenever it comes to eligibility, you should always confirm with your GOTR, your GOTR is...

So NVTAC is here to help you with programmatic issues, and to help support you, and help brainstorm, and provide best practices. But when it comes to compliance with your grant, that is a GOTR responsibility. And so if you're really unsure, of course, reach out to NVTAC, and we'll help walk you through ideas about whether someone may or may not be eligible.

But we also want you to check with your GOTR. They're the official word, we're sort of the helpful guide, and they're the official word on that. So it looks like we have a question. So, Rita, if you wanted to let that person ask their question and... Yeah.

- [Rita] Of course, your line is now unmuted, please, state your full name and go ahead.

- [Woman] Hi, can you hear me?

- Yes.

- Yes.

- Great. So in the TPR, when we are reporting that someone is in SSVF, we check that box. And then as we scroll through we have to report if they're at risk of homelessness or homeless. We select homeless correct because they're in SSVF?

- Yes. And this is what I'll say, yes, and confirm with your GOTR because the TPR is not really NVTAC's purview of TA. But when you're checking that they are at risk of homelessness, that box is for the people in your 10% that you're using.

So the people who you have gone through all the other steps, and the last choice is, oh, they're at risk of homelessness, that's when you're going to check that they're at risk, otherwise, they're [inaudible].

- Okay, thank you.

- You're welcome. Okay, perfect. I think we have...we're going to keep asking those questions. And we are going to catalog all the questions and who asked them too, so we can make sure everybody gets answers to their questions. But I do want to make sure we talk a little bit about outreach today because I know it's one of the challenges.

And I'm going to encourage Cori, and Ade, and any of the other NVTAC folks who are on to jump in as we go through this. We're going to go through outreach, and again, this is a very high-level conversation around veteran outreach. We understand the challenges of veteran outreach in the best of circumstances. And we also know that the current climate and certainly the last 18 months or so have not been the best of circumstances for outreach.

So we're going to talk about outreach kind of from here's the ideal of what it can look like but also the practical. And we are going to ask you guys, towards the end, to share some of the things that you've tried that have worked and have not worked in the current environment. Knowing that every community right now is different. And there are different restrictions or non-restrictions, and that there have been off and on over the last year and a half.

Folks have come in and out of mandates, and restrictions, and those kinds of things. So keep that in mind as we have this outreach conversation. But we also recognize that there is a lot of opportunity to have additional training, or TA, or individual consultations around outreach with your regional lead. Okay, next slide, please.

Okay, so the way we're thinking about outreach today is we're going to think about this in terms of four Ps. We're going to talk about the purpose of outreach, we're going to talk about the process of outreach. We're going to touch very lightly just on the partnership aspect of outreach because, as I said, I think it's Session 3 next Monday's session is going to talk a lot about partnership and collaboration.

So we're going to sort of touch on it a little bit here. And then we're going to talk about the pandemic, which we have to...any conversation around outreach right now realistic conversation has to include some of that. So next slide, please. Okay, so when we're talking about veteran outreach, what's the purpose? What are we trying to do when we're outreaching a veteran?

And it's really two things we're trying to do here. We are trying to, at first, identify veterans who might be eligible. Again, we don't know if they're eligible or not. But we're trying to identify veterans who might be eligible or people who might be eligible, right? And we're trying to engage them.

And it's that dual piece of identifying them and engaging them so that we can find out if they are, in fact, eligible and would be a good fit for HVRP. As we're thinking about this, we really want to make sure that we're using a person-centered approach, so we're really thinking about the veteran and their perspective. And emphasis in outreach really is about building rapport and trust.

And that takes time. And time is one thing that in HVRP you don't have as much of as you would like, right? You have enrollment goals, you have pressures, you have all of those things. But really, veteran outreach is about building trust and rapport in order to engage veterans who may initially, may not be willing and/or ready to commit to what HVRP is all about.

So that's what we're trying to do is identifying and engage those veterans. And so we're really trying to reach, at least initially, because this is outreach, we are trying to reach as many people as we possibly can within our service delivery area. Some of the people you meet won't be veterans, some of them won't be eligible for whatever reason, or they just...HVRP just might not be the right program for them.

They might need a more intensive program, they might need something that's less hands-on. There's a whole lot of different reasons why they might not be a good fit. But you want to cast your net as wide as possible because you want to get as many people as possible initially, so then you can sort of figure out who are the folks who are the best fit for this program.

And of course, you have to remember that there is no HVRP without veterans because it is a Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program. And we know...I mean, I think I speak for all in NVTAC leads and those of us who've started having conversations with grantees, we know that... And finding veterans has been a real challenge this grant year, and it certainly was towards the end of the last grant year as well.

So we know that that's a challenge and we're here to help support you in that process. I wish I could say that in my next slide, I am going to have, you know, sort of the magic idea here, that's going to be, like, if you just do this one thing,

all of your challenges around finding veterans will go away. Unfortunately, I do not have that answer. None of us at NVTAC have that answer.

But we do have suggestions and are really open to working with you, and talking to you, and brainstorming about things that might work in your communities. So with that caveat that I don't have all the answers, let's go to the next slide, please. So the next thing we wanted to talk a little bit about with outreach is this idea of the process of what does outreach look like?

How do we actually do it? And generally speaking, there's kind of two different paths or tracks of outreach that happen at the same time, and they're not exclusive of each other. It's not like, oh, there's one over...you do one or the other, or you do one separately from the other. But there's sort of two different ways of doing it. One is where you, your HVRP staff is directly identifying and engaging with those veterans, or those potential veterans, potential participants to see if they might be eligible and a good fit for the program.

And then the second one is to be doing all of that indirectly. So instead of you directly going out and talking to veterans or meeting veterans, you are working to build awareness of your program, of your agency, in your community, with veterans, with other service providers, with employers, with shelter operators, with folks who....you know, food pantries, you name it.

You're sort of building...you're trying to be visible in the community, build awareness of your existence of your program's existence. So when you're doing that more indirect approach, you really need to think about being visible, being present, being part of the community, so that when...and the community being the veteran community.

The community that helps individuals experiencing homelessness, and just the larger community, right, you're part of things, you're integral to what's happening in your community. And you really need to think about partnership. As I said, I'm not going to talk too much about partnership today because...I'll talk a little bit in a minute. But that's really what we're talking about here. So there's direct outreach, direct, and then there's the indirect which comes through awareness, relationships, etc.

Next slide, please. So as you're doing this, you need to think about creating an actual plan, a process for outreach. Outreach is daunting, it's hard work, it's not

easy, it's time-consuming. But you really want to have a plan and be systematic about it and have an actual approach.

And there's a couple of reasons for that. One is it helps keep you on track. But the other reason is, when you have a plan and you're actually implementing that plan and you're following through, you can then look at the results, and see if what you're doing is working.

And if it's not working, you can tweak it, you can adjust it. And if it is working, you can see if there are aspects of that, that then can be amplified or, you know, you can do more of the things that are working. And so having this plan, this systemic approach gives you both a way to organize all the activities that come with outreach, but also a way to assess them as you're going through, and see what's working and what isn't working.

And then to make adjustments on the fly and figure out well, yeah, I went to that place, and there's never anybody there, and it's an hour away. And maybe that's just not the place that you, maybe you try something different, right? But part of your plan is really, who are you targeting? So who are you trying to reach? And depending on your program, you could have different target audiences in different parts of your community.

You could have different target audiences, maybe based on some kind of demographic factor, but who are you targeting? And then what message are you saying to them about why they should be part of your program. The message that you're giving to a veteran who just got housed through SSVF and has shelter or, you know, has an apartment, and they're working with SSVF, the message to that veteran about why HVRP is a good fit for them is very different than the message might be to a veteran who was recently released from incarceration.

Or a veteran who is staying in a GPD, in a grant and per diem transitional housing. So you want to think about what the message is, and, you know, how you tweak that based on the veterans that you're trying to reach? You want to think about when you're doing your outreach, are there certain times where veterans congregate locally that might be better for outreach versus others?

Are there certain places, the location, are there, you know, that time location combination. And when we're thinking about location, you also want to think about virtual options for outreach. Are there ways to do outreach virtually? And

we certainly know that there have been, and programs have been doing that over the last year and a half.

So thinking about the location, thinking about the methods, how you're doing your outreach. Do you have someone who's part of an outreach team locally that actually does street outreach with people from other programs, with maybe someone from the VA, and somebody from SSVF, and somebody from Health Care for the Homeless or whatever that might be. How are you doing your outreach?

Are you using social media for outreach, you know, thinking about those kinds of things? And then how are you following up? So once you make contact with a veteran through outreach, how are you following up? How are you continuing that contact? Because remember, we talked about outreach being both identifying the veteran, but also engaging the veteran. And so engaging the veteran takes time.

And so we really want to think about just meeting them that one time isn't enough. And it looks like I may have lost sound, hopefully, maybe somebody can chat me to make sure that you guys can still hear me. So we want to make sure that we're engaging them as well...

- We hear you. [crosstalk]

- Oh, perfect, great. I have had some technical issues today, so it would not surprise me if my phone just died in the middle of a sentence. So that follow-up piece is really important because we want to make sure that once...just identifying the veteran isn't enough, we need to engage them. And for many of the veterans that we're trying to work with, it may take a while for them to be ready to commit to HVRP.

And I say commit to HVRP because HVRP, it's not an entitlement program. It's not a program where the veteran just comes in the door and gets a job, there are things that they have to do. They have to take some responsibility, they have to take action, they have to make decisions about what they want from their employment. And so engaging them may take time and so that follow-up piece is really important.

And when you think about it, it is a marketing activity. So we think about this process of creating this outreach plan so that we know where we're going, and then we know what's working, and what's not working. Next slide, please.

As I mentioned, we're only going to talk for a minute about the partnership aspect of outreach, because we have a session where we're going to talk a lot about partnership and collaboration. But when we're thinking about outreach, we need to remember that HVRP is part of a much larger system that is helping people who are experiencing homelessness, veterans and nonveterans alike.

And so HVRP is an integral, important part of that system but it is a part of the system. And compared to many or most of the VA homeless programs, it is a smaller piece. And so we need to be connected to that larger system to help identify veterans.

Both the larger system of programs serving veterans who are homeless, and the mainstream system that's serving individuals and families who are homeless, regardless of their veteran status. So we really need to be connected, and part of that system through the continuum of care, which we'll talk about in that partnership session, and other partnerships and collaborations.

We also have to be really just straight up, to say that referrals are essential to successful outreach. There is no HVRP program that has ever existed that has done all of its outreach entirely on its own without referrals from other people.

And those other people include housing programs, but it includes workforce partners, like your American Job Center staff, and your DVOPs, and your LVERs. And so you really....referrals are an integral part of how you're going to reach veterans, and so you need to think about that in your partnership efforts. And again, try not to say too much about partnership until the next time but...

And you really want to think about potentially coordinating your outreach efforts with some of these other programs and other partners. Coordinated outreach benefits everyone. It benefits HVRP because it helps you leverage other resources and you don't have to do everything yourself.

It benefits the other partners because, again, you're bringing multiple partners together to outreach and so you can all benefit, right? The veteran may need housing, they may need employment, they may need legal services, they may need whatever else. And so having all that access there benefits both of those

programs, but then at the end of the day, it also benefits the veterans because they have access to multiple things in one place.

So that coordinated outreach effort is really a way to help leverage other resources and keep from trying to do everything yourself because there's too much to do in a day as we know. Next slide, please. Okay, so we're going to talk...here's the pandemic slide that everyone was waiting for. And then just after this, I am going to...get your thinking caps on about things that have worked for you and have not worked for you from an outreach perspective.

But when you think about outreach specifically, the pandemic completely changed the way that outreach was done for HVRP as well as other programs as well. But if you think back...I know, in some ways, it seems like yesterday, and in some ways, it seems like a lifetime ago. You know, April or May of 2020 when things were completely shut down in some places, and in some places, they were still completely shut down until a few weeks ago.

The ability to do street outreach in many places completely went away. So if you remember, I said there are two different ways to do outreach, that direct outreach that you're doing and that referral outreach. That direct outreach, that street outreach, where you're going out into the community to find veterans, in some cases, stopped completely because the veterans weren't there, or people weren't able to go out.

People were, you know, in stay-at-home orders or whatever those things might be. And so street outreach became very limited. But then the second half of the way we do outreach that referral partners and all of those that was also impacted. Because some of our partners that we were counting on for referrals had to completely change the way they did business.

Many shelters completely locked down, and nobody was allowed in or out, like, the people who were there were there, but nobody could go in and talk to them or do anything. Or many of the congregate shelters, where a lot of people were staying, were split up. And people were...you know, veterans and other people experiencing homelessness were removed from those large congregate settings and put in smaller settings for their safety and their health.

And that was very important for their health and safety. But it completely changed the way that outreach was done and the way that outreach could be done. Because instead of going to one Grant and Per Diem Transitional

Housing Program, and potentially meeting 10, or 20, or even 50 veterans, all of those veterans were in different places. And the ability to reach them became much more challenging.

And so it completely changed the way we did everything. The other thing we want to say about the pandemic is that some of the resources that came out of the response to the pandemic impacted how we identify and engage our veterans. And I mentioned a couple of that, like, for example, removing folks from congregate shelters that made it more difficult because instead of, you know, that...you lose that economy of scale.

Instead of one visit yielding potentially multiple veterans, one visit is to one veteran who may or may not be ready to engage, right? So that impacted our ability to engage veterans. But the other piece that impacted is some of the things that happened in response to the pandemic that were for safety of veterans health and safety of veterans, for example, housing veterans in a hotel setting.

That was very important for the safety of those veterans that they were not connected. They were in large groups of other vulnerable populations with health conditions in a large setting where the virus could be easily transmitted. But from an HVRP outreach perspective, when it comes to engaging those veterans, it's harder to find them, it's harder to engage them.

If we add in that those veterans were now, for example, housed in a hotel and potentially had unemployment benefits that they hadn't been qualified before, perhaps, engaging them in an employment program becomes that much harder. Because their basic needs are being met. And if their basic needs are being met, making the case that they should give up those basic needs, or even pay attention to something that's beyond those basic needs is a much harder sell as an HVRP.

And so those resources did really impact how we are able to engage veterans. Because we might find the veterans and the veterans might just say, I'm good. I'm not ready for this, I don't need this, I'm okay where I am. And so those things impacted our outreach effort. But what they also did...what the pandemic also did is it really forced programs to think creatively in their approaches, and their solutions, and to come up with new ways of doing business.

And not all those new ways of doing business worked great, not all of those outreach things were hugely successful, some work, some don't work. Some are things that as soon as they could be gotten rid of and you could go back to the old way, programs immediately did. And others are things that programs are still doing.

And so there's a lot of creativity that came out of, that forced creativity, I guess, is the way to talk about it. And these innovative ways of doing things. And specifically around that was this idea of virtual outreach and engaging folks in a nontraditional virtual way. And that includes things like Zoom orientation meetings in a shelter, for example, or those kinds of things.

So a lot of creativity came out of that. Next slide, please. So, with that said, I did give you fair warning. And we have a few minutes left before the end of today's session. What we really want to do is I want you to raise your hand or type it in the chat to talk about, you know, how you're approaching outreach right now, and what are the things that are working well, for you from an outreach perspective?

And are there things that you've tried that just didn't work? And then the third question, maybe that's not even up here in this blue box is, are there things that you want to try, but you're not quite sure how to do it? So this is a time to sort of hear from you about what is working, what isn't working, and just to share thoughts and ideas. So you can, please, type in the chatbox, but also raise your hand.

And while we're waiting for folks to join in, Cori or Ade, if anybody else has anything else they want to add on this thing while we're waiting for folks, that would be great. So, Tanya, thank you so much. Tanya shared that one of the things that's worked well for them is using the VSOs, the Veteran Service Organizations.

Places like the Disabled American Veterans, DAV, or the VFW, or American Legion posts, the folks that see veterans regularly. So Maya from U.S.VETS working with other programs, coordinating with other programs that might be offering other services.

That's great. Let's see lots of partner...like lots of people talking about partnering, and maybe even using virtual tools like Zoom to connect with their partners. That's great. Let's see.

I'm trying to read quickly and that doesn't always work well for me so... Let's see. Lots of networking, connecting to veterans' hospitals, rehab facilities. Other veteran programs like SSVF, and HUD-VASH, department of corrections, and local jails and prisons.

I'm curious, John, are those state institutions or are those federal institutions? The local ones are obviously local, but is that your state department of correction, or are they federal? Yeah, state, okay, thank you, John. I thought that might be the case. Not that I discourage working with the Federal Bureau of Prisons, but it often takes more time to make those connections and those relationships.

That's great. And I think we have some other ideas coming in. So lots of good ideas here. And I'm curious if anybody has had things that worked well, potentially engaging with some of those veterans who may have been moved from a congregate setting into a hotel setting, or challenges that you found when you're trying to do your outreach, and get folks to connect and join in with HVRP.

- Hey, Cindy, someone wants you to address Slide 27 regarding nonvets participating.

- Okay, Rita, could we go back to Slide 27 because I don't remember what's on it. Okay. Okay, so this just means you want to make sure...all that sentence there means is that you have to make sure that whoever you enroll in this program meets HVRP's definition of a veteran.

Okay, so you just want to make sure that you do the veteran status first. So as long as the person is a veteran by HVRP standards, which means they have that one day of active duty and a discharge status other than dishonorable.

Or if they were guard and reserve that they have been activated federally, so federal activation. Activation by a governor doesn't count. Federal activation for duty not including training. As long as they meet that definition, then you're fine. So don't worry about this sub-bullet here this is really just to reinforce, make sure that they are a veteran by HVRP standards before you move on to any of the other steps.

And then, Rita, I think we should go back to whatever slide we were on, I don't remember what number that was. So there's some questions around

incarceration probably specifically connected to IVTP, but also, those other categories of eligibility.

And I think we had a slide on this maybe somewhere in the 20s. I'm going to paraphrase here, and then we'll find the exact slide that has the official language. The question is around how long before and after release, does it count? Basically, you're talking 12 months.

So if they are currently incarcerated and transitioning, if they are transitioning from incarceration, that means they're within 12 months of release. And if they are recently incarcerated, it means they're within 12 months post-release. So that's your general frame is 12 months on either end of their release. But we'll find out.

There is some specific language in here and we can also follow up. I think that was David, we can follow up with that language as well.

- Sure. We have one verbal question if you have the time to address that real quick, Cindy.

- Of course. Sure.

- Your lines are unmuted, please, state your full name. Go ahead. Tanya, are you still with us? The hand has been lowered.

- I guess that just means we're great at answering questions. We'll go with that anyway. Let's see. Oh, Tammy sent in a comment about this outreach, and just talking about beating the streets, and relationship building, and showing veterans that she cares is how she addresses some of those barriers.

So I think that's really important. Her comment talks about...I encourage everybody read that in the chat, about creating that safe space and being open-minded. And I think part of the challenge of outreach is that it often takes time, especially when you're working with veterans who may have more significant barriers, it takes time to engage them.

It doesn't necessarily take time to identify them but to engage them it takes time, and it takes building trust. And that happens over time. And that is a challenge when you think about, you know, HVRP, you have deliverables you have to meet, you have enrollment numbers, all of those things. But it does take time for some of our veterans. And so building in, when you're thinking about

that outreach plan, building that time into your plan, so that you have time to go back and check-in with veterans that you may have met previously who might not have been ready for HVRP.

Or you might have just been making an initial contact and sort of engaging them. So thanks for that comment, Tammy, that's great. Let's go to the next slide, Rita, I think... And if folks have other questions or other things they want to add in here. So this is...I want to give on this, and then we have a couple last minutes for questions before we finish up for today.

But as I promised, here's the contact information for all the regional leads. So you have our email addresses here. And I believe Cori may have answered the question about the slides and the recording going up. But in the short term, if you want to look up your regional lead right here and just jot down their email address so that you have it. You can reach out to us with any additional questions.

As I said, this course is going to...we have four courses happening over this two-week period. But it is pretty high level, we're going to get into as much detail as we can. But also, we can't cover everything in the time we have. But we want you to think about this as a jumping-off point to spur other questions, other ideas, things that you might want additional training on.

So please, reach out to us with those questions. I see Kia has a hand, a question about the DD-214 saying uncharacterized or unknown. I encourage you, Kia, to work with your GOTR on that. You may be able...if the veteran is getting VA health care through their HINQ report, it might be clearer on their HINQ report.

But if you have an uncharacterized or unknown status, please, connect to your GOTR, your Grant Officer Technical Representative. So that's usually your DVET, your state director of vets, but sometimes an assistant director as well. So please, connect. And, Tanya, you are correct that often that uncharacterized might be that they didn't complete 180 days.

But connect there. Kate, regional liaison for Hawaii that's me. In Hawaii, you're part of San Francisco region. So, mahalo, reach out to me. We do have quite a time difference because I'm on the East Coast. But I have worked with several of the Hawaii grantees, so we will find a time that works for things. Other questions, or Cori or Ade, do you have any sort of last-minute...I know we

covered a lot of stuff today fairly quickly, but we did want to leave some times for questions.

But also, we encourage you to come back on Wednesday when Ade, and Amy, and Nicole are going to be talking about assessment and addressing barriers...intake assessment and addressing barriers. And then next week, I think we have partnerships and then placement and retention conversations as well.

As Ade said, if you have other staff members who couldn't come today, they're more than welcome to come on Wednesday. We want everybody to come and ask as many questions as they have, but also, to listen to the recording. Any last words, Ade, before we give folks a couple minutes back?

- Yeah, thank you so much, Cindy, for the detailed presentation. We try to address some questions through the chat, and through email, and responding some emails. But whatever questions are not addressed today, we are compiling, you know, a list of questions and answers so that everyone can have it.

We'll work on that as soon as possible. And for Wednesday's sessions and subsequent sessions, we're going to be sending out reminders. And if you have any kind of technical difficulties getting in, or any of your colleagues, or, you know, co-workers let us know so that we can mitigate that. That said, Cori, I don't know on the call or, Amy, if you have anything, please, let us know.

- [Cori] Hi, this is Cory. I'm certainly good. Great presentation. Thank you, Ade and Cindy, very much.

- All righty on that note, back to you, Cindy. Looks like we're going to give them a few minutes back today.

- Great. Thanks, everybody. And we look forward to talking to you on Wednesday.

- Thank you, everyone.