Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) Grant Recipient Program Guide



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Introduction

How to Use this Guide

The Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) Grant Recipient Program Guide (Program Guide) was developed to provide an overview of HVRP, including Homeless Women Veterans and Homeless Veterans with Children (HWVHVWC) and Incarcerated Veterans' Transition Program (IVTP). This guide can be used by current HVRP grant recipients, prospective HVRP applicants, U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans' Employment and Training Service (DOL/VETS) staff members, and other interested parties.

The Program Guide was developed by the National Veterans' Technical Assistance Center (NVTAC), in partnership with DOL/VETS, with the goal of creating a comprehensive resource to support the successful implementation of HVRP. It is intended as a start-up guide for new programs and staff, a reference document for experienced programs, and a collection of best practices and lessons learned. Therefore, it is a living document that will be expanded and updated over time. The Program Guide is intended to be consistent with all regulations and guidance related to HVRP. However, if any discrepancies exist, the most <u>current regulations and guidance</u> take precedence.

Accessing Training and Technical Assistance (TA)

The Program Guide is meant to enhance, not replace, direct training and TA. DOL/VETS funds NVTAC to provide programmatic support to HVRP grant recipients at no cost. NVTAC offers a variety of products and services including one-on-one consultations, customized training, webbased training, best practices, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and a robust Community of Practice (CoP). The NVTAC website serves as the hub of NVTAC's efforts to provide access to products, services, and staff.

HVRP grant recipients can request training and TA by emailing contact@nvtac.org. DOL/VETS regional staff, located across the country, are also available to provide training and TA to grant recipients. Each grant has an assigned Grant Officer's Technical Representative (GOTR) within their state. A grant recipient's GOTR is listed in the terms and conditions of their grant award. The GOTR is responsible for federal oversight and grant compliance. Any questions about guidance-related issues should be directed to the grant recipient's GOTR. For a more comprehensive list of which topics should be directed to your GOTR or NVTAC, please view the Menu of Services. NVTAC works closely with GOTRs to provide comprehensive support leading to successful HVRP grants. Training and TA are available on a variety of topics from NVTAC and/or the GOTR.



Program Overview

Introduction to HVRP

HVRP is an employment-focused competitive grant program funded by DOL/VETS designed to enable America's veterans experiencing homelessness to reach their full employment potential and obtain high-quality career outcomes. HVRP is the only federal grant to focus exclusively on employment for veterans experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Grant recipients must address the complex employment-related needs and supportive services necessary to assist veterans experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Whether by direct services or a robust referral system, recipients must provide the tools, resources, and partnerships to identify, recruit, prepare, and support veterans experiencing or at risk of homelessness for employment success.

The program was originally authorized in 1987 under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act), the first major federal legislative response to homelessness. The McKinney-Vento Act authorized 15 programs, including "Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Projects":

The Secretary, using funds appropriated and made available for the purpose of carrying out this section, shall conduct, directly or through grant or contract, such programs as the Secretary determines appropriate to expedite the reintegration of homeless veterans into the labor force.

HVRP and its companion programs are currently authorized under Title 38 United States Code (USC) Sections 2021, 2021A, and 2023.

HVRP is a competitive grant program. Each year, pending authorization from Congress, DOL/VETS issues a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) for HVRP. The FOA describes the application and award process including critical elements of a responsive application, the

submission process, and how grant recipients will be selected. To access the most recent FOA, HVRP outcomes, and other important guidance, visit the HVRP homepage.

HVRP has three core objectives:

- 1. Provide career exploration, training, and supportive services to veterans experiencing and at risk of homelessness, empowering them to secure good jobs in stable, high-demand occupations earning livable wages.
- 2. Establish strong partnerships between public, private, and nonprofit organizations, especially those that include people who have experienced homelessness.
- 3. Remove barriers to the full and equal participation of marginalized communities through partnerships with a range of organizations that support the ability to reach out to and deliver equitable services to marginalized veterans experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

The program is intended to support veterans experiencing homelessness to reintegrate into society through participation in the workforce. HVRP is about preparing and placing veterans experiencing homelessness into jobs that are not therapeutic or subsidized, but rather part of the local competitive economy. However, employment alone cannot end homelessness among veterans. Instead, employment is one component of the larger objective—an important part of a complex delivery system that depends on close and productive collaboration between multiple partners to address the needs and barriers of veterans experiencing homelessness.



Participant Eligibility

To be eligible for HVRP, an individual must meet the definitions for "veteran" and either "homeless," "at risk of homelessness," "participating in a partner program," or "transitioning from incarceration" as described below. However, please note that these descriptions are not the formal definitions. For the full statutory definitions, see *Appendix A*.

Veteran: According to the USC definition, a person who served in the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, or Reserve Component (National Guard and

Reserve), with least one day of active duty, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.

To meet the HVRP definition of veteran, an individual must have at least one day of active-duty service, including time spent in basic training. Members of the National Guard and Reserve, who were not federally activated for duty beyond training, do not meet this definition and are not eligible for HVRP. However, any period of inactive duty or active duty for training during which National Guard and Reserve members received a service-connected disability resulting from a disease or injury incurred or aggravated in line of duty would be considered eligible. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Hospital Inquiry (HINQ) or the VA web application Status Query and Response Exchange System (SQUARES) documentation are acceptable as provisional source documents to expedite enrollment; however, a DD-214 (or the VA Summary of Benefits letter for National Guard and Reserve members with a service-connected disability who were not issued a DD-214 as they may not have served on active duty) must be requested within three business days of enrollment and must be included in the participant case file prior to the participant exiting the program. Individuals who received a dishonorable discharge from the military are not eligible for HVRP unless, and until, they receive an upgrade to their discharge status. Note: Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) replaced HINQ after the release of Veterans' Program. Letter (VPL) 02-23. Individuals who received a dishonorable discharge from the military are not eligible for HVRP unless, and until, they receive an upgrade to their discharge status.

Homeless: A person who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; lives in a shelter or a place not meant for human habitation; is fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence; is at imminent risk (within 14 days) of losing their housing; or who was homeless in the 60-day period before HVRP enrollment and who has since found housing. See the HomelessEmergency Assistance and Rapid Transition Housing (HEARTH) Act for the full definition.

Recently housed veterans and veterans at imminent risk of homelessness are considered homeless, not "at risk of homelessness," for HVRP eligibility purposes.

Veterans participating in partner programs, such as U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development – Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)/Tribal HUD-VASH or Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) programs, veterans who are receiving assistance under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act of 1996, and veterans transitioning from incarceration are also eligible under HVRP.

Veteran Transitioning from Incarceration: A veteran who is a resident of a penal institution, or an institution that provides long-term care for mental illness; and is at risk of homelessness absent

referral and counseling services provided under the program." To be determined "at risk," the veteran must be scheduled to be released from incarceration within 12 months.

Veteran Recently Released from Incarceration: A veteran released from incarceration in the last 12 months who is at risk of homelessness.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act expanded eligibility for HVRP to include:

Veterans at Risk of Homelessness: Veterans at risk of homelessness within 60 days of the HVRP enrollment date or veterans released from incarceration within the last 12 months who are at risk of homelessness.

If grant recipients have any questions about whether an individual meets the eligibility requirements for HVRP, they should contact their GOTR. For more information on eligibility, see the most updated guidance from the Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS).

While eligibility for HVRP has expanded, the purpose of the program has not changed. HVRP is still a program for veterans experiencing homelessness. The changes in HVRP eligibility were designed to prevent veterans from falling through the cracks, not to change the focus of the program.

Program Implementation

Unlike some federal grant programs with rigid structures and processes, HVRP is designed to give grant recipients flexibility to tailor their programs to meet the needs of the veterans and communities they serve. While there is no "formula," HVRP grant recipients are expected to engage in specific activities and provide a variety of core services:

Knowledge of Population: Grant recipients understand the unique needs of the veterans they serve and structure their services to meet those needs.

Outreach, Recruitment, and Engagement: HVRP grant recipients use a flexible, non-threatening approach to meet veterans where they are. Outreach also includes activities to engage partners and employers.

Intake: An eligibility process for screening individual applicants in which (a) an initial determination of eligibility is made; (b) program information is provided; and (c) individual applicants are selected for participation in the program.

Assessment: A collection of education and employment history, identification of barriers to employment, including skill deficits, and service needs as well as strengths.

Case Management: HVRP grant recipients use a client-centered approach in the delivery of intensive services designed to address barriers and develop comprehensive employment plans for participants, ensure access to the necessary training and supportive services that impart relevant skills and connect participants with high-quality career opportunities, and provide continued support during program participation and after job placement.

Job-Driven Training (JDT) and Placement: HVRP grant recipients provide training that is targeted to the specific industries, occupations, and skills that are in demand locally. Training services can be provided in-house, through partners in the community, or the American Job Center (AJC).

Collaboration: HVRP grant recipients collaborate with public and private partners at all levels (federal, state, and local) to provide supportive services and access to permanent housing.

Retention and Follow-up: HVRP grant recipients provide ongoing support to track participant outcomes and promote job retention.

The following section of the Program Guide will provide a comprehensive review of each of the core components of HVRP, including a description of the component, strategies for implementation, lessons learned, best practices from other HVRP grant recipients, and resources for additional information.



Outreach

A successful HVRP program begins with the ability to identify and engage with potential participants, employers, and community partners. Outreach is a strategic process for making these connections. Since the primary goal of HVRP is to connect veterans experiencing homelessness to meaningful employment, this section focuses on veteran outreach. However, the strategies and methods discussed here can be applied to other audiences, as well.

In the context of HVRP, outreach means finding veterans who meet the eligibility requirements that were described above (i.e., veterans experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness) and need or would benefit from employment. At this stage, the focus is casting a wide net to help identify as many prospective participants as possible. Every HVRP grant recipient should create an outreach plan that is strategic and intentional. The following are essential components of an effective outreach plan:

Target Audience: Who are you trying to reach?

Message: What are you offering?

Timing: When will you conduct outreach activities?

Location: Where will those activities occur?

• Methods: How will you find potential participants?

Follow-Up: How will you build rapport and maintain contact?

Outreach Implementation Strategies

Although the specific elements of the outreach plan will vary from grant recipient to grant recipient, these fundamental strategies form the foundation of an effective plan:

Cultural Competency – Outreach staff must be knowledgeable about the target population
and sub-populations and connect to potential clients regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or
any other characteristic. Each veteran requires an individual approach; there is no one-sizefits-all model, and some veterans may take longer to respond to outreach efforts than
others.

Tip from the field: Hiring veterans to conduct outreach to other veterans who understand the military experience can help build trust.

- Referrals Referrals are often the most effective and efficient way to find eligible veterans.

 A veteran who is already engaged in services with a community partner may be more receptive to enrolling in HVRP when referred. The most powerful referrals come from veterans who previously participated in the program. When someone a veteran trusts refers them to a program, that trust is often imparted to the newly-referred program.
- Veteran Outreach Visiting the community to find veterans who may not already be
 engaged in services is an important part of outreach. It means meeting people where they
 are comfortable (e.g., homeless encampments) and may be the only way to connect with
 unsheltered veterans. Street outreach requires patience, persistence, and precautions to
 ensure the safety of all involved. Outreach workers must locate eligible veterans, build trust,

and promote the program's benefits, which may take multiple visits across weeks or months.

Tip from the field: Connect with local Coordinated Entry Systems (CES) to find local, targeted community outreach dates and locations to create a partnership. See Appendix B for more information on CES.

Presence and Visibility – An individual HVRP program and the overall grant recipient
agency need to be both visible and present in the community. For example, educating the
public, community partners, and veterans by hosting events can help raise awareness of
HVRP. Participation in community and stakeholder meetings can also raise the program's
profile and awareness in the veteran, homeless, and employment circles in the community.

Tip from the field: Co-locating with other partners, such as the local AJC or housing providers, extends your visibility and makes it easier for veterans to find you.

- Stand Down (SD) Events Hosting or participating in a local SD event is a great way to
 connect with veterans experiencing homelessness. SD events are held over one to three
 days, and provide supplies and services to veterans experiencing homelessness, such as
 food, shelter, clothing, health screenings, and benefits counseling. More information on SD
 grants and the grant application process is available on the SD page of the HVRP
 webpage.
- Collaboration Being a good partner who is active in the larger community's efforts and in finding solutions around veterans experiencing homelessness is essential. Where possible, HVRP grant recipients should be part of the local CES, participate in the By-Name List, when applicable, and work closely with the local Continuum of Care (CoC) and housing providers. Important partnerships for HVRP include AJCs, SSVF, HUD-VASH, Grant and Per Diem (GPD), VA Domiciliary, Compensated Work Therapy (CWT), local police department, local criminal justice system, and VA Crisis Line. Connecting to mainstream providers, in addition to veteran-specific ones, can extend the reach of your program, especially with harder-to-find sub-populations including women veterans with minor children.

Intake

An effective outreach strategy will identify a stream of potential participants, not all of whom will be good candidates for HVRP. The next step is intake, an important process that lays the foundation

to build rapport and screen a potential participant for enrollment. Intake begins with an initial eligibility assessment to determine if the individual is:

- 1. Eligible for HVRP; and
- 2. A suitable fit for the program.

Program eligibility is based on meeting the definitions of "veteran" and "homeless" or "at risk of homelessness" discussed in <u>Appendix A</u>. However, not every veteran who is eligible for HVRP should be enrolled in the program.

Since HVRP is an employment-focused program, only veterans who have a goal of seeking employment should be enrolled in the program. We often speak in terms of "employment readiness." However, for the purposes of intake, a veteran should be able to participate in and benefit from HVRP services, not necessarily be immediately ready to find employment; the role of HVRP is often to support a veteran in overcoming barriers to employment.

This information can be gleaned during the intake conversation as you share details about the program and gather information about the veteran's assets, needs, and barriers. Intake can occur on-site or in the community depending on the veteran's transportation options. The decision to enroll the veteran in HVRP should be agreed on by both the veteran and the HVRP staff member.



Intake and Enrollment Implementation Strategies

• Verify Veteran Status First – If an individual does not meet the HVRP definition of veteran, homeless status is irrelevant. To provide HVRP services, grant recipients must collect, in an individual's participant case file, source documentation of eligibility, to include a DD-214 that provides the character of discharge (any one of copies 2–8). Grant recipients cannot expend any grant funds on a participant until it is verified that they are eligible for the program. For National Guard and Reserve members who received a service-connected disability resulting from a disease or injury incurred or aggravated in line of duty and were not issued a DD-214, you must obtain a VA Summary of Benefits letter to verify the service-connected disability. Veterans may be provisionally enrolled in HVRP using a VA HINQ or

the VA web application SQUARES. If HINQ or SQUARES is used to enroll a veteran provisionally, a copy of the DD-214 (or the VA Summary of Benefits letter, only when appropriate) must still be provided. If a DD-214 is not readily available, grant recipients must request the DD-214 within three business days of HINQ- or SQUARES-based enrollment. A DD-214 (or the VA Summary of Benefits letter, only when appropriate) must be included in the participant case file prior to the participant exiting the program. Please note, the VBMS replaced HINQ after the release of VPL 02-23.

- Take Your Time The decision to enroll does not have to be made during the first meeting with the veteran. The veteran might not immediately be ready or able to commit to the program, but the case manager should continue to follow up with the veteran. Examples may include the veteran being in rehabilitative services for drugs, alcohol, and/or mental health. The same is true for intake. There is a lot of information to gather, but you do not need it all at once. Collect only what is essential at the first meeting (e.g., how to contact the veteran) and focus your energy on having a conversation and making a connection, not filling out a form.
- Information Sharing If a participant is referred by a partner, such as an AJC or a
 housing provider, ask them to share basic information so the veteran does not have to
 repeat themselves. Ask the veteran to sign a release of information (ROI) form to make this
 process easier (see a sample ROI form).

Assessment

Assessment is the foundation for an HVRP grant recipient's work with veterans experiencing homelessness. Assessment is an intensive, ongoing process that provides staff with the information they need – strengths, challenges, history, and needs – to serve veterans. The goal is to get a comprehensive picture of who the veteran is and what the veteran wants. That picture includes a realistic understanding of the veteran's strengths, weaknesses, barriers, and assets that will inform the next steps, from enrollment to case management and referrals to training and job placement. To guide these efforts, a grant recipient can focus on three categories of information connected to employment:

- 1. **Abilities, Interests, and Skills:** Focus on strengths. What kind of work does the veteran want to do? In what setting? What activities do they like? What are they good at? What experience do they have?
- 2. **Barriers:** What is preventing the veteran from obtaining stable employment? HVRP participants have many types of barriers including skills-based, health-related, and situational (e.g., transportation, criminal background).

3. **Supports:** What can HVRP do to support the veteran in overcoming barriers and translate their interests, abilities, and skills into a fruitful and lasting employment opportunity?

HVRP grant recipients should develop a structured, flexible assessment process to meet the diverse needs of individual veterans. Please note that "assessments" are not always meant to be tests or formal evaluations. Assessments should begin with conversations that allow both you and the veteran an opportunity to establish a connection, build trust, and foster an understanding of the program's benefits as it relates to each veteran. Several strategies for assessment are as follows:

Use a Variety of Assessment Tools – Formal, scientifically validated tools, such as the
 O*NET Interest Profiler, can help veterans identify careers that correspond to their interests
 and experience. Combining formal assessments with information checklists and
 conversations can provide a better overall picture for the veteran and case manager.

Tip from the field: Learn how other HVRP grant recipients use assessment tools such as O*NET by watching this brief video.

Assessment is Ongoing – Each assessment provides a snapshot of the veteran, which is
combined with other information to guide the next steps. Veterans and their circumstances
will evolve, requiring reassessment and adjustment of priorities through the case
management process.



Case Management

Case management is the coordinated process by which HVRP participants access supportive services and training to address barriers and achieve employment outcomes. The services may be available within the program, the host organization, or through referrals to, and/or collaboration with, outside partners.

While the assessment process may provide a snapshot of the veteran's skills, barriers, and employment goals, it may also reveal difficult steps the veteran will need to take to accomplish

their goals. The case manager helps the veteran navigate what can be a complicated journey. Therefore, developing rapport and trust is essential. For many participants, the journey will require significant behavioral or attitudinal change. This can be difficult and is often accompanied by mistakes and missteps requiring the case manager to be patient and persistent. While case management is not linear, having a plan in place can help manage the ups and downs of achieving employment stability. The Individual Employment Plan (IEP), discussed in detail below, lays out a path for the veteran moving forward.



Case Management Implementation Strategies

Change is uncomfortable for everyone and can bring on a variety of responses from active resistance to ambivalence. Managing the emotions and behaviors that arise is critical to moving forward. HVRP grant recipients can use numerous change management strategies effectively, including the following:

 Motivational Interviewing (MI) – MI is a collaborative conversation that focuses on increasing the participant's motivation to change. The case manager uses active listening and other techniques to guide the conversation, but the process is driven by the client.

Tip from the field: Learn more about MI through the <u>NVTAC Virtual</u> Learning Course (VLC) on MI.

- Engage in Work Talk Work talk means engaging in purposeful conversation with
 veterans about work. It challenges veterans and staff to change their perspective and think
 differently about their experiences. Work talk may include discussing previous successes
 and failures or encouraging participants to explore new possibilities.
- **Meet Veterans Where They Are** While some veterans may require intensive services to support their employment search, others may be able to connect with employment with less support and intervention from their case manager. The challenge for case managers is

recognizing where each veteran is on this scale and adapting their approach to meet the veteran's needs.

- Case Conferencing Most HVRP participants are enrolled in multiple programs simultaneously. Where possible, having case managers from those programs come together to discuss common clients is invaluable. Case conferencing ensures the different plans complement, instead of compete, with one another. Veterans may share different or conflicting information with case managers from other programs. Case conferencing ensures everyone has the same information, leading to better outcomes (see a sample ROI form).
- Document Everything If it is not documented, it did not happen. A robust case file should include case management notes about client interaction, progress toward addressing barriers, and meeting goals. When developing case notes, it is essential to be accurate, concise, objective, chronological, and timely. For notes detailing client interaction, be specific about the interaction without making assumptions. When applicable, case notes should include documentation of interactions with outside service providers, attempted contacts, and other services in addition to client interaction. For more information about case management and case notes, please review the NVTAC VLC on goal planning and case management recording.

Tip from the field: Data, assessment, and plan (DAP) note format helps capture veteran information, findings, and the plan of action.

Case File Requirements

The FOA and DOL/VETS policies contain the program requirements for this award. Additionally, grant recipients are required to maintain all records and reports, including participant case records, for any activities and services outlined in the FOA. At a minimum, an HVRP grant recipients' participant case file must include:

- 1. Source documentation of veteran status;
- 2. Verification of veteran's homelessness or at risk of homelessness status;
- 3. Intake which includes the collection of necessary information to determine eligibility for the program;
- 4. An assessment that includes education, skills, employment history, desired career, and employment barriers;
- 5. IEP that provides a comprehensive evaluation that may include education, skills, employment history, desired career, and employment barriers;

- 6. Case notes documenting activities such as contact with the participant, services provided, training, and referrals to other agencies in order to gain/retain meaningful employment;
- 7. Supporting financial records for participant support costs incurred for the participant spent in accordance with the grant recipient's budget narrative and 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 200.1; and
- 8. Verification of employment (through employer or participant), wages, and hours worked for the quarter placed and during each quarter after exit during the follow-up tracking period as defined by each year during the Period of Performance (PoP).

Additional Resources

For more information about case management, stages of change, and MI, take the <u>NVTAC Self-Paced Training Course: Module 4</u>. The National Veterans' Training Institute (NVTI) offers two case management courses that HVRP grant recipients can participate in:

- 9604: Managing Case Management (Manager/Supervisor Focused)
- 9620: Advanced Case Management

For more information on NVTI courses, please see the NVTI Class Descriptions.



Individual Employment Plan (IEP)

The IEP is crucial to successful employment outcomes in HVRP. Developed collaboratively by the case manager and veteran, and often including input from other partners and stakeholders in the veteran's employment search, the IEP identifies and lays out a strategy for achieving the veteran's overall employment goal. That strategy includes the overall goal, broken down into manageable steps, a brief description of the activities or services required, timelines for completion, and the people responsible for each action. The IEP is not a static document, either forgotten or rigidly adhered to after completion. To be effective, it should be discussed, reviewed, and updated throughout participation in HVRP.

Some HVRP participants may lack a clear vision or be unprepared to develop an employment goal. Case managers may use MI or other strategies discussed previously to help them explore their interests, skills, and abilities. The key elements of an IEP are as follows:

- Overall Employment Goal What are the industries and occupations, salaries, full- or part-time placement, and target start date of where the veteran will work?
- Basic Education What foundational skills (math, literacy, time management, and financial literacy) does the veteran have, and what skills do they need to be successful?
- **Skills Training** What skills does the job/career require, and how will the veteran get them?
- Housing What housing options are available, and how will the veteran access them?
- Supportive Services What other services are required to address the veteran's barriers?
 This may include health care, treatment for substance use, clothing, legal services, etc.
 How will you connect them to those services?
- Job Search How will the veteran identify and apply for relevant positions?

The following outlines specific implementation strategies for IEPs:

- Start Small Breaking goals down into smaller, more easily accomplished components lead to early success and builds confidence.
- Promote Accountability Including timelines and expectations about what needs to be
 done, when, and by whom allows veterans and case managers to track progress and hold
 each other accountable.
- Build Buy-in Developing the IEP is a collaborative process that requires negotiation and flexibility from the veteran and case manager. If the veteran is not invested in the plan, progress will be intermittent and slow, or worse. To demonstrate their commitment to the plan, the case manager and veterans should sign the IEP; this will also give the veteran the opportunity to review the document to ensure it reflects their interests in, and understanding of, the process.
- Connect with Partners Veterans may be working with multiple providers to assist them with their job search or to address other barriers. Collaborating and sharing information with

those partners prevents duplication of services and ensures everyone is working together to help the veteran.



Confronting and Overcoming Barriers to Employment

HVRP grant recipients frequently support veteran job seekers to confront and overcome barriers and challenges that prevent them from finding and retaining employment. Barriers can take a variety of different forms and require a wide array of creative solutions. In some cases, barriers perceived by HVRP staff will not be perceived or recognized as significant by the veteran being served. While open and honest conversations are essential between HVRP staff and veterans, HVRP staff must also remember that the veteran is the "lead" in their own employment search, and both their success and ongoing investment depend on their capacity to direct and control the process.

The job development process is not linear; it is a continuous process that is integrated into the IEP. It includes tangible activities like working with veterans on their resumes, job search, or interviewing techniques, as well as intangible support through counseling or mentoring. Job development is not limited to getting a job. It means looking for the right job and being prepared to keep that job, even when things get hard.

The following list, although not exhaustive, provides common barriers that can complicate the employment search process for veterans served through HVRP:

- Physical, perceptual, and psychological disabilities
- Transportation
- Housing instability
- Addiction
- Complex schedules due to child care, medical, and/or other appointments
- Histories of justice involvement

Perhaps the most difficult barrier to support a veteran in overcoming is a perceived lack of motivation in their job search. As noted, the veterans must control and drive the process—when

they cannot or do not, it is very unlikely to be successful. However, even in this case, it is important to recall that what seems like a lack of motivation from the outside may in fact be a sense of fear or uncertainty in the process. Extended unemployment can have a corrosive effect on self-esteem.

Although HVRP staff cannot conduct a job search without the veteran's investment, they should pursue strategies that cultivate their engagement and enthusiasm. The following strategies can be employed to confront common barriers to employment:

- Reality Check Discussing barriers to employment may involve difficult conversations to
 manage expectations around career choices, salary, job tasks, or hours based on the
 veteran's skills and the local job market. Many veterans have high expectations based on
 their military occupations, which may not translate to the civilian workforce. Having open,
 honest discussions about what is realistic and how a veteran may progress from their
 current options to their eventual goals is important.
- Practice, Practice Mock interviews give participants the opportunity to practice
 talking about their experience and how it translates to a given job and to discuss barriers
 such as incarceration. Practicing what they will say and receiving feedback from staff or
 employment partners can relieve anxiety and allow them to adjust their approach as
 needed.
- The Power of Peers Learning from peers who have successfully maintained employment is powerful. Hosting an event where peers can share what a typical day is like at their job can help participants see possibilities and create mentorship opportunities. Peers can be especially effective in helping veterans prepare for what comes after they secure a job.
- Cultivating Interim Goals without Creating Additional Barriers The IEP process
 necessitates the creation of numerous interim goals for veterans and helps break down a
 daunting process into smaller, more manageable steps. However, as HVRP staff, it is
 important to avoid the pitfalls of creating goals that might come to serve as artificial barriers
 to employment. There must be a balance to ensure that what is required of a veteran is
 truly necessary to the job development process, not an imposition that may come to serve
 as another barrier.
- **Engaging Partners** A quick review of the list of barriers presented above illustrates the necessity of working closely with partners to serve veteran career seekers. HVRP grant recipients cannot work in silos to support veterans in their employment search and to

overcome the barriers that could otherwise derail a positive outcome. An HVRP grant recipient's many and always expanding list of partners are vital resources in the service delivery process, and their roles should be planned for, and documented in, the IEP.

Flexibility and Persistence – Accommodating and overcoming barriers often means
changing your plans, but it always means continuing to work with and support the veterans
we serve.



Job-Driven Training (JDT)

Job training services are essential to a veteran's preparedness for obtaining and maintaining employment. Some examples of job training that may be provided to participants are on-the-job training (OJT), apprenticeships, customized job training, upgrading, retraining, or other work-based learning, and occupational skills training provided by the applicant or a third-party training provider. Life skills, financial management, resumé writing, and interviewing preparation **do not count** towards the job-training requirement. Employment and training programs must target in-demand occupations indicated in the Labor Market Information provided in the Statement of Need. Please note that placement into an unsubsidized apprenticeship is considered placement into employment. Please visit the Apprenticeship Job Finder webpage to search for training providers.

JDT is a strategy for connecting workers with the training they need to meet the demands of the current labor market. JDT was designed to address three challenges:

- 1. Employers struggling to find skilled workers to fill vacancies;
- 2. Training programs that do not always match the skills required for in-demand jobs; and
- 3. Workers lacking information about training resources.

JDT ensures a veteran's interests and preferences are the basis for receiving training that provides the skills necessary to get a job that currently exists in the local labor market. Without an in-depth understanding of the local job market, HVRP grant recipients will struggle to place veterans in sustainable employment. JDT comes in a variety of forms, from classroom training to experience-based opportunities, such as apprenticeships and OJT.

Outside of JDT, HVRP participants may need basic skills training, such as computer literacy training, math and language instruction, and soft-skills training. Many of these kinds of training opportunities are available at little or no cost through the local AJC. Off-Base Transition Training (OBTT) offers virtual workshops for veterans covering topics such as job search tactics, resume essentials, interview skills, salary negotiation, and more. While the type of training mentioned within this paragraph *is not considered training* per HVRP guidelines, it can help HVRP participants meet their employment goals. Adding OBTT workshops to a participant's IEP can increase the likelihood of being job ready.

The following outlines several JDT implementation strategies:

- Training With a Purpose Training should be based on the veteran's interests and
 preferences, balanced against the realities of the local employment market. Will the training
 provide skills, certification, or other credentials connected to actual jobs in which the
 veteran has an interest? If not, time and resources may be wasted and not result in a
 positive outcome.
- Stepping Stones and Career Pathways The first position a veteran takes in their transition from homelessness is usually not a "career job" that perfectly matches their interests and goals. Ongoing JDT provides the skills and experience needed for the veteran to continue their career development and growth within their selected field.
- Individualized Approach Do not place a veteran in training simply because there is an opening. Placement needs to make sense based on the veteran's overall employment goal and IEP. Does the proposed training provide the necessary skills, experience, or insight that would benefit the veteran's career development? Is the veteran emotionally, physically, or psychologically ready to engage in the training? The skills provided by training are irrelevant if the veteran is unwilling or unable to commit to participation.
- Leverage Resources Through Partnerships JDT requires a significant investment of time and resources. HVRP should leverage partnerships with employers, community colleges, industry associations, and training vendors to access training and share costs.
- Collaboration With the AJC The local AJC is a vital partner in providing training opportunities. Learn about the specific training and services available at your local AJC. In some cases, the AJC can provide resources to support training. All AJCs maintain an Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) of the local training providers to which the AJC refers job seekers. AJC staff may also have insight into which providers offer training of the

highest quality and, based on labor market information, which training will have the most positive career impact.



Collaboration

Stable, permanent housing and access to supportive services make it easier to maintain employment by addressing some of the barriers faced by veterans experiencing homelessness. Veterans who want to return to the workforce face obstacles such as a lack of transportation, lack of permanent housing, proper working tools and attire, and involvement with the justice system or recent release from prison. Case managers will need to identify creative strategies to address these barriers, including the development of community partners. Partnerships with organizations that can provide the services the veterans need are among the most effective ways to improve employment and training outcomes for the veterans you serve. Among the partners you should consider are housing partners, local CoCs, mainstream services, and other partners.

Safe, stable, permanent housing is critical for allowing your clients to focus on the employment search or training program at hand by meeting their basic needs and giving them a safe place to sleep and address any health issues. Housing providers appreciate clients obtaining employment and training assistance, as these clients often end up with more financial independence, self-esteem, and the sense of dignity that comes from work.

The following partnership strategies can assist with fostering these critical partnerships:

• Talk to the Experts – HVRP grant recipients cannot and should not be experts in everything. Focusing on employment and partnering with experts to cover housing, supportive services, and other needs is a far more effective way of serving veteran clients. Many housing providers receive funding from the VA – GPD for transitional housing and SSVF for rapid rehousing and prevention – or the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for both veteranspecific and more general programs – in order to provide housing and/or supportive services. The best point of contact for disseminating information on your services to potential clients is the HUD-VASH case manager or team at your nearest VA Medical Center.

Tip from the field: To find your nearest grant recipient, visit the <u>GPD</u> and SSVF pages on the VA website.

- Connect to Local Partners The local CoC is responsible for coordinating and
 executing a community-wide plan to address homelessness and housing stability and
 creating partnerships across services and sectors in the community. Veterans
 experiencing homelessness are eligible for housing and supportive services assistance
 from their local CoC, in addition to the veteran-specific services mentioned above. HVRP
 grant recipients should request information on local CoC meetings and any veteranspecific meetings (if the CoC has working groups or subcommittees to target specific
 populations). These meetings convene many of the local partners working on veteran
 homelessness and provide an opportunity for you to introduce your organization and the
 services you provide to key partners.
- Connect to Mainstream Services Mainstream services play an important role in supporting an employment seeker's goals toward gainful employment. These include food assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), child care assistance through the Child Care Development Block Grant, health care through Medicare or Medicaid for veterans unable to access VA health care, and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) for your state's services related to family stability.

Important Partnerships for HVRP Providers

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

SCSEP is a community service and work-based job training program for unemployed, low-income Americans aged 55 or older. Enrollment priority is given to veterans and qualified spouses, as well as individuals who are over 65, have a disability, are experiencing homelessness, or meet other eligibility criteria. SCSEP grant recipients include state agencies and national nonprofit organizations that administer the program. To learn more about SCSEP, visit the SCSEP website. To find a local SCSEP grant recipient in your area, visit the Older Worker Program Finder.

VA Partners

Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Program

The purpose of GPD, as defined by the VA, is "to promote the development and provision of supportive housing and services with the goal of helping homeless veterans achieve residential stability, increase their skill levels and/or income, and obtain greater self-determination." In addition to funding community agencies, the program offers case management grants to support housing retention for veterans who were previously homeless and are transitioning to permanent housing. For more information, visit the GPD website.

Homeless Veterans Community Employment Services (HVCES) Program

HVCES was created to help employers recruit, interview, and hire job-ready veterans experiencing homelessness. Based in VA Medical Centers, community employment coordinators (CEC) work with businesses to develop new and improved hiring practices for veterans experiencing homelessness, connect veterans to employment and supportive services, and collaborate with public- and private-sector partners. Learn more through the HVCES website. You can find your local CEC through the Community Employment. Coordinators' Contact List.

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program

For very low-income veterans, SSVF provides case management and supportive services to prevent the imminent loss of a veteran's home or identify a new, more suitable housing situation for the individual and their family; or to rapidly re-house veterans and their families who are homeless and might remain homeless without this assistance. Grants are awarded to nonprofit organizations and consumer cooperatives offering supportive services, including outreach, case management, referrals to VA and local resources, and temporary financial assistance. For more information, including a list of current SSVF grant recipients, visit the SSVF website.

Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) Program

VJO was created to avoid the unnecessary criminalization of mental illness and extended incarceration of veterans by ensuring eligible persons have timely access to Veterans Health Administration (VHA) services during or after their involvement in the legal system. VJO specialists provide direct outreach, assessment, and case management for justice-involved veterans and liaise with local justice system partners (i.e., police, jails, and courts). For more information and to find the closest VJO specialist, visit the VJO website.

HUD Partners

Continuum of Care (CoC)

The CoC program supports and encourages coordination between local organizations in their efforts to address homeless and housing-related issues, including veteran homelessness. CoC funding enables nonprofit organizations, state and local governments, and other grant recipients to quickly rehouse veterans experiencing homelessness and families, expand access to community programs, and promote self-sufficiency. For more information and to find your local CoC, visit the CoC website.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development – VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)

Through a cooperative partnership, the HUD-VASH program provides long-term case management, supportive services, and permanent housing support for veterans experiencing homelessness. Eligible veterans receive VA-provided case management and supportive services to support stability and recovery from physical and mental health, substance use, and functional concerns contributing to, or resulting from, homelessness. HUD provides "Housing Choice" Section 8 vouchers designated for HUD-VASH to participating Public Housing Authorities to assist with rent payment. The program's goals include promoting maximal veteran recovery and independence to sustain permanent housing in the community for the veteran and the veteran's family. For more information about HUD-VASH, visit the HUD-VASH website, and learn more about vouchers through the HUD-VASH Vouchers page.

American Job Centers (AJC)

AJCs, also referred to as one-stop centers, provide job seekers with a range of services. Established under the Workforce Investment Act and reauthorized in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA), the network of nearly 2,300 AJCs across the country offers a variety of employment-related services, including career counseling, job training, and job search assistance. Each AJC is unique and offers customized services based on local workforce conditions and available resources. Services offered at AJCs include:

- Job training and employment workshops
- Job search assistance
- Career counseling
- Labor market and employer information
- Hiring events and business service information
- Referrals to community resources and other agencies
- Supportive services
- Unemployment insurance information

Job seekers can visit a local AJC in person or online. Organizations wishing to contact their local AJC can reference contact information on the <u>U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) website</u> or CareerOneStop website.

HVRP grant recipients partner with local AJCs to enroll their participants in the public workforce system. Enrollment with the AJC provides veterans experiencing homelessness access to additional resources, including training opportunities, supportive services, state vocational rehabilitation, integrated case management, and direct connections to employers and employment

opportunities through the Local Veterans' Employment Representative staff. Enrollment at the AJC also benefits HVRP grant recipients, AJC staff, and DOL/VETS. Leveraging resources and partnerships across programs creates an integrated approach to improve employment outcomes for veterans experiencing homelessness. To ensure successful partnerships with local AJCs, grant recipients should:

- Meet with your local AJC to facilitate strong working relationships, learn about AJC services, and encourage AJC staff to learn about HVRP services.
- During co-enrollment of HVRP participants, the HVRP case manager should work collaboratively with the AJC staff to serve the participant and assist them in overcoming employment barriers.
- Ensure new HVRP staff members are fully trained on AJC services.
- HVRP grant recipients should refer to VETS' most current guidance on this topic.



Placement

All the work that HVRP grant recipients have done up to this point – outreach, intake and assessment, case management, and training – lead to the placement of the veteran into employment. Job placement is all about making the best possible match between the veteran's skills, interests, and preferences, and the employer's needs and work environment. Establishing a suitable fit occurs on multiple levels. Career interests and relevant skills are important but not all-encompassing. Matching a veteran with the "right" job at the "wrong" employer will not be beneficial in the long term.

The following outlines several placement strategies HVRP grant recipients can implement with veteran clients:

Find the Right Fit – Many aspects of job satisfaction increase the likelihood of retention.
 While there is no such thing as a perfect match, look for the combination of salary, tasks, work environment, culture, benefits, career advancement potential, and management style that align with the veteran's preferences.

- Identify Deal Breakers Think about things that might contribute to job loss quitting, being terminated, or abandoning the position from both the veteran and the employer perspectives. Deal breakers can be tangible, like transportation access or commute times, or intangible, like an expectation to socialize.
- Only Fools Rush In Take the time to learn about the veterans you serve and the local employers in your area. Job shadowing, visiting the employer to experience their culture, understanding common reasons for turnover from the employer's perspective, and understanding from the veteran what went wrong at previous jobs can provide valuable insight.

Tip from the field: Quick placements may improve numbers, but a poor or unsustainable fit can do long-term damage to the veteran's prospects and relationships with employers. Many veterans will benefit from a "now and next" approach, where meeting the immediate need for a job does not prevent continuing to work to build a longer-term career. HVRP grant recipient performance indicators also include both earnings in the second quarter after exit and continued employment in the second and fourth quarters after exit for participants served.

Engaging Employers

The success of an HVRP grant is built on the strength of its service to both veterans and employers. While it is natural to think of veterans first, it is important to remember that providing outreach, employment, and follow-up services to employers is essential to the success of an HVRP grant, and the veterans it serves. In simple terms, HVRP has two clients – veterans and employers – served simultaneously on parallel tracks. The same strategies discussed earlier for working with veterans – building trust, focusing on the client's needs/preferences, and providing ongoing support – also apply to employers.

The following implementation strategies can be used to engage and support employers:

Cultivate an Employer Network – When considering employer outreach, HVRP grant
recipients often think in terms of sales and marketing, but building an employer network is
more than that. It is an opportunity to establish trust among employers that will someday
interview the veteran. Take a step back and think about who you know – the answer is the
beginning of your program's employer network. That network will include contacts from your
agency and individual staff members.

- Leverage Connections Use your connections as a gateway into the local employer community. Asking an employer who has successfully hired an HVRP participant to make introductions and share positive experiences is more effective. It is the employer version of "word of mouth." As outlined in the <u>Collaboration</u> section above, the partnership between an HVRP grant recipient and their local AJC is critical, particularly for the placement process.
- Agency-wide Commitment Everyone involved in the agency should be able to speak on behalf of HVRP with potential employers. Provide all staff with talking points and marketing materials so they are prepared when the opportunity arises.
- Take Your Time Building relationships with employers takes time. Asking for too much
 too soon can turn off a potential partner. Ideally, during the first conversation, the only thing
 requested from the employer is their time. HVRP staff should focus on listening and
 learning what the employer needs, like the initial conversation staff would have with a
 veteran. Over time, you will make more involved requests for informational interviews or
 client placements.
- Understand the Value Added Hiring, developing, and retaining talented staff is the biggest challenge of any employer. HVRP's extensive assessment and case management process can help employers find good candidates whose skills and preferences match the opportunity.
- Ongoing Employer Support The relationship with an employer does not end at placement. Regular check-ins, ongoing support, and recognition can strengthen the employer relationship and provide opportunities to address any potential issues.
- Engage Beyond Employment Inviting employer partners to visit your agency, attend
 events, or volunteer creates a connection and may increase commitment to your program.
 Participating in employer-sponsored or the local Chamber of Commerce events reinforces
 the two-way nature of the relationship.

Tip from the field: Host employer recognition breakfasts or gatherings to highlight successful relationships with employers – then network with those they know!

The following tips will better equip you in your first meeting with an employer partner:

- Respect the employer's time: Arrive on time and limit the meeting to 30 minutes.
- **Listen to the employer:** Do not spend the entire time talking. Instead, listen and learn about the employer's wants, needs, and challenges.

- Speak the employer's language: Avoid jargon and acronyms.
- **Research the employer:** Learn as much as you can before the meeting. Be prepared to ask clarifying questions, as necessary.



Retention and Follow-up

Placing a veteran in employment does not mean the work is done. Job retention – how long a veteran remains at a particular job or in the labor force – can sometimes be just as challenging as finding a job placement. Retention is more than simply checking in with veterans periodically to see if they are still employed. Retention is a systematic approach to supporting a veteran that begins at outreach.

Focusing on retention is a "win, win, win" situation – for the veteran, the employer, and the HVRP grant recipient. For the veteran, job retention is important for learning skills, earning higher pay, and building a career path, as well as providing a sense of purpose and community within their workplace. For employers, high turnover costs money and time in hiring and training new workers. For the HVRP grant recipient, job retention outcomes are a required component of grant success and can have a strong influence on any future grant application.

Challenges to job retention sometimes seem to come out of nowhere. However, it is often the case that HVRP will come to understand and have the opportunity to plan for retention challenges long before the veteran is even placed. In the section above on confronting barriers to employment, numerous possible challenges are discussed. In most cases, these challenges will not simply be solved prior to placement; the complexities of veterans' lives will continue even after they are employed.

It is easiest to plan for and support retention when an employer is fully aware of the various challenges a veteran may be facing. As such, HVRP grant recipients typically counsel veterans to be entirely honest and open with potential employers. Once an employer is aware of a challenge, they can be enlisted to help confront and overcome that challenge. If an employer knows that a veteran has frequent appointments, they can work to support a flexible schedule where possible. If

an employer understands that a veteran has not been a part of the workforce for an extended period and that extended unemployment can have a corrosive effect on a candidate's self-esteem, they can look for ways to proactively support the veteran in their position.

HVRP staff must always remember that it is rarely, if ever, their role to disclose these barriers to employers, without the consent of the veteran. It is always ideal, if possible, that the veteran have these conversations themselves. Alternatively, HVRP staff can support the veteran by facilitating a conversation with the veteran and employer together.

The following outlines strategies to support long-term job retention:

- **Start at the Beginning** Job retention starts with establishing clear expectations around HVRP's goal of employment and follow-up requirements with veterans, employers, staff, and the community from day one.
- Manage Expectations Before placing a veteran in a job, program staff must address the veteran client, the employer, and the staff's expectations. Be open about potential challenges and discuss solutions the road to employment stability is not without bumps in the road. Veterans who have been out of the workforce for an extended period or recently separated may need to learn the protocols of the civilian workforce. Make sure employers understand any limitations or accommodations (e.g., legal appointments) and how to reach out to HVRP staff for support.

Tip from the field: Some veterans may move seamlessly through HVRP and then suddenly relapse into previous destructive behavior because they were not ready for what comes next. Talking about what life will be like once they are employed is an important part of the process.

- Identify Stressors Discuss potential triggers and how they affect job performance with
 the veteran during case management. Teach veterans how to remove or manage stress by
 identifying specific action steps to take when triggered.
- Job Loss is Not Always Bad If the fit is not right, helping the veteran leave responsibly
 can salvage future opportunities for that veteran and strengthen the HVRP-employer
 relationship. Veterans may also outgrow the position, taking the skills they have learned to
 move forward in their career pathway.
- Regular Check-ins HVRP grant recipients are required to track retention for their grants (please reference <u>VPL 03-24</u> and HVRP Quarterly Performance Desk Guide on the <u>HVRP</u>

<u>website</u>), but that is only part of the reason to check in. Regular contact with veterans and employers gives HVRP grant recipients the opportunity to monitor the veteran's progress, identify potential barriers, and provide ongoing support as necessary.

Tip from the field: Keeping veterans engaged in HVRP after job placement can be difficult. Be creative. Provide incentives when possible, use social media and email, host peer support groups, and recognize successful placements.

Please note: Incentives may be provided to enrolled participants and participants maintaining employment throughout the 12-month retention period. Grant recipients using HVRP funds for incentives must have a standard operating procedure (SOP) in place that outlines a disbursement policy and tracking system to ensure supportive services are implemented and executed consistently and equitably before incentives are dispersed.











Program Performance

All HVRP recipients outline their performance goals at application through the VETS-704 Planned Goals Chart. DOL/VETS tracks performance throughout the PoP based on the goals submitted in the application and approved in the grant award documentation. DOL/VETS places a high priority on maximizing successful grant performance and relies on quarterly performance reporting to measure and track an HVRP grant recipient's success toward achieving satisfactory outcomes. Each HVRP grant recipient is required to report on the progress toward its performance indicators on a quarterly basis.

The following list outlines the HVRP Performance Indicators grant recipients are required to develop goals for and report on. Overall success or failure of an HVRP grant recipient's project is based on the below performance indicators:

1. Number of Participants Enrolled

- 2. Placement Rate (Rate = Employed/Exited)
- 3. Average Hourly Wage at Placement
- 4. Cost per Placement
- 5. Percentage of Program Participants who are in Unsubsidized Employment in the Second Quarter After Exit from the Program
- 6. Percentage of Program Participants who are in Unsubsidized Employment in the Fourth Quarter After Exit from the Program
- 7. Median Quarterly Earnings of Program Participants who are in Unsubsidized Employment in the Second Quarter After Exit from the Program

Grant recipients are expected to provide training to the percentage of enrolled participants that is listed in their Planned Goals Chart on their application.

HVRP grant recipients can learn more about performance indicator definitions and calculation methodology in the HVRP Technical Performance Report (TPR)/Technical Performance Narrative (TPN) Desk Guide on the HVRP webpage.

Performance Outcome Expectations

Quarterly Performance Reports

Grant recipients submit a TPR and TPN to their GOTR via email within 30 days after the end of each quarter. If the GOTR finds any issues (e.g., data validation issues; incomplete, incorrectly prepared, inaccurate, or missing report), the GOTR will work with the grant recipient to resolve them as soon as possible.



Appendix A – HVRP Eligibility

Veteran Definition 38 USC § 101

The term "veteran" means a person who served in the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, or Reserve Component (National Guard and Reserve), who meet the following criteria:

- Received a discharge or release under conditions other than dishonorable (see 38 USC § 101(18)); and
- At least one day of active duty (see 38 USC § 101(21)) to include time spent in basic training for active-duty members; or
- Federal active duty for National Guard and Reserve members (not including inactive duty and active duty for training, see 38 USC § 101(22), (23)); or
- Any period of inactive duty or active duty for training during which National Guard and Reserve members received a service-connected disability resulting from a disease or injury incurred or aggravated in line of duty (see 38 USC § 101(24)).

Homeless as defined by the **HEARTH** Act:

- (a) IN GENERAL—For purposes of this Act, the terms "homeless", "homeless individual", and "homeless person" means—
- (1) an individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence;
- (2) an individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;
- (3) an individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including hotels and motels

paid for by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals or by charitable organizations, congregate shelters, and transitional housing);

- (4) an individual who resided in a shelter or place not meant for human habitation and who is exiting an institution where he or she temporarily resided;
 - (5) an individual or family who—
 - (A) will imminently lose their housing, including housing they own, rent, or live in without paying rent, are sharing with others, and rooms in hotels or motels not paid for by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals or by charitable organizations, as evidenced by—
 - (i) a court order resulting from an eviction action that notifies the individual or family that they must leave within 14 days;
 - (ii) the individual or family having a primary nighttime residence that is a room in a hotel or motel and where they lack the resources necessary to reside there for more than 14 days; or
 - (iii) credible evidence indicating that the owner or renter of the housing will not allow the individual or family to stay for more than 14 days, and any oral statement from an individual or family seeking homeless assistance that is found to be credible shall be considered credible evidence for purposes of this clause;
 - (B) has no subsequent residence identified; and
 - (C) lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing; and
- (6) unaccompanied youth and homeless families with children and youth defined as homeless under other Federal statutes who—
 - (A) have experienced a long-term period without living independently in permanent housing,
 - (B) have experienced persistent instability as measured by frequent moves over such period, and
 - (C) can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of chronic disabilities, chronic physical health or mental health conditions, substance addiction, histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse, the presence of a child or youth with a disability, or multiple barriers to employment.
- (b) DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND OTHER DANGEROUS OR LIFE-THREATENING CONDITIONS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the Secretary shall consider to be homeless any individual or family who is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-

threatening conditions in the individual's or family's current housing situation, including where the health and safety of children are jeopardized, and who have no other residence and lack the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing. [42 USC 11302 (a-b)]

Title 38, Section 2021 includes the following categories under the definition of homeless for HVRP purposes to include veterans who are:

- a) Homeless as defined by the <u>HEARTH</u> Act, including veterans who were homeless but found housing during the 60-day period preceding the date on which the veteran begins to participate in HVRP;
- b) Participating in HUD-VASH or Tribal HUD-VASH;
- c) Receiving assistance under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996;
- d) Transitioning from incarceration; and
- e) Participating in the Department of Veterans Affairs rapid rehousing and prevention program.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act expanded eligibility for HVRP to include:

Veterans at Risk of Homelessness: Veterans at risk of homelessness within 60 days of the HVRP enrollment date or veterans released from incarceration within the last 12 months who are at risk of homelessness.

At Risk of Homelessness:

The most recent guidance on eligibility states that for the purposes of determining a veteran's "at risk of homelessness" status, the individual or family:

- Has an annual income below 30 percent of median family income for the geographical area¹; AND
- Does not have sufficient resources or support networks immediately available to prevent them from moving to an emergency shelter or another place defined in Category 1 of the "homeless" definition; AND

¹ DOL/VETS created an income calculator tool for determining a veteran's income level to meet the definitions of at risk of homelessness in accordance with VPL 02-23 Attachment 1. This tool is an optional resource for grant recipients and its use is not required by policy and guidance. The tool is available on the HVRP website under "Program Resources and Partners." If grant recipients choose to use this tool, please read the calculator instructions and methods carefully. To keep current with the inflation adjustment to household income in current dollars, DOL/VETS will update this tool monthly, based on the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Consumer Price Index (CPI) Release Schedule; therefore, DOL/VETS recommends grant recipients check for the most recent version available prior to downloading the tool.

- Meets one of the following conditions:
 - Has moved because of economic reasons two or more times during the 60 days immediately preceding the application for assistance; OR
 - o Is living in the home of another because of economic hardship; OR
 - Has been notified that their right to occupy their current housing or living situation will be terminated within 21 days after the date of application for assistance; OR
 - Lives in a hotel or motel and the cost is not paid for by charitable organizations or by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals; OR
 - Lives in a single room occupancy (SRO) or efficiency apartment unit in which there reside more than 2 persons or lives in a larger housing unit in which there reside more than one and a half persons per room; OR
 - o Is exiting a publicly funded institution or system of care; OR
 - Otherwise lives in housing that has characteristics associated with instability and an increased risk of homelessness



Appendix B - Resources

The following organizations are committed to ending homelessness and providing supportive services to individuals experiencing homelessness across the United States. Partnerships with these entities are valuable to pursue. Check out each linked website to learn more, and to find resources to add to your resource portfolio.

Performance and Guidance

- Grant Officer's Memoranda and VPLs
- Training and Employment Guidance Letters
- HVRP Program Documents and Performance Resources
- Grants.gov
- DOL Cybersecurity Tips

Training and Technical Assistance

- NVTAC
 - Welcome New Grantees
 - This section of the NVTAC website contains materials to support grant startup activities and a grant recipient's ongoing work with veterans, employers, and partners.
 - VLCs and Topical Webinars
 - o HVRP Acronym Desk Aid
 - HVRP Customizable Forms
 - o Menu of Services
 - o Resources
 - o HVRP Policies, Guidance, and Forms
 - o CoPs
- NVTI
 - NVTI Class Descriptions

- NVTI offers career coaching courses on special populations such as veterans experiencing homelessness and justice-involved veterans, rural veterans, women and LGBTQ+, older and youth veterans, and more
- o NVTI Resources
 - HVRP Journey Map
 - Journey Maps walk a user through the NVTI courses they should be taking and the order in which they should be taking them.
- WorkforceGPS

General Resources

- National Alliance to End Homelessness
- National Coalition for the Homeless
- United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)
- Making the Most of the American Rescue Plan
 - How to Start Addressing Racial Disparities in Your Community
- VA
 - o GI Bill Comparison Tool
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Emergency Food and Shelter Program
- American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Community Service Employment Program
- DOL Senior Community Service Employment Program
- Homelessness and Racial Disparities
- VA Racial and Ethnic Minority Veterans
- Disabled Veterans National Foundation

Housing Assistance

- HUD Exchange
- CoC Program
 - Coordinated Entry
- HUD-VASH
- SSVF
- GPD

Health Care

- Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans (DCHV)
- Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV)

- Homeless Patient Aligned Care Teams (HPACT)
- VA Office of Health Equity
- Supported Employment: Building Your Program
- Healthcare and Homelessness
- Understanding the Impact of Homelessness on Health and Wellbeing

Employment

- Homeless Veterans Community Employment Services (HVCES)
- The Good Jobs Initiative
- Off-Base Transition Training (OBTT)
- Compensated Work Therapy (CWT)
- AJCs
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG)
- O*NET OnLine
- SkillsCommons
- VA Employment Center for Women Veterans (CWV)
- Women Veteran Alliance Career Center
- Americans with Disability Act (ADA)
 - Veterans and the ADA: A Guide for Employers
- Worker.gov
- Know Your Rights Toolkit

Special Populations

- NVTI The Difference: Special Populations versus Significant Barriers to Employment
- NVTI Podcast Episode 23 Continuing Conversations: Serving Justice-Involved Veterans
- NVTI Podcast Episode 24 Serving Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Veterans
- VA Racial and Ethnic Minority Veterans
- VA Center for Minority Veterans (CMV)
- Native American Veterans VA Benefits
- Tribal HUD-VASH
- Women Veterans Support
- DOL/VETS Women Veterans Research
- CWV
- VA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiative

- VHA LGBTQ+ Health Program Patient Care Services
- American Veterans for Equal Rights Veteran Resources
- Transgender American Veterans Association
- CenterLink LGBTQ Community Centers

Appendix C – Common Acronyms

The acronyms listed below can also be found in the <u>HVRP Acronym Desk Aid</u>.

Acronym	Definition
ACVETEO	Advisory Committee on Employment, Training and Employer Outreach
ADA	Americans Disability Act
AD	Active Duty
ADSW	Active Duty for Special Work
ADVET	Assistant Director for Veterans' Employment and Training
AEFLA	Adult Education and Family Literacy Act
AGR	Active Guard Reserve
AJC	American Job Center
AMVA	American Military Veterans Act
ANG	Air National Guard
APC	Apprenticeship Placement Counselor
AR	Army Reserve
ARNG	Army National Guard
ARP	American Rescue Plan
ASVET	Assistant Secretary [of Labor] for Veterans' Employment and Training
AWOL	Absent Without Leave
BJS	Bureau of Justice Statistics
BLS	Bureau of Labor Statistics (DOL)
BSR	Business Services Representative
BST	Business Services Team
C2E	Career and Credential Exploration
CAP	Corrective Action Plan
CAPs	Cost Allocation Plans
CE	Customized Employment
CES	Coordinated Entry System
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CM	Case Management
CoC	Continuum of Care
COC	Chamber of Commerce
COFFA	Council of Federal Financial Assistance
СООР	Continuity of Operations Plan

Acronym	Definition
СоР	Community of Practice
COR	Contracting Officer Representative
СР	Consolidated Position (JVSG)
СРА	Certified Public Accountant
CPDD	Cost & Price Determination Division
СРР	Cost Per Placement
CR	Continuing Resolution
CRS	Career Readiness Standards
CSG	Council of State Government Justice Center Resources
СТТ	Career Technical Training
CVSO	County Veterans Service Officer
CWT	Compensated Work Therapy
CY	Calendar Year
DAS	Deputy Assistant Secretary
DCHV	Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans
DHS	U.S. Department of Homeland Security
DMDC	Defense Manpower Data Center
DOD	U.S. Department of Defense
DOJ	U.S. Department of Justice
DOL	U.S. Department of Labor
DRAVET	Deputy Regional Administrator
DTAP	Disabled Veterans' Transition Assistance Program
DV	Disabled Veteran
DVET	Director for Veterans' Employment and Training
DVOP	Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist
DWG	Dislocated Worker Grants
EBSA	Employee Benefits Security Administration
eCFR	Electronic Code of Federal Regulation
ED	U.S. Department of Education
EDP	Employment Development Plan
EDS	Employability Development Services
EFCT	Employment Fundamentals of Career Transition
E-GOV	Electronic Government
EIN	Employer Identification Number

Acronym	Definition
ENPP	Employment Navigator (EN) and Partnership Program (ENPP)
EO	Employer Outreach
EO	Executive Order
ES	Employment Services
ESGR	Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve
ESL	English as a Second Language
ETA	Employment and Training Administration (DOL)
F&A	Facilities & Administrative
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
FAR	Federal Acquisition Regulations
FBO	Faith-Based Organization
FCAIS	Federal Contractor Awards Information System
FCJL	Federal Contractor Job Listing
FCP	Federal Contractor Program
FFR	Federal Financial Report – Standard Form 425
FOA	Funding Opportunity Announcement
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
FPI	Federal Program Inventory
FPO	Federal Project Officer
FRN	Federal Register Notice
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
FY	Fiscal Year
GAO	U.S. General Accountability Office
GED	General Equivalency Diploma
GO	Grant Officer
GO Memo	Grant Officer Memorandum
GOTR	Grant Officer's Technical Representative
GS	General Schedule (Government Civilian Employee Pay Grades)
GS	GrantSolutions
HCHV	Health Care for Homeless Veterans
HCRV	Health Care for Reentry Veterans' Services and Resources
HHS	Health and Human Services
HIRE Vets	Honoring Investments in Recruiting and Employing
HUD VASH	Housing and Urban Development - Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing

Acronym	Definition
HVAC	U.S. House Veterans Affairs Committee
HVCES	Homeless Veterans Community Employment Services
HVMP	HIRE Vets Medallion Program
HVRP	Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program
HWVHVWC	Homeless Women Veterans' and Homeless Veterans' with Children
	Reintegration Grant Program
ICR	Indirect Cost Rate
ICS	Individualized Career Services
IDP	Individual Development Plan
IEP	Individual Employment Plan
IF	Incremental Funding Amendment
ION	Innovation and Opportunity Network
IRAP	Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Program
IRR	Individual Ready Reserve
ISC	Intensive Service Coordinator
ITA	Individual Training Account
IVMF	Institute of Veterans and Military Families
IVTP	Incarcerated Veterans' Transition Program
IWRP	Individual Written Rehabilitation Plan
JDT	Job-Driven Training
JVA	Jobs for Veterans Act
JVSG	Jobs for Veterans State Grant
JWG	Joint Work Group
L&C	Licensing & Certification
LE	Labor Exchange
LEAP	Linking Employment Activities Pre-Release
LERS	Labor Exchange Reporting System
LESO	Local Employment Service Office
LG	Large Gold (HVMP)
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Other Sexual and
	Gender-Diverse
LMI	Labor Market Information
LP	Large Platinum (HVMP)
LVER	Local Veterans' Employment Representative

Acronym	Definition
LWIA	Local Workforce Investment Area
LWIB	Local Workforce Investment Board
МСТО	Military to Civilian Transition Office
MG	Medium Gold (HVMP)
MIS	Management Information System
MOS	Military Occupation Specialty Code
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Medium Platinum (HVMP)
MSPB	Merit Systems Protection Board
MTDC	Modified Total Direct Cost
MTF	Military Treatment Facility
NAF	Nonappropriated Funds
NAICS	North American Industry Classification System
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
NASWA	National Association of State Workforce Agencies
NCHV	National Coalition for Homeless Veterans
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NDA	Non-Disclosure Agreement
NDNH	National Directory of New Hires
NEC	Naval Enlisted Classification Code
NGB	National Guard Bureau
NICRA	Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
NO	National Office
NOA	Notice of Award
NOFOs	Notice of Funding Opportunities
NPRC	National Personnel Record Center
NRRC	National Reentry Resource Center
NVTAC	National Veterans' Technical Assistance Center
NVTI	National Veterans' Training Institute
OASVET	Office of the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training
ОВТТ	Off-Base Transition Training
OCIO	Office of Chief Information Officer
ODEP	Office of Disability Employment Programs (DOL)
OFCCP	Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (DOL)

Acronym	Definition
OGM	Office of Grants Management
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OJJDP	Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
OJT	On-the-Job Training
ОМВ	U.S. Office of Management and Budget
ONP	VETS Office of National Programs
ОРМ	U.S. Office of Personnel Management
OSC	U.S. Office of Special Counsel
OSCC	One-Stop Career Center
OSR	On Site Review
PAC	Post Award Conference
РВ	Personnel Benefits
PHI	Protected Health Information
PII	Personal Identifiable Information
PIRL	Participant Individual Record Layout
PL	Public Law
РМА	President's Management Agenda
PMS	Payment Management System
POC	Point of Contact
PoP	Period of Performance
POS	Priority of Service
PS	Personal Services
PY	Program Year
QSMO	Quality Service Management Office
RA	Regular Army
RAVET	Regional Administrator for Veterans' Employment and Training
RC	Reserve Component
REO	Reentry Employment Opportunities Program
RESEA	Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments
RIF	Reduction-In-Force
RO	Regional Office
RWB	Regional Workforce Boards
SBA	Small Business Administration
SBE	Significant Barrier to Employment

Acronym	Definition
SCD	Service-Connected Disabled
SD	Stand Down [Grants]
SDA	Service Delivery Area
SDV	Special Disabled Veteran
SF	Standard Form
SG	Small Gold (HVMP)
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
soc	Standard Occupational Classification
SOL	Solicitor of Labor (DOL)
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SP	Small Platinum (HVMP)
SQUARES	Status Query and Response Exchange System
SSVF	Supportive Services for Veterans Families
STAR	Situation, Task, Action, and Results
SVAC	U.S. Senate Veterans Affairs Committee
SVC	State Veterans Coordinator
SWA	State Workforce Agency
T&C	Terms and Conditions
TA	Technical Assistance
TAA	Trade Adjustment Assistance
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
TAP	Transition Assistance Program
TEGL	Training and Employment Guidance Letter
TEN	Training and Employment Notice
TPN	Technical Performance Narrative
TPR	Technical Performance Report
UEI	Unique Entity Identifier
UI	Unemployment Insurance
USAF	United States Air Force
USAR	United States Army Reserve
USC	United States Code
USERRA	Uniform Service Employment and Reemployment Rights Act
USMC	United States Marine Corps
USN	United States Navy

Acronym	Definition
USNLX	US National Labor Exchange
USSF	United States Space Force
VA	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
VBMS	Veterans Benefits Management System
VEOA	Veterans Employment Opportunity Act
VETS	Veterans' Employment and Training Service
VGRS	VETS Grantee Reporting System
VJO	Veterans Justice Outreach Program
VLC	Virtual Learning Course
VLS	Virtual Learning Series
VOW	Veterans Opportunity to Work Act
VPL	Veterans' Program Letter
VPS	Veterans Program Specialist
VR&E	Vocational Readiness and Employment
VRC	Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
VSO	Veterans Service Organization
VTC	Veterans Treatment Court
WB	Women's Bureau
WDB	Workforce Development Board
WHD	Wage and Hour Division
WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
WIPA	Work Incentive Planning and Assistance
WIPS	Workforce Integrated Performance System
WO	Warrant Officer
WOTC	Work Opportunity Tax Credit
WP	Wagner-Peyser Act