HMIS – SSVF Addendum

HMIS
Homeless Management
Information System

All example client names depicted herein are completely fictitious. No association with any real organization or persons is intended or should be inferred.

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Introduction

This addendum is a guide for SSVF programs and their workflows. The HMIS Introductory packet will cover all of the basics common to all HMIS programs. This packet is intended to cover the additional data elements that the VA requires its SSVF program participants to track. This packet will cover any SSVF specific guidance for the entire workflow. Any question or workflow not noted in this packet indicates the VA standards are no different from the HMIS standards. In these cases, please refer to you HMIS Introductory Packet for guidance, which will detail questions and workflows not present here.

Entering a Client into HMIS

SSVF programs offer no additional elements or workflow when entering a new client into HMIS. Nonetheless, there is some additional guidance for SSVF programs regarding the veteran status field. Please see below for details.

- **Name:** Use full legal names instead of nicknames. The use of middle names and suffixes is strongly encouraged. For Veterans, the name should be entered as they appear on the DD214.
  - o **Name Data Quality:** The VA considers "full name reported" to be the only acceptable response.

- **Social Security Number**: Unlike other projects, this field is **required**. This field is used to determine veteran status and thus eligibility for SSVF programs. Still, this field is only mandatory for the Head of Household (the Veteran). Other members of the household are not required to provide this information. A Veteran who declines to provide their SSN is not eligible for the SSVF program.
  - o **Pending Verification of Veteran status**: Persons with this status may be entered into HMIS and uploaded to the Repository.

- **Veteran Status** (*Excerpt from 2017 HMIS Data Standards Manual*): Veteran Status should be 'Yes' for anyone who has ever been on active duty in the armed forces of the United States, regardless of discharge status or length of service. For members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, active duty begins when a military member reports to a duty station after completion of training.

  For members of the Reserves and National Guard, active duty is:
  - ▪ Any time spent activated or deployed, either in the United States or abroad; or
  - ▪ Anyone who was disabled in the line of duty during a period of active duty training; or
  - ▪ Anyone who was disabled from an injury incurred in the line of duty or from an acute myocardial infarction, a cardiac arrest, or a cerebrovascular accident during a period of inactive duty training.

  Veteran Status should be 'No' for anyone who has not been on active duty, including:
  - ▪ Individuals who attended basic training, officer training school, and/or technical training but were discharged before reporting to a duty station;
  - ▪ Members of the Reserves or National Guard who were never activated or deployed.

  For VA funded projects, every adult must have a Veteran Status of either Yes or No. Neither Client doesn't know nor Client refused are permissible responses. If there is already a record in HMIS for the client and Veteran Status is incorrect, please correct it.

SSVF Entry Assessment – Program Specific Elements

In addition to the questions that every project must answer, SSVF programs have a number of additional data elements they must capture. This addendum will discuss additional details to existing elements and how to complete SSVF specific data fields.

Maricopa UDE Assessment Questions

The Maricopa UDE Assessment covers the universal questions all projects must cover. Nonetheless, there are some additional notes that the SSVF program manual highlights. Any question not included here indicates that there is no SSVF specific guidance. Please refer to your HMIS Introductory Packet in these cases.

Entry UDE Elements with Additional SSVF Guidance

- **Relationship to Head of Household:** The head of household must be an eligible veteran. For households with more than one eligible veteran, follow local guidelines to designate this role. This field is required for all members of the project. Repository uploads missing this information will be rejected.

- **Date of Birth:** SSVF expects that every client, including the non-Veteran household members, have a date of birth recorded.
  - **Date of Birth Type:** "Client doesn't know" and "Client refused" are not valid options for SSVF participants.

- **Gender:** "Client doesn't know" and "Client refused" are not valid options for VA grant-funded participants.

SSVF Program Data Elements Questions

These elements are program specific questions that are required by SSVF projects. SSVF both has additional guidance for common program elements (as listed in the HMIS Introductory Packet) and unique program elements. Any question not appearing here, but present in the introductory packet, indicates no additional guidance was provided.

Entry Program Elements with Additional SSVF Guidance

- **"Income" Sub-Assessment:** "Client doesn't know" and "Client refused" are not acceptable responses. Eligibility is based on income and therefore this information must be provided. SSVF programs may exclude income from minors in HMIS.

- **"Disabilities" Sub-Assessment:** These fields are not required for SSVF programs.

- **Domestic Violence:** This field is not required for SSVF programs.

Entry Program Elements Specific to SSVF

- **Veteran's Information** (*Excerpt from 2017 HMIS Data Standards Manual*)**:** Record Veteran's Information for all Veterans served. This includes:

  - **Year Entered Military Service and Year Separated from Military Service:** Record the Year Entered and Year Separated for the Veteran's longest continuous period of service. These can be found in Block 12 of the DD214.

- If two continuous periods of service are identical in length and one was during a combat era and the other was not, record the Year Entered and Year Separated for the combat era period of service.
- If two continuous periods of service are identical in length and neither or both were during a combat era, record the Year Entered and Year Separated for the most recent period of service.

- **Theaters of Operations:** Identify whether or not the Veteran served in the theatre of operations for any of the listed military conflicts. Only physical presence within the geographic area during the conflict is required for a Yes response – this is not a question of whether or not the Veteran was in combat or ever came under fire.

- **Branch of the Military:** Record the branch of the military in which the Veteran served for the longest period of time. If periods of service are identical in length, see the instructions related to Year Entered and Year Separated above. This can be found in Block 2 of the DD214.

- **Discharge Status:** Record the Veteran's discharge status. For Veterans with multiple discharges under different conditions, record the best discharge status. A veteran's discharge status can be found in block 24 of the DD214.

  There is only one character of service / discharge status that may appear on a DD214 but has no corresponding value on the HMIS list – this is 'Entry Level Separation.' In order to be considered a Veteran, an individual must have completed training and reported to a duty station. Entry level separations, which only occur during the first 180 days a person is in the military, often happen prior to completion of training.

  In order to establish Veteran status – and VA-funded program eligibility – additional information may be needed. Asking the applicant whether or not s/he reported to a duty station after training is a good start.

  The last duty assignment is listed on the DD214 in Block 8a. Information about these locations is typically available via a quick internet search. If the last duty assignment was a training location, the applicant may be less likely to be a Veteran.

  Another source of information is Block 14 of the DD214, which lists military education. If Block 14 shows no completed training, the applicant may be less likely to be a Veteran. If completed training is listed, the applicant is more likely to be a veteran.

- **Percent of AMI:** This field records the household income compared to the Area Median Income. Select the appropriate category from the dropdown. An answer of "Greater than 50%" means the client is ineligible for SSVF assistance. Such an answer will reflect poorly in data quality reports.

- **Last Permanent Address:** Record the head of household's last permanent address. This should be an address that is a permanent housing situation, not a reference to a shelter or other homeless situation. Normally this will include the client renting an apartment/house or living at another person's apartment/house.

- **VAMC Station Number:** This dropdown field is for selecting the VA Medical Center Station Number that corresponds to the client's service location. This may be filled in on behalf of the client – it does not require client input.

- **SSVF HP Targeting Criteria (HP Only):** This is only required of Homeless Prevention SSVF projects. This is to be filled out for the head of household. There are 19 questions, which are based off of the SSVF Homelessness Prevention Stage 2 Targeting Criteria Screening. Data entered into HMIS should be based on this screening. Please refer to your agency for more information on this screening.

  o **HP Applicant Total Points**: This field will be based on the SSVF Homelessness Prevention Stage 2 Targeting Criteria Screening, which should have been completed prior to the client's entry into the program. Please refer to your agency for more detail.

  o **Grantee Targeting Threshold Score:** This score is variable and is determined by the SSVF program. In short, it is based on the number of expected applicants compared to the program capacity. Please refer to your agency for more detail.

- **Connection with SOAR:** Record what, if any connection, the client has to a SOAR program. Any change in this field should be recorded in an update.

- **Last Grade Completed:** Record the last grade completed for every member of the household.

SSVF Exit Assessment – Program Specific Elements

SSVF programs both have additional guidance for common program elements (as listed in the HMIS Introductory Packet) and unique program elements. Any question not appearing here, but present in the introductory packet, indicates no additional guidance was provided. Please note, the SSVF exit assessment contains a number of elements that were answered in the entry assessment. The purpose in repeating these questions is to understand how the client's situation has changed during the tenure at the project. There are also many additional questions unique to the exit assessment. Please see below for detailed explanations for SSVF specific program guidance.

Exit Program Elements with Additional SSVF Guidance

- **Exit Date**: This should reflect the last date the client is provided services or residence. This includes rental assistance, even if no other services are provided. Additionally, this also includes scenarios where services are provided but rental assistance is not. Once the head of household leaves, all members should also be exited on the same day. Other household members may leave prior to the head of household.

- **Destination**: Best efforts should be made follow up with clients who stop appearing after receiving services. If a client cannot be contacted, select "No exit interview completed". Data quality for this field is evaluated in comparison to national averages and similar projects. Avoid the selection of "Other" as it will reflect poorly in data quality.

- **Last Grade Completed**: This is the last grade the client completed.

- **Connection with SOAR:** Record what, if any connection, the client has to a SOAR program. Any change in this field should be recorded in an update.

SSVF Services and Financial Assistance

Unlike some programs, SSVF projects are required to record services for their clients. In addition to the workflow that is covered in the Case Management training, SSVF also has to complete additional fields while recording services. This section will cover how to complete the additional fields. Any steps not mentioned here will remain the same as presented in the Case Management packet.

SSVF Specific Elements

- **Services Provided – SSVF:** Record each service on the date it is provided. Each instance of a service should be recorded, not only on the initial occurrence. The service needs to be recorded on the head of household's record. The services options are below.
    - Outreach services
    - Case management services
    - Assistance obtaining VA benefits
        - This selection will prompt an additional dropdown
    - Assistance obtaining/coordinating other public benefits
        - This selection will prompt an additional dropdown
    - Direct provision of other public benefits
        - This selection will prompt an additional dropdown
    - Other (non-TFA) supportive service approved by VA
        - This selection will prompt an additional textbox

- **Financial Assistance – SSVF:** Record each instance of financial assistance. Each check which is cut should have a separate record created. Returned checks or checks that are not cashed should be deleted from the record. The financial assistance options are below.
    - Rental assistance
    - Utility fee payment assistance
    - Security deposit
    - Utility deposit
    - Moving costs
    - Transportation services: tokens/vouchers
    - Transportation services: vehicle repair/maintenance
    - Child Care
    - General housing stability assistance - emergency supplies
    - General housing stability assistance – other
    - Emergency housing assistance

SSVF Services and Financial Assistance Workflow

This section will detail the specific area to track SSVF services and financial assistance. Any steps not covered here are the same as outlined in the Case Management packet. Refer to that packet where necessary.

1) "Service Provider", "Start Date", and "End Date" will auto-populate.

2) Select appropriate "Service Type" from dropdown.

3) Click "Save & Continue". The screen will expand.
   a. The screen will expand. Please refer to below picture for next steps.

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4) You will record either an SSVF service or financial assistance. Do NOT complete both on the same entry.
   a. To record a service, select from the "Type of SSVF Service" dropdown.
      i. Please note the second box may or may not appear depending on the initial entry (arrow above).
         OR – Do NOT complete both sets of fields under the same entry
   b. To record financial assistance, select from "SSVF Financial Assistance Type" and enter in "SSVF Financial Assistance Amount".

5) <u>ONLY for "SSVF Financial Assistance Type" selections</u>: Click on "Add Funding Source". Select the appropriate funding source.

6) <u>ONLY for "SSVF Financial Assistance Type" selections</u>**:** Enter the amount.

7) Complete **Need Information** section at bottom. For additional guidance refer to the Case Management packet.

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