

Section 5

VA Application Section

Background

Although funds will not be awarded directly to the recipient of the grant, funding is available for the VA facility that partners with the applicant. VA facilities can include medical centers or programs under the direction of medical centers including VA outpatient clinics. This funding is intended to offset the costs of services provided to the veterans served by the grant recipient. The applicant is required to submit a plan that describes in detail how a collaborative relationship with VA will be created and sustained in an effort to provide services to chronically homeless veterans. The chronically homeless veterans to be served will be those veterans housed in or being provided services through the program developed by the collaborative initiative grant recipient and who meet the definition for homeless as put forth in this NOFA.

Pending the availability of funds, up to \$5 million will be made available for up to three years. Funds available for each project will be in an approximate amount equivalent to the proportionate yearly salary of full-time employees (FTE) to provide professional care or care-coordination/case management for chronically homeless veterans participating in the program and for FTE to assist in data collection and evaluation. Funding will be made available to the VA facility that enters into a collaborative relationship with the recipient of this grant.

It is expected that these FTEs will provide necessary and appropriate care for chronically homeless veterans which can include but is not limited to: case management; direct medical care, mental health or substance abuse treatment; and assistance with veterans benefits. The goal is to provide comprehensive, project- and community-linked substance abuse, mental health and primary care services for chronically homeless veterans. FTEs assigned data evaluation duties will be responsible for data collection through participant interviews, tracking program participants and record keeping for the purposes of the program study.

If it is anticipated that the project will not be serving veterans, the applicant will be asked to demonstrate why veterans will not be participating in the project. If it is anticipated that veterans will be served but it is unlikely a VA facility will be available to partner with the applicant, the applicant must demonstrate other sources of providing substance abuse, mental health and primary care services for chronically homeless veterans. Those applicants that will not be partnering with a VA facility need only address criteria (4) by providing a narrative that is typed, using font size no smaller than 12 pt. The narrative for criteria (4) should be no longer than one and one-half pages.

If you are requesting VA funding, please address criteria (1) through (3) by providing narratives that are typed, using font size no smaller than 12 pt. This complete VA section should be no longer than five pages, excluding the MOA attachment.

The Collaborative Approach application sections together with all agency-specific factors will be used to assign points.

Any applicant scoring a zero in the Need, Plan, or Ability criteria of the VA section, or any applicant scoring less than 8 points (40%) for a total score on all VA criteria will be eliminated from the competition and will not be eligible for any part of this grant funding.

Criteria:

(1) Need: Demonstrate your understanding of the needs of the chronically homeless veteran population and provide a description of how this population will be served in the specified area or community (5 points). In the narrative consider the following:

- a. Gaps in services for chronically homeless veterans and how the program will address, and if appropriate, fill those gaps; and
- b. Homeless population to be served and its unmet housing, substance abuse, mental health, and primary care needs.

(2) Plan: Provide a description of the project and the plan for assisting chronically homeless veterans (10 points). The narrative should include the following:

- a. A detailed discussion of the nature of the collaboration between VA and the other partners;
- b. How the collaboration will be sustained for the benefit of chronically homeless veterans; and
- c. How the collaboration will be linked on a short-term as well as long-term, strategic level with the total project conceptualization and design.

(3) Ability: Provide a descriptive summary of who will be involved in carrying out the project and their experiences in activities similar to those proposed in the application (5 points). The narrative should include experience of involved parties relating to activities involving housing, the planning and delivery of substance abuse and mental health treatment and primary care as well as activities regarding the accessing and/or delivery of VA benefits, medical and mental health care, and other VA related services.

(4) No VA Request: If it is anticipated that the project will not be serving veterans, provide a narrative demonstrating why veterans will not be participating in the project. Or, if it is anticipated that veterans will be served but it is unlikely a VA facility will be available to partner with the applicant and therefore no VA funding is requested, provide a narrative demonstrating other sources of offering substance abuse, mental health and primary care services for chronically homeless veterans in this project (20 points).

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA): To be eligible for the VA section submit as an attachment a jointly signed Memorandum of Agreement between the local VA facility and the applicant of this grant. Ensure that the collaborative relationship is documented, specifically stating the terms of the agreement. At a minimum, the terms of the agreement should include:

- a. Number of chronically homeless veterans expected to be served by the grant recipient and the extent and level of services that will be provided by the VA facility;
- b. Process and outcome measures clearly delineated and linked to service delivery and responsibilities for collection, compilation, and reporting of these measures; and
- c. How services provided by the FTE funded under this section will be integrally linked in a comprehensive fashion with the intent of the collaborative initiative grant recipient's project and the strategic plans of the project in an effort to break the cycle of homelessness.
- d. Contingencies regarding the applicant's and VA's responsibilities if funding is not available.