

FAQs for Tribal HUD-VASH – Part 2

1. Are there technical assistance funds available to get this program up and running?

Yes, there are funds available. Please contact your Area ONAP for further assistance. ONAP will also be holding a series of Tribal HUD-VASH trainings in conjunction with VA. The training is for Tribal HUD-VASH grantees and VA case managers. The first training will be in Muskogee, OK August 31 – September 21 – 23, 2016 in Spokane, WA. Other trainings are being planned for Fargo, ND and Anchorage, AK. HUD encourages all grantees to attend the training session closest to their region.

2. Can Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) funds be used to travel to the Tribal HUD-VASH trainings?

Unfortunately, since IHBG and Tribal HUD-VASH are two separate programs, IHBG funds cannot be used to pay travel costs to attend the Tribal HUD-VASH trainings.

3. How do grantees calculate income for tenants in this program?

To be eligible, a veteran household's annual income must be no more than 80 percent of the area median income for the Indian area. The definitions of annual income and median income for the IHBG program in 24 CFR 1000.10 apply.

Grantees may follow their existing IHBG policies on calculating income or may establish new policies just for the Tribal HUD-VASH program. The income determination is determined at time the veteran enters the program.

4. Are grantees limited to just serving tribal members with the Tribal HUD-VASH?

No. This is left to the discretion of the tribe. Under the Tribal HUD-VASH program the tribe/TDHE may choose to establish a tribal preference policy. This policy may or may not be the same as the tribal preference policy established for the IHBG program. Tribes/TDHEs may not however, deny admission to any veteran referred by VA for any reason other than tribal preference, native status, income, or lifetime sex offender status.

5. Can we use Tribal HUD-VASH funds to address health and safety issues on a home the veteran wishes to move into?

No. Tribal HUD-VASH funds can only be used to pay rent on behalf of an eligible veteran. The unit must meet local housing codes and quality standards in accordance with section 207(a)(2) of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA).

6. What are environmental requirements under Tribal HUD-VASH?

The October, 21, 2015 Tribal HUD-VASH Implementation Notice requires an environmental review on units that are constructed through this program. Limited environmental review may also be required for assistance provided on existing units. HUD will be issuing a correction

notice which will provide further information. Until time of publication of that notice please contact the Area ONAP GM Specialist working with the tribe/TDHE on the program.

7. Can vouchers be used to make loan payments since homeownership is the preferred tenure in rural areas?

Not at this time, however, HUD is open to considering this in the future.

8. What is the timeframe of this program?

Each grantee received 12 months of rental assistance for each veteran. The 12-month period begins at the time of the initial drawn down of rental assistance grant funds.

9. Can we charge veterans in this program 20 percent of income for rent or do we have to charge 30 percent of income?

Eligible Native American veterans and their families are to pay no more than 30 percent of their monthly-adjusted income. If a tribe/TDHE decides to charge less than 30 percent, the grantee can use the Tribal HUD-VASH funds to cover the remainder, up to the Fair Market Rent.

10. How are veterans selected for this program?

The Implementation Notice for the Tribal HUD-VASH program, which was published in the Federal Register on October 21, 2015, explains this process in detail. In summary, this is how decisions are made.

- *VA Screening: Native American veterans are first screened by VA to determine if:
(1) the veteran is eligible for VA health care;
(2) the veteran is homeless or at risk of homelessness;
(3) the veteran has a need for Case Management Services;
(4) and the veteran agrees to participate in VA Case Management.*
- *Tribe/TDHE Screens: The tribe/TDHE screens Native American veterans referred by VA (those that are found eligible by VA) to determine if:
(1) the veteran is an Indian as defined in NAHASDA;
(2) the veteran is income eligible for the program; and
(3) the veteran is not registered as a lifetime sex offender.*

11. Will this program be renewed and/or expanded?

HUD supports the continuation and expansion of the program, as evidenced in the President's fiscal year 2017 budget. Both the Senate and House appropriations bills also provide funding for the continuation and expansion of the program.

12. If a veteran owes back rent to a TDHE can the TDHE in its Tribal HUD-VASH program deny assistance to such veteran?

No. Rent owed to a TDHE for an IHBG unit cannot be used to deny rental assistance to a veteran in the Tribal HUD-VASH program as they are two distinct program