



# Veteran Homelessness and Transition Grant Program Manual

## Introduction

This policy and procedure manual for the Veterans Homelessness and Transition Program provides clear guidelines and standardized procedures to ensure consistent service delivery, regulatory compliance, and accountability. It enhances operational efficiency with detailed instructions on eligibility, application processes, financial management, and reporting. By outlining best practices and quality standards, it ensures high-quality services and includes risk management procedures to safeguard the program. Additionally, it serves as a training resource for new hires and provides a framework for continuous evaluation and improvement, ultimately contributing to the program's successful implementation and better outcomes for Veterans.

The Veteran Homelessness and Transition Grant was established October 16, 2023, to assist homeless Veterans or Veterans at imminent risk of being homeless with resources needed to obtain and maintain permanent housing. The Veteran Homelessness and Transition Grant Program is funded through appropriations by the South Carolina General Assembly and managed by the South Carolina Department of Veterans' Affairs (SCDVA). This manual provides guidance on requirements and procedures for applicants submitting proposals (Applicants) and proper administration of funding for those awarded grants (Grantees).

The grant's mission is to support organizations in meeting community defined needs by providing funding to nonprofits and governmental entities. These organizations should focus on providing housing assistance, rental or utilities assistance, transitional housing for Veterans participating in substance abuse programs, and underemployment programs for eligible South Carolina Veterans statewide.

## Grant Program Goals

1. Reduce Veteran Homelessness: Aim to decrease the number of homeless Veterans in targeted areas.
2. Provide Sustainable Housing Solutions: Ensure Veterans have access to stable and appropriated housing options.
3. Enhance Access to Support Services: Increase Veterans' access to healthcare, employment assistance, mental health services, and other essential support systems.
4. Promote Long-Term Stability: Support Veterans in achieving and maintaining independent, stable lifestyles.

## Objectives

1. Provide support, services, and resources to Veterans and their families to improve their quality of life and strengthen their connections and integration with their communities statewide.
2. Provide grant-funded services and resources that have measurable, positive outcomes.
3. Ensure a diversity of grant-funded services are available within geographic regions.
4. Develop outreach programs to locate and engage homeless Veterans within communities.
5. Collaborate with nonprofits and state agencies to expand affordable and suitable housing choices for Veterans.

## **Applicant Eligibility Criteria**

For purposes of this grant, Applicants must meet the requirements listed below and submit a complete application by the due date for award consideration. Grant applications will be accepted only via electronic submission (not to exceed 12 pages). Only one application per Applicant will be accepted. Visit the South Carolina Department of Veterans' Affairs website <https://scdva.sc.gov/veterans-homelessness-and-transition-grant> for a copy of these materials.

To be eligible for the program, an Applicant must be a South Carolina government entity or nonprofit with the following:

1. For nonprofit Applicants, registered and in good standing with the Division of Public Charities with the Secretary of State for a minimum of 5 years.
2. For nonprofit Applicants, recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) or (19) tax-exempt organization (must provide a copy of their IRS designation or affirmation letter)  
*\* Faith based organizations are eligible on the same basis as other nonprofit organizations.*
3. Public or non-profit private entity as defined in 38 CFR § 79.10.
4. Physically located and operating in South Carolina.
5. Member of the South Carolina Veteran Coalition.
6. Must demonstrate the technical and administrative abilities and resources to administer the grant successfully.
7. Applicants must provide sufficient eligibility information to allow SCDVA to evaluate their application for scoring purposes.
8. Grantees must maintain their status as a 501(c)(3) or (19) non-profit, state, or local government for the entire award cycle.
9. Applicants and Grantees must follow all state and federal laws and be free of tax liabilities.

## **Application Process**

Applicants must submit a completed application form along with a detailed project proposed by the specified deadline to SCDVA. The application must contain:

1. Program Detail Narrative
2. Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative (list of specific objectives, goals, and timeline that the grant will accomplish or achieve)
3. Organization Summary and Organization Chart
4. Organization anti-discrimination policy
5. Copies of the Applicant's articles of incorporation and bylaws if a nonprofit entity
6. By signing and applying, the Applicant agrees to accept the terms and conditions if awarded.

## **Selection Process**

A panel of experts will review applications based on criteria including project impact, feasibility, and alignment with program areas, and make award recommendations to the Secretary of SCDVA. The

Secretary makes the final determination for awarding grants and considers all attributes of the applications, specifically how they will serve Veteran's needs, prior to awarding.

### **Grant Award**

Successful Applicants will be notified via email. To accept the award, the Grantee must return and/or agree to the following:

1. The terms and requirements within the SCDVA Veterans Homelessness and Transition Grant Program Manual.
2. Veteran Homelessness and Transition Grant Award Agreement.
3. The approved Grant Application and all items submitted by the grant applicant to SCDVA in response to the Notice of Grant Award.
4. The Grantee shall designate in writing, individuals to serve as the point of contact for grant data (Authorized Designees). The Grantee shall notify SCDVA within 10 business days in the event of a change in the Authorized Designees.

### **South Carolina Enterprise Information System (SCEIS)**

Approved applicants must register as a SCEIS Vendor within 30 days of acceptance to receive disbursement of 1<sup>st</sup> quarter funds. To register, visit the SCEIS Vendor Registration website at [South Carolina State Procurement \(sc.gov\)](https://www.sc.gov) and complete the following steps:

Step 1 - Your company's name and tax identification number. For individuals, this is your social security number (SSN). For other entities, it is your employer identification number (EIN). The Name/TIN combination should match U.S. Internal Revenue Service records.

Step 2 - The name, phone number, and email address of the person responsible for maintaining this profile.

Step 3 - The company's primary contact information, to include phone and fax, and if available, your company's website.

Step 4 - Your company's mailing address.

Step 5 - If applicable, an alternate 'order from' or 'remit to' address.

Step 6 - If your company can support emergency procurements, you have the option of supplying emergency contact information.

Step 7 - Pick from the database of possible goods/service categories that your company would be able to supply to the state government.

Step 8 - Additional or secondary company contacts (name, job function, phone, email address).

Step 9 - Any additional text you would like to provide to describe your business.

## **Disbursement Of Funds**

Grant funds will be disbursed in 4 quarterly installments (July, October, January, and April).

Prior to the first Request for Payment, the Grantee must ensure that any subrecipient agreements and /or third-party contracts have been reviewed and authorized by SCDVA and confirm alignment with SCDVA goals and mission.

The Grantee must submit a Request for Payment form for eligible expenses and documentation as follows:

1. The Grantee must certify the information provided has been completed in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Award Agreement.
2. All documentation (including appointments to the Award Agreement) that SCDVA may reasonably require to substantiate the incurred expenses and certifications must be submitted with the Request for Payment. Invoices must be certified as valid expenses by an Authorized Designee of the Grantee who is knowledgeable about the work that has been completed.
3. Requests for payment must be submitted using forms approved by SCDVA and may be signed by any Authorized Designee. Delay of payment may result from incomplete or late submission of required or requested documents.
4. Payment requests must be approved by SCDVA in accordance with the approved scope of work and budget. Payments are issued from the State Treasurer's Office (STO) using the South Carolina Enterprise Information System and will be directly deposited into the Grantee's designated bank account.

## **Grant Amendment**

Veterans Homelessness and Transition Grantees may amend their agreement only with written approval from SCDVA. To request an amendment, grantees are encouraged to consult with the SCDVA Transition Housing Officer, then electronically submit:

1. A formal written request on the grantee's letterhead and signed by someone with agreement signature approval (which must define and justify the changes being made).
2. An amended budget if any changes are being made. ( Must use SCDVA budget Form).

\*Grant amendment requests must be made no later than 30 days before the end of the contract.

## **Confidentiality**

Grantees must develop and implement written confidentiality procedures to ensure all records containing personally identifiable information for clients receiving SCDVA assistance are kept secure and confidential.

## **Conflict of Interest**

Grantees must comply with organizational, individual, and procurement conflict of interest provisions. Grantees will be required to repay any SCDVA funds disbursed for persons with whom there is an identified conflict of interest unless an exception is granted by SCDVA.

## Organizational Conflicts of Interest

Grantees must not condition SCDVA-funded assistance on a client's acceptance of housing owned by the grantee, a parent or subsidiary of the grantee.

## Program Implementation

The grant program offers the following service categories:

1. **Homeless Veterans' Housing Assistance Services** identified by Grantee to address Veterans' homeless status, and to support Veterans who are literally homeless or striving to transition out of a homeless status. This service category is to help Veterans and their families gain stability and to initiate all the resources necessary to establish permanent housing. Resources can include deposits, first month rent, grocery, and transportation assistance (including bus passes or rideshare funding). Services can only be authorized once per grant cycle per Veteran household.
2. **Veterans' Rental Assistance** is temporary in nature and is intended to provide limited emergency assistance and financial relief to Veterans at imminent risk of being homeless and who can demonstrate financial need. Rental assistance will cover monthly rent including deposits, late fees, and payments in arrears. Service can only be authorized once per grant cycle per Veteran household.
3. **Veterans' Utility Payments** for electric, water, gas, internet, and Veteran's primary cell phone to includes connections, late fees, and payments in arrears. The Veteran must be a named person on the utility account or other bill/invoice presented for financial support. Utility payments are not to be made to the Veteran, but to the vendor. Services can only be authorized once per grant cycle per Veteran household.
4. **Veterans' Substance Abuse and Transitional Housing Assistance** sponsors transitional housing rental cost for homeless Veterans participating in a substance abuse rehabilitation program. Services can only be authorized once per grant cycle per Veteran.
5. **Veteran Employment Services** provide eligible Veterans with employment services such as job search services, job skills training, professional certifications, resumes, interviewing skills building, accessing legal documents, and tools and uniform required to perform the jobs task by the employer. Services can only be authorized once per grant cycle per Veteran.

Grantees must maintain proof of the delivery of services (i.e., invoice receipt to include date, the clients name, vendor name, property address, term of lease, periodic amount due, etc.) in their place of business for a minimum of five years. Proof of delivery documentation must be made available to SCDVA upon request. SCDVA may recoup payment for services that do not have a documented proof of payment.

Financial assistance payments are not to be made to the Veteran, but to the vendor. Payments must be made by check (must provide canceled/cleared check to include front and back with endorsement); or by EFT, ACH, Bank Transfer, or Debit Transactions (must provide Bank Statement showing a summary of

the payment transactions). The Veteran must be the name person on the lease, utility, or other bill or invoice presented for financial support.

### **Allowable and Unallowable Cost**

Veteran Homelessness and Transitions Grant, has specific guidelines and requirements detailed in their Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) and program manual. It is crucial for grantees to refer to these documents and consult with the housing department, ensure compliance with all funding rules and regulations.

**Allowable Costs are those that are deemed necessary and reasonable for the performance of the grant.**

#### Direct Assistance to Veterans

1. Housing Costs: Rental assistance, security deposits, utility payments, and moving costs.
2. Supportive Services: Case management, substance abuse treatment, job training, and employment services.

#### Program Costs

1. Staff Salaries and Benefits: Wages and benefits for staff directly involved in program delivery.
2. Training: for staff to improve service delivery.
3. Supplies and Equipment: Office supplies, computers, software, communication tools, and other equipment necessary for program operations.
4. Travel: Expenses for staff to attend SCDVA grant manager trainings and meetings.

#### Administrative Costs

1. Insurance: Liability insurance related to the program.

**Unallowable costs are those that are not permissible under the grant program.**

#### Personal Expenses

1. Entertainment: Costs of amusement, social activities, and related costs (e.g., tickets, meals, lodging, rentals).
2. Fines and Penalties: Costs resulting from violations of, or failure to comply with, federal, state, or local laws and regulations.
3. Personal Debts: Payment of personal debts of staff or program participants that are not related to program objectives.

#### Luxury Items

1. Purchase or rental vehicles, high-end office furnishings, and other items that are not necessary for the program.
2. Unjustified Travel: Travel costs that are not directly related to the program activities or are excessive.

#### Other Specific Restrictions

1. **Supplanting Funds:** Using grant funds to replace (supplant) other funds that have been appropriated for the same purpose.
2. **Capital Expenditures:** Large capital expenditures for facilities or equipment unless specifically allowed by the grant terms. Funds can't be used for construction or procurement.

#### Certain Administrative Costs

1. **Office Expenses:** Rent, utilities, appliances, or maintenance of office space and grounds.
2. **Lobbying:** Costs related to lobbying activities.
3. **Fundraising:** Expenses for raising funds for the organization or program.
4. **Advertising:** Costs of advertising not related to the recruitment of personnel, procurement of goods and services, or other allowable program activities.

### **Grant Reporting and Monitoring**

The South Carolina Veteran Coalition is the system of record for tracking Veterans served under the Veteran Homelessness and Transition Grant. Veterans' information must be entered into the South Carolina Veteran Coalition, and their profiles must be updated to record progress and outcomes of services provided. Training is provided virtually by SCDVA on the first Wednesday of each month from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Grantee and subrecipients are required to submit Quarterly Expenditure Reports, supporting documentation (to include invoices, receipts, and payroll statements), and performance reports on outputs and outcomes, including information on participants served to date, funds expended, and narrative descriptions of program progress or issues or as deemed necessary.

All documents must be submitted by the last Friday of each quarter (September, December, March, and June) for the period of program operation and shall include current monthly and cumulative data. These spreadsheets shall be submitted to SCDVA's Housing Division of Operations.

Grantees must be able to collect and maintain relevant deidentified client-level data and provide SCDVA access to all relevant deidentified client-level to better understand outcomes associated with services offered through this grant opportunity.

Grantees are required to maintain accounting records for compiling and reporting accurate financial data, in accordance with appropriate accounting standards and principles.

Grantees must establish internal controls to ensure completion and timely submission of all mandatory performance and/or compliance reporting.

Reporting templates will be provided upon Award Agreement execution for reporting deidentified client data to SCDVA.

1. Required records – retain for a minimum of 5 years following grant closeout
2. If any litigation, claim, or audit is started before the expiration of the five-year period, then records must be retained for three years after the litigation, claim or audit is resolved.

Upon Award Agreement execution, Grantees will be required to provide a monthly status report on project implementation to SCDVA. SCDVA may modify the reporting schedule to better align with the



Grantees' normal month-end financial cycle. The Grantee must complete a Monthly Program Plan Status Report that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Status of implementing each of the components listed in the grant proposal submitted with the application.
2. List each type of personnel hired by the Grantee (e.g., peer support specialists, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, etc.) for the purposes of this project. Identify which personnel are Grantee's staff and which are contractors.
3. List all costs associated with developing the proposed unit, including the amount of grant funds expended since the beginning of the grant term.
4. Grantees will be required to report all grant expenditure information to SCDVA in an Annual Fiscal Report within 30 days after the end of each year of the grant term. Funds awarded to a Grantee that are unspent within the grant term must be returned to SCDVA within 30 days after the end of the grant term.

### **Compliance and Regulations**

The Grantee will not be eligible to participate in Veteran Homelessness and Transition Grant activities until they have participated in an implementation training. Upon request or as deemed necessary by SCDVA, additional training and technical assistance will be provided by SCDVA staff. Additionally, SCDVA will host mandatory quarterly grant manager meetings to provide updates and best practices among Grantees.

SCDVA will address the technical assistance needs of the grantee with special emphasis on compliance.

The Grantee will be required to maintain compliance and correct any deficiencies identified during grant onsite audits.

SCDVA will identify need for technical assistance, through assessment of service grantees compliance levels, and requests for technical assistance.

SCDVA will conduct onsite assessments, educational interventions, and follow-up visits to all grantees which are having trouble maintaining satisfactory compliance levels.

Grantees must establish positive working relationships with service organizations so that necessary knowledge and skills will be effectively transferred.

SCDVA will develop action plans, which clearly detail the objectives to be accomplished in the appropriate timeframes; and formulate sample record and management forms and procedures that can be adapted by grantees to meet basic compliance requirements.

Compliance Visits to one or more of a Grantee's places of business may be made as determined by Agency representatives to inspect and review a project's physical facilities, financial records, personnel records, operational policies, and procedures, including observation of Grantee's delivery of services and other aspects of a Grantee's project as reasonably necessary to ensure compliance with the NOFA and these provisions.

In the event SCDVA finds the Grantee to be out-of-compliance with program standards, performance standards, or the terms or conditions of the Award Agreement, SCDVA will have the right to exercise any of the sanction options described below:

1. Plan of correction: 30 Days to address identified deficiencies.
2. Sanctions: No additional funding until all deficiencies resolved.
3. Termination and recoupment.

Any of the following actions may result in termination from participating in the Veteran Homelessness and Transition Grant:

1. Failure to timely provide required forms and/or documents.
2. Failure to improve program deficiencies and performance upon notice of a written warning.
3. Failure to use the South Carolina Veteran Coalition to record interactions and outcomes.

Regardless of when the violation is discovered, any of the following actions may result in the permanent banning from participating in the Veteran Homelessness and Transition Grant program:

1. Any Applicant or Grantee who provides false or misleading information to SCDVA about a project seeking funding, in any capacity whatsoever, regardless of when such false or misleading information is discovered. SCDVA may report the provision of false or misleading information to any regulatory agencies that govern the party who provided such information (e.g., S.C. Secretary of State, the S.C. Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, etc.).

### **Veteran Participant Eligibility**

The Grantee must ensure that Veterans served using Veteran Homelessness and Transition Grant funds are eligible to receive services. Eligibility documentation must be maintained by the Grantee in the Veterans' records.

A Veteran must meet the following requirements to be eligible to participate in services funded by the Veterans Homelessness and Transition Grant Program:

1. Reside in the state of South Carolina.
2. Meet the Title 38 of the Code of Federal Regulations definition of a Veteran: "a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable"; or a former National Guard member or reservist (even if never active under Title 10 orders) who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.
3. Have a Department of Defense Form DD-214, a Department of Defense National Guard Bureau (NGB) Form 22, or equivalent documentation. (If the grantee is unable to verify a Veteran's eligibility, contact SCDVA Housing Department).
4. Be at risk of being homeless; been homeless for one or more nights; have proof of evictions; or have a notice of utility disconnection.
5. Desire to lead a clean and sober lifestyle.
6. Desire to make meaningful life changes leading to independent living.
7. Is not on the sexual offender registry.

## Contact Information

SCDVA Division of Operations, Housing Department

### Transition Housing Officer

Alexis Spry, MBA, CPM

803-683-0236

[Alexis.Spry@SCDVA.sc.gov](mailto:Alexis.Spry@SCDVA.sc.gov)

### Transitional Housing Coordinator

Kami Drakes

803-683-0235

[Kami.Drakes@SCDVA.sc.gov](mailto:Kami.Drakes@SCDVA.sc.gov)

SCDVA has the right to update the Veteran Homelessness and Transition Grant Program Manual as needed. All changes will be shared with current Grantees and sub-awardees and will be available on the SCDVA website.

## **Definitions**

**501(c):** Section of the Internal Revenue Code that authorizes and defines most tax-exempt organizations, which must be organized and operated for a public purpose. 501(c)(3) is the most common type of nonprofit designated.

**Affordable Housing:** The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) designates housing as affordable if the gross costs to live in that housing unit, including utilities, do not exceed 30 percent of the gross income of the resident(s).

**Allowable Cost:** Cost for which an organization or agency may be reimbursed under a grant with a government agency.

**Appropriations:** Federal or State legislation that approves spending for a particular agency or group of agencies.

**At Risk of Homelessness:** A person with an annual income below 30 percent of median family income for area, as determined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and who does not have sufficient resources or support networks immediately available to prevent them from moving to an emergency shelter or place not meant for habitation, and who exhibits one or more risk factors of homelessness, including recent housing instability or exiting a publicly funded institution or system of care such as foster care or mental health facility.

**Audit:** A review to ensure outcomes were achieved and money was spent in accordance with the grant agreement.

**Budget Narrative:** Written justification for everything included in a budget.

**Confidentiality** is a set of rules that limits access or places restrictions on the use of certain types of information.

**Conflict of Interest:** A situation in which the private interests of someone involved with an organization could cause him or her to make decisions that are not in the best interest of the organization.

**Grant:** An award of funds to an organization or individual to undertake charitable activities; a financial assistance mechanism through which money and/or direct assistance is provided to carry out approved activities.

**Grant Amendment:** Modification of an existing grant agreement/change. Must be in writing.

**Grant Cycle:** the fiscal year running from July 1 to June 30, outlines the comprehensive process through which grant funds are allocated, managed, and evaluated.

**Grant Monitoring:** The ongoing assessment of the progress of the activities funded by a donor, with the objective of determining if the terms and conditions of the grant are being met and if the goal of the grant is likely to be achieved.

**Homeless:** Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and share the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospital.

**Installment:** a sum of money due as one of several equal payments for something, spread over an agreed period of time.

**Literally Homeless:** A person who has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation; or living in a publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, and local government programs).

**Organizational Conflict of Interest (OCI)** the person's objectivity in performing the contract work is or might be otherwise impaired, or a person has an unfair competitive advantage.

**Outcome(s):** The measurable results of a project. The positive or negative changes that occur in conditions, people, and policies as a result of an organization or program's inputs, activities, and outputs.

**Substance Abuse:** A pattern of compulsive substance use marked by recurrent significant social, occupational, legal, or interpersonal adverse consequences, such as repeated absences from work or school, arrests, and marital difficulties.

Addiction is a state of psychological or physical dependence (or both) on the use of alcohol or other drugs. The term is often used as an equivalent term for substance dependence and sometimes applied to behavioral disorders, such as sexual, internet, and gambling addictions.

**Transitional Housing:** Temporary housing for certain segments of the homeless population, including working homeless people who are earning too little money to afford long-term housing. Transitional housing is usually, a room or apartment in a residence with support services.

**Utility Assistance:** Most electric, gas and water not to exceed 90 days.

**Vendor:** any entity that provides goods or services to eligible clients of the program. These vendors could include landlord or property management companies; utility companies that provide essential services such as electric, gas, water, or internet; organization that provide vocational training, and skills development.

**Veteran:** A person who served in the active military, naval or air service, and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable; or a former National Guard member or reservist (even if never active under Title 10 orders) who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.

