FY 2024 VA Data Guide

Data Collection and Reporting Guidance for VA Grantees

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Contents

Summary of VA Data Guide Revisions since FY 2023

- Updated to FY 2024 HMIS Data Standards
  - Reference full change list here; of specific importance to VA Grantees:
  - 2.02 Project Information
  - 3.04 Race and Ethnicity
  - 3.06 Gender
  - 3.16 Client Location
  - 3.12 Destination
  - 3.917 Prior Living Situation
  - V1 Veteran's Information
  - V2 Services Provided – SSVF
  - V3 Financial Assistance – SSVF
  - V4 Percent AMI
  - V5 Retired Element
  - V7 HP Targeting Criteria
- Added clarifications and links to other guidance for GPD Case Management (CM) grantees now required to use HMIS as of October 1, 2023 for all FY 2024 and ongoing reporting
- Updated CoC lookup information

VA Programs & HMIS Participation

A Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a community-based application that collects and reports on the characteristics and needs of people who are served by programs intended to prevent and end homelessness in a particular geographic area or Continuum of Care (CoC). U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is committed to HMIS participation by VA-funded homeless assistance providers to support community-based service planning and coordination for Veterans and others experiencing homelessness or are at risk of experiencing homelessness.

In June 2010, VA released a Strategic Plan that identified thirteen major initiatives, one of which is the Elimination of Veteran Homelessness. This major initiative promotes the use of robust management systems to monitor outcomes for individual Veterans as well as the outcomes of programs that serve Veterans experiencing homelessness and is consistent with strategic plans developed by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In April 2021, VA Secretary Denis McDonough and HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge renewed the federal government's commitment to end Veteran homelessness. The new secretaries outlined measures to align federal efforts to end

Veteran homelessness, and evaluate its existing strategies, implement new approaches when necessary, and execute a plan to achieve tangible results that incorporate best practices, feedback, and lessons learned from Veterans, advocacy groups, and other stakeholders.

As a result of these federal coordination efforts, VA-funded Grant and Per Diem – Case Management (GPD-CM) providers, Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Contract Emergency Residential Services providers, and Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) providers have been directed by VA to participate in HMIS implementations operated by each CoC in which they provide services.

With respect to HMIS participation by VA homeless programs other than GPD-CM, HCHV/CRS, and SSVF, the VA Homeless Program Office released national guidance on August 31, 2015 that VA staff may obtain read-only access to HMIS, as long as the data is used as part of the job responsibilities of the individual obtaining access; VA staff are also permitted to enter data directly into an HMIS if a Release of Information (ROI) is in place and the entry contributes to the job responsibilities of the VA staff entering the data. In both cases, the data entered must be used to provide needed services and coordinated care to Veterans. VA's full guidance can be viewed at: https://www.hudexchange.info/news/va-releases-guidance-on-hmis-read-only-and-direct-entry-access-policy-q-a/.

CoC leadership and HMIS project staff will need to consider the following when planning for HMIS participation:

- Local CoC and HMIS staff should coordinate with local VA officials and VA-funded providers to initiate HMIS participation for community-based service providers who are not yet participating in HMIS.
- VA-funded projects participating in HMIS are subject to the requirements of the most recent version of the HMIS Data Standards and 2004 HMIS Technical Notice , which define HMIS data collection and privacy, security, data quality, and software requirements. Documentation is available on the HUD Exchange website (https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3824/hmis-data-dictionary/).
- VA-funded projects participating in HMIS are subject to HMIS policies and procedures established by the CoC(s) in which they operate, but they are also subject to VA requirements. For SSVF and GPD-CM grantees, VA requirements include the export of client-level data from HMIS for upload to VA's HMIS Repository. It may be necessary to amend HMIS policies and procedures in the event that they would prevent these VA grantees from complying with this requirement.
- VA will provide HMIS training to VA-funded projects required to participate in HMIS; topics will include a general HMIS overview, HMIS participation requirements, a review of the HMIS Data Standards as they apply to VA-funded projects, and forthcoming HMIS Technical Standards (to be released by HUD), which will include minimum standards for HMIS governance, privacy, security, software, and data quality.

- There are costs associated with HMIS licenses, training, technical support, data storage, system maintenance, and HMIS administration. Given the requirement that SSVF and GPD-CM grantees export and upload client-level data to the Repository at least monthly, and that grantees operating in multiple CoCs may provide exported data to other HMIS implementations, HUD expects HMIS project staff and CoC leadership to assess the costs associated with including VA-funded providers in HMIS, to document the allocation of those costs, and to assess any participation fees in an equitable and transparent manner.
- VA staff and other federal partners will work together to provide additional training materials and technical assistance (TA) support as VA expands HMIS participation requirements.

This manual is comprehensive with respect to SSVF, GPD-CM and HCHV; information and project setup guidance for HMIS administrators about other VA programs participating in HMIS is available on the HUD Exchange website Data Standards landing page at: (https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3824/hmis-data-dictionary/).

I. Data Guide Introduction and Overview

The purpose of this document is to convey all data management requirements to VA grantees required to participate in HMIS while providing the necessary tools to properly meet these requirements and manage program data. The reporting requirements in 38 CFR 62.71 have been designed to provide VA with the information required to assess the outcomes associated with grantees' programs. As a result of this, VA anticipates grantees' programs will assist in reducing the number of Veteran families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The guide is designed for use by grantees, staff, HMIS administrators, and CoC partners. The guide is divided into the following sections:

HMIS Participation Planning. This section includes a general overview of HMIS participation requirements and guidance for grantees in decision-making about how to fulfill them.

HMIS Project Descriptor Data Elements. This section provides guidance to HMIS administrators and HMIS vendors on how to complete the Project Descriptor Data Elements in HMIS to properly set up a grant for data collection in HMIS.

HMIS Data Collection. This section includes information on specific data elements that must be collected, when they must be collected, and for whom they must be collected, along with grant-specific information. Additionally, it includes sections on data quality and completeness requirements, data security policies, and HMIS privacy and security requirements.

Reporting. This section details reporting requirements, including HMIS and quarterly reports. Also included are Repository upload and integration specifications and the Repository user guide, which include step-by-step instructions on uploading HMIS data into the VA's Repository.

Data Quality Management. This section describes the necessary components of a comprehensive data quality plan. The data quality policy and thresholds are detailed, which outline the minimum acceptable data quality standards for program data. Additionally, links to the U.S. Interagency Council on the Homeless resources on developing a sound data quality plan as well as a sample plan are included.

CoC Integration & Planning. This section contains an overview of the function of the CoC and specific opportunities for collaboration between VA homeless programs and CoCs. Topics covered include coordinated assessment, homeless Point-in-Time (PIT) Counts, and the Housing Inventory Chart (HIC).

Toolkit. This section provides grantees with sample forms, templates, checklists and other resources that can be used and adapted for each program to facilitate HMIS implementation.

Other Training Materials for Grantees

In addition to this Data Guide, there is a Data Quality Implementation webinar from June 2021 that includes information on how to use all of the latest VA HMIS Repository data reports at: https://youtu.be/Unglu1aypDk.

There are extensive webinars for new SSVF grantees, including HMIS topics, on the SSVF website's Webinar Library:

II. HMIS Participation Planning

Overview

To participate in HMIS means to provide client level data into the database that is designated by the Continuum of Care (CoC) as that jurisdiction's HMIS. Therefore, grantees are participating in HMIS by contributing data to HMIS. For the VA, participation in HMIS also includes creating uploads of client data for the VA's HMIS Repository.

Requirements

- Every grantee is required to participate in at least one HMIS implementation; that HMIS implementation must be operated by a CoC in which the grantee is providing direct services.
- An HMIS implementation is community-based. Entering data into an HMIS application that is not affiliated with a CoC does not satisfy the requirement to participate in an HMIS implementation unless data are exported to and accepted by an HMIS implementation.
- Grantees operating in multiple CoCs must participate in the HMIS implementation of each CoC in which they operate. This requirement may be satisfied either by direct data entry into each HMIS or by entering data into a single HMIS and providing exports of client-level data to each HMIS. HMIS participation arrangements are subject to approval by grantees' SSVF Regional Coordinators (RC) and/or GPD Liaison.
- Information about every participant served must be entered into HMIS, exported from HMIS, and uploaded to the VA Repository on at least a monthly basis.
- Every project in an HMIS must be associated with one or more CoCs (data element 2.03 Continuum of Care Code). Projects operating in multiple CoCs must be associated with each CoC for which they will be entering client-level data into the HMIS.
- HMIS users must identify the CoC (data element 3.16 Client Location) that the client is being served by the CoC in which the vouchers/assistance the client receives was funded to operate.

Grantees should contact the HMIS Lead for each CoC in which they are operating to discuss HMIS participation. You can find a list of CoC contacts by accessing the HUD Exchange website at https://www.hudexchange.info/grantees/contacts/. Technical assistance is available from both HUD and VA if assistance or mediation is needed to ensure compliance with this requirement.

Considerations in HMIS Planning

There are many factors to consider in establishing an HMIS participation plan; some of these factors are outlined below.

Other Grantees Operating in the Same CoC

HMIS can be invaluable in reducing duplication of services in CoCs where there are multiple grantees. If your program is operating in any CoC in which there are other grantees providing services, talk to the other grantees about HMIS. The use of an HMIS that is either open or supports data-sharing agreements between projects such that it is possible to see if an applicant is already being served by another grantee is ideal. Your SSVF Regional Coordinator and/or GPD Liaison may be able to assist you in collaborating with other grantees to use a common HMIS.

Percentage of Participants in a CoC

In the case of a grantee operating in multiple CoCs: when deciding into which CoC to directly enter data versus into which CoC data will be contributed via uploads, it is advisable to decide which CoC has the largest share of the grantee's clients. For example, a grantee operating in six CoCs but with 90% of participants concentrated in a single CoC should be participating in the CoC with the highest percentage's HMIS (unless there are extenuating circumstances discussed with your Regional Coordinator). Your SSVF Regional Coordinator and/or GPD Liaison may be able to assist you in deciding which CoC's HMIS to use.

Location of Service Providers

In the case of a grantee operating in multiple CoCs: it is relatively easy to support participation in multiple HMIS implementations when there is a one-to-one relationship between an organization (grantee or sub grantee) and a CoC, i.e., when services in different CoCs are provided by organizations physically located in those CoCs. In many cases, when service providers are physically distributed across multiple CoCs, the provider organizations may have other programs that are already entering data into the HMIS implementations for the CoCs where they operate. In these cases, participating in multiple HMIS implementations might make more sense than entering all data into a single HMIS.

On the other hand, if services in multiple CoCs are provided from a single location by the same group of people, and participating in each of the HMIS implementations would require staff to remember multiple usernames and passwords as well as which system a participant's record is in every time a service is recorded, then consider entering all of your data into a single HMIS.

If your grant covers three CoCs and services for each of the CoCs are provided from separate locations, you should consider participating in each of the CoC's HMIS implementations. Your SSVF Regional Coordinator and/or GPD Liaison may be able to assist you in deciding how many CoC's HMISs to use, and the list below of "HMIS Participation Questions to Consider" may be of use.

Participation Fees

HMIS participation fees are a covered expense for SSVF and GPD-CM grantees. The overall cost of HMIS participation is a practical consideration in deciding whether to participate in the HMIS implementations for all of the CoCs in which you operate, but it should not be the primary factor.

It is important to be aware that the cost of HMIS participation varies from CoC to CoC and may have no relation to the level of support available or the quality of the HMIS software. Funding can be a big factor; some very advanced HMIS implementations have secured additional funding and charge minimal participation fees.

When comparing the participation fees of various HMIS implementations, be aware of what the fees include and what might cause them to increase. What kind of training and technical support is included? Does the cost of participation depend on the number of users you have, the number of programs you need, the number of client records you create, or some other factor? For VA grantees concerned about HMIS costs, please communicate with the SSVF Regional Coordinator and/or GPD Liaison.

HMIS Software

Each HMIS implementation selects its own HMIS application. HUD publishes minimum standards for HMIS applications, but there are big differences in workflow, reporting, and additional features. Software that is easy to use can have a big impact on data quality and save a lot of staff time. Using software that data entry personnel are already familiar with can also be helpful. When comparing two HMIS implementations that use different HMIS applications, it can be helpful to ask for a demonstration of the software.

The workflow for data entry is important; some applications have features that prevent users from creating duplicate records or to help ensure that all of the required data are entered. The ability to report on data from the HMIS may also be important; some applications offer a wide variety of reporting options – including data quality reports – while others do not. For grantees – particularly those who export and upload their own data to the Repository – the export process is also critical. Some applications produce a single file within a few minutes that can be uploaded to the Repository as is; others require a multi-step process, manual changes, and/or overnight processing.

If two HMIS implementations use different HMIS applications and one appears to be easier to use and/or to have additional useful features that the other does not offer, the software might be a deciding factor. If two HMIS implementations use the same software, it may be that data could be entered into one and exported to the other with relative ease.

HMIS Implementation Capacity

Some HMIS implementations are more advanced and/or have more capacity to support HMIS users than others. A number of grantees export and upload their own data to the Repository; in some HMIS implementations, however, HMIS administrators or software vendors manage this process on behalf of grantees.

Entering Data into One HMIS and Exporting Data to Another

Some HMIS implementations accept data exported from another HMIS implementation. Grantees operating in multiple CoCs may choose to do direct data entry into a single HMIS and to participate in the HMIS implementations for other CoCs by providing them with exports of data for clients located in their jurisdiction.

Your program will only be participating in an HMIS implementation if your data is accepted and integrated into the HMIS database. An HMIS implementation is not required to accept an extract of data and their ability to do so may depend on the capacity of their software. Your data is also subject to all of the policies and procedures of the HMIS implementation that receives it. If either the host CoC HMIS or recipient CoC HMIS lacks the export or import functionality (encouraged but not yet required for HMIS implementations), then using a single CoC's HMIS may not be a viable option. Any decision to use only one CoC's HMIS must be made after determining the data exchange work flow and schedule that assures the HMIS participation requirements of the recipient CoC are met so as not to disrupt their ability to produce system level reports.

HMIS Participation Questions to Consider

The following is a list of some questions you may wish to consider for each of the CoCs in which you are operating in developing an HMIS participation plan.

- Does your organization already have other programs participating in this CoC's HMIS?
- If you have sub-grantees, do any of them have other projects participating in this CoC's HMIS?
- Are there other VA grantees operating in the CoC?
- If other SSVF, GPD, or HCHV projects operate in the same CoC, is the HMIS open or does it support data-sharing agreements between projects?
- What percentage of your clients do you expect will be located in this CoC? Less than 10%? More than 75%?
- Which HMIS software does the CoC use?
- Are any of your staff already familiar with the CoC's designated software?
- Does the CoC's HMIS software have any features that make it easier or more difficult to use than the software used by other CoCs?
- Given the number of users you need and the number of projects required, what is the annual cost of participation by direct data entry in this CoC's HMIS?
- What kind of user training and support is provided to HMIS users? Are they included with the participation fee or are there additional costs?
- Will using a CoC's HMIS increase the availability of resources to your clients?
- Is the expected total number of persons to be served by your grant in a given CoC significant for their HUD System Performance Measures submission?
- Can the HMIS export HMIS data in the HMIS FY 2024 CSV format? (This is the only format that the Repository will be able to accept). Can it import and export HMIS data in the HMIS FY 2024 XML format (which may be helpful in data exchange with other HMIS implementations)?
- Who would export SSVF or GPD-CM data and upload it to the Repository each month?
    - If the HMIS administrator / vendor: Is there a backup in the event that they are not available?
    - If the SSVF or GPD-CM grantee: What steps are required to export / upload the data?

III. HMIS Project Descriptor Data Elements

This section provides guidance to HMIS administrators and HMIS vendors on how to complete the Project Descriptor Data Elements in HMIS to set up a grantee. Project Descriptor Data Elements (PDDE) are the required elements that define the individual projects within the HMIS. They must be set up and updated by the HMIS Lead or HMIS System Administrator on a regular basis as information within the elements are subject to change and are critical for report generation.

2.01 Organization Information

The *Organization Information* element contains several fields: 'Organization ID' is generated by the HMIS application; the 'Organization Name' should be name of the grantee. In the event that the organization has other projects participating in HMIS, there may already be a record for the organization in the HMIS. It is not necessary that the *Organization Name* in HMIS is an identical match to the grantee name as identified in the grant, only that the organization is correctly identified and recognizable to CoC and HMIS administration staff. 'Victim Service Provider' status is set at the organization level as "Yes/No" response. The definition of Victim Service Provider can be accessed at this link: https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5743/hmis-when-to-use-a-comparable-database/

2.02 Project Information

The *Project Information* element contains several fields: 'Project ID' is generated by the HMIS software; the 'Project Name' identifies the specific project. There are no specific VA requirements for grantee's HMIS project names, but in general, names should make it as simple as possible for users to distinguish between the various HMIS projects created to represent a single grant. Due to 'Project Type' (described below), you may be required to split a single grant into multiple projects. If so, here's an example of a simple naming convention for 2.02.2 'Project Name': *Community Homeless SSVF RRH* and *Community Homeless SSVF Prevention*.

'Operating Start Date' must be completed on all projects within the HMIS. The 'Operating Start Date' of the project is defined as the first day the project provided services and/or housing. Thus, this date must be no later than the date the first client served in the project was entered into the project. 'Operating End Date' must be entered when a project closes. The 'Operating End Date' must be the last day on which the last client received housing/services. The 'Operating End Date' should be left empty if the project is still in operation.

Every VA grant project in HMIS should answer "Yes" to 'Continuum Project'. Each VA grant component has a specific 'Project Type' assigned to it, as follows:

Grant: Component	**Project Type #**	**Project Type Name**
SSVF (Rapid Re-Housing)	13	PH-Rapid Re-Housing *RRH Subtype:* RRH: Housing with or without services
SSVF (Homelessness Prevention)	12	Homelessness Prevention
HCHV CRS: EH	0	Emergency Shelter – Entry Exit
HCHV: Low Demand Safe Haven	8	Safe Haven
GPD: Bridge Housing	2	Transitional Housing
GPD: Low Demand	8	Safe Haven
GPD: Service Intensive Transitional Housing	2	Transitional Housing
GPD: Special Need	2	Transitional Housing
GPD: Hospital to Housing	2	Transitional Housing
GPD: Clinical Treatment	2	Transitional Housing
GPD: Transition in Place	9	PH – Housing Only
GPD: Case Management/Housing Retention	6	Services Only

Housing Inventory Count Note: The provision of EHA in hotel and motel settings should be recorded in the SSVF: Rapid Re-Housing project type, as there is no emergency shelter project type that the SSVF Program funds. Instructions for how to report this correctly for HIC/PIT reporting can be found in the most recently released PIT and HIC guidance.

'Affiliated with a residential project' and 'Project ID(s) of residential project(s) affiliated with a Supportive Services Only project' applies to all GPD CM projects if applicable, and applies to those SSVF RRH projects that are sub-typed RRH: Services Only. If the GPD CM project or the SSVF RRH: Services Only project is affiliated with a residential project, select "Yes" and enter the Project ID(s) of the residential project(s) affiliated with the GPD CM or SSVF RRH project.

'Housing Type', 'Target Population', and 'HOPWA-funded Medially Assisted Living Facility' should be answered as appropriate for the project.

2.03 Continuum of Care Information

Select the 'CoC Code' based on the location in which the project operates. VA-funded projects may be funded to operate in a single CoC or they may be funded to operate in a wider geographic area that covers multiple CoCs. Projects funded to operate in multiple CoCs should be associated with all of the CoC codes for which they will be entering client-level data into the HMIS. For example, if a SSVF project is expected to provide financial assistance to everyone in the catchment area then all of the CoC codes which cover the area must be selected. However, if the SSVF project only provides services to people in City X, and City X has a single CoC code, then select the code that applies to City X's CoC only. If a project is funded to operate in multiple CoCs and is participating in the HMIS implementations of each separate CoC with a separate project created in each, only the CoC Code relevant to the HMIS implementation need be entered.

'Geocode,' 'Project ZIP code,' and 'Project Street Address' fields must reflect the location of the project's principal lodging site or, for multiple site projects, the area in which most of the project's clients are housed.

2.06 Federal Partner Funding Sources

Projects funded in whole or in part by VA funds are to be identified based on the VA program. Select the appropriate VA program for each project as such:

Grant: Component	Federal Funder Source Number	Federal Funder Source Name
SSVF (RRH)	33	VA: Supportive Services for Veteran Families
SSVF (Homelessness Prevention)	33	VA: Supportive Services for Veteran Families
HCHV CRS: EH	27	VA: CRS Contract Residential Services
HCHV: Low Demand Safe Haven	30	VA: Community Contract Safe Haven Program
GPD: Bridge Housing	37	VA: Grant Per Diem – Bridge Housing
GPD: Low Demand	38	VA: Grant Per Diem – Low Demand
GPD: Service Intensive Transitional Housing	41	VA: Grant Per Diem – Service Intensive Transitional Housing
GPD: Special Need	41	VA: Grant Per Diem – Service Intensive Transitional Housing
GPD: Hospital to Housing	39	VA: Grant Per Diem – Hospital to Housing
GPD: Clinical Treatment	40	VA: Grant Per Diem – Clinical Treatment
GPD: Transition in Place	42	VA: Grant Per Diem – Transition in Place
GPD: Case Management/ Housing Retention	45	VA: Grant Per Diem – Case Management/Housing Retention

For VA projects the *Grant Identifier* field should include the VA grant number or Federal Awards Identification Number (FAIN), along with the corresponding *Grant Start Date* and *Grant End Date*. With the exception of SSVF, projects that operate as a single entity but are funded under multiple VA programs or grants may be set up as a single project in HMIS, as long as the project type (as shown in 2.4 Project Type above) is the same and each of the funding sources is recorded in HMIS. For SSVF and GPD CM, multiple VA grant identifiers should only be associated with a single project when a grant is renewed. Organizations operating with more than one VA grant at the same time must have separate projects set up for each grant.

2.07 Bed and Unit Inventory

This data element should be completed for the projects in HMIS consistent with the policies of the HMIS implementation. HMIS Leads should review available HMIS guidance regarding the specifics of bed and unit inventory information for each project. HMIS Leads and CoC data leadership, as well as VA grantees that are required to use HMIS, may also utilize the HUD Ask A Question HMIS Help Desk. As different HMIS software types may have different ways of populating bed and unit inventory information, HMIS Leads and system administrators should be familiar with the processes and protocols for recording this information. In addition, they should also be able to compare vendor programming specifications with HMIS guidance from HUD and VA to ensure accurate data collection, project setup, and reporting.

IV. HMIS Data Collection Instructions

HMIS Universal and Program Specific Data Elements Required by Program

All VA funded projects participating in HMIS are required to collect and enter Universal Data Elements. Project-specific data elements are required for some VA-funded programs and not others. For detailed information about data collection instructions, element rationale, and definitions of response categories, please see the FY 2024 HMIS Data Standards Manual. Some special considerations for VA projects include:

- Persons served under “Pending Verification of Veteran status” may be entered into HMIS and uploaded to the Repository.
- Data collected and entered into HMIS should be done so upon program entry based on the participants’ self-reports.
- Documentation must be obtained for data elements directly tied to program eligibility.

HMIS Data Elements by VA Program

R = Required; O = Optional; N = Not reported

#	Name	SSVF: RRH	SSVF: HP	HCHV: All	GPD: All
3.01-3.917	Universal Data Elements	R	R	R	R
4.02	Income and Sources	R	R	R	R
4.03	Non-Cash Benefits	R	R	R	R
4.04	Health Insurance	R	R	R	R
4.05	Physical Disability	N	N	R	R
4.06	Developmental Disability	N	N	R	R
4.07	Chronic Health Condition	N	N	R	R
4.08	HIV/AIDS	N	N	R	R
4.09	Mental Health Disorder	N	N	R	R
4.10	Substance Use Disorder	N	N	R	R
4.11	Domestic Violence	R	R	R	R
4.19	Coordinated Entry Assessment	N	N	O	O
4.20	Coordinated Entry Event	N	N	O	O
V1	Veteran's Information	R	R	R	R
V2	Services Provided – SSVF	R	R	O	O
V3	Financial Assistance – SSVF	R	R	N	N
V4	Percent of AMI (SSVF Eligibility)	R	R	N	N
V6	VAMC Station Number	R	R	R	R
V7	HP Targeting Criteria	N	R	N	N
P4	Connection with SOAR	R	R	N	O
R4	Last Grade Completed	R	R	N	N
R6	Employment Status	R	R	N	R

VA Assistance Type

Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF)

Rapid Re-Housing and Homelessness Prevention: For each SSVF grant, there must be one project set up in HMIS with a project type of Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) and another with a project type of Homelessness Prevention (HP).

Participants should be entered into HMIS under either the RRH or HP project based on the housing status of the Veteran at the time of project entry.

If the Veteran is homeless, enter the household into the RRH project. Briefly, this includes:

- Individuals and families living in a place not meant for habitation (e.g., a vehicle, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground).

- Individuals and families being provided with a temporary residence by a public or private organization (e.g., emergency shelter, Safe Haven, or a hotel or motel paid for with emergency shelter vouchers).
- Individuals exiting an institution after a stay of 90 days or less who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for habitation immediately before entering that institution.
- Individuals and families leaving their primary nighttime residence because they are fleeing or are attempting to flee domestic violence, who have no other residence, and who lack the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

Other participants (i.e., those who are not homeless but are eligible for SSVF) should be entered under the HP project type.

Project Transfers due to Housing Status changes: A Veteran is categorized at the start of their SSVF enrollment as either Category 1 (HP) or Category 2/3 (RRH). That categorization determines their initial HMIS project enrollment, and at recertification if the Veteran has been determined to have changed housing status from Category 1 to Category 2/3, then the Veteran should be exited from the HP project in HMIS and enrolled in the RRH project in order to document the loss of housing appropriately. Remember that the goal of RRH is to quickly house a Veteran (meaning we expect the housing status to go from Category 2/3 to Category 1 as part of the program design), so the recertification process does not include changing the Veteran's housing status in the case of moving from Category 2/3 to Category 1. The change in status only applies to situations when a Veteran was enrolled in the HP project in HMIS and then was not prevented from becoming homeless, and when the recertification happens and the Veteran is still homeless in a shelter or on the street they would need to be exited from the HP project in HMIS and reenrolled in the RRH project in HMIS to document the project's failure at preventing the Veteran's homelessness.

Rapid Resolution: SSVF grantees may provide *Rapid Resolution* assistance to SSVF household. *Rapid Resolution* is a conversation with clients to identify a safe alternative to entering or remaining in the homeless system. *Rapid Resolution* service provision is required to be entered into HMIS by all grantees. SSVF grantees should enroll Veterans in SSVF HP or RRH projects prior to beginning *Rapid Resolution* conversations. Veterans who identify a safe alternative with assistance from SSVF through the *Rapid Resolution* conversation must be tracked in HMIS as having a *Rapid Resolution* service by adding a service under V2 Services Provided using Field Response #9: "Rapid Resolution."

If a conversation commences and the client is unable to identify a safe alternative to entering or remaining in the homeless system, then the SSVF grantee should not enter a service of "Rapid Resolution" under V2 Services Provided.

For further information about the *Rapid Resolution* intervention, please refer to the SSVF Rapid Resolution Service Compliance Guidance.

Returning Home: SSVF grantees may provide *Returning Home* assistance to SSVF households. *Returning Home* assistance consists of offering Veteran households experiencing homelessness the option of returning to their community of origin or to a community where the Veteran has available supports to facilitate housing placement using SSVF financial assistance.

Communities may find that *Returning Home* is beneficial when used in partnership with the *Rapid Resolution* initiative. *Returning Home* has been available to all communities since FY 2020.

SSVF households receiving *Returning Home* assistance should enroll households into RRH or HP project types based on their living situation at entry. Within HMIS, *Returning Home* clients must be identified by adding a service under V2 Services Provided using Field Response #8: "Returning Home."

For further information about the *Returning Home* program, please refer to the SSVF Returning Home Initiative Description and FAQ.

Shallow Subsidy: SSVF grantees may provide *Shallow Subsidy* assistance to SSVF households. *Shallow Subsidy* assistance consists of offering Veteran households experiencing homelessness a smaller amount of assistance over a longer period of time to facilitate housing placement using SSVF financial assistance.

SSVF households receiving *Shallow Subsidy* assistance should enroll households into RRH or HP project types based on their living situation at entry. Within HMIS, *Shallow Subsidy* clients must be identified by adding a service under V2 Services Provided using Field Response #7: "Shallow Subsidy" and by adding a financial assistance amount under V3 Financial Assistance using Field Response #15: "Shallow Subsidy – Financial Assistance" along with the amount of financial assistance provided by the grantee per the instructions in V3.

Grant and Per Diem (GPD)

For each GPD grant, there must be at least one project set up in HMIS with a project type matching the table on page 9. The GPD program promotes the development and provision of supportive housing (up to 24 months) and/or supportive services with the goal of helping Veterans experiencing homelessness achieve residential stability.

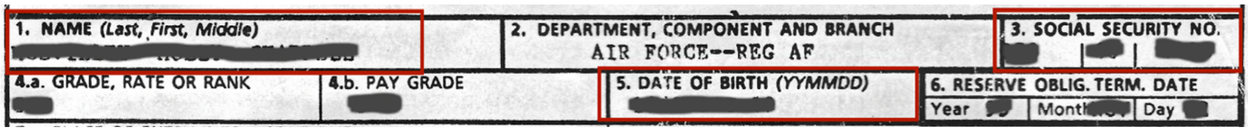
Healthcare for Homeless Veterans (HCHV)

For each HCHV grant, there must be at least one project set up in HMIS with a project type matching the table on page 9. The HCHV program provides emergency housing to Veterans experiencing homelessness.

Data Elements

3.01 Name

Providing identifying information is an eligibility requirement and is not optional. At a minimum, every client, including household members, must have a first name and a last name entered in HMIS. For Veterans, names should be entered in HMIS as they appear on the DD214 unless the Veteran has had a legal name change since their discharge. The DD214 is also a reliable source of information about Social Security numbers and Date of Birth (as shown below).



1. NAME (*Last, First, Middle*) [redacted]		2. DEPARTMENT, COMPONENT AND BRANCH AIR FORCE--REG AF	3. SOCIAL SECURITY NO. [redacted]
4.a. GRADE, RATE OR RANK [redacted]	4.b. PAY GRADE [redacted]	5. DATE OF BIRTH (*YYMMDD*) [redacted]	6. RESERVE OBLIG. TERM. DATE Year [redacted] Month [redacted] Day [redacted]

For Veterans, the only acceptable response to Name Data Quality is *Full name reported*. If the first name and last name are complete and correct, *Full name reported* is an appropriate response – it is desirable but not necessary that the middle name is included.

If there is already a record in HMIS for the participant and any part of the name is incorrect, correct it. Although the HMIS Data Standards specify that names are only collected when a client record is created, it is the responsibility of every project that serves that person to ensure that information is complete and correct.

For non-Veterans, it is permissible for non-Veterans to provide their preferred names.

3.02 Social Security Number (SSN)

Any Veteran applying for services from a VA funded program must provide an SSN to receive services and grantees must enter the complete SSN into HMIS. A Veteran who declines to provide a nine-digit SSN is not eligible for VA funded programs.

Grantees must also ask for an SSN for all non-Veteran household members; however, non-Veterans are legally entitled to decline to provide an SSN or to provide only a partial SSN. When that happens, it must be accurately reflected in HMIS data by selecting *the correct response* in the SSN Data Quality field. Regardless of the reason, partial, missing, or invalid SSNs will always have a negative impact on data quality.

If there is already a record in HMIS for the client and the SSN is incorrect or incomplete, please correct it.

3.03 Date of Birth

Again, providing identifying information is an eligibility requirement and is not optional. Every client, including non-Veteran household members, must have a date of birth in HMIS. Note that for Date of Birth Data Quality, *Approximate or partial DOB reported, Client doesn't know*, *Client prefers not to answer,* and *Data not collected* are not valid responses for SSVF and GPD-CM participants.

If there is already a record in HMIS for the client and the date of birth is incorrect or incomplete, please correct it.

3.04 Race and Ethnicity

Collect self-reported race and/or ethnicity data for each client. Select as many race or ethnicity selections as apply. If the participant does not identify with any of the race or ethnicity selections listed, then select *Client doesn't know* or *Client prefers not to answer* as appropriate. The Data Manual provides a description of each race category and instructions for how to help a client identify the appropriate races for them.

If there is already a record in HMIS for the client and race information is incorrect or incomplete, please correct it.

3.06 Gender

Collect self-reported gender information about every client. Select as many gender responses as apply. When enrolling a client who already has a record in the HMIS, verify that gender information is complete and accurately reflects how the client identifies, and correct if it does not. Gender identity is a person's internal perception of themselves and may not match the sex they were assigned at birth. This element records one's gender identity and not sex assigned at birth. The Data Manual provides a description of each gender selection.

HMIS users and data entry staff should apply a Client-Centered Approach to Recognizing Gender Identities in Data Collection. Staff observations should never be used to collect information on gender. Provide all options to every client. Even if staff think they can guess a client's gender, every client must be asked for their self-reported information. If they prefer not to provide it or say they don't know, do not select any response other than "Client doesn't know" or "Client prefers not to answer" on the client's behalf. Gender does not have to match legal documents and clients may not be asked about medical history or other information to try to determine the person's gender. Simply asking, "Which of these genders best describes how you identify?" is appropriate and focuses on the person's own internal knowledge of their gender.

If a client does not understand what a particular gender response may mean, the descriptions in the Data Manual can be provided. The availability of these options is not intended to indicate that transgender individuals are expected to disclose their status; each response is provided as an option in case an option (or more than one option) is better suited to a client's preferred terminology, needs, or situation. Clients may select as many responses to the Gender field as they would like to, with up to a total of seven responses possible for a client's preferred identity, need or situation. However, a response of *Client doesn't know* should not be used interchangeably with the response option *Questioning*. *Questioning* is about exploring one's gender identity. *Client doesn't know* should only be selected when a client does not know their gender from the options available, including *Questioning*. Additionally, *Client doesn't know*, *Client prefers not to answer*, and *data not collected* are not valid in conjunction with any other response.

If a client discloses being a culturally specific identity (e.g., Two-Spirit), transgender, non-binary, questioning, or a different identity, staff should ask if the client prefers to have the HMIS record reflect the client's gender identity. For example, the availability of these options is not intended to indicate that transgender individuals are expected to disclose their status; each response is provided as an option in case an option (or more than one option) is better suited to a client's identity, needs, or situation. For instance, if a client identifies as a transgender man but they do not want their transgender identity recorded in the HMIS, the staff person would select "Man (Boy, if child)" instead of both "Man (Boy, if child)" and "Transgender."

Clients may report different gender identities or present different gender expressions at different projects within the same CoC. This may be because their gender identity has changed or because they experience a different degree of safety at different projects. If staff are working with a client who reports a gender identity that differs from the existing HMIS record, staff should ensure that the client understands and is comfortable with their information being updated across all projects prior to making any changes. Clients decide to which projects they will disclose potentially sensitive information. Project staff should enter the self-reported information as directed by the client.

3.07 Veteran Status

VA Homeless Programs may serve clients who only had service time in Basic Training. Please be aware that the *HMIS definition of a Veteran* requires at least 1 day of active duty service beyond training service, but that *is not a requirement for SSVF or GPD program eligibility*.

> ***For HMIS purposes, Veteran Status should be 'Yes' for anyone who has ever been on full-time <u>active duty</u> in the armed forces of the United States, regardless of length of service,*** **excluding anyone who received a dishonorable discharge from the Armed Forces or was discharged or dismissed from the Armed Forces by reason of the sentence of a general court-martial.** *For members of the* active military, naval, air, or space services*:*
>
> - *Active duty begins when a military member reports to a duty station after the completion of their training,*
> - *Includes any period of <u>active duty for training</u> during which a person is disabled or dies from a disease or injury incurred or aggravated in the line of duty,*
> - *Includes a period of <u>inactive duty for training</u> during which the individual concerned was disabled or died from an injury incurred or aggravated in line of duty or from an acute myocardial infarction, a cardiac arrest, or a cerebrovascular accident occurring during such training.*
>
> *For members of the Reserves and National Guard, active duty is:*
>
> - *Reservist activation or deployment, either within the United States or abroad under Active Duty as defined in section 101(d)(1) of Title 10 USC (12304, 12302, or 12301a); or*
> - *Members of the Reserves who are active duty for training (ACDUTRA) only; or*
> - *National Guard called to active service authorized by State or Federal authority under Title 32 USC; or*
> - *National Guard called to active duty under Title 10; 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 National Guard who are active duty for training (ACDUTRA) only.*
- *Members of the Reserves or National Guard who were never activated or deployed as described above.*

For VA funded projects, every adult must have a Veteran Status of either *Yes* or *No*. Neither *Client doesn't know* nor *Client prefers not to answer* are permissible responses.

Due to the complexity in the definition of active military service, it is important to have a strong level of communication with your local VA Medical Center to verify if a potential participant has active military service and to verify their type of discharge.

Documentation of the client's eligibility for the project should be retained on file for the client for monitoring purposes, and this guidance can be saved as backup to explain the apparent discrepancy between the client file and the HMIS record.

If there is already a record in HMIS for the client and Veteran Status is incorrect, please correct it.

Establishing Veteran Status for Enrollment:
To prove a participant's Veteran status, grantees should obtain at least ONE of the following documents:

- SQUARES 2.0 Printout www.va.gov/homeless/SQUARES
- Veteran Health Administration (VHA) Veteran's Identity card
- VA Veterans Choice Card
- VA Photo ID Card
- Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) Statement of Service (SOS)
- VISTA printout from VHA healthcare provider
- Veteran Information Solution (VIS) Printout
- VBA award letter of service-connected disability payment or non-service-connected pension
- NA Form 13038
- DD Form 214 Certificate of Release Discharge from Active Duty

If such documents proving eligibility are not immediately available, an Affidavit of Veteran Status signed by the Veteran can be used to allow grantees to temporarily enroll Veterans who are Pending Verification of Veteran Status and initiate supportive services. However, Temporary Financial Assistance cannot be provided until the grantee/Veteran can obtain documentation proving Veteran status.

If the Veteran is not in possession of his or her DD Form 214, the grantee should assist the Veteran in submitting an SF-180, Request Pertaining to Military Records, to confirm the individual's status. Information on how to submit this form can be found on the National Archives website: http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/.

3.08 Disabling Condition

Disabling condition is one or more of the following:

- A physical, mental, or emotional impairment, including an impairment caused by alcohol or drug abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, or brain injury that:
  - Is expected to be long-continuing or of indefinite duration;
  - Substantially impedes the individual's ability to live independently; and
  - Could be improved by the provision of suitable housing conditions.
- A developmental disability, as defined in section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15002); or
- The disease of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) or any condition arising from the etiologic agency for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV).
- Additionally, if the client is a veteran who is disabled by an injury or illness that was incurred or aggravated during active military service and whose disability meets the disability definition defined in Section 223 of the Social Security Act, they should be identified as having a disabling condition.

Collect disabling condition for every client served with VA-funded grants. If there is already a record in HMIS for the client and Disabling Condition is incorrect, please correct it.

3.10 Project Start Date

Every client must have a Project Start Date. There are no exceptions, and the Repository will reject any upload that has missing information for this field.

For all project types, the Project Start Date indicates a client is now being assisted by the project. The term 'assisted' is not limited to financial assistance. By project type for VA funded projects, below is a synopsis of what to record as the date of project start:

Emergency Shelter: Record the date of the night client first stayed in the shelter.

Safe Haven and Transitional Housing: Record the date the client moves into the residential project (i.e. first night in residence).

Permanent Housing including Rapid Re-Housing: Record the date following application that the client was admitted into the project. To be admitted indicates the following factors have been met:

- Information provided by the client or from the referral indicates they meet the criteria for admission;
- The client has indicated they want to be housed in this project;
- The client is able to access services and housing through the project.

Homelessness Prevention: Record the date the client first began working with the project and generally received the first provision of service.

All household members who are staying with the head of household at the time of project entry should have the same Project Entry Date. If a new client is added to a household after the original household members' start dates, the new client's start date should reflect the actual day that client started the project.

If a client is transferred from one RRH project to another RRH project, or from one HP project to another HP project due to location changes or continuity of services allowed for by the VA Program Office, please ensure the *Project Start Date* of the enrollment the Veteran was transferred to is *on or after* the *Project Exit Date* of the enrollment the Veteran was transferred from. Make sure to provide back-up documentation in the client file to ensure the project transfer was eligible according to the VA Program Office.

3.11 Project Exit Date

The Project Exit Date is the last date on which the grantee provides services or residence to the household. This may be the last day of any month for which rental assistance is provided, even if no other services were provided on that date. Likewise, rental assistance may have ended but services are still being provided, in which case the client must not be exited until those services cease.

All household members who are staying with the head of household at the time of project exit should have the same Project Exit Date. Household members who leave the project before the rest of the household for any reason may have an earlier Project Exit Date.

If a client is transferred from one RRH project to another RRH project, or from one HP project to another HP project due to location changes or continuity of services allowed for by the VA Program Office, please ensure the *Project Exit Date* of the enrollment the Veteran was transferred from is *before or on* the *Project Start Date* of the enrollment the Veteran was transferred to. Make sure to provide back-up documentation in the client file to ensure the project transfer was eligible according to the VA Program Office.

3.12 Destination

For all clients, select the residence type that best corresponds to the client's living situation at the time of project exit.

For projects where a client is not expected to relocate upon exit (Homelessness Prevention, Rapid Re-Housing, Transition in Place, or Supportive Services projects), record where the client is expected to stay after they complete or stop participation in project activities. This could likely be the same place they were staying during their project enrollment. For projects where a client is expected to relocate upon project exit, record where the client is expected to move immediately after leaving the project.

It is critical to follow up with clients who may stop showing up after receiving services. Without information about clients' living situation at exit, VA has no way to tell whether the intervention was successful. For this reason, any response that does not provide information about the client's living situation will be documented to report data quality issues and project performance.

If a client cannot be contacted after receiving services and it is not possible to identify a living situation for the client at the time of exit, 'No exit interview completed' should be selected. This will happen; data quality for this field is not evaluated against perfection but against national averages and other grantees dealing with the same circumstances and client population.

The selection of 'Other' for the Destination field generally reflects poor data quality. 'Other' should only be selected if the client's living situation at the time of project exit is so unusual that it is not possible to select one of the other options. If 'Other' is selected, an explanation must be provided;

if the explanation indicates a living situation that falls under one of the other options, grantees will be required to correct the data.

Below are some common destination situations and the matching HMIS Destination response that is appropriate for that situation. This list is not exhaustive of every situation; please refer to the HMIS Data Manual for all destinations.

Common Living Situations at Project Exit	HMIS Destination Response
In a unit paid for by a HUD-VASH voucher	Rental by client, with VASH housing subsidy
In a unit no longer subsidized by any subsidy	Rental by client, no ongoing housing subsidy
In a unit paid for by GPD Transition in Place	Rental by client with GPD TIP housing subsidy
In the same unit because they were prevented from becoming homeless with SSVF HP	Same "Destination" as "Prior Living Situation"
Not yet in a unit (still looking for housing even though a HUD-VASH voucher has been secured)	If the client must be exited even though they have not obtained a housing unit yet, then use the actual living situation on the date of Project Exit. The VA Program Office encourages a "warm hand-off" whenever possible so that a Veteran does not have to experience homelessness while awaiting housing assistance from another subsidy or project.

Make sure that you are accessing the most up-to-date destination list when selecting destination at exit. Changes to FY 2024 Data Standards included a change in 'Rental by client, with ongoing housing subsidy' such that the subsidy information is a dependent response and will not immediately be on the list of destinations, as it was in prior data standard iterations. When exiting a client to a rental unit with a housing subsidy, first select "Rental by client, with ongoing housing subsidy" and then select from a list of applicable subsidies. For a more detailed description of each destination and subsidy type, refer to the HMIS Data Manual.

3.15 Relationship to Head of Household

Identify one person to whom all other household members can be linked at the time of project start: that becomes the Head of Household. Every client must have a Relationship to Head of Household defined at project start. There are no exceptions, and the Repository will reject any upload that has missing information for this field.

For VA funded projects, the head of household must be the eligible Veteran. In households with two or more eligible Veterans, the program should follow CoC methodology to designate head of household. In multi-person households, the term "Head of Household" is not intended to mean the "leader" of the house. When a group of persons present together as a household or family unit, no matter the configuration or whether a minor is among the members, one of those persons must be designated as the Head of Household and the rest must have their relationship to the Head of Household recorded.

If the Head of Household leaves the project entirely while other household members remain, another member of the household currently participating in the project must be designated as the Head of Household (retroactively to the beginning of the household's enrollment). The other members' relationship to Head of Household should be edited to reflect each individual's relationship to the newly designated Head of Household (including the individual exiting the program) in the event that it differs from the relationship to whoever was previously identified as the Head of Household. Records of such changes are not necessary to retain in HMIS over the course of a project stay; the Head of Household is simply swapped out, backdating to the start of the household's enrollment.

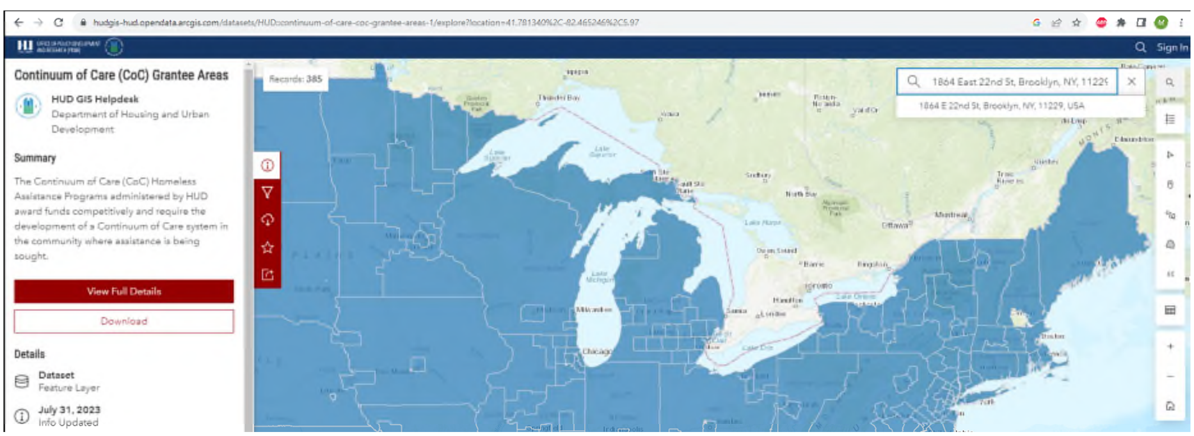
If the Head of Household leaves the household but not the project (i.e.: divorce or separation but both parties are eligible and will continue to receive housing assistance), two separate project enrollments must be created at the point of the separation (including accurate prior living situations for both), and both parties must be exited from the first enrollment record with accurate destinations at exit. The relationships to heads of household must be documented appropriately in the subsequent project enrollments post-separation.

3.16 Client Location

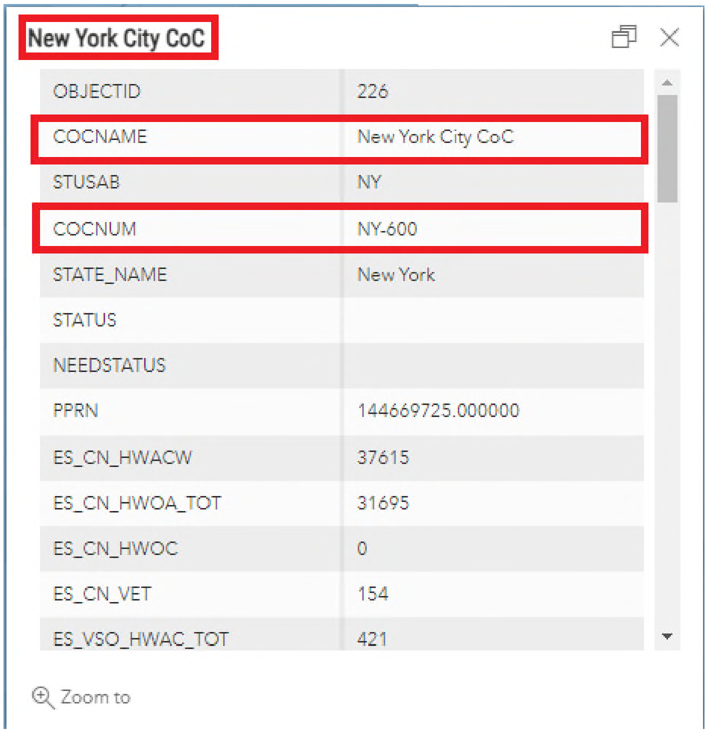
Identify the CoC in which the head of household is located at the time of project entry. The CoC Code should correspond to one of the CoCs in which the VA grantee is funded to provide services. CoC codes identify a geographic area and consist of a two-letter state abbreviation, a dash, and a 3-digit number assigned by HUD. For example, the CoC code for the New York City Continuum of Care is NY-600.

This is mandatory for every project entry; there are no exceptions. If you do not know the CoC code, HUD has an online mapping tool that you can use to find it. To do this:

1. Go to https://hudgis-hud.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/HUD::continuum-of-care-coc-grantee-areas-1/explore.
2. Enter the client's address (or an address close to where the client is located) in the box on the upper right and click return or the magnifying glass to search.



3. Next, click on the map next to the address dot shown. Then, the mapping tool will display the CoC's name and code.



Client Location is only required upon project start. If Client Location information was recorded incorrectly at project start, correct the existing record.

3.20 Housing Move-In Date

For clients with a Project Start Date in a Permanent Housing project type, including Rapid Re-Housing (RRH), record the date a client or household physically moves into a permanent living situation. This may be the same date as Project Start Date, or a date after Project Start Date if there are pre-housing services being provided.

A *Housing Move-In Date* must be recorded at the point the household moves into a permanent living situation, whether subsidized by the currently enrolled PH project, a different PH project or subsidy, or without any subsidy at all. This may or may not be the same date as *Project Exit Date* depending on the provision of additional services after the client is housed. Refer to *3.11 Project Exit Date* guidance for instructions on *Project Exit Date*.

If a client vacates the housing situation, and the project stops paying rental assistance, and they become literally homeless, staff should exit the client from the project with an accurate *Project Exit Date* and *Destination* and create a new *Project Start Date* in a second enrollment for the client on the <u>same or following</u> day. The project would continue working with the client until a new unit is found, at which point a new housing move-in date would be recorded on the second project record. This will ensure that the client's history of housing is preserved.

If the client moves directly from one unit into another unit with the same subsidy and no days of homelessness in between, it would not be necessary to exit and re-enter them because their housing move-in date would still accurately reflect the day they entered permanent housing according to that enrollment record.

Housing Move-in Date must be a date occurring on or between the *Project Start Date* and *Project Exit Date*. There can be only one *Housing Move-in Date* per Veteran Enrollment.

Please note that the VA tracks the recording of Housing Move-In Date in RRH projects very closely and expects that any RRH exit record with a permanent housing destination will have a Housing Move-In Date recorded as well. Therefore, the RRH provider should exit the client from RRH if the client is housed by HUD-VASH. They should include in their exit record in the RRH project in HMIS:

1. An accurate Housing Move-in Date that matches the HUD-VASH provider's Housing Move-in Date in the HUD-VASH project record (or in the case of missing or non-entered housing move-in date on the HUD-VASH side, the RRH provider should enter a date that is accurate to the best of their knowledge on the RRH record); and
2. An accurate permanent housing destination; and
3. An accurate Exit Date that *matches the housing move in date in the RRH project.*

For additional guidance about this data element, please see the HMIS Data Manual.

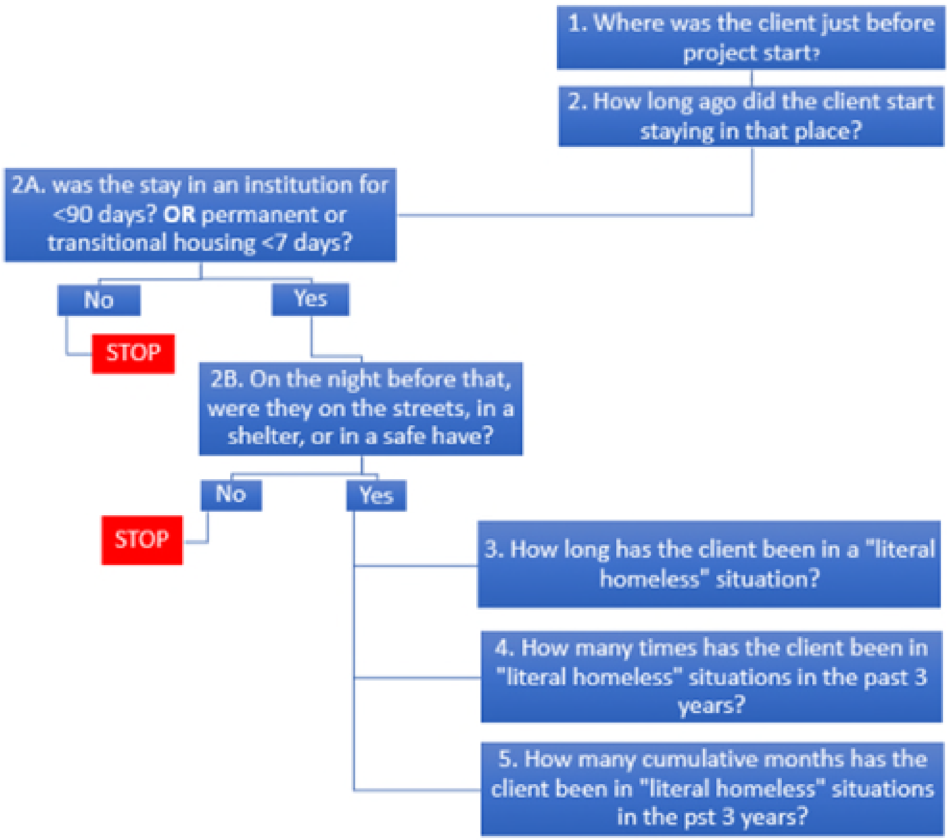
3.917 Prior Living Situation

3.917A is to be used for all persons entering a Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter or Safe Haven project and 3.917B is to be used for persons entering in all other HMIS project types. With this separation and clarification, the definition of chronic homelessness as identified in the final rule in the Federal Register published December 5, 2015 is able to be fully reported through an HMIS.

3.917 has been carefully constructed to apply the logic appropriate to the client's responses in order to avoid asking for information which is irrelevant or inappropriate for the client population being served in a particular situation. For example – eligibility for Homelessness Prevention requires that a client be in housing. By definition, a person in housing is not homeless, let alone chronically homeless, so the series of questions asked to determine chronic homeless status are not required. A flow chart to further describe this element is shown below. Make sure you are accessing the most up-to-date Prior Living Situation list when selecting Prior Living Situation. For additional guidance about this data element, please see the HMIS Data Manual.


3.917 For Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Safe Haven
Where was the client just before project start?
How long ago did the client start staying in that place?
How long has the client been in a 'literal homeless' situation?
How many times has the client been in 'literal homeless' situations in the past 3 years?
How many months have been spent on the street, in ES, or SH, in the past three years?

3.917 For All Other Project Types



4.02 Income and Sources

Record responses for all adults at all collection points: project start, quarterly assessment (an update to income quarterly that only applies to SSVF Shallow Subsidy recipients), and project exit. Note that 'Client doesn't know' and 'Client prefers not to answer' are not valid responses for VA funded participants. Eligibility for VA projects is based on income; participants must provide income information and grantees must enter it into HMIS.

Information about income may be recorded in HMIS consistent with the SSVF Income Eligibility Calculation worksheet. For example, the worksheet specifically excludes income earned by minors from household income calculations; accordingly, income earned by minors may be excluded from HMIS.

If Income from any Source is 'Yes,' there should be an amount greater than zero in the Total Monthly Income field and at least one income source should also be 'Yes.' For any source that is 'Yes', there must be an amount greater than zero recorded for the source. The total of all source amounts must equal Total Monthly Income.

The HMIS Data Standards and VA require that a new record of Income and Sources must be created at the time of collection. The questions must be asked and the responses must be recorded in HMIS. It is not acceptable to assume that nothing has changed since project entry.

SSVF requires quarterly certifications of income in HMIS for recipients of shallow subsidy. Note that the quarterly income assessment for Shallow Subsidy recipients does not include a requirement to document income; only to note in the client's HMIS record on every 3rd monthly case management session whether client's income has changed at all and, if so, record it as an "update" with an information date that matches the V2 and V3 services recorded at that time in HMIS.

4.03 Non-Cash Benefits

Record responses for all adults at all collection points: project start, annual assessment, and project exit.

The HMIS Data Standards and VA require that a new record of Non-Cash Benefits must be created at the time of collection. The questions must be asked and the responses must be recorded in HMIS. It is not acceptable to assume that nothing has changed since project entry.

4.04 Health Insurance

Record responses for all participants (including minors) at all collection points: project start, annual assessment, and project exit.

The HMIS Data Standards and VA require that a new record of Health Insurance must be created at the time of collection. The questions must be asked and the responses must be recorded in HMIS. It is not acceptable to assume that nothing has changed since project entry.

4.05 – 4.10 Disability Elements

Record whether clients have any disabling special needs. Indicate whether the client has each disability and whether the disability is expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration and substantially impair the client's ability to live independently. VA requires these elements are required for all of their funded projects, except for SSVF projects:

- 4.05 Physical Disability
- 4.06 Developmental Disability
- 4.07 Chronic Health Condition
- 4.08 HIV/AIDS
- 4.09 Mental Health Disorder
- 4.10 Substance Use Disorder

4.11 Domestic Violence

Record whether adults served are survivors of domestic violence. This element is required for all VA-funded projects.

For specific questions about participation in HMIS for providers who serve survivors of domestic violence, please see the following HUD Exchange website: https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/6305/hmis-comparable-database-manual/

4.19 Coordinated Entry Assessment

This optional data element is intended to standardize data collection on core components of Coordinated Entry like access, assessment, referral, and prioritization. For additional guidance about this data element, please see the HMIS Data Manual.

4.20 Coordinated Entry Event

This optional data element is intended to standardize data collection on core components of Coordinated Entry like access, assessment, referral, and prioritization. For additional guidance about this data element, please see the HMIS Data Manual.

V1 Veteran's Information

Record Veteran's Information for all Veterans served. This element is required for all VA-funded projects.

Veteran's Information includes:

Year Entered Military Service and **Year Separated from Military Service**

Record the Year Entered and Year Separated for the Veteran's latest period of service or the period of service with the most favorable discharge status for eligibility purposes.

12. RECORD OF SERVICE	Year(s)	Month(s)	Day(s)
a. Date Entered AD This Period	1987	NOV	03
b. Separation Date This Period	1993	NOV	02
c. Net Active Service This Period	06	00	00
d. Total Prior Active Service	00	00	00

These can be found in Block 12 of the DD214 (as shown above) or from SQUARES 2.0 (as shown below).

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	SSN	GENDER	VETERAN ELIGIBILITY STATUS	CHARACTER OF DISCHARGE	DISCHARGE YEAR
				M	1-VHA Eligible	Honorable	1992

Description	What it means for SSVF/GPD	What it means for VA health care/ HUD-VASH
1-VHA Eligible: Eligible for SSVF/GPD and VA health care.	Eligible	Eligible

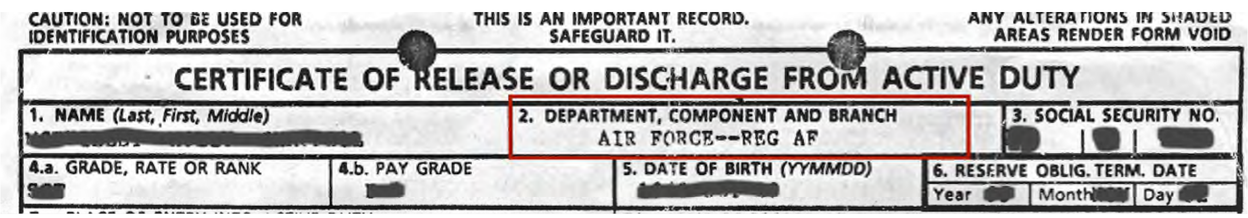
Theater of Operations

Identify whether or not the Veteran served in the theater 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. A response option for *Space Force* was added for FY 2024 HMIS Data Standards.

This can be found in Block 2 of the DD214.



CAUTION: NOT TO BE USED FOR IDENTIFICATION PURPOSES | THIS IS AN IMPORTANT RECORD. SAFEGUARD IT. | ANY ALTERATIONS IN SHADED AREAS RENDER FORM VOID

CERTIFICATE OF RELEASE OR DISCHARGE FROM ACTIVE DUTY

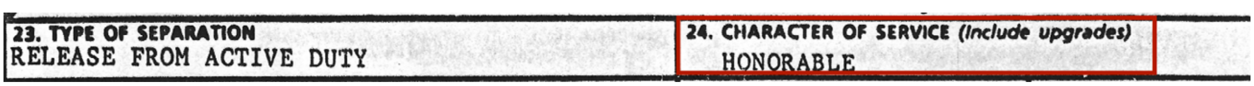
1. NAME (*Last, First, Middle*)	2. DEPARTMENT, COMPONENT AND BRANCH	3. SOCIAL SECURITY NO.
[redacted]	AIR FORCE--REG AF	[redacted]

4.a. GRADE, RATE OR RANK	4.b. PAY GRADE	5. DATE OF BIRTH (*YYMMDD*)	6. RESERVE OBLIG. TERM. DATE
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	Year [redacted] Month [redacted] Day [redacted]

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.



23. TYPE OF SEPARATION	24. CHARACTER OF SERVICE (*Include upgrades*)
RELEASE FROM ACTIVE DUTY	HONORABLE

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 they 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.

8.a. LAST DUTY ASSIGNMENT AND MAJOR COMMAND
SSC GREAT LAKES, IL

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.

14. MILITARY EDUCATION *(Course title, number of weeks, and month and year completed)*
NONE. X X X X X X X X X X X X X

14. MILITARY EDUCATION *(Course title, number of weeks, and month and year completed)* Filed:04/13/1995 3:02:57 P
BASIC MILITARY TRAINING SCHOOL, 6 WKS, NOV 87. APPRENTICE MIDDLE EAST CRYPTO LINGUIST SPECIALIST, 17 WKS, APR 89.

If completed training is listed, the applicant is more likely to be a veteran.

V2 Services Provided – SSVF

Record each service on the date it is provided. For example, if you meet with a participant 5 times during the course of enrollment to provide case management, there should be a record for each date. Another example is when a family has a Rapid Resolution conversation that results in the family accessing Returning Home services. Both a 'Rapid Resolution' service and a 'Returning Home' service would be recorded for the family. A third example would be providing 'Shallow Subsidy' services to participants during the provision of Shallow Subsidy Rent Assistance, (e.g. monthly Shallow Subsidy case management meetings for those receiving Shallow Subsidy Rent Assistance); there should be a record of "Extended Shallow Subsidy" under V2 for every month there is a V3 record for "Extended Shallow Subsidy – Rent Assistance."

Services should be attached only to the head of household's record. Do not create duplicate records of a single service for each household member.

Below are common services provided by VA grantees and may help a grantee identify what option to choose in HMIS for FY 2024 data collection:

Type of Service Provided	HMIS Data Collection Instruction for "V2"
VA Health, Including Mental Health, referral	Response 3: "Assistance obtaining VA Benefits" Dependent Response 4: "Health care services"
Community Health, including Mental Health, referral	Response 4: "Assistance obtaining/coordinating other public benefits" Dependent Response 1: "Health care services"
Shallow Subsidy (case management and other non-financial assistance)	Response 7: "Shallow Subsidy"
Landlord or Tenant Incentives	No longer required for V2
Legal Services (paid for by community partners)	Response 4: "Assistance obtaining/coordinating other public benefits"

	Dependent Responses 7-11 “Legal Services…”
Legal Services (paid for by VA funding)	Response 5: “Direct provision of other public benefits” Dependent Responses 5-9 “Legal Services…”

This element is required for SSVF RRH & HP projects and is optional for other VA projects.

Data Quality: On a monthly basis, grantees should review “Table 8: Services” of the SSVF Monthly Report for accuracy in the count of services provided per client. For planning and reporting purposes, it is critical for grantees to collect and report services data via HMIS data entry on a timely basis.

V3 Financial Assistance – SSVF

Record each instance of financial assistance. There should be a separate record of financial assistance for each check that is cut. If a check is returned or not cashed, delete the record in HMIS.

Enter financial assistance only under the head of household’s record. Do not create duplicate records of a single instance of financial assistance for each household member; after a household is discharged, it should be possible to determine, based on HMIS data, how much financial assistance the household received.

V3 Financial Assistance should be recorded completely and accurately in HMIS and uploaded to the VA Repository.

For FY 24, grantees should make sure to include the following service tracking in HMIS:

Type of Financial Assistance Provided	Start Date	End Date	HMIS V3 Response
Non-Shallow Subsidy and other Regular HP or RRH Rental Assistance	First date of occupancy in unit covered by check amount	Last date of occupancy in unit covered by check amount	Rental assistance
Utility fee or utility arrears	Date utility fee or arrears check is cut	Same date as start date (date check is cut)	Utility fee payment assistance
Security deposit	Date security deposit check is cut	Same date as start date (date check is cut)	Security deposit
Utility deposit	Date utility deposit check is cut	Same date as start date (date check is cut)	Utility deposit
Moving costs	Date moving costs check is cut	Same date as start date (date check is cut)	Moving costs
Transportation services: token or voucher	Date transportation token or transportation voucher is provided	Same date as start date (date service is provided)	Transportation services: tokens/vouchers

Type of Financial Assistance Provided	Start Date	End Date	HMIS V3 Response
Transportation services: vehicle repair or vehicle maintenance	Date vehicle repair or maintenance check is cut	Same date as start date (date check is cut)	Transportation services: vehicle repair/maintenance
Child care	First date of child care service covered by check amount	Last date of child care service covered by check amount	Child care
General housing stability assistance (NOT Tenant Incentive)	Date of general housing stability assistance (NOT Tenant Incentive)	Same date as start date (date check is cut)	General housing stability assistance
Emergency housing assistance (hotel/motel)	First date of occupancy in hotel/motel covered by check amount	Last date of occupancy in hotel/motel covered by check amount	Emergency housing assistance
Shallow subsidy HP or RRH rental assistance	First date of occupancy in unit covered by check amount	Last date of occupancy in unit covered by check amount	Shallow subsidy financial assistance
Food assistance	Date food assistance is provided	Same date as start date (date assistance is provided)	Food assistance
Landlord incentive	Date landlord incentive is provided	Same date as start date (date landlord assistance is provided)	Landlord incentive
Tenant incentive	Date tenant incentive is provided	Same date as start date (date tenant assistance is provided)	Tenant incentive

This element is required for SSVF RRH & HP projects.

Data Quality: On a monthly basis, grantees should review “Tables 6-7: Temporary Financial Assistance” of the SSVF Monthly Report for accuracy in the amount of TFA provided per client and household. For planning and reporting purposes, it is critical for grantees to collect and report TFA data via HMIS data entry on a timely basis.

V4 Percent of AMI (SSVF Eligibility)

Record the household income as a percentage of Area Median Income (AMI). Select a category based on the SSVF Income Eligibility Calculation. Please note that although ‘81% or greater’ is a response category defined in the HMIS Data Standards, households with income 81% or greater than the Area Median Income are ineligible for SSVF. Responses of ‘81% or greater’ will negatively impact data quality.

This element is required for SSVF RRH & HP projects.

V6 VAMC Station Number

Enter the VA Medical Center (VAMC) Station Number that corresponds to the grantee's service location. The service number requires no input from the client. In situations where providers are serving more than one VAMC in their catchment area, grantees should select the VAMC in the location where the services will be provided from. The list of VAMC Station Numbers can be found on the HMIS CSV Specifications document located on the Homelessness Data Exchange.

This element is required for SSVF RRH & HP, all GPD, and all HCHV projects.

V7 HP Targeting Criteria

Enter the results of SSVF Homelessness Prevention Stage 2 Targeting Criteria Screening as of the date of project entry for all heads of households.

This element is required for SSVF funded Homelessness Prevention projects only. It is not required for any other VA funded project types.

There were minor changes to this data element for FY 2024. There are redundancies between this data element and other data collection (including, 3.8 Disabling Condition, 4.2 Income and Sources, V1 Veteran's Information, V4 Percent of AMI), and data related to household composition. Consistency in responses for this data element and others will be used in evaluation of SSVF data quality.

The HMIS Data Manual provides full descriptions of each criterion and their selections. The VA has also published a training resource on the SSVF VA website here: https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_Homeless_Prevention_Screening_Form.pdf

P4 Connection with SOAR

The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and *Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR)* Initiative is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to help enroll eligible adults who are either homeless or at risk of homelessness into SSI and SSDI. To qualify, enrollees must have a mental illness or a co-occurring substance use disorder. A reliable and sizable income source, such as SSI or SSDI benefits, often makes the difference in obtaining or retaining housing, rather than becoming or staying homeless.

Record for all adults in the household any connection to a SOAR program. Update the connection status anytime between entry, annual assessment, and exit.

This element is required for SSVF RRH & HP projects. It is optional for GPD projects.

R4 Last Grade Completed

Enter the last grade completed by the head of household, all adults and any unaccompanied youth.

This element is required for SSVF RRH & HP projects.

R6 Employment Status

Enter the employment status of the head of household and all adults, including type of employment for those employed and reason not employed for those that aren't. Record the status once at Project Start and once at Project Exit.

This element is required for SSVF RRH & HP projects and for GPD projects.

Data Quality and Completeness Policy

VA grantees must attempt to collect every applicable data element for every person served; grantees are required to enter data into HMIS for every person served. National-level counts of participants and tracking of outcomes are based on HMIS data. Only clients for whom data is entered into HMIS and successfully uploaded to the Repository can be counted by VA as having been served by VA-funded grantees in the GPD, HCHV and SSVF programs.

Some data elements in HMIS include options for 'Client doesn't know' and 'Client prefers not to answer.' In some cases, these responses are unacceptable for VA clients.

Mandatory Data Collection

All of the data elements listed in the HMIS Data Collection Instruction section are mandatory; all grantees are required to collect them, participants are required to provide responses, and the data must be entered into HMIS.

The data fields listed immediately below are required to determine eligibility for VA funded projects and/or do not require input from clients. There is zero tolerance for missing data in these fields:

- Social Security Number for Veterans
- Date of Birth for Veterans
- Relationship to Head of Household (no/multiple heads of household
- VAMC Station Code
- Client Location – CoC Code
- Income as a Percent of AMI
- Housing Move-In Date (RRH)

Issues identified on the data quality report must be corrected in HMIS and data must be re-uploaded to the Repository.

Social Security Numbers (SSN)

For Veterans, SSN is relevant to eligibility. Any Veteran applying for services from VA funded program must provide an SSN in order to receive services and grantees must enter the complete SSN into HMIS. A Veteran who declines to provide an SSN is not eligible for VA funded assistance.

Grantees must also ask for an SSN for all non-Veteran household members; however, non-Veterans are legally entitled to decline to provide an SSN. When that happens, it must be accurately reflected in HMIS data by selecting 'Client prefers not to answer' in the SSN Data Quality field. Regardless of the reason, partial, missing, or invalid SSNs will always have a negative impact on data quality.

If there is already a record in HMIS for the client and the SSN is incorrect or incomplete, correct it.

HMIS Data Collection for Participants with History of Domestic Violence

Only programs whose primary mission is to serve victims of domestic violence are prohibited by Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) from entering client data into HMIS. All other grantees are required to collect and enter data for 100% of participants into HMIS. For more information on VAWA and HMIS, please visit the HUD Exchange.

Grantees who perceive this requirement to be in conflict with state law, local law, or local HMIS policy must contact regional coordinators with documentation of the specific law and/or policy. VA will review and, when possible, take additional action to facilitate the entry of this data into HMIS. If there is any doubt about a conflict, grantees should contact regional coordinators immediately rather than waiting until a participant with a history of domestic violence requests assistance.

HMIS Duplicate Enrollments

Grantees are expected to review their HMIS records and client files for evidence of client duplication, investigate the duplication, and resolve the issue (if needed). If a client has received financial assistance, the grantee must determine if total amounts have exceeded the limitations stated in the NOFA/Final Rule.

Data Security Policy

It is the responsibility of the grantee to take precautions to protect client information for all persons served; this applies to both hard copies and electronic data. Information in HMIS tends to be more secure than information in paper files. There are basic information security practices that grantees should follow to keep all personally identifying information secure:

1. Protect any computer that stores or accesses identifying information about any client – which includes accessing HMIS or data exported from HMIS for upload to the Repository – with a username and password.
2. Do not share the username and password for your computer or your HMIS account with anyone, and do not keep them written down in a place where anyone else could find them.
3. Log out or lock your computer when you are not at your desk.
4. The only VA-approved method of transmitting exported HMIS data for clients is by upload to the Repository; exported files may not be emailed and client Personal Protected Information (PPI) or Personally Identifying Information (PII) should never be emailed.

Grantees should coordinate with the HMIS Lead to ensure that they are aware of and compliant with all security and privacy policies and procedures established by the HMIS implementation(s) in which they operate.

Additional Security Measures for Sensitive Data

While data in HMIS is typically highly secure, there are some very rare circumstances in which it may be vulnerable. These circumstances include instances in which a participant who has been a victim of domestic violence has an abuser who either has access to HMIS data or is a proficient hacker.

Grantees who have reason to believe that information pertaining to a particular participant or household is especially vulnerable in HMIS must contact their regional coordinator, who will help to develop a plan to enter data without compromising the participant's safety. It may be appropriate to delay data entry in whole or in part until after the participant has been discharged.

In addition to data elements required by VA, some HMIS applications include data collection that may provide information about a participant's location, employers, etc. Where there is reason to believe that an abuser may have access to HMIS data, none of that additional information should be entered into HMIS.

HMIS Privacy & Security Requirements

Grantees are required to maintain confidentiality of records kept on participants. In addition, HUD has established standards for the privacy and security of personal information collected in an HMIS. The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Data and Technical Standards Final Notice, published in the Federal Register on July 30, 2004, provides baseline standards and guidance for privacy and security. While the HMIS Data Standards have been revised, the Technical Standards portion of the standard governing privacy and security remains in effect.

These standards seek to protect the confidentiality of personal information while allowing for reasonable, responsible, and limited uses and disclosures of data. The standards are based on principles of fair information practices and were developed after careful review of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

The privacy standards apply to all agencies, projects and individuals that record, use or process protected personal information for an HMIS. This includes employees, volunteers, affiliates, contractors and associates, regardless of funding source.

Baseline or minimum standards require that Continuum of Care (CoC), HMIS, service providers and individual end users:

- Must comply with other federal, state, and local confidentiality laws
- Must comply with limits to data collection (relevant, appropriate, lawful, specified in the privacy notice)
- Must have a written privacy policy, which must be posted on their website specifying mandatory uses and disclosures, additional uses and disclosures, and optional uses and disclosures
- Must post a sign at each intake desk or comparable location with general reasons for collection and reference to privacy policy

The CoC may also establish additional privacy protections through the privacy policy. Once approved by the CoC, these additional protections require compliance at the same level as HUD's baseline standards.

The standard also establishes a common set of baseline security requirements for all HMIS implementations. While the HMIS staff manages most security requirements, the grantee and individual end users are critical in maintaining a secure HMIS environment by:

- Safeguarding passwords
- Maintaining local virus protection and firewalls

- Limiting physical access to systems with access to HMIS data
- Securing paper or other hard copy containing personal protected information generated for or by the HMIS, such as client intake forms, signed consent forms or reports

The CoC may adopt additional security protections that must be followed by all HMIS users.

Agencies must require each member of its staff (including employees, volunteers, affiliates, contractors and associates) to sign (annually or otherwise) a confidentiality agreement that acknowledges receipt of a copy of the privacy notice and that pledges to comply with the privacy notice.

Local HMIS privacy and security requirements are a combination of HUD HMIS baseline requirements, additional protections established by the CoC in the privacy notice, and state and local privacy laws. Appropriate privacy and security training should be obtained from HMIS staff prior to accessing the HMIS.

2004 HMIS Data and Technical Standards are available at:

https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2004HUDDataandTechnicalStandards.pdf

Sending Client Personally Identifiable Information (PII) Over Email

Under no circumstances should client PII (such as names, social security numbers, dates of birth) be sent to anyone else over unencrypted email. This includes sending information internally or to the SSVF HMIS TA Team. For additional context on this policy, see the Data Security Policy.

If your organization does need SSVF HMIS TA Team troubleshooting with client-level data issues, then request a screen sharing session at ssvfhmis@abtassoc.com. Be sure to include your grantee ID in the subject line.

SSVF FY 2024 Supplemental NOFA Awards: Recording Landlord and Tenant Incentive Payments in HMIS

For both Landlord Incentive Payments and Tenant Incentive Payments under the FY 2024 Supplemental Awards, HMIS data entry is required. Below are descriptions of these payment types and their data entry instructions.

Landlord Incentive Payments: SSVF Grantees funded under FY 2024 Supplemental Awards are allowed to provide up to two months' worth of rent as a direct incentive to landlords or housing owners within the VA Catchment area of those funded geographies. These incentives should be used to help overcome housing barriers of individual Veteran households and used to mitigate risk and fears amongst housing owners if Veterans otherwise would have been screened out or their housing units. Landlord incentives are not security deposits and not bound by security deposit requirements. Landlord incentives may only be used for new leases that are at least 12 months in duration, and where such an incentive would make an appreciable difference in the grantees ability to quickly connect the Veteran to permanent housing.

Tenant Incentive Payments: SSVF Grantees funded under the FY2022 Supplemental Awards are allowed to provide up to $1,000 in Tenant Incentive purchases for Veteran entering new housing. These incentives are separate from, and more flexible than, traditional GHSA assistance in order to engage and support housing stability. Tenant incentives can be used to purchase household and comfort items in behalf of Veterans at the beginning of tenancy with the goal of ensuring Veterans have the basic comforts one would expect in a permanent housing unit. Veterans choose the items they wish to receive up to $1,000 and the SSVF Grantee purchase those items and ensures the Veteran receives the items. Some examples of eligible purchases include but are not limited to furniture, housewares, televisions, tablet computers, bicycles, food, recreational items, air conditioners, etc. Ineligible items include but may not be limited to art/antiques, jewelry, collections, weapons or other items prohibited by local, state or federal law.

Incentive Data entry Instructions:

- **V3 -- Financial Assistance – SSVF**
    - Enter the **Start Date of Financial Assistance** (the date the incentive is provided)
    - Enter the **End Date of Financial Assistance** (the date the incentive is provided – matches “Start Date of Financial Assistance”)
    - Enter the **Financial Assistance amount**
    - If the amount is a…
        - **Landlord Incentive:** Select “**Landlord Incentive**”
        - **Tenant incentive:** Select “**Tenant Incentive**”

V. Reporting

Monthly Repository Uploads

Grantees are required to enter data on all participants into the HMIS project associated with the CoC geography where the head of household is physically located at the time of entry. The only exception to this is for grantees who are victim service providers as defined by the Violence Against Women Act. Client data from separate HMIS projects will be aggregated within the Repository to create a consolidated accounting of grant activity.

During the first three business days of every month, grantees are required to upload client-level data from the HMIS system into the secure HMIS Repository ("Repository") managed by VA. Each upload of data to the Repository will contain a complete data set reflecting program activity from the start of the federal fiscal year to the date of export. Every time a file is successfully uploaded, it replaces any and all data previously uploaded for that program dating to the start of the Federal Fiscal Year.

The preferred format for the upload of VA funded program data to the Repository is the HUD HMIS Comma-Separated Value (CSV) Format; a subset of the complete set of CSV files will be required. Each of the fields defined in the HUD HMIS CSV documentation must be present in the uploaded files, although not all of the fields must contain data.

Data exported from HMIS systems should be packaged in a ZIP file prior to upload to the Repository. For detailed specifications, please see the VA Repository Data Upload Criteria section of this document.

Upload Reports

There are four HMIS repository reports generated for grantees each month. Taken together, these reports aide grantee staff in submitting, amending, and understanding their HMIS data as submitted to VA. More specifically, these reports contain upload validation information, data quality information, and programmatic summary information that should be used for data quality and programmatic reviews.

The first three reports listed are made available to either Repository uploaders or all Repository users associated with given uploads during the monthly upload period. However, the last report listed (Monthly Report), is shared with associated users shortly after the monthly upload period ends.

Each time a file is uploaded to the Repository, it validates the file to ensure that all of the necessary columns are included. The results of this validation will appear on the Repository website immediately after submitting the data and will be emailed to the uploader at the time of the unsuccessful or successful upload.

a. Validation Results

If a Repository upload is unsuccessful, the Validation Report will identify all of the file errors that led to the upload's rejection. Data quality alerts may occur as well. See the file validation section of this report for more details on these issues.

If the uploaded data is successfully transmitted to the Repository, a message will appear at the bottom of the validation results confirming that the uploaded data was successfully transferred to the Repository database. See the File Validation section for more information about how to read the results.

b. Data Quality Summary

The purpose of the Data Quality Summary Report is to identify potential issues for review and to facilitate the correction of errors before the Repository closes. These reports are emailed out to all Repository users *with a successful upload* associated to the corresponding Repository program.

Individual fields should be above the 95% complete threshold for that data element unless there are valid documented reasons for issue. For some fields such as Veteran status and Veteran SSN, 100% scores are required. More detail is available in this report's guide (link below).

The Repository remains open from the second business day of the month through the seventh calendar day of the month to allow for uploads with corrected data or for late uploads. The data quality reports will continue to be emailed with each successful upload so that grantees can track data quality improvements.

- Data Quality Summary Report Documentation

c. Data Quality Details

The Data Quality Details report is emailed to the person who completed a successful upload to the Repository. This report corresponds to the Data Quality Summary report (described above) and provides HMIS identifiers for each data quality issue listed on the Data Quality Summary report.

d. Monthly Report

The Monthly report is emailed to all persons associated with a given upload slot that was successfully submitted to the Repository. It is the most SSVF useful report for developing a data-driven understanding of the scope, scale, and impact to date of each SSVF upload.

This report provides information about persons, veterans, and households served, demographics, TFA usage data, services counts and outcomes data; each report includes counts for each month and grant-to-date.

The reports are e-mailed once each month to all Repository users associated with each grant. It is usually sent out after the close of the Repository period.

- Monthly Report Guide

The VA Program Office will be reviewing data throughout each fiscal year to ensure timely, accurate, and complete data. Detailed technical information can be found in the "File Validation" section below.

VA Repository Data Upload Criteria

Each upload of VA data to the Repository must contain a complete data set for the current grant year up to the date that the data set is exported from the HMIS. This document identifies criteria that an uploaded data set must meet in order to be accepted by the Repository.

Data Upload Format

The HMIS CSV FY 2024 (most recent version) must be used beginning November 1, 2023 for all VA Repository uploads. CSV files must be packaged in a ZIP file and uploaded to the Repository by the second business day of each month.

Data Integration Criteria

Upon upload of a dataset, the Repository will extract the CSV files from the zip file and run a series of validation checks to determine whether or not the uploaded data is compliant with the HMIS CSV specifications and with the data quality requirements established by VA for grantees.

General

- Each of the required CSV files must be included in the upload and file names must be consistent with the HMIS CSV specifications. Uploads missing any required file will be rejected.
- Each file must contain a header row with field names for all fields defined for the file in the HMIS CSV specifications, regardless of whether or not the Repository requires data for the field. Uploads with missing fields, incorrect field names, or additional fields in required files will be rejected.
- The Repository will disregard fields that are greyed out in the tables below. Any data in those fields will not be validated, nor will it be written to the Repository database.
- Fields that are not greyed out in the tables below must be exported in a manner consistent with the HMIS CSV FY 2024 specifications (where data are present) or the upload will be rejected. Data types must be correct, fields with defined pick lists must include only valid values, and fields not specifically identified in the CSV specifications as null must have values.
- All data associated with any enrollment active in the current grant year must be included in every upload. This includes all enrollment data for participants who entered the project in the previous grant year and were still enrolled on October 1. All service and financial assistance records associated with those enrollments must be exported, including those dated prior to the export start date.
- No data marked as deleted in the exporting application may be included in an HMIS export for upload to the Repository. Uploads with non-null values in any DateDeleted field will be rejected.
- When an upload is rejected, the Repository will provide a specific reason (or reasons) for the rejection.

Data Quality

The Repository will evaluate the uploaded files for data quality.

When records are missing data in critical fields, an error message will be displayed identifying the file name, the field name, and the PersonalID associated with the record.

When the percentage of field values with missing/NULL, Client doesn't know (8), Client prefers not to answer (9), or Data not collected (99), the Repository will generate a data quality alert to notify the user that the data quality is below the expected threshold.

'Other' is almost always not the most accurate response when entering data. It should only be used if no other response is more accurate, which would occur very rarely. 'Other' is included in error counts for Residence Prior to Project Entry and Destination.

At the Rejection level, where data quality is excessively poor, or where missing data indicates that there is a potential defect in the export process, the entire uploaded dataset will be rejected by the Repository. In order to comply with the upload requirement, rejection level errors must be corrected in HMIS and the data set must be exported and uploaded again.

When a file is uploaded without any client data in it, it will not show any errors and will be successfully uploaded. It is up to the grantee to understand the amount of data contained in the file and confirm that all data required to be provided has been. A count of records shows at both the upload stage (count of rows in Client.csv file, including Header row) and the Summary Report stage (count of all client records), as pictured below:

Index 11: **Client.csv** [186 rows found in the file.]

: All clients : 185

Required HMIS CSV FY 2024 Files

The complete CSV standard includes a broader range of information than is required by the Repository. Only the following 12 CSV files are required by the Repository for a successful upload. Any additional files will be ignored.

1. Export.csv
2. Project.csv
3. Funder.csv
4. ProjectCoC.csv
5. Client.csv
6. Enrollment.csv
7. Exit.csv
8. IncomeBenefits.csv
9. Services.csv
10. EmploymentEducation.csv
11. Disabilities.csv
12. HealthandDV.csv

CSV File Details

Fields that are greyed out in the tables below are not required; the Repository does not validate or import data in fields that are not required.

Files and their associated fields are listed below, along with notes specific to Repository uploads.

Export.csv

This file provides basic information about the export, such as the date that it was generated and the date range that the export covers, along with an identifier (ExportID) for the export itself that must be present in each of the other files. This identifier helps to verify that each of the files was generated by the same export process.

It should always (and only) include two rows – the first row will be field names and the second row will be the values for those fields. There must be one and only one export record in Export.csv.

Name	Notes
ExportID	Unique identifier for the exported data set, repeated in all files.
SourceType	[not required]
SourceID	[not required]
SourceName	[not required]
SourceContactFirst	[not required]
SourceContactLast	[not required]
SourceContactPhone	[not required]
SourceContactExtension	[not required]
SourceContactEmail	[not required]
ExportDate	The date that the export was generated.
ExportStartDate	The start date of the current federal fiscal year for which you are reporting data should be used for the Export Start Date. If the date in this field is later than the Repository's recorded start date for the program, the upload will be rejected.
ExportEndDate	The date that the export was generated must be used for the Export End Date. If the date in this field does not match the ExportDate, the upload will be rejected.
SoftwareName	The name of the HMIS application that produced the export.
SoftwareVersion	(optional)
CSVVersion	The version number of the CSV Specification.
ExportPeriodType	Must be 3
ExportDirective	Must be 2
HashStatus	1,2,3,4
ImplementationID	A vendor-generated ID that is unique to every source database, regardless of the number of CoCs participating in the implementation.

Project.csv

Project.csv holds data about the project(s) selected for export as defined in HMIS. There should be one record for each project selected for export, even if there's no enrollment data for a selected project. There should be one (and only one) record in Project.csv for each ProjectID in Enrollment.csv

Name	Notes
ProjectID	Unique identifier; up to 32 characters.
OrganizationID	[not required]
ProjectName	Up to 200 characters.
ProjectCommonName	Up to 200 characters.
OperatingStartDate	[not required]
OperatingEndDate	[not required]
ContinuumProject	[not required]
ProjectType	Valid values are: SSVF: 12,13 GPD: 2,8,9,6 HCHV: 0,8 All others are ignored
HousingType	[not required]
RRHSubType	Values 1,2
Residential Affiliation	Required for ProjectType = 6 Required for ProjectType = 13 + RRHSubType = 1
TargetPopulation	[not required]
HOPWAMedAssistedLivingFac	[not required]
PITCount	[not required]
DateCreated	[not required]
DateUpdated	[not required]
UserID	[not required]
DateDeleted	[not required]
ExportID	Must match *ExportID* in Export.csv

Funder.csv

For each project in Project.csv, this file identifies the 2.6 Federal Funding Partner for the project. There must be at least one record in Funder.csv for each record in Project.csv where the *ProjectType* is 1,2,8,9,12 or 13.

Name	Notes
FunderID	Unique identifier; up to 32 characters
ProjectID	Must match a record in Project.csv
Funder	Valid values are: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52,53,54,55
OtherFunder	Required if value for Funder = 46
GrantID	For VA Projects the GrantID field should include the VA grant number.
StartDate	Start date of grant
EndDate	End date of grant; may be NULL
DateCreated	[not required]
DateUpdated	[not required]
UserID	[not required]
DateDeleted	[not required]
ExportID	Must match *ExportID* in Export.csv

ProjectCoC.csv

For each project in Project.csv, this file identifies the CoC(s) in which the project provides services. There must be at least one record in ProjectCoC.csv for each record in Project.csv where the *ProjectType* is 0,1,2,8,9,12, or 13 and RRH Subtype is NULL or 2.

Name	Notes
ProjectCoCID	Unique identifier; up to 32 characters
ProjectID	Must match a record in Project.csv
CoCCode	Two letters, a dash, and 3 numbers `^[a-zA-Z]{2}-[0-9]{3}$`
Geocode	[not required]
Address1	[not required]
Address2	[not required]
City	[not required]
State	[not required]
Zip	[not required]
GeographyType	[not required]
DateCreated	[not required]
DateUpdated	[not required]
UserID	[not required]
DateDeleted	[not required]
ExportID	Must match *ExportID* in Export.csv

Client.csv

This file holds data about clients – name, SSN, DOB, race, gender, and ethnicity, veteran status, and, for Veterans, information about their service, and their Personal ID. The Personal ID is unique to each client in an HMIS, and it is also used in Enrollment.csv and other data files to link enrollment data to a particular individual. Household members are considered clients and they all have records.

There should only be one record for each person, regardless of how many enrollments they have.

The fact that there is a record here doesn't necessarily mean that a client will be counted in reporting – there must also be a valid record for that person in Enrollment.csv.

<table>
<tr><th>Name</th><th>Reject</th><th>Notes</th></tr>
<tr><td>PersonalID</td><td>>0</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>FirstName</td><td>>5</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>MiddleName</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>LastName</td><td>>5</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>NameSuffix</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>NameDataQuality</td><td>>5</td><td>Check for: 2, 8, 9, 99, NULL</td></tr>
<tr><td>SSN</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>SSNDataQuality</td><td>>10</td><td>Check for: 2, 8, 9, 99, NULL</td></tr>
<tr><td>DOB</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>DOBDataQuality</td><td>>5</td><td>Check for: 2, 8, 9, 99, NULL</td></tr>
<tr><td>AmIndAKNative</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Asian</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>BlackAfAmerican</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>HispanicLatinaeo</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>MidEastNAfrican</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>NativeHIPacific</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>White</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>RaceNone</td><td>>10</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>AdditionalRace/Ethnicity</td><td></td><td>Up to 100 characters</td></tr>
<tr><td>Woman</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Man</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>NonBinary</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>CulturallySpecific</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Transgender</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Questioning</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>DifferentIdentity</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>GenderNone</td><td>>10</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>DifferentIdentityText</td><td></td><td>Up to 100 characters</td></tr>
<tr><td>VeteranStatus</td><td>>0</td><td>Check for: NULL</td></tr>
<tr><td>YearEnteredService</td><td>See notes</td><td>If applicable, the value entered must be between 1920 and the current year
^(19[2-8][0-9]|199[0-9]|20[01][0-9]|202[01])$</td></tr>
</table>

Name	Reject	Notes
YearSeparated	See notes	If applicable, the value entered must be between 1920 and the current year ^(19[2-8][0-9]|199[0-9]|20[01][0-9]|202[01])$
WorldWarII		
KoreanWar		
VietnamWar		
DesertStorm		
AfghanistanOEF		
IraqOIF		
IraqOND		
OtherTheater		
MilitaryBranch		
DischargeStatus		
DateCreated		
DateUpdated		
UserID		[not required]
DateDeleted		[not required]
ExportID		Must match *ExportID* in Export.csv

Enrollment.csv

Enrollment.csv is central to all reporting. It holds data about project entries and should have one record per person per project entry.

In addition to the entry date, it also has fields for which there is only one response per project enrollment – e.g., Relationship to Head of Household, Residence Prior to Project Entry, etc.

The Personal ID in this file links to the Personal ID in Client.csv. A person who has been enrolled multiple times should have only one record in Client.csv but would have multiple records in Enrollment.csv.

Every record in Enrollment.csv ***must have*** an Entry Date and Relationship to Head of Household.

Every household ***must have*** one (and only one) record where Relationship to Head of Household is 'Self' (1).

The count of records in Enrollment.csv is – when everything is as it should be – a duplicated count of clients, or an unduplicated count of project entries. If the number of rows in Enrollment is more than 10-15% higher than the number of rows in Client.csv, there may be a problem with the data.

The raw count doesn't take anything into account except the fact that a record is present, and the count of records in this file might be substantially different from the number in the reports.

Name	Reject	Notes
EnrollmentID	>0	
PersonalID	>0	
ProjectID		
EntryDate	>0	
HouseholdID	>0	
RelationshipToHoH	>0	
EnrollmentCoC		Must match a record in ProjectCoC.csv with the same ProjectID
LivingSituation		
RentalSubsidyType		Null unless LivingSituation = 435
LengthOfStay		
LOSUnderThreshold		
PreviousStreetESSH		
DateToStreetESSH		
TimesHomelessPastThreeYears		
MonthsHomelessPastThreeYears		
DisablingCondition	>0	Check for: NULL Should be '99' for any project entry where there is no response
DateOfEngagement		[not required]
MoveInDate		
DateOfPATHStatus		[not required]
ClientEnrolledInPATH		[not required]
ReasonNotEnrolled		[not required]
PercentAMI		

Name	Reject	Notes
ReferralSource		[not required]
CountOutreachReferralApproaches		[not required]
DateOfBCPStatus		[not required]
EligibleforRHY		[not required]
ReasonNoServices		[not required]
RunawayYouth		[not required]
SexualOrientation		[not required]
SexualOrientationOther		[not required]
FormerWardChildWelfare		[not required]
ChildWelfareYears		[not required]
ChildWelfareMonths		[not required]
FormerWardJuvenileJustice		[not required]
JuvenileJusticeYears		[not required]
JuvenileJusticeMonths		[not required]
UnemploymentFam		[not required]
MentalHealthDisorderFam		[not required]
PhysicalDisabilityFam		[not required]
AlcoholDrugUseDisorderFam		[not required]
InsufficientIncome		[not required]
IncarceratedParent		[not required]
VAMCStation		Should not be null when RelationshipToHoH = 1
TargetScreenReqd		
TimeToHousingLoss		
AnnualPercentAMI		
LiteralHomelessHistory		
ClientLeaseholder		
HOHLeaseholder		
SubsidyAtRisk		
EvictionHistory		
CriminalRecord		
IncarceratedAdult		
PrisonDischarge		
SexOffender		
DisabledHoH		
CurrentPregnant		
SingleParent		
DependentUnder6		
HH5Plus		
CoCPrioritized		
HPScreeningScore		Should not be null when RelationshipToHoH = 1 and ProjectType = 12
ThresholdScore		
TranslationNeeded		
PreferredLanguage		
DateCreated	>0	

Name	Reject	Notes
DateUpdated	>0	
UserID		
DateDeleted		
ExportID	>0	Must match *ExportID* in Export.csv

Exit.csv

This file includes information on client exits. There may be no more than one record in Exit.csv for any EnrollmentID.

Name	Reject	Notes
ExitID	>0	
EnrollmentID	>0	
PersonalID	>0	
ExitDate	>0	
Destination	>0	
DestinationSubsidyType		Null unless Destination = 435
OtherDestination		Null unless Destination = 17
HousingAssessment		[not required]
SubsidyInformation		
ProjectCompletionStatus		
EarlyExitReason		
ExchangeForSex		[not required]
ExchangeForSexPastThreeMonths		[not required]
CountOfExchangeForSex		[not required]
AskedOrForcedToExchangeForSex		[not required]
AskedOrForcedToExchangeForSexPastThreeMonths		[not required]
WorkplaceViolenceThreats		[not required]
WorkplacePromiseDifference		[not required]
CoercedToContinueWork		[not required]
LaborExploitPastThreeMonths		[not required]
CounselingReceived		[not required]
IndividualCounseling		[not required]
FamilyCounseling		[not required]
GroupCounseling		[not required]
SessionCountAtExit		[not required]
PostExitCounselingPlan		[not required]
SessionsInPlan		[not required]
DestinationSafeClient		[not required]
DestinationSafeWorker		[not required]
PosAdultConnections		[not required]
PosPeerConnections		[not required]
PosCommunityConnections		[not required]
AftercareDate		[not required]
AftercareProvided		[not required]
EmailSocialMedia		[not required]
Telephone		[not required]
InPersonIndividual		[not required]
InPersonGroup		[not required]

Name	Reject	Notes
CMExitReason		[not required]
DateCreated	>0	
DateUpdated	>0	
UserID		[not required]
DateDeleted		[not required]
ExportID	>0	Must match *ExportID* in Export.csv

IncomeBenefits.csv

This file holds information about specific sources of income, benefits, and health insurance. The records are linked to Enrollment.csv using the EnrollmentID.

Each client should have one record in IncomeBenefits at project entry and one record at project exit, so the total number of records should be equal or greater than the total number of records in Enrollment.csv PLUS the total number of records in Exit.csv. There may be additional records if any of the information is updated during enrollment.

Records for adults will include income, non-cash benefits, and health insurance. Records for children (clients who were under 18 at project entry) will include only health insurance information.

Name	Reject	Notes
IncomeBenefitsID		[not required]
EnrollmentID	>0	
PersonalID	>0	
InformationDate	>0	
IncomeFromAnySource	>5	Check for: 8,9,99
TotalMonthlyIncome		
Earned		
EarnedAmount		
Unemployment		
UnemploymentAmount		
SSI		
SSIAmount		
SSDI		
SSDIAmount		
VADisabilityService		
VADisabilityServiceAmount		
VADisabilityNonService		
VADisabilityNonServiceAmount		
PrivateDisability		
PrivateDisabilityAmount		
WorkersComp		
WorkersCompAmount		
TANF		
TANFAmount		
GA		
GAAmount		
SocSecRetirement		
SocSecRetirementAmount		
Pension		
PensionAmount		
ChildSupport		
ChildSupportAmount		
Alimony		

Name	Reject	Notes
AlimonyAmount		
OtherIncomeSource		
OtherIncomeAmount		
OtherIncomeSourceIdentify		
BenefitsFromAnySource		
SNAP		
WIC		
TANFChildCare		
TANFTransportation		
OtherTANF		
OtherBenefitsSource		
OtherBenefitsSourceIdentify		
InsuranceFromAnySource		
Medicaid		
NoMedicaidReason		[not required]
Medicare		
NoMedicareReason		[not required]
SCHIP		
NoSCHIPReason		[not required]
VHAServicesHA		
NoVHAServicesReasonHA		[not required]
EmployerProvided		
NoEmployerProvidedReason		[not required]
COBRA		
NoCOBRAReason		[not required]
PrivatePay		
NoPrivatePayReason		[not required]
StateHealthIns		
NoStateHealthInsReason		[not required]
IndianHealthServices		
NoIndianHealthServicesReason		[not required]
OtherInsurance		
OtherInsuranceIdentify		[not required]
ADAP		
NoADAPReason		[not required]
RyanWhiteMedDent		[not required]
NoRyanWhiteReason		[not required]
ConnectionWithSOAR		
DataCollectionStage	>0	
DateCreated	>0	
DateUpdated	>0	
UserID	>0	
DateDeleted		[not required]
ExportID	>0	Must match *ExportID* in Export.csv

EmploymentEducation.csv

This file holds information about education and employment, and there's a record for each enrollment.

Name	Reject	Notes
EmploymentEducationID	>0	[not required]
EnrollmentID	>0	
PersonalID	>0	
InformationDate	>0	
LastGradeCompleted		
SchoolStatus		
Employed		
EmploymentType		
NotEmployedReason		
DataCollectionStage	>0	
DateCreated	>0	
DateUpdated	>0	
UserID	>0	
DateDeleted		[not required]
ExportID	>0	Must match *ExportID* in Export.csv

Services.csv

This file holds information about specific services, and there's a record for each instance of service. Depending on the number of services provided, the number of records may be quite high relative to other files.

Name	Reject	Notes
ServicesID		[not required]
EnrollmentID	>0	
PersonalID	>0	
DateProvided	>0	
RecordType		Ignore records with a RecordType other than 144 or 152
TypeProvided	>0	
OtherTypeProvided		
MovingOnOtherType		[not required]
SubTypeProvided		
FAAmount		
FAStartDate		
FAEndDate		
ReferralOutcome		[not required]
DateCreated		
DateUpdated		
UserID		[not required]
DateDeleted		[not required]
ExportID	>0	Must match *ExportID* in Export.csv

HealthandDV.csv

This file holds information about health and DV specific issues, and there's a record for each enrollment.

Name	Reject	Notes
HealthandDVID		[not required]
EnrollmentID	>0	
PersonalID	>0	
InformationDate		
DomesticViolenceSurvivor		
WhenOccurred		
CurrentlyFleeing		
GeneralHealthStatus		
DentalHealthStatus		
MentalHealthStatus		
PregnancyStatus		[not required]
DueDate		
DataCollectionStage		
DateCreated		
DateUpdated		
UserID		[not required]
DateDeleted		[not required]
ExportID	>0	Must match *ExportID* in Export.csv

Disabilities.csv

This file holds information about disabilities, and there's a record for each enrollment.

Name	Reject	Notes
DisabilitiesID	>0	[not required]
EnrollmentID	>0	
PersonalID	>0	
InformationDate	>0	
DisabilityType	>0	Only values allowed: 5,6,7,8,9,10
DisabilityResponse	>0	Only values allowed: 0,1,2,3,8,9,99
IndefiniteandImpairs		
TCellCountAvailable		[not required]
TCellCount		[not required]
TCellSource		[not required]
ViralLoadAvailable		[not required]
ViralLoad		[not required]
ViralLoadSource		[not required]
AntiRetroviral		[not required]
DataCollectionStage		
DateCreated		
DateUpdated		
UserID		[not required]
DateDeleted		[not required]
ExportID	>0	Must match *ExportID* in Export.csv

Understanding Key VA-Specific HMIS Data Elements, FY 2024

V2 Service Provided - SSVF and V3 Financial Assistance - SSVF

Services.csv

All service and financial assistance data are exported in Services.csv, a file which is included in the zip file uploaded to the Repository.

There are a total of *18* columns in the Services.csv file. Some of the information in these columns can help you understand how a service record is connected to records in other files:

- **PersonalID** link a service to a client record in Client.csv
- **EnrollmentID** links the service to a record in Enrollment.csv

Other columns provide information about the service itself:

- **DateProvided** is the date that the service was provided, as it was entered into HMIS by a user.
- **RecordType** has number values that translate to very broad categories. There are only two values that are relevant for VA reporting:
  - 144 = SSVF Supportive Services
  - 152 = SSVF Financial Assistance
- **TypeProvided and SubTypeProvided** also has number values; they indicate the type of service or TFA provided along with the subtype if applicable. Lists of TypeProvided and SubTypeProvided (where applicable) values and their translations for Supportive Service *(RecordType =* 144) and Financial Assistance *(RecordType = 152)* are as follows:
  - 144 = SSVF Supportive Services
    - 1 – Outreach services
    - 2 – Case Management Services
    - 3 – Assistance obtaining VA benefits
      - 1 – VA vocational and rehabilitation counseling
      - 2 – Employment and training services
      - 3 – Educational assistance
      - 4 – Health care services
    - 4 – Assistance obtaining/coordinating other public benefits
      - 1 – Healthcare services
      - 2 – Daily living services
      - 3 – Personal financial planning services
      - 4 – Transportation services
      - 5 – Income support services
      - 6 – Fiduciary and representative payee services
      - 7 – Legal services – child support
      - 8 – Legal services – eviction prevention
      - 9 – Legal services – outstanding fines and penalties
      - 10 – Legal services – restore/acquire driver's license
      - 11 – Legal services – other

        - 12 – Child care
        - 13 - Housing counseling
    - 5 – Direct provision of other public benefits
        - 1 – Personal financial planning services
        - 2 – Transportation services
        - 3 – Income support services
        - 4 – Fiduciary and representative payee services
        - 5 – Legal services – child support
        - 6 – Legal services – eviction prevention
        - 7 – Legal services – outstanding fines and penalties
        - 8 – Legal services – restore/acquire driver's license
        - 9 – Legal services – other
        - 10 – Child care
        - 11 – Housing counseling
    - 6 – Other (non-TFA) supportive service approved by VA
    - 7 – Shallow Subsidy
    - 8 – Returning Home
    - 9 – Rapid Resolution
- *152 =* SSVF Financial Assistance
    - 1 - Rental assistance
    - 2 – Security deposit
    - 3 – Utility deposit
    - 4 – Utility fee payment assistance
    - 5 – Moving costs
    - 8 – Transportation services: tokens/vouchers
    - 9 – Transportation services: vehicle repair/maintenance
    - 10 – Child care
    - 11 – General housing stability assistance
    - 14 – Emergency housing assistance
    - 15 – Shallow Subsidy – Financial Assistance
    - 16 – Food assistance
    - 17 – Landlord Incentive
    - 18 – Tenant Incentive

- **OtherTypeProvided** is used for SSVF Supportive Services; when the service is 'Other (non-TFA) supportive service approved by VA' (6), a description of the service is required to be entered.
- **FAAmount** holds the amount of the Temporary Financial Assistance.
- **FAStartDate is required for VA3** (RecordType = '152') and helps VA calculate the amount per day of certain financial assistance
- **FAEndDate is required for VA3** (RecordType = '152') and helps VA calculate the amount per day of certain financial assistance

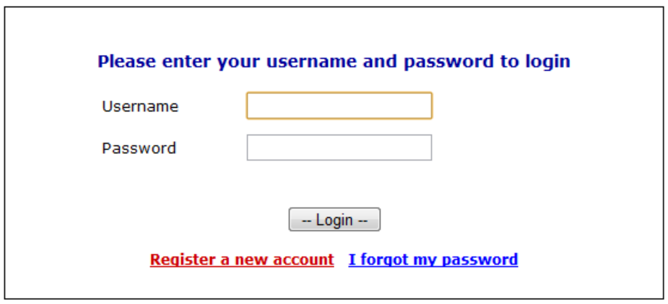
Repository User Guide

Accessing the Repository

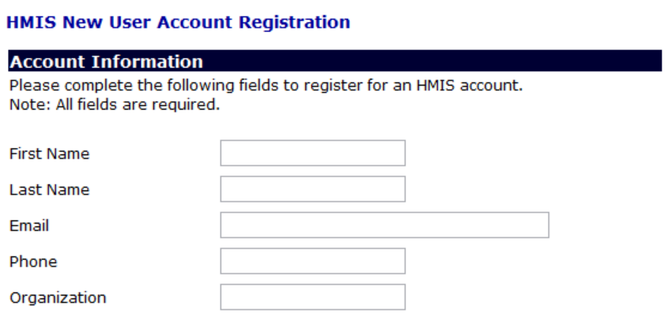
To access the Repository, go to https://www.hmisrepository.va.gov/ and click the 'Click here to log in' link.

Creating an Account

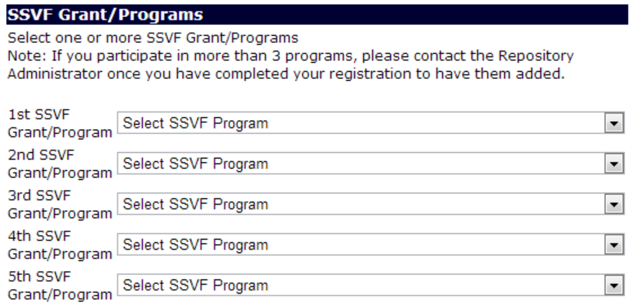
1. From the log in page, click on the 'Register a new account' link.



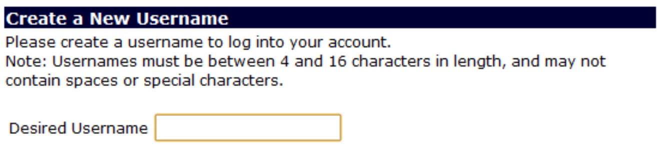
2. Enter your first name, last name, the email address the Repository should use to send your account confirmation, your work phone number, and the name of the organization that employs you. All of these fields are required. The phone number should include an area code.



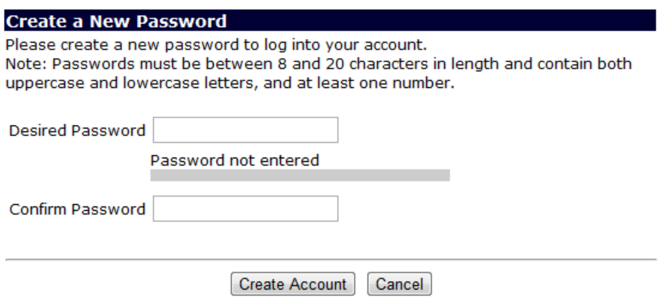
3. Select the name of the program(s) for which you will be uploading data. In order to create an account, you must select at least one program, and if you only select one program, it must be in the field labeled '1st VA Grant/Program.' If you will be uploading more than five data sets each month, click the "Show/Hide" button on the right of the screen to add up to eight programs.



4. Enter your desired username. Usernames must be between 4 and 16 characters in length and contain only letters and numbers – no spaces or special characters (such as @, $, or &, etc.). Each user must have a unique username, so if the name you choose is a duplicate of an existing username, you will be asked to choose a different one.



5. Create a password for your account. The password must be between 8 and 20 characters in length, contain at least one lowercase letter, at least one UPPERCASE letter, and at least one number. Once you have created your password, enter the same password a second time and click 'Create Account.'



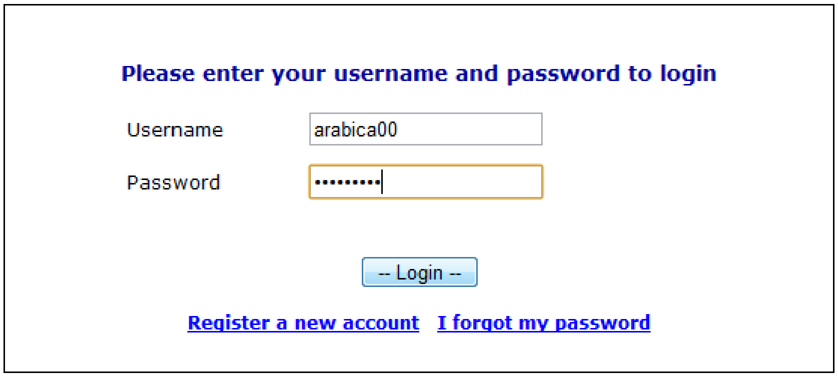
Within a few minutes, you should receive an email asking you to confirm your email address. If you do not receive an email, please contact ssvfhmis@abtassoc.com or GPD_HMIS@abtassoc.com.

After you have confirmed your email address, a Repository Administrator will authorize your account to log in. Email ssvfhmis@abtassoc.com or GPD_HMIS@abtassoc.com for additional assistance with Repository accounts.

Logging in to the Repository

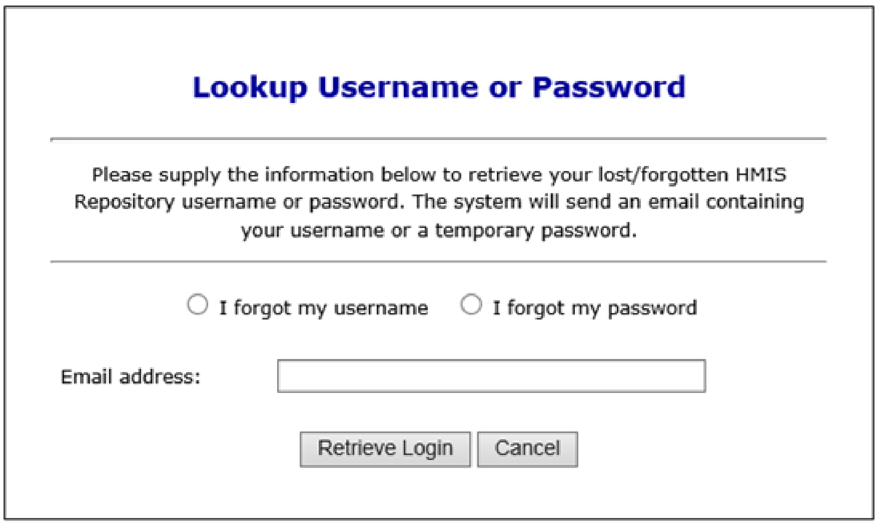
The Repository is open during the first three business days of each month, at which time you are free to log in as many times as necessary.

On the Repository login page, enter your username and password, and click 'Login'.



Forgotten Username or Password

If you have forgotten your username or your password, click the "I forgot my password" link on the login page.



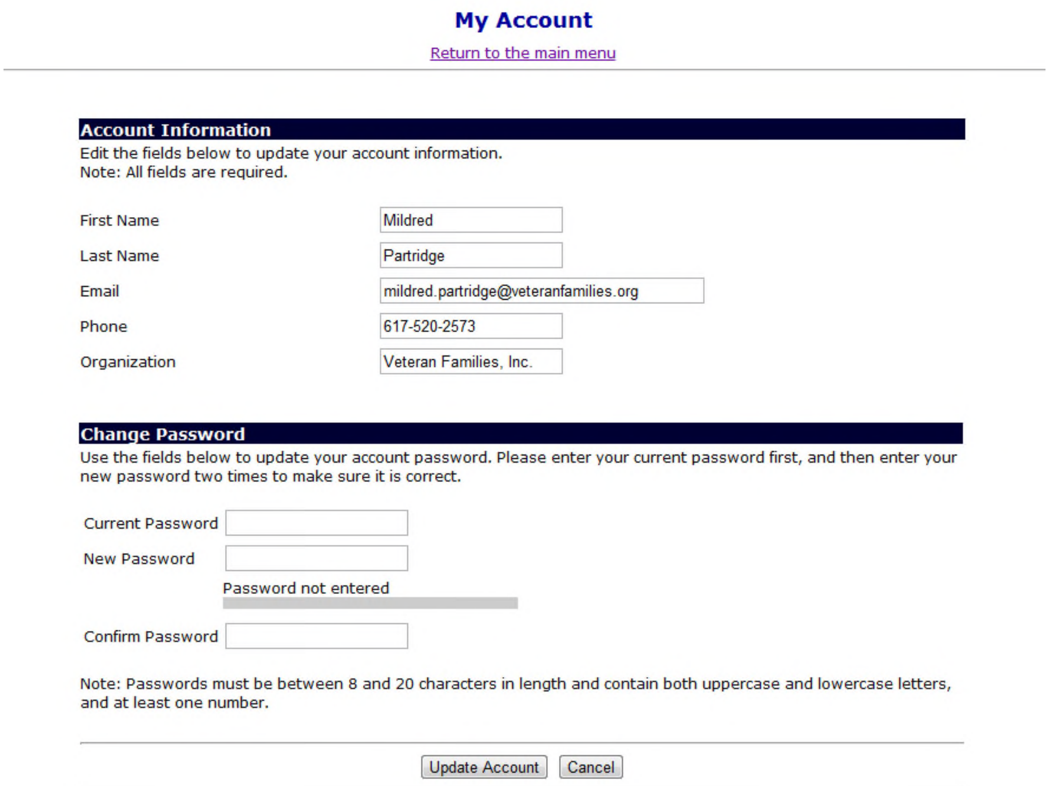
Specify whether you have forgotten your username or your password and enter your email address (the same one you used to register). You will receive an email with the information that you need to log in.

Repository User Account Information

Each Repository user will set-up her or his' own username and password. **Please do not ever share your username or password with anyone.** There is no charge for these accounts; your organization may have as many as you need to make sure that VA program data gets uploaded to the Repository on time every month.

You can update your name, email address, phone number, organization name, and password by clicking 'My Account' on the User Options menu. It is important that the Repository has a current email address so that we can contact you in the event that there is an issue with your data. It also allows you to retrieve your username if you forget it, and to automatically reset your own password if you forget that.

Please note that if you are leaving the VA program and someone else will be taking over the upload responsibilities, the new person should create her/his own account. It would not be appropriate for you to edit your account information to reflect the new user's name and contact information.



Once you have updated your information, click the 'Update Account' button to save it.

Generating an Export of HMIS Data

First, you will need to export your data from HMIS. The export should include all VA funded data entered into HMIS, regardless of date – the most current and complete picture of your program from the start date of the federal fiscal year up to the day you generate the export.

Only data related to VA funded programs should be included in the export.

When you are exporting data, if your HMIS asks you for a start date and an end date for the export:

- The start date should be the start date of the federal fiscal year in which you are reporting.
- The end date should be the date on which you are generating the export – today's date, whatever today is.

Handling More than One Export

Every time you successfully upload a file, it replaces any and all data previously uploaded for your program.

If your program is participating in more than one HMIS implementation or if producing a complete data set for your program requires more than one export for any reason, the Repository must be set up ahead of time with a separate upload program for each of the files that you are going to upload.

Contact ssvfhmis@abtassoc.com or GPD_HMIS@abtassoc.com to get set up for multiple uploads. Be sure to include your grantee ID in the subject line.

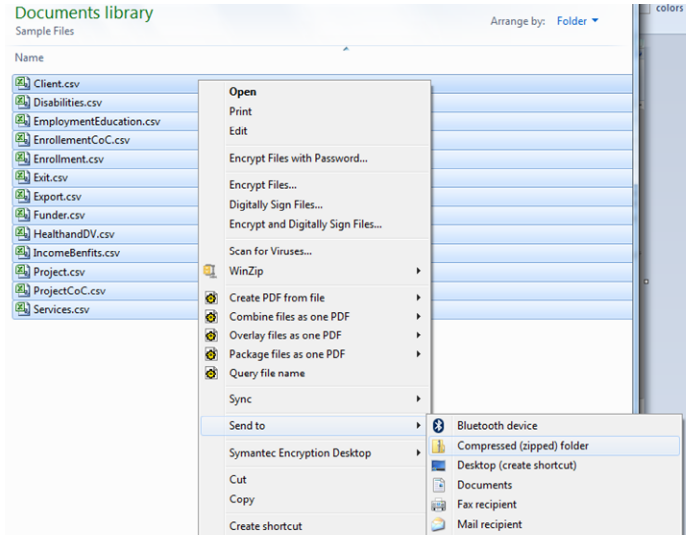
Preparing CSV Data for Upload

A CSV export should include, at a minimum, 12 files with the following names (this is the order in which they are uploaded to the Repository):

1. Disabilities.csv
2. ProjectCoC.csv
3. Services.csv
4. Project.csv
5. Client.csv
6. HealthandDV.csv
7. IncomeBenefits.csv
8. Exit.csv
9. Funder.csv
10. Export.csv
11. EmploymentEducation.csv
12. Enrollment.csv

The CSV files must be packaged in a ZIP or RAR file. Those compressed file formats decrease the amount of space required to store data, making the upload process faster. Some HMIS applications zip/rar the files as part of the export process. If your HMIS does not compress the files, then you will need to compress them prior to Repository uploading.

Both Windows and Mac operating systems (OS) have built-in functionality to create ZIP files. To use the built-in functionality, select all fourteen of the CSV files and right-click on them.



In Windows, click 'Send to' and then 'Compressed (zipped) folder' to create a ZIP file.

In Mac OS, click 'Compress 13 items' to create a ZIP file. In both Windows and Mac OS, the ZIP file will be created in the same folder as the CSV files.

When you zip your files, make sure to zip ONLY the CSV files. Do not zip up the folder that contains the files; if they are in a folder inside the ZIP file, the Repository will not be able to find them.

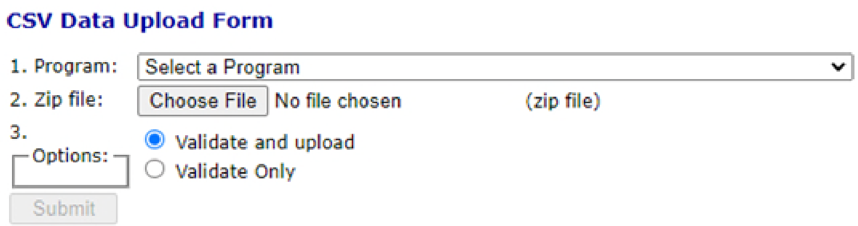
You can name the ZIP file anything you want – just make sure that the name includes the .zip extension and does not contain any special characters such as #, $, %, @, etc. Letters, numbers, dashes (-), and underscores (_) are the only characters you should use in the file name.

There are also several software applications that will create ZIP files, including 7-zip, WinZip, WinRAR, or MagicRAR. If you have one of these installed on your computer, you are welcome to use it to zip your files.

Uploading Data

From the list of User Options on the left-hand side of the page, click 'Upload Data.'

Next, enter the following information about your upload.



- **Program** – Select the name of the specific program for which you are uploading data.
- **Zip file** – Click 'Browse' to open a dialog box where you can select the .zip or .rar file from your network or hard drive.
- **Options** – There two options for the upload process:
  - **Validate and upload** – This is the default; it will validate your file and – if the file meets the data quality requirements – transmit the data to the Repository database.
  - **Validate only** – This option will validate your file but <u>will not</u> upload it. You can use this to check the upload's data quality, if you would like to review it before deciding whether to upload your file. If after validating your data, you would like to proceed with uploading it, click the "Upload Data" button at the bottom of the validation page.

The validate and upload option is a single step process, but it may take several minutes to complete; please wait for the Repository to display the results without clicking Back or closing your browser window.

The Repository will process your files and check them for data quality and to make sure that the files include all of the necessary columns. When it is done, the Repository will display a Validation Report. See the File Validation section for more information about how to read the results.

If the uploaded data is successfully transmitted to the Repository database, then you will see this message at the bottom of the validation report:

The upload was successful and the data has been accepted.

If you see this message, congratulations! Your upload was accepted into the HMIS Repository.

If you do not see this message, your upload was not successful, and you will need to fix any issues with your data and try again.

File Validation

In order for the Repository to process the data set, the export must be compliant with the HMIS CSV specifications. In order for VA to be able to use the data to report on program activity, the data quality must meet minimum thresholds.

The Repository will unzip your CSV files and analyze them.

There are several sections in the validation report.

Validation Errors

Validation errors prevent uploads from being accepted by the Repository. These errors identify instances where data quality for one or more fields does not meet acceptable levels. When missing data is a large enough problem to cause a validation error, then corrections must be made in order for the upload to be accepted by the Repository. Once your local HMIS system has been updated, its data must be exported and uploaded again.

Often, this report will identify row numbers within a specific CSV file (noted in brackets). The row number can be used to identify SSVF client or service records with file errors. For questions about file errors, contact your HMIS Administrator or ssvfhmis@abtassoc.com or GPD_HMIS@abtassoc.com.

Data Quality Alerts

Data quality alerts identify records that are missing data in critical fields. These issues may not prevent you from uploading your data, but they should be addressed with program staff. Often, this report will identify row numbers within a specific CSV file (noted in brackets). The row number can be used to identify client or service records with file errors. For questions about these issues, contact your HMIS Administrator or ssvfhmis@abtassoc.com or GPD_HMIS@abtassoc.com.

File Errors

If the export is not compliant with the CSV specifications, the data set will be rejected by the Repository, and information about the specific issue(s) will be provided.

If a data set is rejected because of the format of a field or the structure of the export, you might be able to fix it by correcting data in your HMIS, but it may be necessary for your vendor to make corrections. If your vendor has any questions, contact ssvfhmis@abtassoc.com or GPD_HMIS@abtassoc.com. Be sure to include your grantee ID in the subject line.

Reading the Validation Results

The validation results can tell you more than whether your data quality is acceptable – they can also help you to verify that all of the data that you intend to upload is present. See "Required HMIS CSV FY 2024 Files" section of this document for more information on each of the twelve CSV files.

How to Tell If an Upload Is Successful

For a successful upload, the Repository will display a message like this:

Step 5. Data Integration
Success! Uploaded data has been transferred to the Repository database.

If you do not see that message, your data has not been uploaded to the Repository. The error messages display the specific errors that are causing rejection. If technical assistance is needed to troubleshoot these errors, contact the HMIS TA Help Desk (ssvfhmis@abtassoc.com or GPD_HMIS@abtassoc.com) and 'cc' your Regional Coordinator or Grant Staff on the email. Do not send personally identifiable information such as such as social security number, date of birth, name, etc. by e–mail. The HMIS TA team can share screens to ensure that no data is transferred insecurely using email.

VI. Data Quality Management

What is Data Quality?

Data quality is a term that refers to the reliability and validity of client-level data collected in the HMIS. It is measured by the extent to which the client data in the system reflects actual information in the real world. With good data quality, the CoC can "tell the story" of the population experiencing homelessness and the federal funder can determine if the grantee or recipient of federal funding is performing as expected.

The quality of data is determined by assessing certain characteristics such as timeliness, completeness, and accuracy. In order to assess data quality, a community must first think about what data quality means and document this understanding in a data quality plan.

What is a Data Quality Plan?

A data quality plan is a set of policies and procedures designed to assure that all client level information entered into HMIS is complete, accurate and timely. The plan facilitates the ability of the CoC to achieve statistically valid and reliable data. It establishes data quality goals, the steps necessary to measure progress toward the goals, and the roles and responsibilities for ensuring the data in the HMIS is reliable and valid. In general, it is developed by the HMIS Lead Agency with input from community stakeholders and is formally adopted by the CoC. At a minimum, the plan should:

- Identify the responsibilities of all parties within the CoC that affect data quality.
- Establish specific data quality benchmarks for timeliness, completeness, and accuracy.
- Describe the procedures that the HMIS Lead Agency will take to implement the plan and monitor progress to meet data quality benchmarks.
- Establish a timeframe for implementing the plan to monitor the quality of data on a regular basis.

VA Program Data Quality

All projects participating in HMIS, including VA funded projects, are expected to understand and follow the CoC's data quality plan, which details baseline standards for all projects participating in the HMIS. SSVF, GPD and HCHV programs must also meet the additional data quality requirements established in their VA grant. These additional VA data quality requirements are discussed later in this section.

VA grantees are also responsible for all information entered into HMIS by subgrantees and should develop a plan to assure adequate data entry oversight. A successful upload to the VA Data Repository requires that grantees and subgrantees meet or exceed all data quality thresholds. The following information outlines the concepts of data quality and the recommended process for monitoring. VA providers should understand data quality and how it impacts both community planning and VA needs. They should actively seek to achieve the highest levels of quality possible.

In short, a data quality plan sets expectations for both the community and the end users to capture reliable and valid data on persons accessing the homeless assistance system.

Collecting data in the human service field can be challenging; clients presenting for services are often distraught, scared, or confused. It may be difficult to obtain accurate information from them, but case managers and others working with these clients need to understand the importance of obtaining accurate information from all clients they serve. Without good information, it is difficult to assess a client's needs and determine the appropriate level of services for each homeless individual or family.

A plan that sets data quality expectations will help case managers better understand the importance of working with their clients to gather timely, complete, and accurate data. For example, most homeless providers collect information on a client's military service history, or veteran status. Knowing whether a client has served in the military is an important piece of information; it helps case managers make appropriate referrals and alerts them to specific benefits the client may be eligible to receive – benefits that could help the client become permanently housed. If the case manager does not know the veteran's status of a client, a piece of their story is missing.

Each component of a data quality plan includes a benchmark – a quantitative measure used to assess reliability and validity of the data. A community may decide to set the benchmark for a missing (or null) value for a certain data element at 5%. This would mean that no more than 5% of all the client records in the system should be "missing" a response to a particular data element.

There are five components to a good Data Quality Standard: Timeliness, Completeness, Accuracy, Monitoring, and Incentives. Although these standards have already been determined by the local CoC, VA programs must comply with local standards. Therefore, VA programs should obtain and review the Standards and Compliance Plan for the local CoC.

Below is a brief overview of each Data Quality Standard component. For more information, a toolkit on how to develop a Data Quality Standard and Compliance Plan is available on HUD's Homeless Resource Exchange (https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HUDDataQualityToolkit.pdf).

Component 1: Timeliness

Entering data in a timely manner can reduce human error that occurs when too much time has elapsed between the data collection (or the service transaction) and the data entry. The individual doing the data entry may be relying on handwritten notes or their own recall of a case management session, a service transaction, or a program exit date; so, the sooner the data is entered, the better chance the data will be correct. Timely data entry also ensures that the data is accessible when it is needed, either proactively (e.g., monitoring purposes, increasing awareness, meeting funded requirements), or reactively (e.g., responding to requests for information, responding to inaccurate information).

The standard for entering HMIS data in a timely manner is set by specifying the number of hours or days by which data must be entered. By including timeliness benchmarks for all types of projects that enter or contribute data to the HMIS, such as Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Permanent Housing, Safe Haven, Outreach, Prevention, Rapid Re-housing, and any other programs in the CoC, local communities can ensure that data is available when needed, such as for the SSVF monthly export to the VA Registry.

Timeliness is critical for VA Grantees since data must be exported to the VA's VA Data Repository by the 2nd business day following the end of each month. This requirement often exceeds the general timeliness standards for the HMIS.

Component 2: Completeness

Partially complete or missing data (e.g., missing digit(s) in a SSN, missing the year of birth, missing information on disability or veteran status) can negatively affect the ability to provide comprehensive care to clients. Missing data could mean the client does not receive needed services – services that could help them become permanently housed and end their episode of homelessness. Expectations for completeness expectations include All Clients Entered and analysis of each of the HUD data elements. All Clients Entered is usually a manual process where regularly non-electronic records are compared to records in the HMIS to assess if all clients have been entered along with their associated service provision. For individual data elements, allowable percentages of null/missing data or levels of Unknown, Don't Know and Prefers not to answer responses is expressed as a maximum percentage. For example, a community may have determined that an allowable rate for non-VA programs of null/missing values for Veteran status is 0%, meaning that no null or missing values are allowed.

The CoC's goal is to collect 100% of all data elements. However, the CoC recognizes that this may not be possible in all cases.

Therefore, the CoC has very likely established an acceptable range of null/missing and unknown/don't know/prefers not to answer responses of between two and five percent, depending on the data element and the type of program entering data.

It is important to understand that standards for VA Grantees may exceed the CoC's existing completeness standards. For example, while responses of 'Don't Know' and 'Prefers not to answer' are acceptable responses for some data elements under the HMIS Data Standards, the **VA may require additional information to establish program eligibility** due to VA funding requirements**.**

Component 3: Accuracy

The purpose of accuracy is to ensure that the data in the CoC's HMIS is the best possible representation of reality as it relates to persons experiencing homelessness and the programs that serve them. Accuracy of data in an HMIS can be difficult to assess as it depends on the client's ability to provide the correct data and the intake worker's ability to document and enter the data accurately. Accuracy is best determined by comparing records in the HMIS to paper records, or the records of another provider whose information may be considered more accurate. For instance, a

Social Security Number that is in question may be compared to a paper case file or an SSI benefit application, where the data is perceived to be more accurate.

A primary way to ensure that data is understood, collected, and entered consistently across all programs in the HMIS is to provide regular training, refresher courses, and cheat sheets for collection and data entry. Additionally, consistency in intake forms, how well forms match data entry methods, wording of questions, etc., are all excellent practices for achieving the best possible accuracy of data. It is a good practice for VA grantees to review data capture procedures at the beginning of each Fiscal Year to ensure all required data is captured consistent with this VA Data Guide.

Component 4: Monitoring

VA programs will need to implement monitoring practices to ensure that staff tasked with data entry and subgrantees are complying with the CoC's HMIS data quality plan. Documenting the expectations for monitoring activities of the HMIS data and the methods that data quality is monitored will help prevent invalid data. VA Grantees are expected to meet data quality benchmarks such as complete temporary financial assistance records and Veteran Status and data will be reviewed by Regional Coordinators and/or GPD Program Staff for adherence to contractually stated benchmarks.

Component 5: Incentives and Enforcement

Incentives and enforcement policies reinforce the importance of good data quality. The local CoC will likely have established incentives and enforcement measures for complying with the data quality plan. The VA expects its grantees **to adhere to or exceed the local Data Quality Standard** to ensure quality data for its own programs, provide quality data for community planning, and to ensure that VA participation does not negatively impact CoC funding processes.

The purpose of monitoring is to ensure that the CoC's data quality benchmarks are met to the greatest extent possible and that data quality issues are quickly identified and resolved. The local HMIS and CoC will have a monitoring process in place. The following is a sample of a monitoring process that VA providers may be required to follow:

- Access to the Data Quality Plan: The data quality plan will be posted to the CoC's public website.
- Access to Data Quality Reports: By the 15th of each month, the HMIS Lead Agency will make available data quality reports for the purposes of facilitating compliance review by participating agencies and the CoC Data Committee.
- Data Correction: Participating agencies will have 10 days to correct data. By the last calendar day of each month, the HMIS Lead Agency will make available revised data quality reports for posting to the CoC's public Website.

- Monthly Review: The CoC Data Committee will review participating agency data quality reports for compliance with the data quality benchmarks. The Committee will work with participating agencies to identify training needs to improve data quality.
- Public Review: On the last day of each month, the HMIS Lead Agency will post agency aggregate data quality reports to the CoC's public Web site.
- CoC Review: The CoC Data Committee will provide a brief update on progress related to the data quality benchmarks at the monthly CoC meeting.
- Review Results: Agencies that meet the data quality benchmarks are periodically recognized by the CoC Data Committee. For agencies that fail to meet the data quality benchmarks, the CoC may ask the agency to submit a written plan that details how they will take corrective action. The plan is then submitted to and monitored by the CoC's Data Quality Subcommittee. Should the problem persist, the Data Quality Subcommittee may make a recommendation to suspend the agency's ability to enter data into the HMIS and will contact any appropriate state and federal funders.

VII. Continuum of Care Integration & Planning

Continuum of Care (CoC) Overview

A ‘‘Continuum of Care’’ is a geographically based group of representatives that carries out the planning responsibilities of the Continuum of Care program, as established under 24 CFR part 578. These representatives come from organizations that provide services to the homeless, or represent the interests of the homeless or formerly homeless. These organizations can include, but are not limited to nonprofit homeless providers, victim service providers , faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, organizations that serve people experiencing homelessness and formerly unhoused veterans, and people experiencing homelessness and formerly unhoused persons.

A Continuum of Care then designates certain ‘‘applicants’’ as the entities responsible for carrying out the projects that the Continuum has identified through its planning responsibilities.

Coordinated Entry Systems

HUD has established a requirement that all CoCs implement a coordinated entry system, a common process for documenting a person’s crisis response needs for housing assistance and then accessing homeless assistance services including prevention, diversion, emergency shelter, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, supportive services and permanent supportive housing. The interim regulations for the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program and the CoC Program contain clear requirements for CoCs to work in consultation with ESG recipients to establish and operate “either a centralized or coordinated entry system” within their mutual geographic areas. VA homeless assistance service will need to be coordinated with the CoCs coordinated entry approach. For more information on HUD’s views of the characteristics of an effective coordinated entry process, a policy brief is available at https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Coordinated-Entry-Policy-Brief.pdf.

Data Collection and Management Toolkit Materials

Checklist & Discussion Guide for New Grantees

This comprehensive checklist includes a list of all tasks involved in setting up a new VA funded project in HMIS. The checklist is divided into four major steps, with several tasks and questions to address within each step. The form can be used as a discussion guide to initiate conversation with an HMIS Administrator to ensure a comprehensive approach is taken to implement HMIS successfully.

Step 1: Learn about HMIS

- Review federal HMIS participation requirements:
- Review the 2024 HMIS Data Standards Manual to understand the HMIS requirements for data collection. (https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3824/hmis-data-dictionary/)
- Check the HUD Exchange page for updates on HMIS. Here grantees can subscribe to receive HUD's email updates on HMIS. (https://www.hudexchange.info/mailinglist/)

Step 2: Learn about your CoC's HMIS Implementation

A list of local CoC HMIS points of contact can be found on the HUD Exchange Website (https://www.hudexchange.info/grantees/).

Contact the CoC Chairperson and HMIS Administrator.

Gather the following information:

- What are the HMIS participation requirements? Ask for a copy.
- What is the name of the software solutions provider?
- What are the participation costs?
- Will any additional costs be applied to VA-funded homeless assistance programs?
- What participation agreements are required?
- What are the local data collection, privacy, security, and data quality requirements beyond any federal baseline standards?
- Are software and/or reporting licenses required? If so, is there a limit on the number of licenses per project?
- What training or technical support is available? Who will be your contact person?
- Who would be your contact person for resolving technical questions?
- Communicate your VA Reporting Needs to HMIS lead agency, including monthly HMIS export, VA specific data elements (optional to collect through HMIS) and troubleshooting.

- Negotiate and execute agreements.
- Administrator provides HMIS training including data collection, privacy and security, and reporting training. Set training timeline with Administrator.

Step 3: Implementing HMIS within your VA program.

Request individual login and passwords for all Repository users, including back-up staff. Review the Repository User Guide section of this manual.

- If your VA funded program covers multiple CoC jurisdictions, how will this data be reportable by CoC?
- If your VA funded program has subgrantees, determine whether the primary grantee or subgrantee or both will be entering data directly into HMIS. If subgrantees will upload separately, they will need to request separate Repository logins.
- Establish data collection and HMIS policies and procedures.
    - It is REQUIRED that SSVF and GPD-CM grantees create, update and hold themselves accountable for HMIS data collection and SSVF and GPD-CM Reporting data quality policies and procedures.
    - It is BEST PRACTICE to coordinate SSVF and GPD-CM Policies and Procedures with CoC HMIS Policies and Procedures so that HMIS data collection and data quality policies are not in conflict between SSVF and GPD-CM grantees and CoC grantees.
- Establish data collection workflow, the process by which data are collected from clients, managed by HMIS staff and entered into HMIS. Test workflow before implementation begins. Discuss back-up or successions and have a plan in place to address all the following:
    - Who will enter data?
    - Who will upload data monthly to the Repository?
    - Who will monitor data quality regularly?
    - Who will correct data quality errors?
- Develop data collection forms that capture required data elements at program entry, exit and at update from all program participants. See Section 2: Data Collection Toolkit, Data Collection templates.
- Train SSVF and GPD-CM staff to consistently collect and record all required information per policies and procedures and workflow.
- Test data entry using HMIS training database.
- Confirm that HMIS can produce all information needed for monthly and quarterly VA reporting.

Step 4: Creating and Monitoring Data Quality Standards

- Develop data quality plan. See Data Quality Management section.

- Establish management and end user accountability for data accuracy, timeliness and completeness.
- Include regular monitoring as part of data collection and entry process to assure information is timely, complete and accurate. Provide feedback to staff, as necessary.

Step 5: Upload Your Data to the Repository

Before exporting data from HMIS, confirm that data entry is up to date per policy and VA expectation. You should also use any available data quality tools to check for missing or erroneous data prior and make corrections.

Ensure data is uploaded to the Repository BEFORE the last day of the upload cycle (the second business day of each month).

- If data is rejected, correct errors, correct, create new CSV and resubmit data to Repository.

For further information on Privacy and Security regarding HMIS, please see the HUD Exchange HMIS website.

Sample Data Quality Plan – SSVF Grantees

The sample below of a combined Quality Assurance and Data Quality plan summarizes and combines policies provided by SSVF Grantees. Grantees should add additional detail as necessary to describe their specific efforts to assure excellent data quality. Thanks to the Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County, Inc. and Volunteers of America of Greater Sacramento and Northern Nevada, Inc. for sharing their policies.

Quality Assurance and Data Quality Policy

1. The goal of the SSVF Program is to provide services that will stabilize housing for very-low-income veterans and their families through prevention assistance for those still residing in housing and for very low income Veterans experiencing homelessness, through assistance and movement to permanent housing.
2. The SSVF Program will provide services consistent with the application submitted to the VA, the Final Rule, the Continuum of Care Program's Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) and VA SSVF Program Guide. This includes targeting:
   - Extremely low-income veteran-headed households
   - Very low-income unhoused Veterans with a dependent family member
   - Chronically or formerly chronic homeless veterans and their families
3. Performance objectives will be developed to demonstrate the effectiveness of the SSVF Program goal and measured using internal tracking and HMIS reporting.
4. The grantee will integrate HMIS Data Quality elements into the Quality Assurance activities.
5. The agency will evaluate the project outcomes and develop strategies for addressing those areas of deficiency.
6. Policies and procedures are developed to ensure consistency with the implementation of the SSVF Program and incorporate any interpretations or clarifications received from the VA.

General Procedures for Quality Assurance, Evaluation & Data Quality:

1. Staff providing services as part of the SSVF Program will receive training in the policies and procedures, the SSVF Program Guide and Final Rule.
2. Subcontractors will develop performance standards for each employee in the SSVF Program and evaluate performance at least annually.
3. Agency staff and subcontractors will be trained on HMIS policies, procedures and operations. All staff and contractor personnel with access to the HMIS will receive training in the Continuum of Care's Privacy Policy and will sign an HMIS End User Agreement.

4. Staff and contractors will be trained on the agency's data quality elements, standards and monitoring:

- ***Timeliness***
    - Standard – Intakes will be reviewed by a Screening Committee within 24 hours. Once a decision has been made by the committee, the relevant data will be entered into HMIS within 24 hours of the veteran's acceptance into SSVF.
    - Monitoring - The entry date of HMIS will be compared to the date on the SSVF intake document and is expected to be within 48 hours of the intake appointment (24 hours of approval).
- ***Completeness***
    - The SSVF Program will enter data on 100% of all clients accepted into the program. Subsequently, all clients will be exited from the system within 24 hours of their exit from the program.
    - Veteran Status is documented through a DD214.
    - All HMIS questions will be asked at the intake. Don't know, prefers not to answer or unknown will not be recorded in the HMIS system because of a question not being asked or recorded.
- ***Monitoring***
    - An HMIS client detail report will be printed from HMIS on a monthly basis to ensure that the list of current and exited clients is accurate.
    - A Data Quality report will be run biweekly to identify any missing/prefers not to answer or don't know responses. It will be run immediately prior to the monthly upload to the VA Repository.
    - The results and corrections will be reviewed by the Program Director and the Director of Quality Assurance. Should further oversight be deemed necessary the Vice President or Chief Operating Officer will review all findings.
    - All Data will reach the Data Quality and Benchmark Rates as established by SSVF. The Repository notifications will be responded to as follows:
        - Alert level: if the agency receives an alert at the Notify level it will be corrected immediately.
        - Error (Reject) level: For a non-compliant data set, the staff will immediately update HMIS and repeat the Repository upload.
- ***Accuracy***

    Errors within the data reporting system can often be corrected most efficiently by comparing paper files to the HMIS records. As such, SSVF paper intake forms should match what is entered into HMIS. Instances where the two sources are not in agreement identify errors for our staff so that we can ensure corrections are made.

- Standard – 100% of the data entered into HMIS will reflect what SSVF clients are reporting
- Monitoring Plan – A data quality report will be run biweekly to identify any missing data elements or those with unknown/prefers not to answer responses. The results and corrections will be reviewed by the Program Director and the Director of Quality Assurance. Should further oversight be deemed necessary the Vice President or Chief Operating Officer will review all findings.

In this example monitoring is integral to each data quality element. In addition, data quality reports will be printed at a minimum of once-a- month and reviewed by senior staff. The results will be reviewed by the Program Director and the Director of Quality Assurance.

5. Program performance is evaluated monthly and more frequently if there is a high error rate in compliance with the policies and procedures, SSVF Program Guide and Final Rule. During program implementation and until performance demonstrates the ability to provide the SSVF Program services consistent with the NOFA, Final Rule and SSVF Program Guide, the agency will review the eligibility determination for each application approved for assistance and those households screened and determined ineligible. This includes the submission of the eligibility determination.

   List required forms and documentation.

   - The agency will review the forms submitted and data entered into the HMIS within 2 business days of receipt of the paperwork, not including the day the paperwork is received. The review will include:

   List required forms and documentation.

   - Once staff can confirm eligibility, the case manager will be notified. Staff will complete the SSVF program entry in the HMIS.

6. At a point in time agreed to by the agency and the primary subcontractor, the agency will begin to reduce the level of review provided.

   Describe any anticipated changes in subcontractor review.

7. The agency will evaluate the effectiveness of the services being provided by examining the aggregate results of the performance. The following data elements will be reviewed at least quarterly:

   List the data elements that will be reviewed to evaluate performance.

8. Incentives and enforcement policies are an important part of the HMIS Data Quality Plan since they reinforce the importance of good data quality. HMIS data quality reports will be prepared monthly for providers based on data entered. Corrective action is required for

any data quality score below 100%. Staff and subcontractors achieving a score of 100% will be recognized by the agency for their performance.

9. Program performance is reviewed by the agency CEO and Board of Directors.

10. Each request for Financial Assistance is reviewed to ensure the eligibility of the request and compliance with the limitations and restrictions for the requested assistance. The agency Financial Assistance Request Checklist will be completed and reviewed by different staff persons using the Financial Assistance Request Reviewer Checklist.

11. Policy and procedures may be revised to clarify or correct an area of deficiency and will be reviewed at least annually.