

Section 5: VA Section—20 Points

I. Overview

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

If it is anticipated that the project will not be serving veterans, the applicant will be asked to demonstrate why veterans will not be participating in the project. If it is anticipated that veterans will be served but it is unlikely a VA facility will be available to engage in partnering, the applicant will be asked to demonstrate other sources of providing substance abuse, mental health and primary care services for those chronically homeless veterans.

II. Amount Allocated

Up to \$5.0 million will be made available for up to three years. Funds available for each project will be in an approximate amount equivalent to the proportionate yearly salary of full-time employees (FTE) to provide professional care or care-coordination/case management for chronically homeless veterans participating in the program and for FTE to assist in data collection and evaluation. Funding will be made available to the VA facility that enters into a collaborative relationship with the recipient of this grant.

III. Program Description

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

participants and record keeping for the purposes of the program study.

IV. Application Selection Process

A. Review and Rating

The factors described in the General Section of this NOFA together with all agency-specific factors will be used to assign points.

To be eligible for the VA section of this NOFA, the application will undergo a VA threshold review prior to rating to ensure:

1. Forms, time and adequacy: application must be filed in the form prescribed by VA in the application process and within the time established in the NOFA;

2. Application eligibility: the applicant must be a non-profit or public entity, as described in the General Section of the NOFA;

3. Eligible population to be served: the population proposed to be served must be chronically homeless veterans. Homeless is defined in this NOFA. A veteran is a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. Such veterans must also be enrolled in VA's health care system.

B. Rating Criteria

The applicant who intends to apply under this VA section of the Joint NOFA must submit a signed Memorandum of Agreement (one original and four copies) between the applicant and its partnering VA facility, and a Program Plan (one original and four copies). Much of the information that will be used to determine the ranking of application and ultimately the likelihood of funding will be from the Comprehensive Section of the application.

Applications will be rated and ranked on the criteria listed below.

1. *Need*: Up to 5 points will be awarded based on the applicant's demonstrated understanding of the needs of the chronically homeless veteran population proposed to be served in the specified area or community. Ratings will be made based on the extent to which applicants demonstrate:

- a. Identified gaps in services for chronically homeless veterans and how the program will address, and if appropriate, fill those gaps; and

- b. An understanding of the homeless population to be served and its unmet housing, substance abuse, mental health, and primary care needs.

2. *Plan*: Up to 10 points will be awarded based on the extent to which

the application presents a clear, well-conceived, and thorough plan for assisting chronically homeless veterans. The plan should include, at a minimum:

- a. A detailed discussion of the nature of the collaboration between VA and the other partners;

- b. How the collaboration will be sustained for the benefit of chronically homeless veterans; and

- c. How the collaboration will be linked on a short-term as well as long-term, strategic level with the total project conceptualization and design.

3. *Ability*: Up to 5 points will be awarded based on the extent to which those who will be involved in carrying out the project have experience in activities similar to those proposed in the application. This includes activities involving housing, the planning and delivery of substance abuse and mental health treatment and primary care as well as activities regarding the accessing and/or delivery of VA benefits, medical and mental health care, and other VA related services.

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

Projects that will not be serving veterans will not be required to complete these sections of the application. However, the applicant will be asked to demonstrate how it was determined that services for chronically homeless veterans are not needed for the project.

V. Application Submission

A. Required Materials

The application provides the application materials. In addition to the narratives, the applicant will be required to submit a Memorandum of Agreement with its partnering VA facility.

B. Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)

To be eligible for the VA section of this NOFA, the applicant must submit a Memorandum of Agreement in addition to the application materials. The collaborative relationship must be documented in a jointly signed Memorandum of Agreement between a local VA facility and the applicant of this grant specifically stating the terms of the agreement. At a minimum, the terms of the agreement should include:

1. Number of chronically homeless veterans expected to be served by the grant recipient and the extent and level of services that will be provided by the VA facility;