

*letters of intent or commitment from SSA FOs. SSA will secure FO cooperation.)*

#### B. Evaluation

The projects will work with an evaluation contractor who will conduct an independent evaluation of outcomes, impacts, and benefits of the HOPE projects. Grantees must make data collected in the projects available to the evaluation contractor, as specified by the evaluation contractor under the direction of SSA.

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the extent to which the projects are successful in achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the projects.

The evaluation results will be used to assist SSA in identifying possible changes in policies or procedures that could enhance service to the public or otherwise improve administration of the program. The evaluation reports will be disseminated to others involved in providing community-based services to individuals who are homeless or members of under-served populations. To the extent possible, project data will be used to conduct cost-benefit analyses, which will help SSA to answer not only the question of whether the activities conducted in the project affect outcomes for program claimants, but how much they affect outcomes, and at what cost.

#### 1. Enrollment Guidelines

Each grantee is required to enroll at least 50 individuals in their project. SSA encourages grantees that serve large numbers of homeless individuals attempt to achieve higher enrollment numbers. In order to be considered a project participant, and to receive services as a participant of any HOPE project, an individual must be enrolled by the grantee, using the reporting mechanism described in Section II.C.1.

Grantees may enroll individuals who have not yet filed an initial application, as well as those whose benefits are in suspense or terminated. Grantees may not enroll individuals who have pending applications with SSA, nor those who have already filed for a reconsideration or appeal of a denial or partially favorable decision. The grantee may, of course, continue to serve such individuals, but for the purposes of enrollment and data collection, grantees must follow these guidelines.

Individuals who are served by the grantee that are not enrolled are not eligible to receive any special case processing consideration that is accorded enrollees. Allowing for enrollment of those whose benefits are suspended or terminated will allow

projects that focus primarily on pre-release activities to meet enrollment targets.

Grantees may enroll individuals that they have already had contact with prior to award of the cooperative agreement, provided that the individual has not already filed a claim. The grantee may provide services to individuals who refuse to sign the consent forms described in Section II.C.2, but they may not enroll or report data to SSA on individuals who refuse to sign forms indicating that they authorize release of personal information.

#### C. Data Collection

##### 1. Data Elements

SSA's evaluation contractor will develop and maintain a secure interactive Web site to collect evaluation information from the grantees. Grantees will log-on to the Web site and input information on each project enrollee monthly, which will then be readily accessible to the contractor and to SSA. "Project enrollees" are defined in Section II.B.1.

All data elements are to be reported using precise definitions, which will be developed by the evaluation contractor and approved by SSA. Adherence to such definitions is crucial to the comparability of the data across project sites. Grantees must report these elements on the secure Web site established by the contractor.

Specific instructions will be available at the time that the projects begin enrollment. The data elements below will be entered on the secure Web site monthly, except as noted:

- The project enrollee's name, date of birth, and social security number (report only at time of enrollment);
- Time (in hours) spent developing the medical evidence;
- Time (in hours) spent providing other forms of application assistance;
- The date of all grantee contacts with SSA during the application process, identification of an issue category, and an indication of whether the issue was resolved, or if further follow-up will be necessary;
- The date the project enrollee received notice of the determination;
- Whether a recommendation for presumptive disability (PD) benefits was made by the grantee;
- If so, whether SSA adopted the PD recommendation;
- A description of the living situation of the project enrollee on the date that the individual files a claim for benefits, to include:
  - A description of the living situation of the project enrollee on the date that

the individual files a claim for benefits, to include:

- Dwelling type:
  - Living on the street (in doorways, on sidewalks, etc.);
  - Other outdoor location;
  - Other place not meant for human habitation (e.g., abandoned buildings);
- Living with friends or relatives;
- Foster care;
- Halfway house or group home;
- Correctional facility;
- Institution;
- Emergency or transitional shelters;
- Housing units containing people living doubled up with family members or friends;
- Other
- Unknown
- A description of the living situation of the project enrollee, one year following the date that the individual files a claim for benefits, and eighteen months following application, to include:

- Dwelling type:
  - Living on the street (in doorways, on sidewalks, etc.);
  - Other outdoor location;
  - Other place not meant for human habitation (e.g., abandoned buildings);
- Living with friends or relatives;
- Foster care;
- Halfway house or group home;
- Correctional facility;
- Institution;
- Emergency or transitional shelters;
- Housing units containing people living doubled up with family members or friends;
- Other
- Unknown
- Representative Payee information
- Did the grantee recommend a payee (report when recommendation is made, and any changes)
  - When benefits start, report if the grantee is the payee, or if the grantee found another payee.

#### 2. Privacy

All personal information collected by SSA is protected by the Privacy Act of 1974. All projects must adhere to SSA's Privacy and Confidentiality Regulations (20 CFR 401) for maintaining records of individuals, as well as provide specific safeguards surrounding beneficiary information sharing and storage of paper/computer records/data. All applications must describe proposed practices for addressing clients' privacy and obtaining informed consent for any disclosure. The plan described in the applicant's project description must address the following elements:

- The development and use of a consent form that will allow the grantee to disclose clients' personal