



Veterans First
*Supportive Services for
Veteran Families (SSVF)*

Dear Landlord and Property Managers,

Thank you for your interest in the Veterans First program. We rely on landlords like you to provide safe, affordable housing for Veteran families. Community support from landlords, neighbors and resource agencies is the primary component for long-lasting stability among Veteran families and really makes a difference.

This packet contains information on the Veterans First program, answers to frequently asked questions, an overview of the rights and responsibilities of both landlords and tenants participating in this program, and some key program documents. Please take a moment to read through it, and do not hesitate to let us know if you have any additional questions or concerns at any time while you are working with us.

Thanks again for the tremendous service you provide to Veterans in our community!

Sincerely,

Friendship Place- Veterans First Program
3636 16th St NW #AG54
Washington, D.C. 20010
Office: 202-248-2801
Fax: 202-248-2874
www.FriendshipPlace.org

Attach Business Card Here



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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Veterans First program at Friendship Place is a leading provider of housing stability services to Veterans and their families in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. The Veterans First program is supported under a grant from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs' Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program. The program provides short-term case management services, financial assistance, and other supportive services to assist Veterans in achieving and maintaining housing stability.

Examples of services provided include:

- Case management
- Temporary financial assistance (including rental payments and security deposits)
- Employment services and job placement
- Assistance obtaining Veteran and other public benefits
- Budgeting/financial planning
- Referrals to community resources

As a community partner Friendship Place will strive to:

- Proactively communicate with you, the Landlord, as we seek to ensure that your needs and concerns are addressed in an appropriate and timely fashion.
- Collaboratively work with you and the Veteran residing at your property to support successful tenancy.
- Provide high-quality supportive services for Veterans throughout the duration of their participation in the Veterans First SSVF program.
- Conduct ourselves in a professional and courteous manner at all times.

Veterans First may provide emergency and/or transitional financial assistance to Veterans and their families who meet certain programmatic requirements. In these cases, the following will apply:

- Payments can only be made to a third-party vendor, such as the landlord or management company, and cannot be provided directly to the Veteran.
- A payment to assist a Veteran with rent or utilities does not imply a commitment to future payments by the Veterans First SSVF program. Participants are assisted in obtaining housing for which they can independently meet future costs; the Veterans First program is not intended to provide, and cannot guarantee, financial assistance for the duration of tenancy.
- As a vendor of services to Friendship Place, a W9 will be required for tax purposes. A blank form is included in this packet for your convenience. Please return the completed W9, using the information of whoever is to receive payment, to the identified case manager in the most expeditious manner possible to ensure timely payment of financial assistance.



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Frequently Asked Questions

Is there a difference between HUD-VASH or Section 8 Housing Vouchers and the Veterans First program (SSVF)?

Yes. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development provides housing choice vouchers that allow low-income families, elderly, and disabled individuals to receive long-term assistance towards their monthly rent through the HUD-VASH program for Veterans and the Section 8 program for the general population. These vouchers are intended to provide long-term support to those households with the highest needs who otherwise would be unable to meet their rental obligations.

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) is provided through a grant from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and is intended to be a *short-term* assistance program to help Veterans and their families quickly regain housing stability. It is not a voucher program and cannot guarantee ongoing financial support. Participants in this program are anticipated to be able to achieve housing stability within 3-6 months of entering the program and to be able to sustain housing independently of SSVF program assistance thereafter. The SSVF program will assist participants in connecting to necessary long-term supports in the community which they may access following the completion of SSVF services to promote ongoing housing stability.

What paperwork is required from the landlord in order to receive payment through SSVF?

- Approval letter (sample attached)– A statement indicating the unit address, monthly rent amount, security deposit amount, move-in date, Veteran name, and landlord information (name and mailing address)
- W9 Form (attached)– Only if landlord is not operating under an LLC.
- Signed lease – Copy provided to case manager and Veteran at lease signing
- Monthly rental assistance letter (for ongoing support)- A statement provided at the beginning of each month for which rental assistance is being requested stating the month, the address of the unit, the name of the Veteran occupying the unit, and the amount owed. Case managers will contact the landlord prior to the beginning of each month to request this letter.

When can the landlord expect payment from SSVF?

Once all required documentation is received, the Veterans First case manager will submit a check request to the Friendship Place finance department. Allow 24-48 hours for a check to be processed. Case managers can either deliver or mail the payments directly to the landlord. Please contact case manager in case of any delay in receiving payments.

How many months of rental assistance will a Veteran receive?

Financial assistance is provided on a case-by-case basis, and Veterans First cannot guarantee future payments. Typically, Veterans receive financial assistance to cover move-in costs of the security deposit and first month's rent. They may receive additional months of rental assistance. Households are reassessed for need and eligibility at least every 90 days and are exited from the program if they are no longer in need of or eligible for services. SSVF is not an entitlement program, and households may receive different amounts of assistance based on their level of need and funding availability. Specifics on SSVF program guidelines, including eligibility and parameters regarding financial assistance, can be located at <http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp>.

Who screens the tenant?

You do. Case managers strive to locate housing which best meets the Veteran's individual needs, however, the landlord has the final approval in determining the eligibility according to his/her own requirements.

If Friendship Place provides the security deposit, who receives the deposit at the end of the lease?

The tenant. The balance on the security deposit will be given to the Veteran to use in transitioning to another property if they decide to relocate after the lease agreement terminates.

Are the units required to pass an inspection?

Yes. However, the inspection does not need to be done by a licensed inspector. The habitability standards used by Veterans First to conduct walk-through inspections are attached at the end of this packet. The inspection can be completed by any Veterans First staff member. If a recent previous inspection has been completed, a copy of that report may be provided to the Veterans First program in lieu of this habitability inspection. Inspections are expected to be completed no more than 3 days following a tenant's approval for move in.

Who do I call if I have a question or problems?

The Veteran's case manager is the primary point of contact in regards to the household's services in the SSVF program. Case managers welcome your calls with any questions or concerns. Their contact information is attached to the first page of this packet. If the case manager cannot be reached, you may contact the Veterans First offices at 202-248-2801.

What are a case manager's responsibilities?

Each Veteran household is assigned a case manager upon entering the program. The case manager works with the Veteran to create an individualized housing plan and set goals to achieve and maintain housing stability. The case manager conducts home visits with the household no less than once a month to work with them towards achieving their goals and to address any concerns. Case managers help participants understand their lease and their responsibilities as a tenant, including their obligation to pay rent. Case managers work with the Veteran to develop a budget, access available benefits, and obtain employment.

Case managers are available to assist in mediating and addressing concerns related to the Veteran's tenancy. Please contact the case manager directly in the event of a question or concern regarding a Veterans First participant household.

Does rapid re-housing work? Won't Veterans just become homeless after your services end?

National data on the SSVF program are demonstrating that the vast majority of households entering the program are exiting it into their own permanent housing and are not returning to homelessness after service completion. Nearly 100,000 people received services across the country from the SSVF program over its first two years of existence. 84% of single adult Veterans and nearly 91% of Veteran families who received rapid re-housing assistance had not returned to homelessness within one year of completing the SSVF program.

Who should I contact if I would like to rent additional properties to Veterans First participants?

If you have additional properties available to rent to Veterans First participants, you may contact Melissa Robinson at 202-660-2197 or mrobinson@friendshipplace.org and she will assist you in communicating the availability to our team of case managers.

What if I know a Veteran in need of housing assistance?

Instruct the Veteran to contact the Veterans First screening line at 202-658-9599. An intake specialist will conduct an eligibility screening for SSVF services and provide other appropriate housing assistance referrals.



An Overview of Landlord Rights and Responsibilities

Landlord Rights:

- Landlords have the right to terminate tenancy under conditions outlined in the lease agreement and in accordance with local Landlord/Tenant laws.
- Landlords have the right to refuse tenancy to an applicant as long as it is not a fair housing violation.
- Landlords have the right to raise rent at the end of the lease term provided proper notice is given and the increased rent complies with applicable laws.

Landlord Responsibilities:

- Landlords must comply with fair housing laws.
- Landlords must use their own standard lease agreements with terms comparable to those given to households not receiving assistance.
- The landlord must provide a copy of the lease to the Veterans First case manager at lease signing.
- Landlords must provide a signed W9 if not operating under an LLC.
- Landlords must provide all required documentation in a timely manner.

An Overview of Tenant Rights and Responsibilities

Tenant Rights:

- The tenant maintains all rights as written into the conditions of the lease.
- The tenant has the right to request to make reasonable modifications to the unit, at his/her own expense, in order to accommodate a disability.
- The tenant has the right to file a complaint with the applicable authorities if he/she feels that the landlord was discriminatory on the basis of race/color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, age and/or national origin.
- The tenant has the right to privacy within the rental unit. The landlord must provide appropriate notice to the tenant if he/she wishes to enter the unit during a reasonable time of day.

Tenant Responsibilities:

- The tenant must meet with their SSVF case manager at least monthly during their participation in the Veterans First program.
- The tenant must comply with all lease terms.
- The tenant must request landlord approval to add additional occupants to the unit.
- The tenant must ensure that monthly rent payment obligations are met, both during the course of their participation in the program and upon completion of the SSVF program.

Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification

Give Form to the requester. Do not send to the IRS.

Print or type See Specific Instructions on page 2.	Name (as shown on your income tax return)	
	Business name/disregarded entity name, if different from above	
	Check appropriate box for federal tax classification: <input type="checkbox"/> Individual/sole proprietor <input type="checkbox"/> C Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> S Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Trust/estate <input type="checkbox"/> Limited liability company. Enter the tax classification (C=C corporation, S=S corporation, P=partnership) ▶	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (see instructions) ▶	
	Address (number, street, and apt. or suite no.)	Requester's name and address (optional)
City, state, and ZIP code		
List account number(s) here (optional)		

Part I Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)

Enter your TIN in the appropriate box. The TIN provided must match the name given on the "Name" line to avoid backup withholding. For individuals, this is your social security number (SSN). However, for a resident alien, sole proprietor, or disregarded entity, see the Part I instructions on page 3. For other entities, it is your employer identification number (EIN). If you do not have a number, see *How to get a TIN* on page 3.

Note. If the account is in more than one name, see the chart on page 4 for guidelines on whose number to enter.

Social security number								

Employer identification number								

Part II Certification

Under penalties of perjury, I certify that:

1. The number shown on this form is my correct taxpayer identification number (or I am waiting for a number to be issued to me), and
2. I am not subject to backup withholding because: (a) I am exempt from backup withholding, or (b) I have not been notified by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) that I am subject to backup withholding as a result of a failure to report all interest or dividends, or (c) the IRS has notified me that I am no longer subject to backup withholding, and
3. I am a U.S. citizen or other U.S. person (defined below).

Certification instructions. You must cross out item 2 above if you have been notified by the IRS that you are currently subject to backup withholding because you have failed to report all interest and dividends on your tax return. For real estate transactions, item 2 does not apply. For mortgage interest paid, acquisition or abandonment of secured property, cancellation of debt, contributions to an individual retirement arrangement (IRA), and generally, payments other than interest and dividends, you are not required to sign the certification, but you must provide your correct TIN. See the instructions on page 4.

Sign Here	Signature of U.S. person ▶	Date ▶
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General Instructions

Section references are to the Internal Revenue Code unless otherwise noted.

Purpose of Form

A person who is required to file an information return with the IRS must obtain your correct taxpayer identification number (TIN) to report, for example, income paid to you, real estate transactions, mortgage interest you paid, acquisition or abandonment of secured property, cancellation of debt, or contributions you made to an IRA.

Use Form W-9 only if you are a U.S. person (including a resident alien), to provide your correct TIN to the person requesting it (the requester) and, when applicable, to:

1. Certify that the TIN you are giving is correct (or you are waiting for a number to be issued),
2. Certify that you are not subject to backup withholding, or
3. Claim exemption from backup withholding if you are a U.S. exempt payee. If applicable, you are also certifying that as a U.S. person, your allocable share of any partnership income from a U.S. trade or business is not subject to the withholding tax on foreign partners' share of effectively connected income.

Note. If a requester gives you a form other than Form W-9 to request your TIN, you must use the requester's form if it is substantially similar to this Form W-9.

Definition of a U.S. person. For federal tax purposes, you are considered a U.S. person if you are:

- An individual who is a U.S. citizen or U.S. resident alien,
- A partnership, corporation, company, or association created or organized in the United States or under the laws of the United States,
- An estate (other than a foreign estate), or
- A domestic trust (as defined in Regulations section 301.7701-7).

Special rules for partnerships. Partnerships that conduct a trade or business in the United States are generally required to pay a withholding tax on any foreign partners' share of income from such business. Further, in certain cases where a Form W-9 has not been received, a partnership is required to presume that a partner is a foreign person, and pay the withholding tax. Therefore, if you are a U.S. person that is a partner in a partnership conducting a trade or business in the United States, provide Form W-9 to the partnership to establish your U.S. status and avoid withholding on your share of partnership income.

Veterans First Inspection Checklist

This form is to be used by the SSVF Case Manager to determine habitability standards of units for participants who are utilizing financial assistance to move into new permanent housing or to maintain their current permanent housing.

The following standards must be met:

1. Structure and materials: The structure must be structurally sound so as not to pose any threat to the health and safety of the occupants and so as to protect the residents from hazards
 Approved
 Deficient
2. Access: The housing must be accessible and capable of being utilized without unauthorized use of other private properties. Structures must provide alternate means of egress in case of fire.
 Approved
 Deficient
3. Space and Security: Each resident must be afforded adequate space and security for themselves and their belongings. Each resident must be provided with an acceptable place to sleep.
 Approved
 Deficient
4. Interior air quality: Every room must be provided with natural or mechanical ventilation. Structures must be free of pollutants in the air at levels that threaten the health of residents.
 Approved
 Deficient
5. Water Supply: The water supply must be free from contamination.
 Approved
 Deficient
6. Sanitary facilities: Residents must have access to sufficient sanitary facilities that are in proper operating condition, may be used in privacy, and are adequate for personal cleanliness and the disposal of human waste.
 Approved
 Deficient
7. Thermal environment: The housing must have adequate heating in proper operating condition.
 Approved
 Deficient
8. Illumination and electricity: The house must have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and to support the health and safety of residents. Sufficient electrical sources must be provided to permit use of essential electrical appliances while assuring safety from fire
 Approved
 Deficient

9. Food preparations and refuse disposal: All food preparation areas must contain suitable space and equipment to store, prepare, and serve food in a sanitary manner.
- Approved
 - Deficient
10. Sanitary condition: The housing and any equipment must be maintained in a sanitary condition.
- Approved
 - Deficient
11. Fire Safety: Both conditions must be met to meet this standard.
- a. Each unit must contain at least one battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detector, in proper working condition, on each occupied level in the unit. Smoke detectors must be located, to the extent practicable, in a hallway adjacent to a bedroom. If hearing-impaired persons occupy the unit, smoke detectors must have an alarm system designed for hearing-impaired persons in each bedroom occupied by a hearing-impaired person.
 - b. The public areas of all housing must be equipped with a sufficient number, but not less than one for each are, of battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detectors. Public areas include, but are not limited to, laundry rooms, day care centers, hallways, stairwells, and other common areas.
- Approved
 - Deficient

The following are optional standards. If the standards are not met, participants may sign off stating that they accept the unit as is:

- 1. The entire unit must be freshly painted.
 - Approved
 - Deficient
- 2. No chipping or peeling paint, cracks, holes or loose plaster inside the unit.
 - Approved
 - Deficient
- 3. All ground floor windows and exterior doors shall open and close as designed and must have working locks.
 - Approved
 - Deficient
- 4. All security bars and windows must have a quick release mechanism.
 - Approved
 - Deficient
- 5. Windows and doors shall be weather tight with glass free of cracks to prevent wind, air or rain penetration.
 - Approved
 - Deficient

6. House or apartment shall be properly numbered or lettered with the proper illumination (lighting).

Approved

Deficient

7. There must be stepping stones or walkway to the unit.

Approved

Deficient

8. Weeds and grass shall be less than four inches in height.

Approved

Deficient

Certification Statement

I certify that I am NOT a HUD certified inspector and I have evaluated the property located at the address below to the best of my knowledge and find the following:

Property meets all of the above standards.

Property meets all of the required standards but does not meet all of the optional standards.

Property does not meet all of the required standards.

Therefore, I make the following determination:

Property is approved.

Property is NOT approved.

Participant Name: _____

Street Address: _____

Evaluator's Name: _____

Evaluator's Signature

Date

By signing this I agree to accept the unit in the condition that it is in even though it may not meet the optional inspection standards.

Participant Signature

Date