

*Affected Public:* Business or other for-profit organizations, and not-for-profit institutions.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 3,205.

*Estimated Time Per Respondent:* 8 hours, 4 minutes.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 25,870.

*The following paragraph applies to all of the collections of information covered by this notice:*

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless the collection of information displays a valid OMB control number. Books or records relating to a collection of information must be retained as long as their contents may become material in the administration of any internal revenue law. Generally, tax returns and tax return information are confidential, as required by 26 U.S.C. 6103.

*Request for Comments:* Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will become a matter of public record. Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and (e) estimates of capital or start-up costs and costs of operation, maintenance, and purchase of services to provide information.

Approved: April 29, 2003.

**Glenn P. Kirkland,**

*IRS Reports Clearance Officer.*

[FR Doc. 03-11050 Filed 5-2-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4830-01-P

## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

### Fund Availability Under the VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program

**AGENCY:** Department of Veterans Affairs.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Veterans Affairs is announcing the availability of funds for applications for assistance

under the "Per Diem Only" component of VA's Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program. This Notice contains information concerning the program, funding priorities, application process, and amount of funding available

**DATES:** An original completed and collated grant application (plus three completed collated copies) for assistance under the VA's Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program must be received in the Grant and Per Diem Field Office, by 4 p.m. Eastern Time on June 19, 2003. Applications may not be sent by facsimile (FAX). In the interest of fairness to all competing applicants, this deadline is firm as to date and hour, and VA will treat as ineligible for consideration any application that is received after the deadline. Applicants should take this practice into account and make early submission of their material to avoid any risk of loss of eligibility brought about by unanticipated delays or other delivery-related problems.

*For a Copy of the Application Package:* Download directly from VA's Grant and Per Diem Program Web page at: <http://www.va.gov/homeless/page.cfm?pg=3> or call the Grant and Per Diem Program at (toll-free) 1-877-332-0334. For a document relating to the VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program, see the interim final rule published in the **Federal Register** on March 19, 2003, §§ 61.0-61.82.

*Submission of Application:* An original completed and collated grant application (plus three copies) must be submitted to the following address: VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Field Office, 10770 N. 46th Street, Suite C-100, Tampa, FL 33617. Applications must be received in the Grant and Per Diem Field office by the application deadline. Applications must arrive as a complete package. Materials arriving separately will not be included in the application package for consideration and may result in the application being rejected or not funded.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Guy Liedke, VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program, Department of Veterans Affairs, 10770 N. 46th Street, Suite C-100, Tampa, FL 33617; (toll-free) 1-877-332-0334.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This notice announces the availability of funds for assistance under VA's Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program for eligible programs that have not previously applied for or received per diem in connection with a grant (see 38 CFR 17.700 through 17.731 (repealed) and interim final rule, published in the **Federal Register**, March 19, 2003,

§§ 61.0 through 61.82). Public Law 107-95, §§ 5(a)(1), the Homeless Veterans Comprehensive Assistance Act of 2001 codified at 38 U.S.C. 2011, 2012, 2061, and 2064 authorizes this program. The program has been extended through Fiscal Year 2005. Funding applied for under this notice may be used for aid for service centers and supportive housing. Funding will be in the form of per diem payments issued to eligible entities for the period of July 1, 2003, to June 30, 2006, subject to availability of funds and re-authorization of the program past September 30, 2005. For eligibility criteria, please refer to the interim final rule published in the **Federal Register** on March 19, 2003, §§ 61.30, 61.31, and 61.32.

Grant recipients who received prior year funding for acquisition, renovation or new construction need not reapply for per diem for those portions of their programs that were created with grant funds. Per diem for these programs is requested in the grant application and paid at the time of grant project completion. However, if such entities desire per diem for programs not funded by a previous grant application, an application responding to this NOFA is required.

VA is pleased to issue this Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA) for the Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program. The Department expects to award approximately \$8 million annually under this NOFA.

Funding available under this NOFA is being offered to help offset the operating expenses of existing state and local governments, Indian tribal governments and faith-based and community-based organizations that are capable of providing supported housing and/or supportive service center services for homeless veterans. The District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and any territory or possession of the United States, may be considered eligible entities under the definition of "State" in the interim final rule, § 61.1 Definitions. It should be noted that VA payment is limited to the applicant's cost of care per eligible veteran minus other sources of payments to the applicant for furnishing services to homeless veterans up to the per day rate VA pays for State Home Domiciliary care, which is currently \$26.95. Awardees will be required to support their request for per diem payment with adequate fiscal documentation as to program income and expenses.

Interested organizations should know that the vast majority of homeless veterans in this country suffer from mental illness or substance abuse disorders or are dually diagnosed with

both mental illness and substance abuse disorders. In addition, many homeless veterans have serious medical problems. Collaboration with VA medical centers, VA community-based outpatient clinics, or other health care providers is an important aspect of assuring that homeless veterans have access to appropriate health care services.

Through the merger of centrally directed funding for VA's Health Care for Homeless Veterans contract residential treatment programs and the Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program some localities across the country may have lost capacity to provide community-based residential services for homeless veterans. In the interest of restoring some portion of lost capacity to as many locations as possible, VA encourages providers from these localities to submit applications. It is important to be aware that VA places great emphasis on responsibility and accountability. VA has procedures in place to monitor services provided to homeless veterans and outcomes associated with the services provided in grant and per diem-funded programs. VA is also implementing new procedures to further this effort. Applicants should be aware of the following:

All awardees that are conditionally selected in response to this NOFA must meet the Life Safety Code of the National Fire and Protection Association as it relates to their specific facility. VA will conduct an inspection prior to awardees being able to submit request for payment to ensure this requirement is met.

Each per diem-funded program will have a liaison appointed from a nearby VA medical facility to provide oversight and monitor services provided to homeless veterans in the per diem-funded program.

Monitoring will include at least an annual review of each per diem program's progress toward meeting internal goals and objectives in helping veterans attain housing stability, adequate income support, and self sufficiency as identified in each per diem program's original application. Monitoring will also include a review of the agency's income and expenses as they relate to this project to ensure per diem payment is accurate.

Each per diem-funded program will participate in VA's national program monitoring and evaluation system administered by VA's Northeast Program Evaluation Center (NEPEC). It is the intention of VA to develop specific performance targets with respect to housing for homeless veterans. NEPEC's monitoring

procedures will be used to determine successful accomplishment of these housing outcomes for each per diem-funded program.

VA encourages all eligible and interested entities to review this NOFA and consider applying for funds to provide service for homeless veterans.

It should be noted that VA expects to announce additional Notices of Fund Availability for construction grants and "Per Diem Only" awards in July or August of 2003 so that interested applicants can take advantage of technical assistance and training that will be available as a result of a technical assistance grant.

**Authority:** VA's Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program is authorized by Pub. L. 107-95, § 5(a)(1) the Homeless Veterans Comprehensive Assistance Act of 2001 codified at 38 U.S.C. 2011, 2012, 2061, 2064 and has been extended through Fiscal Year 2005. The program is implemented by the interim final rule codified at 38 CFR part 61.0. The interim final rule was published in the **Federal Register** on March 19, 2003, the regulations can be found in their entirety in 38 CFR 61.0 through 61.82. Funds made available under this Notice are subject to the requirements of those regulations.

**Allocation:** Approximately \$8 million annually is available for the per diem only award component of this program. This funding is expected to be available from July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2006 subject to the availability of funds and reauthorization of the program past September 30, 2005.

**Funding Priorities:** VA establishes the following three funding priorities in order to: (1) implement the provisions of Pub. L. 107-95 regarding geographical dispersion and non-duplication of service; and (2) partially restore lost capacity resulting from the merger of the Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) contract residential treatment program and the Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program. In this round of "Per Diem Only" funding, VA expects to award funding for approximately 800 community-based supported housing beds.

The Urban Institute's analysis of data collected through the 1996 Survey of Homeless Providers and Clients indicates that 21 percent of the homeless population is found in rural and suburban locations. Over the last 8 rounds of grants, VA awarded approximately \$63 million to help establish 271 projects for homeless veterans. Additionally, VA has provided operational funds in the form of per diem for 1,378 beds.

**Funding priority 1.** Seven states have no grant or per diem funded programs for homeless veterans. These states are

Alaska, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, North Dakota, New Hampshire, and Wyoming. Based on the total number of beds expected to be funded in this round, approximately 140 beds (17.5% of the 800 beds expected to be funded) from eligible entities whose projects are located in these states will be selected as the first funding priority. Of those eligible entities in the first funding priority, that are legally fundable, the highest scoring applicants from each state will be funded first, followed by the second highest scoring applicants from each state, until enough projects totaling approximately 140 beds are identified for funding. The goal will be to fund approximately 20 beds in each of the seven states that currently have no grant or per diem funded beds. Applicants not funded in this priority will be placed in the third funding priority.

**Funding priority 2.** Also, only three grant and per diem-funded programs are affiliated with Indian tribal governments. Based on the total number of beds expected to be funded in this round, approximately 140 beds (17.5% of the 800 beds expected to be funded) from Indian tribal governments will be selected in the second funding priority. Of those Indian Tribal Governments in the second funding priority, that are legally fundable, the highest scoring applicants will be funded first, until enough projects totaling approximately 140 beds are identified for funding. Applicants not funded in this priority will be placed in the third funding priority.

**Funding priority 3.** Finally, VA is encouraging interested, state and local governments, and faith-based, and community-based organizations to apply for funding under this NOFA. Based on the total number of beds expected to be funded in this round, approximately 520 beds (65% of the 800 beds expected to be funded) from the eligible entities that are state and local governments, and faith-based and community-based organizations, along with those applicants not selected in the first or second priority will be considered in the third funding priority. Of those eligible entities that are legally fundable, the highest-ranked applications, for which funding is available, will be selected for eligibility to receive per diem payment in accordance with their ranked order until enough projects totaling approximately 520 beds are identified for funding or until funding is expended.

**Methodology:** VA will review all non-capital grant recipients in response to this notice of funding availability. Then VA will group the applicants into the

funding priorities categories. Applicants will then be ranked within their respective funding category based on score and any ranking criteria set forth in that funding category only if the applicant scores at least 500 cumulative points from paragraphs (b) (c) (d) (e) and (i) of the interim final rule published in the **Federal Register**, March 19, 2003, § 61.13.

The highest-ranked application for which funding is available, within the highest funding category, will be conditionally selected for eligibility to receive per diem payment in accordance with their ranked order until VA reaches the projected bed totals for each category. If funds are still available after selection of those applications in the highest priority group VA will continue to conditionally select applicants in lower priority categories in accordance with the selection method set forth in the interim final rule § 61.32.

**Application Requirements:** The specific grant application requirements will be specified in the application package. The package includes all required forms and certifications. Selections will be made based on criteria described in the application, Interim Final Rule, and NOFA. Applicants who are selected will be notified of any additional information needed to confirm or clarify information provided in the application. Applicants will then be notified of the deadline to submit such information. If an applicant is unable to meet any conditions for grant award within the specified time frame, VA reserves the right to not award funds and to use the funds available for other grant and per diem applicants.

Dated: April 30, 2003.

**Anthony J. Principi,**

*Secretary of Veterans Affairs.*

[FR Doc. 03-11096 Filed 5-2-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8320-01-P

## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

### Fund Availability Under the VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program

**AGENCY:** Department of Veterans Affairs.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is announcing the availability of funds for applications for assistance under the technical assistance grant component of VA's Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program. This notice contains information concerning the program,

application process, and amount of funding available.

**DATES:** An original completed and collated grant application (plus two completed collated copies) for assistance under the VA's Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program must be received in the Grant and Per Diem Field Office, by 4 p.m. Eastern Time on June 4, 2003. Applications may not be sent by facsimile (FAX). In the interest of fairness to all competing applicants, this deadline is firm as to date and hour, and VA will treat as ineligible for consideration any application that is received after the deadline. Applicants should take this practice into account and make early submission of their material to avoid any risk of loss of eligibility brought about by unanticipated delays or other delivery-related problems.

**For a Copy of the Application Package:** Download directly from VA's Grant and Per Diem Program Web page at: <http://www.va.gov/homeless/page.cfm?pg=3> or call the Grant and Per Diem Program at (toll-free) 1-877-332-0334. For a document relating to the VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program, see the interim final rule codified at title 38 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 61.0.

**Submission of Application:** An original completed and collated grant application (plus two copies) must be submitted to the following address: VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Field Office, 10770 N. 46th Street, Suite C-100, Tampa, FL, 33617. Applications must be received in the Grant and Per Diem Field office by the application deadline. Applications must arrive as a complete package. Materials arriving separately will not be included in the application package for consideration and may result in the application being rejected or not funded.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Guy Liedke, VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program, Department of Veterans Affairs, 10770 North 46th Street, Suite C-100, Tampa, FL 33617; (toll-free) 1-877-332-0334.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This notice announces the availability of funds for assistance under VA's Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program for eligible non-profit entities with expertise in preparing grant applications relating to the provision of assistance for homeless veterans to: Provide technical assistance to those non-profit community-based groups with experience in providing assistance to homeless veterans in order to help such groups apply for grants under the interim final rule, published in the

**Federal Register**, March 19, 2003, or to apply for other grants from any source for addressing the problems of homeless veterans.

Pub. L. 107-95, the Homeless Veterans Comprehensive Assistance Act of 2001, authorizes this program. Funding applied for under this notice may be used for: (a) Group or individual seminars providing general instructions concerning grant applications; (b) Group or individual seminars providing instructions for applying for a specific grant; or (c) Group or individual instruction for preparing analyses to be included in a grant application. Seminars (course of instruction) may be delivered in electronic, face-to-face, and correspondence methodologies (e.g., Internet based training, video teleconferencing, computer media such as CD or disk).

Entities that are interested in providing technical assistance should be aware that historically the Grant and Per Diem Program office receives over 1,200 nationwide inquiries per notice of fund availability from prospective applicants. It is estimated that an additional 1,000 inquiries are received at nationwide VA Medical Center Homeless Programs. From these inquiries, VA has seen an increase in the number of applicants each year. Approximately 100 to 300 applications per funding round have been received in past responses to Notices of Fund Availability (NOFAs) under VA's Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program. Those entities applying to provide technical assistance should consider these numbers when establishing their service plans. Grant applicants may not receive assistance to replace funds provided by any State or local government for the same purpose.

It should be noted that VA expects to announce additional Notices of Fund Availability for construction grants and Per Diem Only awards in July or August of 2003. Recipients of technical assistance grant awards should be prepared to offer technical assistance very soon after the technical assistance awards are made so that organizations will have an opportunity to take advantage of technical assistance and training prior to and during the application period for these two additional NOFAs.

**Authority:** VA's Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program is authorized by Pub. L. 107-95, section 5(a)(1), the Homeless Veterans Comprehensive Assistance Act of 2001 codified at title 38 United States Code (U.S.C.), sections 2011, 2012, 2061, 2064 and has been extended through Fiscal Year 2005. The program is implemented by the interim final rule codified at title 38 CFR Part 61.0. The interim final rule was published in the