



May 3, 2007

DIRECTOR'S MEMORANDUM: # 03-07

MEMORANDUM FOR: ALL REGIONAL ADMINISTRATORS AND STATE
DIRECTORS FOR VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND
TRAINING

FROM: **[Approved by George M. Parker for...]**
GORDON J. BURKE, JR.
Director, Operations and Programs

SUBJECT: Revised Standard Operating Procedures for Stand Down Activities

- I. **Purpose:** To provide updated guidance to staff on the process of accepting, reviewing, and processing Stand Down funding requests, emergency grant requests, as well as grantee reporting requirements.
- II. **Supersedes:** DM 10-06, dated May 1, 2006.
- III. **Background:** The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) awards funds appropriated by Congress under the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) on an annual, competitive basis. The Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training (ASVET) is authorized to award residual HVRP funds to a limited number of employment and training pilot and/or demonstration projects that direct service toward homeless veterans, including funds to support Stand Down activities that provide assistance to homeless veterans.
- IV. **Stand Down Activities:** A "Stand Down" is an event held in a local community where a variety of social services are provided to homeless veterans. Stand Down organizers partner with local businesses and service providers such as the State Workforce Agency including Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (emergency food and shelter grants). Other partners may include Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) and local non-profit organizations including faith-based and community organizations.

Services provided at Stand Down events typically include temporary shelter, showers, haircuts, meals, clothing, supplying hygiene care kits, medical examinations, immunizations, legal advice, State identification cards for participants, veterans benefit information, training program information, employment services, and referral to various supportive services. The critical services provided at a Stand Down event are often the catalyst that enables homeless veterans to return to mainstream society.

The Director for Veterans' Employment and Training (DVET) is a vital link in determining the needs of veterans within his/her respective State. The DVET is the primary agency point-of-contact for Stand Down inquiries and is encouraged to take an active role in all aspects of planning and conducting events within his or her area of responsibility.

V. Use of Stand Down Awarded Funding: *Stand Down funding must be used to enhance employment and training opportunities and/or promote self-sufficiency for homeless veterans.* Grant applicants must identify all services, items, and/or goods that will be paid for with Stand Down funds. Grant funds may be used to support the following Stand Down activities:

- The purchase of food items, bottled water, clothing (cold weather type, shoes, boots, underwear, socks, coats), sleeping bags, and hygiene care kits;
- Preparation of meals;
- Rental of facilities and/or tents;
- Payment for special one-time electricity costs, equipment rentals, advertising, event posters, portable rest facilities (Porta Johns), janitorial/kitchen supplies, and temporary communications/internet access;
- Hiring of security personnel;
- Transportation for homeless veterans to and from Stand Down events; and
- Other items and services deemed appropriate and necessary.

Stand Down funds may not be used to purchase special monogrammed tee shirts, pen sets, specialty hats (unless for cold weather use of the homeless veteran attendees), military and veteran type patches, or memento gifts for staff members/visitors/volunteers.

The maximum amount that can be awarded to support a local Stand Down event is \$10,000 per year, per multi-day event. If the event is held for only one (1) day, the maximum amount that can be awarded is \$7,000.

VI. Stand Down Activities for Current HVRP Grantees: Under normal circumstances, current HVRP grantees will not be considered for separate non-competitive Stand Down grant funding. However, under special emergency circumstances such as a natural disaster that causes many veterans to become homeless in a short period of time, the Grant Officer may approve emergency grant awards up to \$99,999 (if funds are available) to support homeless veteran employment focused programs for the area(s) affected.

When the organization planning a Stand Down is a current, competitive HVRP grantee, up to \$10,000 of the existing budget may be obligated to support the event. If the grantee did not originally plan to expend funds to support Stand Down events, a line item budget change must be requested and approved.

When the funding requested for the Stand Down (up to \$10,000) is **less than 10%** of the total grant award for State and local government grantees or 5% of the total grant award for all grantees other than State and local government (includes non-profit organizations), the grantee will submit a written request to the DVET/Grant Officer Technical Representative (GOTR) for the budget line item shift. The DVET/GOTR will evaluate the request and may approve the request if deemed appropriate. Copies of the modification request and approval will be sent to the Regional Administrator for Veterans' Employment and Training (RAVET) and Competitive Grants Lead.

Requests for budget line item changes of **more than 10%** of total grant award for State and local government grantees or 5% of total grant award for all grantees other than State and local government (includes non-profit organizations) will be submitted to the Grant Officer through the DVET, RAVET, and National Office for approval. The DVET/GOTR will evaluate the request and submit the request along with his/her recommendation letter to the RAVET. The RAVET will provide a recommendation and forward the entire package (grantee request, DVET recommendation and RAVET recommendation) to the VETS National Office, Attn: Competitive Grants Lead.

VII. Application Information for Non-HVRP Grantees: When the organization planning the Stand Down is not a current, competitive HVRP grantee, funding is subject to approval by the Grant Officer. If approved, the grantee will receive a grant award letter and the financial documents and information required to establish an account in the Health and Human Services, Payment Management System (HHS/PMS).

A. **Application Deadlines:** All requests for Stand Down funding must be received by the DVET no later than 60 days prior to the event and by no later than June 30th for events that occur on or prior to November 30th. Applications for events occurring after November 30th will be accepted and considered for funding from the following year's Federal appropriation or continuing resolution funding. The Competitive Grants Lead will make decisions regarding late grant applications and funding availability issues on a case-by-case basis.

Under no circumstances can a Stand Down grant application be accepted or approved after the event has occurred.

- B. **Eligible Applicants:** Eligible applicants are the same as those eligible to apply for HVRP competitive grants, i.e. State Workforce Agencies and state and local Workforce Investment Boards, VSOs, local public agencies, for-profit/commercial entities, and non-profit organizations including community and faith-based organizations. VETS is not authorized to award grants to organizations that are registered with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as a 501(c) (4) organization.

The DVET and his/her staff are encouraged to provide technical assistance and guidance to any entity inquiring about or submitting an application for funds to support of Stand Down events. The Technical Assistance Guide (TAG) on Stand Down Grant Funding provided as Attachment 5 should be referred to and provided to such organizations upon request.

C. **Applicant Registration Requirements:**

1. All applicants for Federal funding are required to include a Dun and Bradstreet Number (DUNS) with their application. Grant applicants can obtain a DUNS number through the following website <http://www.dunandbradstreet.com/> or by phone at 1-866-705-5711.
2. After receiving a DUNS number, all grant applicants must also register as a vendor with Central Contractor Registration (CCR) through the following website: www.ccr.gov or by phone at 1-888-227-2423. CCR registration should become active within 24 hours of completion. If the applicant has questions regarding their registration, they should contact the CCR Assistance Center at 1-888-227-2423.

After registration, the CCR website will give the applicant a confirmation number. The applicant's Point of Contact will receive a Trader Partnership Identification Number (TPIN) via mail. The TPIN is, and should remain, a confidential password.

D. **Application Content:** All applications for Stand Down funding must include:

1. A transmittal letter from the applicant requesting Stand Down funds. The transmittal letter must contain a statement attesting that the signatory is authorized to enter into an agreement with the Department of Labor. It must also contain a copy of the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) confirmation number. The applicant will provide the original transmittal letter signed in blue ink;
2. A Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance (original form signed in blue ink). The applicant should fill out the new SF 424 form that was revised October 2005. Please note the length of this new form is 4 pages, includes 2 pages of instructions, and is located on the www.grant.gov website;
3. An SF 424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs that cross-walks to

the SF 424 provided;

4. A Program Narrative that describes the Stand Down activities and includes a timeline for completion of activities. For Stand Down events that occur on or after July 1st, grantees must demonstrate and document all planned activities prior to the end of the FY (September 30th);
5. A Budget Narrative describing each planned expenditure listed on the SF 424A. The description should provide the methodology used in determining the cost estimates such as quantity and if the item will be purchased or rented. Will the items be utilized by the participant or assist the volunteer(s) at the event? ;
6. A signed, original Assurances and Certifications Signature Page (the signature page and all applicable Assurances and Certifications are provided as Attachment 3);
7. Complete the Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants (See Attachment 4);
8. Letters of support, particularly those from the local One-Stop Career Centers, DVOP specialists, LVER staff, the Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) or the local Continuum of Care (COC), VSOs, State and local government agencies, local businesses, local non-profit organizations including community based and faith based organizations, etc., as applicable; and;
9. If the applicant claims non-profit status, a copy of the Internal Revenue Service documentation indicating 501(c) (3), 501(c) (19) status.

VIII. First-Level Application Review: The DVET will:

- A. Review the application and ensure that it is complete, accurate, and prepared in accordance with this directive. If errors or omissions are found, the DVET will notify the applicant and request corrections. Pen and ink changes are acceptable by drawing a single, horizontal line through the error, entering the correct information and initialing the change;
- B. Complete Section A of the Stand Down Review Checklist provided as Attachment 1;
- C. Generate an “Executive Summary” of no more than two pages that contains pertinent information concerning the proposed Stand Down event including:
 - The grant applicant’s experience (i.e., 1st event, 2nd event, 10th event, etc.);
 - Expected partners involved;
 - A summary of planned activities;

- A summary of planned expenditures;
- The estimated number of homeless veterans to be served;
- A verification that local DVOP specialist and/or LVER staff will support and participate in the Stand Down event. If no DVOP/LVER staff are in the local area; then indicate if the One Stop Career Center will participate in the event; and
- The extent of participation by VETS staff (strongly encouraged as travel funds permit).

D. Provide a written recommendation for approval/disapproval for funding to the respective RAVET. A recommendation for disapproval must include the reason(s) for the recommendation and when applicable, a description of attempts made to correct the application. When the applicant has not received prior Stand Down funding, consideration will be based on whether the request meets HVRP eligibility criteria, research of the applicant's program, and letters of support; and

E. Forward the complete "original" application for Stand Down funding, Executive Summary, original signed approval/disapproval recommendation, and the completed Stand Down Review Checklist to the appropriate RAVET within 10 calendar days of receipt.

IX. Second Level Application Review: The RAVET will:

A. Review the application and ensure that it is complete, accurate, and prepared in accordance with VETS policy. If errors or omissions are found, the RAVET will notify the appropriate DVET to make corrections or, as needed, request the necessary corrections from the applicant. Pen and ink changes are acceptable by drawing a single, horizontal line through the error, entering the correct information and initialing the change;

B. Complete Section B of the Stand Down Review Checklist, provided as Attachment 1;

C. Make a recommendation for approval/disapproval of funding in a memorandum addressed to the Competitive Grants Lead. A recommendation against approval must indicate the reason(s) for the negative recommendation, and when applicable, documentation of attempts made to correct the situation leading to a negative recommendation; and

D. Forward the complete "original" application for Stand Down funding, Executive Summary, original signed DVET and RAVET recommendation memorandums, and completed Stand Down Review Checklist to the VETS National Office, Attn: Competitive Grants Lead within ten (10) calendar days of receipt. It is suggested that the application be sent via Federal Express, UPS, or other non-U.S. Postal Service carrier to prevent delays in processing.

X. Third Level Application Review: The Competitive Grants Lead will:

- A. Review the application and ensure that it is complete, accurate, and prepared in accordance with VETS policy. If errors or omissions are found, notify the appropriate RAVET or DVET to request necessary corrections from the applicant. Pen and ink changes are acceptable by drawing a single, horizontal line through the error, entering the correct information and initialing the change; and
- B. Make a final recommendation for approval/disapproval of the request. If recommended for approval, the Lead will forward the application to the Grant Officer through the appropriate National Office channels.

In the event funding is not recommended, the Competitive Grants Lead will notify the applicant in writing and provide the reason(s) for disapproval.

XI. Stand Down Grant Approval and Draw Down of Funds: When the request for funding is approved, the Grant Officer will send the grant award letter, the General Grant Provisions, the Special Grant Provisions and the financial documents needed to establish an account in HHS/PMS to the grantee. The Grant Officer will forward a copy of the grant award letter to Competitive Grants Lead who will provide copies to the appropriate RAVET and DVET.

Once the grant award is approved, the grantee is authorized to obligate and expend funding. The grantee is expected to electronically draw down all Stand Down funding no later than November 30th.

Grantees must submit the completed HHS/PMS financial forms directly to the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), Division of Financial Management Operations in order to electronically draw down funds. The financial forms should be sent via FedEx, UPS, or other non U.S. Postal Service provider to avoid processing delays. Questions or problems relating to the HHS/PMS paperwork or processes should be referred to Gene Contee in the USDOL Procurement Office at (202) 693-4479.

The grantee will receive a packet of instructions on how to set their account up directly from HHS/PMS. After setting up the account, the grantee will be able to electronically draw down funds. Funds can be drawn down to reimburse approved expenses already incurred and to cover approved expenses that will be paid within three days of the draw down. Funds requested for electronic draw down through the HHS/PMS are directly deposited into the grantee's account within 24 hours of the request.

Since funds may be electronically drawn down in more than one quarter up to and after the date of the Stand Down event, grantees are required to complete a PSC Federal Cash Transaction Report (PS 272) within 45 days after the end of each quarter in which funds are

drawn down (February 14th, May 15th, August 14th, and November 14th). Instructions for completing this requirement are provided in the HHS/PMS information packet. The grantee will print hard copies of all PSC 272 forms and attach it to the Stand Down Activity and Expenditure Report that is submitted after the event.

XII. Reporting Requirements: As mentioned in the Stand Down Special Grant Provisions, Section III. “Reporting Requirements”, effective July 1, 2005, **all current competitive HVRP grantees** must report Stand Down expenditures and the estimated number of Stand Down participants served in the VETS Operations and Programs Activity Reporting (VOPAR) system.

Non-competitive Stand Down grantees must submit a Stand Down Activity and Expenditure Report to the DVET/GOTR and the USDOL Procurement Services Center no later than 45 calendar days after the event takes place. For specific reporting instructions, see Stand Down Special Grant Provisions, Section III. “Reporting Requirements”. If the grantee experiences unforeseen delays in submitting the required reports, it is their responsibility to request and receive an approval for an extension from their respective DVET/GOTR.

To prevent processing delays and/or the need to recoup over payments, grantees should be strongly encouraged to submit the Stand Down Activity and Expenditure Report to their DVET/GOTR prior to sending the original to Procurement Services. The DVET/GOTR will review the expenditures to ensure the grantee is in accordance with the budget forecast, appropriate for reimbursement, and paid or contracted prior to the Stand Down event. The DVET/GOTR will maintain the original sales receipts locally.

When the DVET/GOTR does not recommend approval of a particular expenditure, he/she must notify the grantee in writing of the exception with an explanation for the disapproval of the expenditure and request that the grantee electronically return the funds to their HHS/PMS account if already drawn down. A copy of the disapproval of expenditures correspondence must be sent to the appropriate RAVET, Competitive Grants Lead, and the Grant Officer. The Competitive Grants Lead will follow-up to ensure the grantee provides documentation that the disapproved expenditure funds are returned to their HHS/PMS account.

When the DVET recommends approval of the Stand Down Activity and Expenditure Report, he/she will forward a copy of the SF 269A, signed invoice or list of expenditures and Stand Down After Action Report with a cover letter to the appropriate RAVET, who in turn will forward a copy to the Competitive Grants Lead.

A grantee that fails to comply with guidance set forth in the Stand Down Special Grant Provisions and/or reporting requirements set forth in this directive will be excluded from consideration for any future funding.

XIII. Actions Required:

- A. Remove from files and destroy Director's Memorandum #10-06 dated May 1, 2006.
- B. DVETs/GOTRs will provide technical assistance to grant applicants applying for Stand Down funds and grant awardees throughout the process of planning, conducting and reporting the event.
- C. DVETs, RAVETs, and the Competitive Grants Lead will follow the procedures set forth in this directive to review requests for funding and ensure grantees fulfill their responsibilities in conducting and reporting Stand Down events.
- D. DVETs, RAVETs, and Competitive Grants Lead will maintain a paper copy and/or an electronic file of all Stand Down grantee reports for a period of three (3) years.
- E. The Competitive Grants Lead will be responsible for:
 - Logging in all Stand Down requests received;
 - Reviewing grant application request packages for completeness and accuracy;
 - Ensuring availability of funding;
 - Generating and processing funding allocation documents;
 - Securing necessary approvals through the VETS National Office and DOL Procurement;
 - Submitting VETS approved requests for Stand Down funding to the Grant Officer for appropriate action;
 - Coordinating with the Grant Officer to ensure each VETS request for Stand Down funding has been processed and responded to in a timely manner;
 - Faxing or electronic distribution of grant award documents to respective RAVET and DVETs/GOTRs upon receipt from Grant Officer; and
 - Coordinating with VETS Office of Management and Budget to ensure all Stand Down grantees draw down funds electronically in a timely fashion.

XIV. Inquiries: Any questions regarding this directive are to be referred through the appropriate RAVET to the VETS National Office, Competitive Grants Lead at (202) 693-4756.

XV. Expiration Date: Until superseded or rescinded by separate correspondence.

Attachments:

- (1) Stand Down Grant Application Review Checklist
- (2) Stand Down After Action Report
- (3) Assurances and Certifications
- (4) Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants
- (5) Technical Assistance Guide (TAG) for Stand Down Grant Funding