

**Veterans Homelessness Prevention Demonstration**

**Task Order Number**

**Contract Number C-CHI-01115T-0001**

**Paperwork Reduction Act Submission for Veterans Homelessness Prevention  
Demonstration Evaluation Focus Groups and Telephone Survey**

**Part A: Justification**

**Appendix A: Focus Group Protocols**

**FOCUS GROUP CONSENT FORM  
ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION**

I volunteer to be part of a discussion group for the Veterans Homeless Prevention Study. The study seeks to better understand strategies for preventing homelessness among veterans. The focus groups are being conducted by staff from Silber & Associates and the Urban Institute.

I understand that:

- The information I provide will be kept confidential and only used for this study to the extent allowed by the Privacy Act of 1974. The researchers on this study will destroy any tapes and notes after the completion of the study in January 2015.
- In project reports, the information that I provide will never be linked with my name and my name will not be released.
- My participation is voluntary, and I may choose to skip any questions I wish or refuse to participate completely at any time.
- Participating in this research will have no effect on my VHPD services or any other public assistance. Further, if I choose not to participate in the study, it will have no effect on my VHPD services. My decision whether or not to participate in this study will have no effect on my eligibility to receive services through the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Labor, or the Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- With my permission, the discussion will be audio recorded.
- The discussion will last about 1.5 to 2 hours. I understand that as a token of appreciation for my participation I will receive \$50.

Further I understand:

- The Silber & Associates/Urban Institute research team will not reveal information regarding my participation to anyone outside this project.
- I understand that the researchers are required to take steps, including reporting to authorities, a situation where they believe someone they speak to may harm themselves or others.

If I have any questions about this study, I may contact Mary Cunningham at 202.261.5764

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Respondent Name (please print)

**VHPD Study Focus Group Protocol**

## **Introduction**

Welcome and thank you for coming.

Let me start by thanking you for your service to our country.

We asked you all here today to participate in this focus group to discuss your experiences with the Veteran Homelessness Prevention Demonstration (VHPD). We are collecting this information as part of a study funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The focus group will last about an hour and a half. At the end of the session, you will receive \$50 as a token of our appreciation for your participation. .

During the session, I will be asking questions about your military experience, your thoughts on VHPD, and services that might be helpful to you in the future. This is a discussion, not a survey, so you can feel free to talk amongst yourselves and respond to what others are saying. Please make sure to be respectful to other people's opinions. Occasionally I will jump in to moderate the conversation. Please note that you do not have to answer all of the questions. Importantly, we ask everyone here today to respect people's privacy. What is said in the room should stay in the room. At the end of the session, we will type up the notes and the information will be included in a report to HUD. The information you provide will be kept confidential and only used for this study to the extent allowed by the Privacy Act of 1974. This is a chance, however, to get your voice heard, since HUD will use this information to help improve the VHPD program and other homeless prevention programs like it.

Any questions about the study, or why we are here for this focus group?

Before we go on, I need everyone to read the consent form in front of you and, if you agree with the terms, go ahead and sign it. Let me review the terms.

[Moderator should read consent form]

Does anyone have questions?

## **Opening**

- First, I'd like to start with some introductions. Please tell us your name, where you served, and how long you've been home since your last tour of duty.

## **Reasons for Housing Instability and Pathways to VHPD**

- Please describe some of the big challenges you faced when returning from serving your tour of duty. [Probe for adjusting to family life, financial trouble, finding employment, finding or maintaining housing.]

[The following are probes that will be used for focus groups with particular subgroups, if it is possible to construct such groups:

- o Specific probe for veterans with families only: Were there challenges that were related to you specifically because you have children to take care of?
- o Specific probe for women: Were there challenges that were related to you specifically because you are women?

- o Specific probe for veterans of OEF/OIF: How do you think your experiences as an OEF/OIF veteran differed from those who served before you in the Vietnam War?
- When did your housing struggles start?
  - o [Probe for immediately on return or sometime after.]
- What led you to seek help? [Probe for loss of a job or housing, etc.]
- How did you hear about VHPD?

### **Experiences with VHPD, Services Received, and Effectiveness of Those Services**

- What are some of your overall impressions of the VHPD program?
- What services did you get from the [name of VHPD grantee organization]? How helpful were they?
- Has VHPD helped you access additional services through the VA and the Department of Labor/Workforce Center? If so, how and what types of services?
- How has your situation changed since starting the VHPD program?
  - o Probe for housing security, job skills/employment, mental and physical health, benefit receipt, financial situation, education
- Looking back, which aspects of VHPD do you think have been most helpful in getting you to this point?
  - o Probe: financial assistance, case management, referrals
  - o FOR OEF/OIF Only: How do you think the needs of OIF/OEF veterans differ from veterans from previous wars?

### **Prospects for the Future**

- What types of services would be helpful to you in the future?
- How do you think the VHPD program will affect your housing stability long-term?