

How to become a VI-SPDAT Superstar



Explaining the VI-SPDAT - Resources

- [Suggested Messaging](#)
- [Messaging DOs and DONTs](#)

Explaining the VI-SPDAT – Talking Points

- “The assessment helps us figure out the best type of housing to meet your needs.”
 - “It’s not a waiting list.”
 - “It helps you (and us) direct your energy toward finding the right housing program.”
- “The assessment can also help you get connected to other resources, e.g. health care, mental health, employment, etc.”
- “Your information is confidential and will only be shared with other Coordinated Entry providers, all of whom are in a position to help you find resources and housing.”

How to get beyond the questions listed

- Read questions as written. If the client asks for clarification, rephrase as needed.
- Reference dates to help with recall
 - Question 3: “In the past six months, how many times have you been to the emergency room?”
 - Can also be framed as: “The fourth of July was six months ago. Since the fourth of July, how many times have you been to the emergency room?”
- Question #50
 - Read word for word, do not ask for details, and do not press if you think the answer is inaccurate

How to get beyond the questions listed

- How to address inaccurate self-reporting
 - One opportunity to clarify
 - Question #16: “Do you have enough money at the end of the month, or do you usually run out?”
 - Question #23: “Have you ever been so cold that you had to get medical attention?”
 - “I thought I remember...”
 - If you have a relationship with the individual, you can reference something you know about them
 - “I thought I remember that we called 911 for you when your blood pressure was high. Or was that someone else?”
 - “I thought I remember you telling me that the police ‘locked you up’ and took you to CPEP. Or am I misremembering?”

Clarification

- **Questions that commonly require clarification**
 - Question 6: In the past six months, how many times have you used a crisis service, including distress centers and suicide prevention hotlines?
 - Does not include the Shelter Hotline
 - Question 10: Do you have any legal stuff going on right now that may result in you being locked up or having to pay fines?
 - “Legal stuff” includes parole and probation (even if the individual is currently fulfilling obligations), active warrants, unpaid tickets
 - Questions 15: Do you have any money coming in on a regular basis, like a job or government benefit or even working under the table, binning or bottle collecting, sex work, odd jobs, day labor, or anything like that?
 - In Washington, DC, you can omit “binning or bottle collecting” since neither of these yields income

How to collect contact information

- Multiple types of information to collect
 - Phone Number
 - Request that the individual update their phone number with you if it changes
 - Phone number of a family member or friend
 - Email Address
 - Contact info for case worker, family, or friends
 - Encourage the individual to stay engaged with your agency or other sources of support

How to collect contact information

- Location
 - “Where do you sleep? What time do you get there and what time do you leave?”
 - “Where and what time do you eat meals?”
 - “Is there anywhere you usually hang out? The library? Park? A church?”
 - “If you go to the hospital, where do you usually go?”

Explaining the Results of the VI-SPDAT

- *Do not give out the score.* Only explain the recommended housing intervention: PSH, RRH, or one-time assistance.
- Explain PSH and RRH very matter-of-fact
- Use strengths-based language
- Be honest that there's far more demand than supply. We're hopeful this will change with the FY16 budget.

Resources and Assessment Follow-up

- Assessors should use the VI-SPDAT to inform case management

Domain Area	Components within the SPDAT
History of Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">History of Housing and Homelessness
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Risk of Harm to Self or OthersInvolvement in High-Risk and/or Exploitive SituationsInteractions with Emergency ServicesLegal IssuesManaging Tenancy
Socialization and Daily Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Self-Care and Daily Living SkillsPersonal Administration and Money ManagementMeaningful Daily ActivitiesSocial Relations and Networks
Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Mental Health and Wellness and Cognitive FunctioningPhysical Health and WellnessMedicationSubstance UseExperience of Abuse and/or Trauma

Resources and Assessment Follow-up

- What can clients do to work on housing themselves?
 - Apply for housing opportunities outside of Coordinated Entry
 - Collect ID documents
 - Stay engaged with your organization and case managers
 - Let you know if their circumstances change at all
 - Pursue recovery goals identified in the VI-SPDAT, e.g. mental health services
 - Reference the [Resource Manual](#)

FAQs

- Where am I on the waiting list?
 - “The survey does not place you on a waiting list. It’s designed to help us figure out the right type of housing to meet your needs. Once you know what type of housing makes sense for you, you can focus your efforts on specific housing programs.”
- When do I hear back?
 - “It’s impossible to tell if and when you might hear something. The best thing you can do right now is a.) make sure we have up-to-date contact information for you, b.) collect all your ID documents, and c.) continue pursuing housing programs that meet your needs. Don’t put all your eggs in this one basket. Keep doing what you’re doing: engaging with service providers like myself, pursuing your recovery goals, and looking for housing programs that make sense for you.”

FAQs

- How come all these people got housed before me?
 - “The assessment helps us figure out the what type of housing program is best for you. The people who have been getting housing have been matched to programs that make sense for them, not necessarily programs that make sense for you. We’re hopeful that a lot more people will get matched to housing this upcoming year as the DC Government allots a lot more money to permanent housing.”

BE THE HERO

YOU

WERE BORN TO BE