



**SAN FRANCISCO
HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY**

Department of Benefits
and Family Support

Department of Disability
and Aging Services

P.O. Box 7988
San Francisco, CA
94120-7988
www.SFHSA.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: DISABILITY AND AGING SERVICES COMMISSION

THROUGH: KELLY DEARMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FROM: CINDY KAUFFMAN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR
ESPERANZA ZAPIEN, DIRECTOR OF CONTRACTS

DATE: JUNE 5, 2024

SUBJECT: NEW GRANT: **SWORDS TO PLOWSHARES (NON-PROFIT)** TO PROVIDE LEGAL AND HOUSING ASSISTANCE FOR VETERANS WITH MENTAL HEALTH CLAIMS

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GRANT TERM: 7/1/2024-6/30/2026

GRANT AMOUNT:

<u>New</u>	<u>Contingency</u>	<u>Total</u>
\$156,818	\$15,682	\$172,500

ANNUAL AMOUNT

<u>FY 24/25</u>	<u>FY 25/26</u>
\$77,250	\$79,568



London Breed
Mayor

Trent Rhorer
Executive Director

Funding Source	<u>County</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Federal</u>	<u>Contingency</u>	<u>Total</u>
FUNDING:	\$6,818	\$150,000		\$15,682	\$172,500
PERCENTAGE:	4%	96%			100%

The Department of Disability and Aging Services (DAS) requests authorization to enter into a grant with Swords to Plowshares for the period of July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2026, in an amount of \$156,818, plus a 10% contingency for a total amount not to exceed \$172,500. The purpose of the grant is to provide legal and housing assistance to veterans with mental health claims.

Background

Access to veteran's benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) can help to address many of the root causes that lead to homelessness and a lack of housing stability. Veterans with mental health disabilities have an overwhelming need for VA benefits assistance, but few options for support. Veterans unjustly labeled with less than honorable discharges are especially vulnerable: they are twice as likely to commit suicide and experience homelessness, and three times as likely to become involved in the criminal justice system. Combat veterans with a psychiatric diagnosis are nine times more likely to have a less than honorable discharge. Due to their discharge status, they are often denied mental health treatment and benefits from the VA without an advocate. Securing access to VA benefits can be lengthy and complicated, particularly for veterans struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, chronic or severe mental illness, and/or homelessness who need additional support to complete the process.

Compared nationally, California has the highest rate of homeless veterans where 71% of them are living unsheltered. The San Francisco, Continuum of Care has the 5th highest rate of veterans living unsheltered. San Francisco's 2022 Point in Time Count discovered 605 homeless veterans with 67% unsheltered. The most frequently cited cause of homelessness included eviction (14%), incarceration (10%), and mental health issues (9%).

The San Francisco County Veterans Service Office (SFCVSO), part of DAS, assists veterans with filing and tracking claims in order to get benefits for veterans and their dependents. Swords to Plowshares is a community-based organization located in San Francisco dedicated to serving veterans. The SFCVSO has had a longstanding partnership with Swords to Plowshares who provides critical services particularly to veterans with complex legal benefits cases.

The California Dept. of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) grant funding is intended to support enhancement of mental health outreach, treatment, and other related recovery programs by County Veterans Services Offices. The SFCVSO was awarded the MHSA funding in partnership with Swords to Plowshares by CalVet after submitting a successful proposal highlighting ongoing collaboration and outreach activities to underserved veterans.

Services to be Provided

The purpose of this grant is to provide outreach, intake, free legal counseling, and representation for vulnerable veterans with complex mental health benefits claims to remove legal barriers and increase access to VA mental and primary healthcare, monetary benefits, and supportive services. This grant will also provide housing assistance to veterans experiencing or at-risk for homelessness to navigate and access housing solutions available to them.

The goals of this grant align with the mission of DAS and the SFCVSO to streamline service coordination between the SFCVSO and community-based veteran's services. Collaboration between Swords to Plowshares and the SFCVSO will expand the availability and accessibility of legal and housing assistance to increase access to veteran's benefits, which in turn contributes to improved health and quality of life outcomes for veterans. Swords to Plowshares will provide legal counseling, case analysis, advice, self-help materials, and legal intake for full representation by an attorney, in addition to, problem solving, housing eligibility assessment, and access to housing to those in need.

Swords to Plowshares will focus outreach to low-income and/or homeless veterans with mental health disabilities who reside in San Francisco. The program will target underserved veterans (less than honorably discharged, LGBTQ+, women, student, and justice-involved) with complex VA mental health disability claims. These underserved veterans are frequently not receiving the benefits to which they are entitled due to eligibility barriers or difficulty proving their mental health disabilities are service-related; Many of these veterans are unable to navigate the complex Veterans Benefits Administration benefits claims process without expert legal assistance.

Swords to Plowshares will provide outreach at Swords to Plowshares' Drop-in Center, Veterans Community Center and 6 supportive housing sites, the San Francisco Vet Center, the SFCVSO, and other locations where underserved veterans seek support. Veterans who require ongoing

legal assistance and/or full representation to access VA benefits will be identified during intake interviews and/or SFCVSO referrals. Veterans will be offered referrals to Swords to Plowshares for additional services in case management, counseling, supportive services for veteran families, housing placement, supportive housing, and employment to address other than legal needs. Swords to Plowshares legal program staff and SFCVSO will also provide a direct connection to Swords' Housing Access Point to be assessed for housing options.

Achievement of the project goals will make a dramatic impact in the lives of veterans and their families by ensuring that more underserved veterans with mental health disabilities have access to VA mental and primary healthcare; VA monetary disability benefits that compensate for mental health disabilities incurred in military services; and available housing assistance and other supportive services designed to support their reintegration to civilian life.

Selection

Grantee was selected through Sole Source Waiver as Swords to Plowshares was named in the California Department of Veterans Affairs grant award.

Funding

Funding for this grant is State Funds provided through California Department of Veterans Affairs and county general funds.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A – Services to be Provided

Appendix B – Budget

Appendix F – Site Chart

Sole Source

Appendix A – Services to be Provided

Swords to Plowshares

Legal and Housing Assistance for Veterans with Mental Health Claims Project

July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2026

I. Purpose of Grant

The purpose of this grant is to provide free legal counseling and representation for vulnerable veterans with complex benefits claims to remove legal barriers and increase access to Veterans Administration healthcare, monetary benefits, and housing services, and to provide housing assistance to veterans experiencing or at-risk for homelessness to navigate and access housing solutions available to them.

II. Definitions

CARBON	Contracts Administration, Reporting and Billing Online System
City	City and County of San Francisco
DAS	Department of Disability and Aging Services.
Disability	Mental, cognitive and/or physical impairments, including hearing and visual impairments, that result in substantial functional limitations in one (1) or more of the following areas of major life activity: self-care, receptive and expressive language, learning, mobility, and self-direction, capacity for independent living, economic self-sufficiency, cognitive functioning, and emotional adjustment. Source: California Code of Regulations Title 22, Sec. 7630
Exponent Case Management (ECM)	Grantees' organization-wide client database, that captures and reports on program participants' gender, age, ethnicity, military branch, era of service, disability status, department accessed, department-specific measures, and progress over time.
Grantee	Swords to Plowshares
Housing and Urban Development and the Dept. of Veterans Affairs Supported Housing (HUD-VASH)	Voucher program paired with case management services for homeless veterans for rental assistance
Online Navigation and Entry system (ONE)	Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) designed by the Continuum of Care to comply with HUD's data collection, management, and reporting standards.
Outreach	Formal and informal approaches used to engage the target population. Formal approaches can include, but are not limited to, one-to-one contact and/or working with a community collaborative group. Informal approaches can include, but are not limited to, designated staff being present and available in

	community spaces (i.e. community living room, game room, mailroom etc.)
Permanent Supportive Housing	Long-term affordable housing with support services.
SFCVSO	San Francisco County Veterans Services Office
SF-HSA	Human Services Agency of the City and County of San Francisco.
SOGI	Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity; Ordinance No. 159-16 amended the San Francisco Administrative Code to require City departments and contractors that provide health care and social services to seek to collect and analyze data concerning the sexual orientation and gender identity of the clients they serve (Chapter 104, Sections 104.1 through 104.9.)
Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)	VA funded program that assists very low-income veteran families residing in or transitioning to permanent housing. Swords to Plowshares will provide a range of supportive services to eligible Veteran families that are designed to promote housing stability to include emergency housing assistance and eviction prevention.
Unduplicated Consumer (UDC)	A consumer enrolled in the Mental Health Claims Project.
U.S. Department of Defense (DoD)	Executive division of the U.S. federal government responsible for ensuring national security and supervising U.S. military forces.
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)	A Cabinet-level executive branch department of the federal government charged with running programs benefiting veterans and members of their families.
Veteran	A person who served in any branch of the (US) military.
Veteran Access Point	Swords to Plowshares' Coordinated Entry Adult Access Point for housing assessment for Swords permanent and stabilization supportive housing programs, housing placement, and emergency bridge housing.

III. Target Population

The program will target underserved veterans including other than honorably discharged, LGBTQ+, women, students, justice-involved, and experiencing or at-risk for homelessness.

IV. Eligibility for Program Enrollment

- A military veteran seeking assistance with accessing VA healthcare and monetary benefits for mental health disabilities, OR
- A military veteran seeking assistance with navigating or accessing housing solutions available to veterans.

V. Description of Services

1. The San Francisco County Veterans Services Office (SFCVSO) and Grantee will refer veterans to Swords to Plowshares' Drop-in Center for a full intake, which provides a screening and assessment of vulnerabilities, including the

- presence of co-occurring mental and substance use disorders, and provide program and community-based referrals for other than legal needs.
2. Grantee will provide free legal benefits assistance, including legal representation, and accept all legal referrals from the SFCVSO.
 - a. Grantee will host on-site legal clinics where veterans seek services (e.g. Swords to Plowshares' Drop-in Center, the SF Vet Center, San Francisco VA Health Care System, and City College of San Francisco). Grantee will provide legal counseling, case analysis, advice, self-help materials, and legal intake for full representation by an attorney.
 - b. Veterans with less complicated cases and lower vulnerabilities will be referred to the SFCVSO for benefits application assistance.
 3. The SFCVSO and Grantee's legal program staff will provide direct referrals to the Grantee's housing services for veterans identified as experiencing or at risk for homelessness.
 - a. Grantee will assist veterans experiencing or at-risk for homelessness with problem solving and housing eligibility assessment.
 - b. Grantee will seek to successfully house eligible veterans via housing solutions such as Veterans Access Point, Permanent Supportive Housing, HUD-VASH, or Supportive Services for Veteran Families.
 4. The SFCVSO and Grantee will conduct both formal and informal outreach to the target population. Outreach efforts include, but not limited to, one to one contact, publicizing the Grantees' free legal clinics and housing assistance program, and direct referrals to the Grantee Drop-in Center.
 5. Grantee will offer all clients served at legal clinics information on:
 - a. Available VA benefits, eligibility requirements, free self-help materials and legal counseling advice.
 - b. Available community-based supportive services to increase their health, housing and income.
 6. Grantee will promote early intervention by increasing access to VA benefits for student veterans and other transitioning service members with mental health disabilities.
 7. Grantee will outreach to justice-involved veterans in SF Vet Court diversion programs and incarcerated veterans through the Community of Veterans Engaged in Restoration (COVER) program to increase access and eligibility to VA benefits and services.

VI. Location and Time of Services

Please refer to Appendix F – Site Chart

VII. Service Objectives

On an annual basis, the grantee will meet the following service objectives for the Mental Health Claims Project in Table A below:

Performance Metric	Data Source	FY 2024-2025	FY 2025-2026	Total 2-years
1. Number of free legal clinics held.	Data collected and entered into ECM	At least 10 legal clinics held annually	At least 10 legal clinics held annually	At least 20 legal clinics held annually
2. Number of unduplicated veterans who receive information and direct, one-time legal counseling regarding their mental health-related VA benefits or Discharge Upgrade case.	Data collected at legal intake is entered into ECM	40 unduplicated veterans annually	40 unduplicated veterans annually	80 unduplicated veterans
3. Number of veterans who will report that they have an increase in awareness and understanding of their rights and entitlements at the end of the counseling session.	Data collected and recorded at end of session.	36 unduplicated veterans annually	36 unduplicated veterans annually	72 unduplicated veterans
4. Number of veterans served who have a less than honorable discharge.	Data collected entered and tracked in ECM and Prevail.	13 veterans annually	13 veterans annually	26 veterans
5. Number of veterans who received ongoing legal assistance by an attorney on their mental-health related VA benefits and/or Discharge Upgrade case.	Cases taken on for full representation will be entered and tracked in ECM.	8 unduplicated veterans annually	8 unduplicated veterans annually	16 unduplicated veterans
6. Number of represented clients who receive a positive decision from the VA or the DoD their mental-health related benefits and/or Discharge Upgrade case.	Successful outcomes will be tracked and recorded in ECM.	8 veterans annually	8 veterans annually	16 veterans
7. Number of unduplicated veterans experiencing or at-risk for homelessness who receive problem solving and housing eligibility assessment.	Data collected, entered and tracked in ECM and ONE System	25 veterans annually	25 veterans annually	50 veterans
8. Number of veterans successfully housed via housing solutions such as permanent supportive housing, HUD-VASH, or SSVF.	Data collected, entered and tracked in ECM and ONE System	19 unduplicated veterans annually	19 unduplicated veterans annually	38 veterans

VIII. Outcome Objectives

On an annual basis, the grantee will meet the following outcome objectives:

1. Veterans will report, via a consumer satisfaction survey provided by Grantee, that they have an increase in awareness and understanding of available VA benefits, their rights, and entitlements at the end of the counseling session. Target: 75%
2. Veterans will receive a positive decision from the VA or the DoD where that decision provides an increase in access to VA mental healthcare benefits through removal of legal barriers, and/or an increase in monetary disability benefits income. Target: 75%
3. Veterans will access VA mental and physical healthcare by removing legal military discharge barriers. Target: 75%
4. Veterans who engage with the Veteran Access Point will be assessed for their housing needs and will receive problem solving services, if applicable. Target: 100%
5. Veterans eligible for housing placement will be assisted with housing navigation services and successfully placed into permanent housing to which they qualify. Target: 75%

IX. Reporting and Other Requirements

1. Grantee will enroll eligible consumers in the Mental Health Claims Project. Their enrollment will be reflected in the ECM Software database.
2. Grantee will ensure that units of service provided through this grant agreement are tracked and distinguishable, including the number of unduplicated veterans served, and number of legal clinics hosted.
3. Grantee will coordinate with SFCVSO Manager on regular grant reporting to the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet).
4. Grantee shall issue a fiscal closeout report at the end of the fiscal year. The grantee will submit the report to SF-HSA through CARBON system no later than July 31st each grant year. SF-HSA may request and require additional reports at other times during the fiscal year.
5. Grantee will provide an annual client survey report to DAS by March 15th each grant year or a mutually agreed upon date between DAS and the grantee.
6. Grantee shall develop and deliver bi-annual summary reports of SOGI data collected in each grant year as requested by SF-HSA. The due dates for submitting the bi-annual summary reports are January 10th (for July 1 to December 31 data) and July 10th (for January 1 to June 30 data).
7. Grantee program staff will complete security awareness training on an annual basis; grantee will maintain evidence of staff completion of this training.

8. Grantee's non-legal program staff will complete an Elder Abuse Mandated Reporter Training on an annual basis; grantee will maintain evidence of staff completion of this training.
9. Grantee will be compliant with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) privacy and security rules. For specific compliance requirements, please refer to Appendices within the Grant Agreement.
10. Grantee shall develop and deliver ad hoc reports as requested by SF-HSA and/or DAS.

For assistance with reporting requirements or submission of reports, contact:

Maurice Delmer
SF CVS0 Manager
Department of Disability and Aging Services
Maurice.Delmer@SFgov.org

Patrick Garcia
Senior Contract Manager
Human Services Agency
Patrick.Garcia@SFgov.org

X. Monitoring Activities

Program Monitoring: Program monitoring will include review of compliance to specific program standards or requirements; consumer eligibility and any targeted mandates, back up documentation for the units of service and all reporting including the log of service units which is based on the service provision hours; sign-in sheets of consumers who participated in services, and progress of service and outcome objectives; how consumer records are collected and maintained; reporting performance total number of unduplicated consumers served annually; agency and organization standards, which include current organizational chart, evidence of provision of training to staff regarding the Elder Abuse Reporting, evidence that program staff have completed Security Awareness Training; program operation, which includes a review of a written policies and procedures manual of all DAS funded programs, written project income policies if applicable, grievance procedure posted in the center/office, and also given to the consumers who are homebound, hours of operation are current; a board of director list and whether services are provided appropriately according to Section V.

Fiscal Compliance and Contract Monitoring: Fiscal monitoring will include review of the Grantee's organizational budget, the general ledger, quarterly balance sheet, cost allocation procedures and plan, State and Federal tax forms, audited financial statement, fiscal policy manual, supporting documentation for selected invoices, cash receipts and disbursement journals. The compliance monitoring will include review of Personnel Manual, Emergency Operations Plan, Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, subcontracts, and MOUs, and the current board roster and selected board minutes for compliance with the Sunshine Ordinance.

**HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY BUDGET SUMMARY
BY PROGRAM**

Grantee: Swords to Plowshares		Full Term:	7/1/24 - 6/30/26
Program: Legal and Housing Assistance for Veterans with Mental Health Claims		Effective Date:	
New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Modification <input type="checkbox"/> Revision <input type="checkbox"/>		Modification #	
	7/1/24 - 6/30/25	7/1/25 - 6/30/26	7/1/24 - 6/30/26
Expenses	Original	Original	Total
Salaries & Benefits	\$70,156	\$72,264	\$142,420
Operating-Direct	\$71	\$71	\$142
Subtotal	\$70,227	\$72,335	\$142,562
Indirect Percentage (%)	10%	10%	10%
Indirect Costs (Line 16 X Line 15)	\$7,023	\$7,233	\$14,256
CODB Eligible Expenses	\$77,250	\$79,568	\$156,818
Consultant/Subcontractor (\$25,000+)			
Direct Client Pass-Through			
Capital Expenses			
Total Expenses	\$77,250	\$79,568	\$156,818
HSA / DAS Revenues			
Total HSA / DAS Revenues	\$77,250	\$79,568	\$156,818
Grantee Revenues			
Total Grantee Revenues			
Total Revenues	\$77,250	\$79,568	\$156,818
Prepared by:			
<i>Telephone No. & Email:</i>		<i>HSA Budget Form (3/24)</i>	

Grantee: Swords to Plowshares											Appendix B, Page 2
Program: Legal and Housing Assistance for Veterans with Mental Health Claims											
Salaries & Benefits Detail											
POSITION TITLE	Agency Totals		HSA Program		7/1/24 - 6/30/25	Agency Totals		HSA Program		7/1/25 - 6/30/26	7/1/24 - 6/30/26
	Annual Full Time Salary for FTE	Total FTE	% FTE funded by HSA (Max 100%)	Adjusted FTE	Original	Annual Full Time Salary for FTE	Total FTE	% FTE funded by HSA (Max 100%)	Adjusted FTE	Original	Total
Director of Legal Services	\$136,500	0.06	100%	0.06	\$8,500	\$140,595	0.06	100%	0.06	\$8,647	\$17,147
Senior Paralegal	\$79,803	0.04	100%	0.04	\$3,250	\$82,197	0.04	100%	0.04	\$3,348	\$6,598
Intake Specialist/Admin Assistant	\$60,060	0.05	100%	0.05	\$3,200	\$61,862	0.05	100%	0.05	\$3,296	\$6,496
Staff Attorney	\$94,500	0.07	100%	0.07	\$6,250	\$97,335	0.07	100%	0.07	\$6,438	\$12,688
Managing Attorney	\$115,500	0.05	100%	0.05	\$6,175	\$118,965	0.05	100%	0.05	\$6,360	\$12,535
Pro Bono Mgr/Staff Attorney	\$102,900	0.06	100%	0.06	\$6,250	\$105,987	0.06	100%	0.06	\$6,438	\$12,688
Deputy Director of Legal Services	\$102,900	0.06	100%	0.06	\$6,250	\$105,987	0.06	100%	0.06	\$6,438	\$12,688
Staff Attorney	\$91,350	0.08	100%	0.08	\$7,250	\$94,091	0.08	100%	0.08	\$7,576	\$14,826
Access Point Navigator	\$65,061	0.05	100%	0.05	\$3,000	\$67,013	0.05	100%	0.05	\$3,090	\$6,090
Access Point Coordinator	\$74,739	0.04	100%	0.04	\$3,000	\$76,981	0.04	100%	0.04	\$3,090	\$6,090
Access Point Manager	\$84,962	0.04	100%	0.04	\$3,000	\$87,511	0.04	100%	0.04	\$3,090	\$6,090
TOTALS	\$1,008,275	0.60	11.00	0.60	\$56,125	\$1,038,523	0.60	1100%	0.60	\$57,811	\$113,936
FRINGE BENEFIT RATE	25%						25%				
EMPLOYEE FRINGE BENEFITS					\$14,031					\$14,453	\$28,484
TOTAL SALARIES & BENEFITS					\$70,156					\$72,264	\$142,420

HSA Budget Form (3/24)

Grantee: Swords to Plowshares		Appendix B, Page 3	
Program: Legal and Housing Assistance for Veterans with Mental Health Claims			
Operating Expenses Detail			
	7/1/24 - 6/30/25 Original	7/1/25 - 6/30/26 Original	7/1/24 - 6/30/26 Total
Expenditure Category			
Rental of Property			
Utilities(Elec, Water, Gas, Phone, Garbage)			
Office Supplies, Postage			
Building Maintenance Supplies and Repair			
Printing and Reproduction			
Insurance			
Staff Training			
Staff Travel-(Local & Out of Town)	\$71	\$71	\$142
Rental of Equipment			
Consultant/Subcontractor (\$25,000 & Under)			
Other			
Total Operating Expense	\$71	\$71	\$142

HSA Budget Form (3/24)

Appendix F - SITE CHART

Human Services Agency, Department of Disability and Aging Services, Office of Community Partnerships

PROGRAM: Legal and Housing Assistance for Veterans with Mental Health Claims

FISCAL YEAR: 07/01/2024 - 06/30/2026

AGENCY: Swords to Plowshares

DIRECTOR: Michael Blecker

PHONE No: **415-252-4788**

SITES:					
Name of Site	San Francisco Drop-in Center (Legal Veterans benefits assistance)	San Francisco Drop-in Center (Veterans Access Point Housing Assistance)			
Address and Zip	1060 Howard Street, 94103	1060 Howard Street, 94103			
Phone Number	415-252-4788	415-252-4788			
Fax Number	415-552-6267	415-552-6267			
Neighborhood	SOMA	SOMA			
Person in Charge	Claire O'Toole	Claire O'Toole			
Site Manger	LaJune Davis	LaJune Davis			
Programs Offered at Site	Legal Veterans benefits assistance	Veterans Access Point Housing Assistance			
Days Open	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mon <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tues <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thurs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fri <input type="checkbox"/> Sat <input type="checkbox"/> Sun	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mon <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tues <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thurs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fri <input type="checkbox"/> Sat <input type="checkbox"/> Sun			
Hours Open	9:00 a.m - 5:00 p.m	9:00 a.m - 5:00 p.m			
Hours of <u>scheduled</u> programming	Legal intake clinic is held in the Veterans Community Center (3rd Flr) every 1st & 3rd Wednesday from 12 - 4 p.m. Legal intake is held remotely via telephone, contact the Legal Unit @ (415) 798-8387 or send an email to legal@stp-sf.org.	Intake is available in person and remotely by phone 415-727-8387			
Annual # of UDC	40	25			
Total number of service days in FY	249	249			
Days closed	13	13			
Days Closed (list holidays closed)	New Years Eve, New Years Day, President's Day, MLK Day, Juneteenth, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, Veterans Day, and Christmas Eve, Christmas Day	New Years Eve, New Years Day, President's Day, MLK Day, Juneteenth, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, Veterans Day, and Christmas Eve, Christmas Day			
ADA Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			



SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

Department of Benefits
and Family Support

Department of Disability
and Aging Services

Office of Early Care
and Education

P.O. Box 7988
San Francisco, CA
94120-7988
www.SFHSA.org

Date: May 23, 2024

To: Dan Kaplan, Deputy Director, HSA

From: Esperanza Zapien, Director of Contracts, HSA

RE: Sole Source Waiver Exemption Request – Swords to Plowshares to provide legal and housing assistance to veterans with mental health claims

The Human Services Agency (HSA), on behalf of the Department of Disability and Aging Services (DAS), respectfully requests the approval of the attached exemption of the sole source waiver form for Swords to Plowshares for the provision of the Legal and Housing Assistance to Veterans program.

Per Administrative Code Section 21.G, Granting Agencies shall award all Grants through an open and competitive process under Sections 21G.4, 21G.5, and 21G.6, except for Grants (1) to a governmental entity for programs, activities, or services that can be practically performed only by that particular entity, (2) made to a specific entity as required to comply with applicable law or contract, or as a result of the requirements of the funding source, (3) made for improvement to property by a property owner, or (4) awarded on a sole source basis pursuant to Section 21G.8.

Therefore, when a grant is made to a specific entity as required to comply with applicable law or contract, or as a result of the requirements of the funding source, then per the City Purchaser’s Administrative Code Chapter 21G Rules and Regulations, a waiver request form is not needed.

Access to veteran’s benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) can help to address many of the root causes that lead to homelessness and a lack of housing stability. Veterans with mental health disabilities have an overwhelming need for VA benefits assistance, but few options for support. Veterans unjustly labeled with less than honorable discharges are especially vulnerable: they are twice as likely to commit suicide and experience homelessness, and three times as likely to become involved in the criminal justice system. Combat veterans with a psychiatric diagnosis are nine times more likely to have a less than honorable discharge. Due to their discharge status, they are often denied mental health treatment and benefits from the VA without an advocate. Securing access to VA benefits can be lengthy and complicated, particularly for veterans struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, chronic or severe mental illness, and/or homelessness who need additional support to complete the process.

The Department of Disability and Aging Services recognizes an ongoing need for the services that Swords to Plowshares provides and would like to request a continuation of services offered by Swords to Plowshares as a sole source grantee to provide legal and housing assistance services for veterans with mental health claims.

DAS is proposing the following:



London Breed
Mayor

Trent Rhorer
Executive Director



**SAN FRANCISCO
HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY**

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<u>Request:</u> Request authorization to enter into a grant with Swords to Plowshares for the period of July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2026, in an amount of \$156,818, plus a 10% contingency for a total amount not to exceed \$172,500.
<u>Reason for this Request:</u> Admin Code 21G.3(a)(2): made to a specific entity as required to comply with applicable law or contract, or as a result of the requirements of the funding source
<u>Justification for Sole Source Exemption:</u> Swords to Plowshares was named in the California Department of Veterans Affairs grant award for San Francisco County’s Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Proposition 63. 21.G.3(a)(2): Grants to a specific entity as required to comply with applicable law or contract, or <u>a result of the requirements of the funding source.</u>
<u>Brief description of services:</u> Swords to Plowshares will provide outreach, intake, and free legal counseling and representation for vulnerable veterans with complex mental health benefits claims to remove legal barriers and increase access to VA mental and primary healthcare, monetary benefits, and housing services. Swords to Plowshares will also provide housing assistance to veterans experiencing or at-risk for homelessness to navigate and access housing solutions available to them.
<u>Duration:</u> July 01, 2024 through June 30, 2026
<u>Compliance:</u> The grantee meets City requirements for contracting.

Approved Disapproved

DocuSigned by:
Dan Kaplan 5/24/2024
Dan Kaplan, Deputy Director of Administration and Finance