

2022 SAMHSA SOAR NOVEMBER E-NEWS

Over 100,000 Served! SOAR 2022 Outcomes

The SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) outcomes are in for fiscal year 2022, and we are amazed and proud that so many people were assisted by SOAR providers during another difficult year! We are grateful to the practitioners who continued to work through the ongoing pandemic. Over 3,250 individuals were approved for benefits using the SOAR process last year, even though Social Security Administration (SSA) offices were closed for most of the fiscal year, SSA and Disability Determination Services (DDS) offices are facing staff shortages, and access to treatment appointments and consultative exams have been limited or virtual. The national approval rate went up significantly this year to an average of **68 percent on initial application!**



Between initial applications and appeals, SOAR providers have assisted 100,333 people with their Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) applications since SOAR began.

We are excited to celebrate the top 10 states or districts this year with an average cumulative approval rate of 81 percent. These are, in descending order, Pennsylvania; Tennessee; Maryland; Arkansas; North Carolina; Wyoming; Oklahoma; Virginia; Washington, DC; and Nevada. Stay tuned for our forthcoming *2022 SOAR Outcomes Issue Brief* for a complete reporting of SOAR success across the country. For now, [click here to check out our 2022 Outcomes Infographic](#) for our national impact.

November Spotlights



National Veteran and Military Families Month: SOAR Successes

We're celebrating National Veteran and Military Families Month with the SOAR success stories of Veterans submitted by SOAR practitioners from across the country!

Mack in Wyoming

Our first story comes from Michelle Byrd at Volunteers of America Northern Rockies (VOANR) in Wyoming.

Mack was a Veteran who came to Volunteers of America Northern Rockies by referral from the chaplain at the Veteran Affairs (VA) Cheyenne Medical Center. Mack had been admitted to the hospital and had no place to stay once he was released. Mack has significant mental and physical disabilities. While in the hospital, he and the chaplain talked about both of them serving at the same Army base in Alaska. Mack shared that he didn't know where he was going to go after being released. With the extent of his disabilities, employment wasn't an option, and he did not have an income. Before being released, Mack talked to the case managers at the program for Veterans experiencing homelessness. He was then referred to Community Action of Laramie County and then to VOANR.

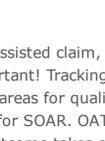
[Click here to keep reading](#), and for more Veteran SOAR success stories!

Social Security Administration Announces National Native American Office

This Native American Heritage Month, we're highlighting the recent formation of SSA's Office of Native American Partnerships and sharing resources focused on serving Native communities. SSA announced the establishment of the Office of Native American Partnerships within the Office of the Commissioner on October 4, 2022. Instituting the Office of Native American Partnerships supports President Biden's 2021 [Executive Order 13985: Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities](#). The new office seeks to enhance SSA's relationships with tribes by elevating and centralizing American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) programs and policies and will serve as the primary point of contact on tribal affairs.

[Learn More and Access SOAR AI/AN Resources](#)

See How SOAR Works



Entering Outcomes Into OAT

Once you have received a decision on a SOAR-assisted claim, entering your outcomes in the Online Application Tracking (OAT) system is very important! Tracking outcomes allows you to assess the effectiveness of your SOAR initiative, identifies areas for quality improvements, enables us to celebrate your successes, and may help secure future funding for SOAR. OAT is free to use, HIPAA compliant, collects no personally identifiable information, and each outcome takes only 3-5 minutes to enter. Each quarter the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center presents an OAT and Outcomes Orientation, the most recent of which can be viewed on the [SOARWorks website](#). During this event, the TA Center shared an overview and walkthrough of the OAT system. If you have any questions or challenges regarding OAT, you can reach out to soaroot@praicn.com.



SOARING Over Lunch Conference Call

November 15, 2022, 1:00-2:00 p.m. ET

[Click here to add SOARING Over Lunch to your calendar.](#)

In Case You Missed It



SOAR Webinar: The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center Answers Your Frequently Asked Questions

In this webinar, held on October 19, 2022, the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center provided in-depth answers while giving the SOAR community an opportunity to get to know us and our resources better. We covered a broad range of topics, such as completing a specific SSA form, getting a Medical Summary Report co-signed, documenting co-occurring substance use disorders, working with applicants who are involved with the legal system, handling appeals, completing the online courses, entering decisions into the OAT system, and working while applying for benefits. In addition to providing answers to common questions, staff demonstrated in real time how to access resources on the SOAR website so you can find what you are looking for and get your questions answered at any time!

Child SSI Information Sheet for Parents and Caregivers: Now Available in Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin

The document *Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for Children: What is it, who is it for, and how can Parents/Caregivers help?* is now available for download in Mandarin, Portuguese, and Spanish, in addition to English.

Federal Updates

Social Security Benefits Increase in 2023

Approximately 70 million Americans will see an 8.7 percent increase in their Social Security benefits and SSI payments in 2023. On average, Social Security benefits will increase by more than \$140 per month starting in January.

SSA Form Update (SSA-16)

In June, the Social Security Administration updated the [SSA-16, \[PDF\]](#) Application for Disability Insurance Benefits. The new SSA-16 has been posted on the [SOARWorks website](#), and the [SOAR Online Course](#) has been updated to reflect the changes.

SSA Resource: What You Need To Know About Your Supplemental Security Income (SSI) When You Turn 18

This publication helps youth prepare for the transition from school to adult life. It provides information about SSI work incentives geared toward youth, as well as information about common programs, services, and supports that parents, guardians, and youth may find helpful.

Social Security Implements Self-Attestation of Sex Marker in Social Security Number Records

Kilolo Kijakazi, Acting Commissioner of Social Security, announced that the agency now offers people the choice to self-select their sex on their Social Security number record. The agency has implemented this policy change, and the new option is now available.

Partner Updates

New HHRC Resource: Disaster Planning and Response: A Guide to Preparation for Homelessness Response Programs

This new guide from the Homeless and Housing Resource Center (HHRC) outlines questions that homelessness response programs should answer as they plan for and respond to natural disasters. The guide places a focus on the needs of people experiencing homelessness with serious mental illness, substance use disorder, or co-occurring disorders.

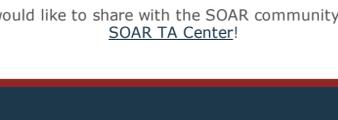
SOAR Jobs



- Florida:** Apalachee Center, Inc., is seeking a full-time SOAR Specialist to provide support and resources through the SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) process to help people successfully obtain SSI/SSDI.
- Tennessee:** The McNabb Center is seeking a full-time Homeless Case Manager.

Learn more about these positions on the [SOARWorks website](#). Do you have a job posting you would like to share with the SOAR community? Please submit it to the [SAMHSA SOAR TA Center!](#)

More From SOAR



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State Directory

Library & Tools

Contact Us



The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) Technical Assistance (TA) Center is sponsored by SAMHSA, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

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