

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

VETERANS SERVICES DIVISION
POST OFFICE BOX 942895
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 94295-0001
Telephone: (916) 653-2573
Fax: (916) 653-2563



California Veteran Reintegration Program Fact Sheet

Homeless Resources

HOMELESS VETERANS PROGRAMS

In 2012, the VA and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) estimated that the number of homeless veterans nationwide to be approximately 62,619. At that time, approximately 25% of homeless veterans were located in California: the highest percentage of any other state. In the last several years, the homeless veteran population in California has been nearly cut in half, but there is still work to be done.

Veterans often suffer from conditions that make it difficult to find and maintain gainful employment and pay for housing. Along with the high rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI), the VA has found that approximately 55% of homeless veterans suffer from mental health issues, 70% are affected by substance abuse issues, and 40% of female homeless veterans report experience severe forms of mental illness, mostly due to higher rates of military sexual trauma (MST).

CalVet is addressing veteran homelessness by working with various government and non-government agencies and organizations, throughout California, to provide advocacy and services needed by the homeless population and those dealing with the threat of becoming homeless. To find housing assistance programs available in the area, call (800) 952-5626 or (800) 221-8998 (Outside California) or go to <http://maketheconnection.net/resources>

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS OF AFFAIRS HOMELESS PROGRAMS

Every VA Medical Center has a Homeless Veterans Coordinator responsible for helping homeless veterans access VA and community-based care, conducting outreach, case management, referrals to benefits counselors, linkage to healthcare, and housing assistance.

HUD-VASH

Through a cooperative partnership, the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Veterans Affairs Supported Housing (HUD-VASH) program provides long-term case management, supportive services, and permanent housing support. HUD provides "Housing Choice" Section 8 vouchers designated for HUD-VASH to participating public housing authorities to assist with rent payment.

To be eligible for this program, veterans must be eligible for VA healthcare, homeless, and participate in case management services to obtain and sustain permanent independent community housing. For eligibility criteria, contact the county's Continuum of Care Coordinator

HONORING CALIFORNIA'S VETERANS

(CoC) (see below), the nearest VA Homeless Veterans Coordinator www.va.gov/homeless/about_the_initiative.asp#three.

Supportive Services for Veteran Families

The Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program provides grants and technical assistance to community-based, nonprofit organizations to help very low-income veterans and their families living in or transitioning to permanent housing. Grantees provide eligible veteran families with outreach, case management and assistance in obtaining VA and other benefits. Grantees may also provide time-limited payments to third parties (e.g., landlords, utility companies, moving companies, and licensed child care providers) if these payments help veteran families stay in or acquire permanent housing on a sustainable basis. For more information on the SSVF program and providers, go to www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp.

Homeless Patient Aligned Care Teams

The Homeless Patient Aligned Care Teams (H-PACTs) program provides a coordinated "medical home" specifically tailored to the needs of homeless veterans that integrates clinical care with delivery of social services with enhanced access and community coordination. Implementation of this model is expected to address many of the health disparity and equity issues facing the homeless veteran population and result in reduced emergency department use and hospitalizations, improved chronic disease management, improved "housing readiness" with fewer veterans returning to homelessness once housed. For more information, go to www.va.gov/homeless/h_pact.asp.

Homeless Veterans Dental Program

The Homeless Veterans Dental Program provides dental treatment for eligible veterans in a number of programs: Domiciliary, Residential Rehabilitation Treatment, VA Grant and Per Diem, Compensated Work Therapy/Transitional Residence, Healthcare for Homeless Veterans (contract bed), and Community Residential Care. VA is working to expand dental care to all eligible veterans within this program. For more information, go to www.va.gov/homeless/dental.asp.

STATEWIDE SERVICES AND OFFICES

California is home to many nonprofit and community based organizations that provide a variety of statewide services to homeless and potentially homeless veterans. For a statewide directory of California homeless service organizations, go to <http://maketheconnection.net/resources>

Continuum of Care

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) allocates HUD homeless assistance grants to organizations that participate in local homeless assistance program planning networks. Each of these networks is called a Continuum of Care (CoC). CoC committees at the city, county and state level coordinate their efforts to identify the needs of local homeless populations, the resources that are currently available in the community to address those needs, and additional resources needed to fill identified gaps. The CoC process is a community-based approach that encourages the creation of collaborative and comprehensive systems to meet the diverse of needs of local homeless populations.

To find contact information for homeless assistance coordinators in Northern California, go to

www.hud.gov/local/ca/homeless/continuumcare/ncalcoc.cfm. To view contact information for homeless assistance coordinators in Southern California, go to www.hud.gov/local/ca/homeless/continuumcare/scalcoc.cfm.

Stand Downs

Stand Downs are typically one- to three-day events organized by community-based veterans' services organizations, non-profit organizations, and veterans service organizations with cooperation from a variety of state, federal, and private agencies. Stand Downs provide vital services for veterans, such as: food, shelter, clothing, health screenings, benefits counseling, and referrals to a variety of other necessary services like housing, employment, and substance abuse treatment. In addition, veterans have access to Homeless Courts where they are able to resolve minor violations and warrants.

CalVet allocates discretionary funds in support of statewide Stand Down events annually. Any veteran service provider desiring to conduct a homeless veteran Stand Down may be eligible for a grant from CalVet. For more information call (800) 952-5626.

To volunteer and/or find a list of all California Stand Down events, go to <https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Pages/Stand-Downs.aspx>

CALL CENTERS FOR HOMELESS VETERANS

Trained call center counselors are available 24/7 to offer homeless veterans and veterans at risk of becoming homeless free referrals to local homeless shelters.

- **National Coalition for Homeless Veterans** is the resource and technical assistance center for a national network of community-based service providers and local, state and federal agencies that provide emergency and supportive housing, food, health services, job training and placement assistance, legal aid and case management support for hundreds of thousands of homeless veterans each year. To find a local shelter, call (800) VET-HELP (838-4357) or visit www.nchv.org.
- The **National Call Center for Homeless Veterans Hotline** was founded by the VA to ensure that homeless veterans or veterans at risk for homelessness have free, 24/7 access to trained counselors. The hotline is intended to assist homeless veterans and their families, VA Medical Centers, federal, state and local partners, community agencies, service providers and others in the community. To be connected with a trained VA staff member, call (877) 4AID-VET ((877) 424-3838).
- **2-1-1 Information and Referral Search** provides free and confidential information and referral for help with food, housing, employment, healthcare, counseling and more. For more information, call 2-1-1 or go to www.211.org.

National Resource Directory provides access to services and resources at the national, state and local levels that support recovery, rehabilitation and community reintegration. Wounded warriors, service members, veterans, or family members may go to www.nrd.gov to connect with a caregiver who supports the local area.

ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING FOOD

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is the name for the federal food stamp program. The name reflects the changes made to meet the needs of clients, including a focus on nutrition and an increase in benefit amounts. State programs may have different names. The online application system allows individuals to apply for the program through a secured site. For more information, call (877) 847-FOOD (3663) or apply online at www.c4yourself.com.

Emergency Food and Shelter Program

The Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) expands the work of local social service agencies (non-profit and government) in assisting people with economic emergencies. United Way serves as the fiscal agent for the EFSP, and EFSP staff is housed in United Way's headquarters. For more information about United Way, go to www.efsp.unitedway.org.

Emergency Food Assistance Program

Food banks solicit and warehouse donated food and other products. This food is then distributed to a variety of community agencies which serve people in need. Many food banks provide food to hundreds of organizations that would likely not be able to obtain a steady supply of food or store enough food to meet the needs of the people they serve. Some food banks also operate programs that distribute food directly to individuals. To locate a nearby food bank, go to www.cafoodbanks.org or call (866) 321-4435.