RESOURCES FOR RURAL VETERANS

Housing Assistance Council

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HAC, founded in 1971, is a nonprofit corporation that supports the development of rural low-income housing nationwide. HAC provides technical housing services, loans from a revolving fund, housing program and policy analysis, research and demonstration projects, and training and information services. HAC is an equal-opportunity provider and employer.
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Introduction

During his second inaugural address in 1886, Abraham Lincoln called upon Congress “to care for him, who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan.” The imperative to care for those who serve our country and their families still exists today. Although our country has provided pensions to veterans since the ratification of the U.S. Constitution, it was not until 1833 that the Bureau of Pensions was authorized by Congress, becoming the first administrative unit dedicated solely to the assistance of veterans.¹ As our country’s history has progressed, and our understanding of the issues and challenges veterans face after their service has improved, the services offered to them have increased and evolved as well.

Rural Americans have a strong history of service to our country. Approximately 5.6 million, or 11.4 percent, of the rural population served in the military, accounting for a quarter of all veterans in 2010.² Providing critical programs can be particularly challenging in rural America due to vast geographies, limited resources, and less social service infrastructure. As a result, HAC, through funding from the Home Depot Foundation, developed this resource guide to provide a one-stop destination for rural housing providers looking to better understand federal programs and initiatives available to veterans.

The Evolution of Support Programs for Veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) as it is known today was created in 1929, when President Hoover consolidated three bureaus – the previously independent Veterans Bureau, the Bureau of Pensions, and the National Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers. From 1931 to 1941, the number of VA hospitals would increase from 64 to 91, and the number of beds would rise from 33,669 to 61,849. These hospitals, now known as VA Medical Centers (VAMC), have historically comprised a large portion of the services utilized by veterans.³ Since its beginnings, the VA has continued to evolve and today offers programs that exist beyond physical health ranging from housing to mental health and employment.

Veterans are not a homogenous group, nor are their needs. As two wars overseas wind down, more veterans will be coming home, while at the same time the demographic changes associated with the baby boom generation and the overall greying of America will also impact veterans’ needs in rural America. In the next ten years, over 70 percent of all veterans in rural America will be over the age of 65 placing increased pressure on the housing and health needs of rural veterans.⁴ On the opposite end of the age spectrum, younger veterans, returning from Iraq or Afghanistan, are more diverse and face different economic and housing challenges. Minority and female veterans are a much larger segment of this population as well and maintain differing needs than older veterans. Beyond this, younger veterans face higher unemployment and poverty rates than older veterans. Approximately 10 percent of veterans between the ages of 18 to 34 are unemployed and 12 percent have incomes below the poverty line.⁵ The programs and services they require will differ from their older counterparts.

³ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2005.
⁴ Housing Assistance Council, 2014.
⁵ Housing Assistance Council, 2014.
A renewed impetus has been placed on the success of organizations and initiatives that provide assistance to veterans. Homelessness among veterans has decreased, individuals returning with disabilities are able to make their homes accessible, and guaranteed loans through the VA have helped veterans own and rehabilitate their homes. Other federal agencies have also begun offering programs aimed at veterans to fill gaps that may exist within the VA. These agencies also manage programs that, although not targeted exclusively to veterans, may still offer needed supports. As a result, there exists a complex number of programs, policies, definitions, eligibilities, and services for veterans of which to be cognizant.

About This Report

This resource guide contains program overviews that describe various resources and initiatives available for veterans as well as eligibility requirements and additional links for each program. Keywords are provided to help navigate the guide. Each keyword can be found at the back of the report with a list of corresponding programs and their page numbers within the guide.

The guide begins with a housing section that features both veteran specific and rural specific housing programs that veterans may be able to utilize. Housing assistance programs are managed through a variety of federal departments including the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Agriculture’s Rural Development Service (USDA RD), and the VA. The section provides insights into a variety of funds that can be used as rental assistance, guaranteed home loans, homeless prevention, re-housing and case management, and senior housing.

The second section contains detailed information on a variety of mental and physical health initiatives that provide veterans will affordable treatments. Some of these programs are linked directly to the VA’s goal of ending veteran homelessness by 2015, while others are open to any veteran that is eligible for VA health benefits. These programs are operated through the VA and require contact with local Veterans Health Administration (VHA) facilitates to locate eligible doctors and providers that are organized into 23 geographic Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISN). Links to help find local VHAs and VISNs can be found in the resource section of the program sheets.

The third section of the guide lists programs that provide a broad range of referral services to veterans, and the fourth section features non-housing and health related programs that can benefit veterans. Programs include employment assistance, transportation, and legal assistance offered through the VA, the Department of Transportation (DoT), and the Department of Labor (DoL). Programs operated through the DoL all fall under the Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) Program and are grouped together. These programs offer a variety of different services that assist veterans and often operate at the local level. Links containing local contact information can be found throughout the report in the resource section.

The final portion of the resource guide contains a list of other available services and resources that may not fit directly into one of these sections. These include links to other resource guides published by federal agencies, as well detailed state by state listings of all VA facilities.

This guide’s intent is to help rural housing organizations better understand and utilize available resources. Knowing where and how to access services is crucial in helping veterans receive the services that will enable them to remain in safe and secure housing.
Eligibility for VA Programs:

Veterans Eligibility:

For the purposes of VA health benefits and services, a person who served in the active military and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable is a Veteran.

If someone served in the active military service and was separated under any condition other than dishonorable, they may qualify for VA health care benefits. Current and former members of the Reserves or National Guard who were called to active duty by a federal order and completed the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty may be eligible for VA health benefits as well.

Reserves or National Guard members with active duty for training purposes only do not meet the basic eligibility requirement.

Minimum Duty Requirements:

Most Veterans who enlisted after September 7, 1980, or entered active duty after October 16, 1981, must have served 24 continuous months or the full period for which they were called to active duty in order to be eligible. This minimum duty requirement may not apply to Veterans who were discharged for a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty, for a hardship or “early out,” or those who served prior to September 7, 1980. Since there are a number of other exceptions to the minimum duty requirements, VA encourages all Veterans to apply so that VA may determine their enrollment eligibility.

Enrollment:

VA operates an annual enrollment system that helps to manage the provision of health care. VA applies a variety of factors during the application verification process when determining a Veteran’s eligibility for enrollment, but once a Veteran is enrolled, that Veteran remains enrolled in the VA health care system and maintains access to certain VA health benefits.

Once an application is successfully processed, the Veteran will be assigned an Enrollment Priority Group. Certain Veterans may be eligible for more than one Enrollment Priority Group. In that case, VA will always place the Veteran in the highest Priority Group they are eligible for. Under the VA Health Benefits Package, the same services are generally available to all enrolled Veterans. Once enrolled, the Veteran will receive a personalized Veterans Handbook, which will detail their VA health benefits and provide important information concerning access to VA health care.

Enroll today: [https://www.1010ez.med.va.gov/sec/vha/1010ez/Form/1010ez.pdf](https://www.1010ez.med.va.gov/sec/vha/1010ez/Form/1010ez.pdf)
Definitions

Homeless (for the Use of VA and DoL Programs)

Veterans must meet the definition as defined in the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act as amended by the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009. This means an individual or family that

(1) lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is either a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill);

(2) lives in an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized;

(3) lives in a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;

(4) will imminently lose their housing, including housing they own, rent, or live in without paying rent, are sharing with others, and rooms in hotels or motels not paid for by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals or by charitable organizations, as evidenced by:
   a. a court order resulting from an eviction action that notifies the individual or family that they must leave within 14 days;
   b. the individual or family having a primary nighttime residence that is a room in a hotel or motel and where they lack the resources necessary to reside there for more than 14 days;
   c. credible evidence indicating that the owner or renter of the housing will not allow the individual or family to stay for more than 14 days, and any oral statement from an individual or family seeking homeless assistance that is found to be credible shall be considered credible evidence for purposes of this clause;

and has no subsequent residence identified, and lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

For more information see: 38 USC 101 (2)

Substance Use Disorders (SUD)

SUD encompasses the family of alcohol and other drug-use illnesses that meet diagnostic criteria according to the American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV). They include patients who meet diagnostic criteria for abuse or dependence on alcohol, tobacco products, illegal substances, and prescribed psychoactive medications. The diagnosis of SUD must be consistent with the criteria of the mental health diagnosis system approved by the VA, i.e., the current edition of DSM-IV.

For more information see: http://www.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub_ID=2498
Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a mental health disorder that can occur after experiencing trauma. Examples of these events can include: combat or war exposure, child sexual or physical abuse, terrorist attacks, sexual or physical assault, serious accidents, such as a car wreck, natural disasters, such as a fire, tornado, hurricane, flood, or earthquake.

Symptoms of PTSD disrupt life, making it hard to continue with daily activities.

Veterans who suspect they suffer from PTSD must file a formal request ("claim") using forms provided by the VA's Veterans Benefits Administration. After the forms are submitted, veterans are required to complete interviews. Information about the application process can be obtained from Benefits Officers at any VA medical center, outpatient clinic, or regional office.

The process of applying for a VA disability for PTSD can be long and stressful. Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) provide "Service Officers" at no cost to help Veterans and family members with VA disability claims.
Glossary of Federal Abbreviations

VA – US Department of Veterans Affairs

VSO – Veterans Service Organizations
For more information, see: http://www.va.gov/vso/

VAMC – Veterans Affairs Medical Center
VBA – Veterans Benefits Administration
VHA – Veterans Health Administration
VISN – Veterans Integrated Service Network
To find local offices, see: http://www.va.gov/directory/guide/

ORA – VA Office of Rural Health
To find local resource centers - http://www.ruralhealth.va.gov/resource-centers/index.asp

HUD – US Department of Housing and Urban Development

USDA – US Department of Agriculture

RD – Rural Development
To find a local RD field office, see: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/recd_map.html

DoL – Department of Labor

VETS – Veterans Employment and Trainings Services
For more information, see: http://www.dol.gov/vets/

DoT – Department of Transportation
Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans
Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
Veterans experiencing homelessness with mental illness, substance abuse problems, or serious medical conditions are the beneficiaries of this program. To qualify, Veterans must be ambulatory (walking); be disabled by medical or psychiatric disorders, injury or age; and not need hospitalization or nursing home care.

Program Description:
The Domiciliary Care program provides residential medical care and rehabilitation to homeless veterans. There are more than 1,800 beds available through the program at 34 sites. The program provides residential treatment to more than 5,000 homeless Veterans each year. The domiciliaries conduct outreach and referral; admission screening and assessment; medical and psychiatric evaluation; treatment, vocational counseling and rehabilitation; and post-discharge community support.

This program is funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs and is administered through the VA Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation and Treatment Program.

Resources:
More information on the Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans Program can be accessed: http://www.va.gov/homeless/dchv.asp

VA’s Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program Handbook can be accessed:
http://www.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub_ID=2354

Definitions of Mental Health Rehabilitation Treatment Programs can be accessed:

Keywords: Case-management, homelessness, mental health, substance abuse, support services
Eligibility Requirements:

HISA grants are available to Special Home Adaptation (SHA) grant-eligible or Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grant-eligible Veterans.

Veterans eligible for SAH are those who suffer from: 1) loss of both lower extremities; 2) blindness in both eyes and loss of extremity; 3) loss of one lower extremity with either residuals of organic disease or injury, or loss of upper extremity requiring braces, crutches, canes, or a wheelchair; 4) loss of both upper extremities at or above the elbows; or 5) severe burns or injuries.

A Veteran is eligible for SHA if he or she has blindness in both eyes with 20/200 visual acuity or less, or loss of use of both hands, or certain severe burn injuries, or certain severe respiratory injuries.

The home in which the veteran lives must be permanent and owned by an eligible individual or family member.

Program Description:

The Home Improvements and Structural Alterations (HISA) grants provide assistance for home improvements necessary for the continuation of treatment or for disability access to the home and essential lavatory and sanitary facilities.

HISA grants provide up to $6,800 for Veterans with service-connected disabilities. Grants of $2,000 are also available for Veterans with non-service-connected disabilities.

Home Improvements and Structural Alterations (HISA) grants are also available for SAH/SHA-eligible Veterans and active service-members through the VA.

Resources:

More information on the HISA grants can be accessed: http://www.prosthetics.va.gov/psas/HISA2.asp

The VA also offers a video on the program online: http://www.prosthetics.va.gov/psas/PSAS_Videos.asp

Keywords: physical disability, home modifications
HUD-VASH Vouchers: Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing

Administered through: HUD/VA

Eligibility Requirements:

Applicants: Veterans must be eligible for VA health care. VA eligibility makes this determination.

Veterans who are appropriate candidates for this program must need case management services in order to obtain and sustain independent community housing. Veterans who need case management services have serious mental illness, substance use disorder history, or physical disability. Veterans with the most vulnerability are excellent candidates for this program.

Program Description:

The Department of Housing and Urban Development – VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Program is a joint effort between HUD and VA to move Veterans and their families out of homelessness and into permanent housing. HUD provides housing assistance through its Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) that allows homeless Veterans to rent privately owned housing. VA offers eligible homeless Veterans clinical and supportive services through its health care system across the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam.

Eligible candidates for the program are expected to participate in case management and utilize the supportive services, treatment recommendations and assistance needed to successfully maintain recovery and sustain housing in the community. Case management is the heart of this program and is a requirement for participation in HUD-VASH.

Resources:

More information about HUD-VASH eligibility can be accessed: http://www.va.gov/homeless/hud-vash_eligibility.asp


Keywords: case management, homelessness, mental health, physical disability, substance abuse, support services
Section 202: Supportive Housing for the Elderly
Administered through: HUD

Eligibility Requirements:

Tenants: Occupancy is limited to very-low income households (50% of area median income) that include at least one person who is 62 years or older.

Applicants: Private nonprofit corporations and consumer cooperatives may participate in the program. Public bodies and their instrumentalities are not eligible. Only approved project sponsors may obtain a Section 202 capital advance fund reservation.

Program Description:

HUD’s Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program, also known as the Section 202 program, aims to expand the supply of affordable housing with supportive services to the elderly.

The program provides options that allow low-income seniors to live independently but in an environment that provides support for daily activities.

Section 202 is open to any very low-income household comprised of at least one person who is 62 years or older at the time of initial occupancy in urban, suburban, and rural and small town communities.

Rent subsidies are provided to ensure affordability. These subsidies cover the difference between the HUD-approved operating costs and tenant contributions towards rents. Project rental assistance contracts are approved initially for three years and are renewable based on the availability of funds.

Resources:

More information for nonprofit organizations and housing providers on the Section 202 program can be accessed:

Nonprofit organizations and housing providers interested in the Section 202 program should talk to their local HUD multifamily hub and program center. These can be accessed:

HUD provides a list of Public Housing Authorities by state that accept Section 202 that can be accessed:

Keywords: seniors, low-income, support services
Section 504: Very Low-Income Repairs Loans and Grants
Administered through: USDA

Eligibility Requirements:
Grants are available only to homeowners who are 62 years old or older and cannot repay a Section 504 loan. They may be used only to pay for repairs and improvements to remove health or safety hazards.

To obtain a loan, a homeowner-occupant must:
- Be unable to obtain affordable credit elsewhere
- Have a very low income, defined as below 50 percent of the area median income (AMI).
- Need to make repairs and improvements to make the dwelling more safe and sanitary or to remove health and safety hazards.

Program Description:
The Housing Repair and Rehabilitation Loan/Grant program, also known as the Section 504 program, provides loans and grants to very low-income homeowners to repair, improve, or modernize their dwellings or to comply with health and safety standards. Although loans are available for any eligible rural households, grants are available only to homeowners who are 62 years of age or older and cannot repay a Section 504 loan.

Loans are for up to 20 years at one percent interest. A real estate mortgage and full title services are required for loans of $7,500 or more. A grant may be recaptured if the property is sold in less than three years. A grant/loan combination is made if the applicant can repay part of the cost. A loan and a grant can be combined for up to $27,500 in assistance.

Repai red properties do not need to meet other USDA Rural Development (RD) code requirements, but the installation of water and waste systems and related fixtures must meet local health department requirements. Not all the health and safety hazards in a home must be removed with Section 504 funds, provided that major health and safety hazards are removed. All work must meet other applicable local codes and standards.

Resources:
The USDA offers a list of their field offices on their website that can assist with 504 related questions and inquiries. The list can be accessed: http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app

Keywords: low-income, home modifications, seniors
Section 515: Rural Rental Housing Loans

Administered through: USDA

Eligibility Requirements:
Tenants: Very low-, low-, and moderate-income families; elderly persons; and persons with handicaps and disabilities are eligible to live in Section 515-financed housing. Very low income is defined as below 50 percent of the area median income (AMI); low income is between 50 and 80 percent AMI; moderate income is capped at $5,500 above the low-income limit. Those living in substandard housing are given first priority for tenancy and top priority is given to very low-income households.

Owner: Individuals, partnerships, limited partnerships, for-profit corporations, nonprofit organizations, limited equity cooperatives, Native American tribes, and public agencies are eligible to apply. For-profit borrowers must agree to operate on a limited-profit basis. Borrowers must be unable to obtain credit elsewhere that will enable them to charge rents affordable to low- and moderate-income tenants.

Program Description:
Section 515 Rural Rental Housing Loans are mortgages made by USDA to provide affordable rental housing very low-, low-, and moderate-income families, elderly persons, and persons with disabilities. Loans are made by USDA Housing and Community Facilities Programs Office (RD). Borrowers may use the funds to purchase buildings or land, to construct or renovate buildings, and to provide necessary facilities such as water and waste disposal systems.

The Section 515 Program provides rental housing for elderly, disabled, and developmentally disabled persons in rural communities. Residents of Section 515 units are not responsible for unit maintenance and are equipped with special amenities, such as strategically placed handrails and emergency call buttons or lights that signal for help when needed. Most Section 515 units are designed to be accessible for persons with mobility challenges. A small percentage of Section 515 properties offer congregate services that include two cooked meals per day.

Resources:
The USDA offers a list of their field offices on their website that can assist with 515 related questions and inquiries. The list can be accessed: http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app

Keywords: low-income, physical disability, rent, seniors
Section 521: Rural Rental Assistance Program
Administered through: USDA

Eligibility Requirements:

Properties: Rental Assistance may be used in both existing and newly constructed RD Section 515- or 514/516-financed developments. Projects must be established on a nonprofit or limited profit basis.

Tenants: Persons with very low and low incomes, elderly persons, and persons with disabilities are eligible if the rent exceeds 30 percent adjusted monthly income. Very low income is defined as below 50 percent of the area median income (AMI); low income is between 50 and 80 percent of AMI. In new projects, 95 percent of those assisted must have very low incomes. In existing projects, 75 percent of new tenants must have very low incomes.

Program Description:

Section 521 Rural Rental Assistance (RA) is available in some properties financed by the Section 515 Rural Rental or Section 514/516 Farm Labor Housing programs of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Development Housing and Community Facilities Programs office (RD). It covers the difference between 30 percent of a tenant’s income and the monthly rental rate.

RA is a project-based program, providing an additional subsidy for tenants in Section 515- or 514/516-financed rental housing with incomes too low to pay the RD subsidized rent from their own resources. RD pays the owner the difference between the tenant’s contribution (30 percent of adjusted income) and the monthly rental rate, which is calculated based on the owner’s project costs.

The request for RA is generally initiated by the property owner. If the borrower does not request it, however, tenants eligible for RA may petition the owner to obtain it for them. There is an RD appeals procedure if RA is denied by the owner. In existing projects, demand for RA far exceeds supply. In a typical year, renewals account for most of RA funds.

Resources:

More information on the Section 521 program can be accessed: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/Rental_Assistance_Program.html

To find a local Rural Development Service location: http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=us&agency=rd

Keywords: low-income, mental health, physical disability, rent, seniors
Section 811: Supportive Housing for People with Disabilities

Administered through: HUD

Eligibility Requirements:

Applicants: Nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply.

Tenants: This program is for physically disabled, developmentally disabled, or chronically mentally ill persons (18 years of age or older) with very low incomes and their families. Families whose incomes are less than 50 percent of the median family income for the area in which the project is located may benefit from Project Rental Assistance Payments.

Program Description:

The Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities program provides funding to develop and subsidize rental housing with the availability of supportive services for very low-income adults with disabilities. The program enables persons with disabilities to live as independently as possible in the community by subsidizing rental housing opportunities which provide access to appropriate community services. The program does so by providing interest-free capital advances and operating subsidies to nonprofit developers of affordable housing for persons with disabilities and by providing project rental assistance to state housing agencies. This assistance can be applied to new or existing multifamily housing complexes funded through different sources such as federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, federal HOME funds, and other state, federal, and local programs.

HUD has traditionally provided interest-free capital advances to nonprofit sponsors through Section 811 to help them finance the development of rental housing such as independent living projects, condominium units and small group homes with the availability of supportive services for persons with disabilities. This advance can finance the construction, rehabilitation, or acquisition with or without rehabilitation of supportive housing. Each project must have a supportive services plan that meets the needs of persons with disabilities determined by the appropriate State or local agency.

Resources:

The Technical Resource Center on Supportive Housing can be accessed: [http://811resourcecenter.tacinc.org/about](http://811resourcecenter.tacinc.org/about)


Keywords: low-income, mental health, physical disabilities, rent, support services
Special Home Adaptation (SHA)

Administered through: VA

Program Description:
The Special Home Adaptation Grant helps Veterans with certain service-connected disabilities adapt or purchase a home to accommodate the disability.

Grants can be used to adapt an existing home the veteran or a family member already owns in which the Veteran lives, adapt a home the Veteran or family member intends to purchase in which the Veteran will live, or help a Veteran purchase a home already adapted in which the Veteran will live.

Specially Adaptive Housing (SAH)

Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
A Veteran is eligible if he or she has: 1) blindness in both eyes with 20/200 visual acuity or less; 2) loss of use of both hands; 3) certain severe burn injuries; or 4) certain severe respiratory injuries. The home in which the Veteran lives must be permanent and owned by an eligible individual or family member.

Eligible Veterans can use a maximum of 3 grants, up to the maximum dollar amount allowable ($13,511 in 2014).

Program Description:
VA provides grants to service members and Veterans with certain permanent and total service-connected disabilities to help purchase or construct an adapted home or modify an existing home to accommodate a disability. SAH grants help Veterans with certain service-connected disabilities live independently in a barrier-free environment. SAH grants can be used in one of the following ways: construct a specially adapted home on land to be acquired, build a home on land already owned if it is suitable for specially adapted housing, remodel an existing home if it can be made suitable for specially adapted housing, apply the grant against the unpaid principal mortgage balance of an adapted home already acquired without the assistance of a VA grant.

Eligibility Requirements:
The grant is available to Veterans or active service-members who have experienced severe physical impairments from service-related injuries. These include: 1) loss of both lower extremities; 2) blindness in both eyes and loss of extremity; 3) loss of one lower extremity with either residuals of organic disease or injury, or loss of upper extremity requiring braces, crutches, canes, or a wheelchair; 4) loss of both upper extremities at or above the elbows; or 5) severe burns or injuries.

Program Description:
VA provides grants to service members and Veterans with certain permanent and total service-connected disabilities to help purchase or construct an adapted home or modify an existing home to accommodate a disability. SAH grants help Veterans with certain service-connected disabilities live independently in a barrier-free environment. SAH grants can be used in one of the following ways: construct a specially adapted home on land to be acquired, build a home on land already owned if it is suitable for specially adapted housing, remodel an existing home if it can be made suitable for specially adapted housing, apply the grant against the unpaid principal mortgage balance of an adapted home already acquired without the assistance of a VA grant.

Resources: More information on housing adaptation grants can be accessed:
http://benefits.va.gov/homeloans/adoptedhousing.asp

Keywords: home modifications, physical disability
Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)
Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
Tenants: Veterans may be single or part of a family in which the head of the household or spouse is a Veteran and the discharge status must be under conditions other than dishonorable. Participants must be very low-income, meaning they earn less than 50 percent of the area median income (AMI).

Eligible Veterans living in permanent housing must be at-risk of becoming homeless if not for SSVF assistance, or Veterans must be currently homeless but scheduled to become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days pending the location of permanent housing, or Veterans must have exited permanent housing within the previous 90 days in order to seek housing that better fits with their needs.

Program Description:
Under the SSVF program, VA awards grants to private non-profit organizations and consumer cooperatives who can provide supportive services to very low-income Veteran 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, which may include: health care services; daily living services; personal financial planning services; transportation services; fiduciary and payee services; legal services; child care services; housing counseling services. In addition, 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.

SSVF focuses on homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing. Homelessness prevention assistance is intended for eligible Veteran families who are imminently at-risk of becoming literally homeless but for SSVF assistance. SSVF rapid re-housing assistance is intended for eligible Veteran families who are literally homeless and may remain literally homeless but for SSVF assistance. Targeting SSVF assistance in this manner helps ensure limited SSVF resources are directed to Veteran families most in need of assistance to prevent or end their homelessness.

Resources:
The SSVF University for housing providers can be accessed: http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp

Keywords: case management, families, homelessness, referral services, support services
Temporary Residence Assistance
Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
Temporary Residence Assistance is available to Veterans who are receiving SAH/sha grants while construction or home modifications are underway.

Veterans eligible for SAH are those who suffer from: 1) loss of both lower extremities; 2) blindness in both eyes and loss of extremity; 3) loss of one lower extremity with either residuals of organic disease or injury, or loss of upper extremity requiring braces, crutches, canes, or a wheelchair; 4) loss of both upper extremities at or above the elbows; or 5) severe burns or injuries.

A Veteran is eligible for SHA if he or she has blindness in both eyes with 20/200 visual acuity or less, or loss of or loss of use of both hands, or certain severe burn injuries, or certain severe respiratory injuries. The home in which the Veteran lives must be permanent and owned by an eligible individual or family member.

Program Description:
The Temporary Residence Assistance (TRA) grant can be used to temporarily adapt a family member’s home while construction or home modifications from SAH/sha grants are underway. The maximum TRA amount available for SAH grant recipients is $28,518 and the maximum grant amount available for SHA grant recipients is $5,092. Although important for disabled Veterans transitioning from active duty to living independently, the program has been greatly underused. From the program’s inception in June of 2006 to April of 2010, the VA processed only 18 TRA grants. The lack of use is mainly attributed to poor publicizing of the program to both older and younger Veterans.

Resources:
More information on housing adaptations can be accessed: http://benefits.va.gov/homeloans/adoptedhousing.asp

Keywords: home modifications, physical disability
Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Program
Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
Only programs with supportive housing (up to 24 months) or service centers (offering services such as case management, education, crisis intervention, counseling, services targeted towards specialized populations including homeless Veterans, etc.) are eligible for these funds.

Preference for these grants is given to project sites that have a Rural-Urban Commuting Area code of 10 to 10.6.

Program Description:
The VA Grant and Per Diem Program (GPD) helps organizations that focus on homelessness prevention, rapid re-housing, and transitioning in place for Veterans adopt a transition-in-place model. Unlike HUD-VASH, the GPD does not specifically target Veterans who are also in need of specialized case management.

The GPD helps the Veteran transition in place providing him or her with supportive services, optimally for a period of 6-12 months, but no more than 24 months. At the end of the program the Veteran is required to assume the lease or other long-term agreement. The program enables Veterans to achieve permanent housing through the initial supportive period.

Resources:
More Information on the VA Grant Per Diem Program can be accessed: http://www.va.gov/homeless/gpd.asp

Frequently asked questions about the program can be accessed: http://www1.va.gov/homeless/gpd_faq.asp

Keywords: homelessness, support services
VA Home Loan Program
Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
To be eligible for the home loan guarantees, Veterans and active service-members must have a good credit score, sufficient income, a valid “Certificate of Eligibility” (to verify eligibility of a VA-backed loan to the lender), and meet service requirements.
Surviving spouses may also be eligible.

Program Description:
The VA provides home loan guarantees to Veterans to purchase, build, repair, retain, or adapt their home. Private lenders like banks or mortgage companies provide the loans that are then guaranteed through the VA for more favorable terms. These loans have competitive interest rates without requiring a down payment or private mortgage insurance. Veterans do not need to be first-time home buyers to use the mortgage guarantees, and all VA guaranteed loans are assumable. This benefit can be used more than once, so long as the recipient inhabits the newly purchased home.

The VA offers other loan products beyond purchase loan guarantees which include: a cash-out refinance loan, an interest-rate-reduction refinancing loan, and a Native American Direct loan. The cash-out refinance loan allows homeowners to take out cash from their home equity. The cash-out refinance loan can be used to refinance a non-VA mortgage loan into a VA mortgage loan. The VA guarantees 100 percent of the value of the home through this process. The Interest Rate Reduction and Refinancing loan (IRRRF) helps Veterans obtain lower interest rates by refinancing existing VA loans, and the Native American Direct loan helps eligible families finance the purchase, construction, or improvement of homes on Federal Trust Land via reduced-interest-rate loans.

Resources:
More information on eligibility can be accessed: http://www.benefits.va.gov/HOMELOANS/purchaseco_certificate.asp

Keywords: home loans, homeownership
Health Care for Re-Entry Veterans (HCRV) Program

Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
Incarcerated or recently released Veterans are eligible for the program.

Program Description:
The Health Care for Re-Entry Veterans (HCRV) Program is designed to help incarcerated Veterans successfully reintegrate back into the community after their release. A critical part of HCRV is providing information to Veterans while they are incarcerated, so they can plan for re-entry themselves. A primary goal of the HCRV program is to prevent Veterans from becoming homeless once they are reintegrated back into the community.

HCRV services include: outreach and pre-release assessment services for Veterans in prison; referrals and linkages to medical, psychiatric, and social services, including employment services upon release; short term case management assistance upon release.

VHA may not provide medical services that are part of care to be provided by correctional institutions.

Resources:
A list of state-specific resource guides that identify steps that Veterans can take prior to their release can be accessed: http://www.va.gov/homeless/reentry_guides.asp

A state by state list of Health Care for Re-entry Veterans specialists can be accessed: http://www.va.gov/homeless/reentry.asp

Keywords: employment, heath care, incarceration
Healthcare for Homeless Veterans
Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
Veterans must be considered homeless and eligible for VA services.

Program Description:
Initially serving as a mechanism to contract with providers for community-based residential treatment for homeless Veterans, many Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) programs now serve as the hub for a myriad of housing and other services. Outreach is the core of the HCHV program. The central goal is to reduce homelessness among Veterans by reaching out to those who are not currently receiving services and providing them with treatment and rehabilitative programs. At more than 135 HCHV sites, trained VA specialists provide tools and support to help Veterans to improve their lives.

The Contract Residential Treatment Program, through HCHV, ensures Veterans with serious mental health diagnoses can be placed in community-based programs which provide quality housing and services.

Resources:
A list of local HCHV providers can be accessed: [http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/docs/HCHV_Sites_ByState.pdf](http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/docs/HCHV_Sites_ByState.pdf)

Frequently asked questions can be accessed: [http://www.va.gov/homeless/hchv_frequently_asked_questions.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/hchv_frequently_asked_questions.asp)

To understand more about benefits, call: 1-800-827-1000

To access health care options, call: 1-877-222-VETS (8387)

Keywords: health care, homelessness, mental health, support services
Homeless Veterans Dental Program
Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:

Eligible Applicants: Licensed dental care providers with experience serving individuals experiencing homelessness.

Eligible Beneficiaries: Veterans experiencing homelessness and accessing VA-sponsored or VA-partnered homeless resources are eligible to utilize this service.

Program Description:

The Homeless Veteran Dental Program is a targeted program for Veterans experiencing homelessness as part of the continuum of services available to gain stability. This program works with VA-sponsored and VA-partnered homeless rehabilitation programs across the country to increase access to quality dental care. Dental problems, such as pain and missing teeth can be tremendous barriers in seeking and obtaining employment. With the provision of quality dental care, it is possible to gain greater confidence and decrease pain.

Resources:

Persons wishing to obtain information regarding the homeless dental program in their area should contact their nearest VA’s homeless coordinator. A list of VA homeless coordinators can be accessed: http://www.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp?isflash=1

More information on the Veterans Health Administration Dental Program can be accessed: http://www.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub_ID=2867

Keywords: health care, homelessness
Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment Program

Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
Veterans seeking resources for substance abuse treatment are eligible.

Program Description:
The VA offers a number of options for those seeking treatment for substance use problems. These options include therapy, either alone with a therapist or in a group, as well as medications to help Veterans reduce their use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs. Treatments that do not involve medications include: increasing and clarifying the Veteran’s motivation for change; helping Veterans improve their skills for spotting and dealing with triggers and relapse risks; counseling couples on how to recover from substance abuse and improve relationships; getting outside support for recovery, including programs like Alcoholics Anonymous (AA); looking at how substance use problems may relate to other problems such as PTSD and depression.

A patient going to VA can expect to find the following types of care: first-time screening for alcohol or tobacco use in all care locations; short outpatient counseling, including focusing on motivation; intensive outpatient treatment; residential (live-in) care; medically managed detoxification and services to increase stability; continuing care and relapse prevention; marriage and family counseling; self-help groups; and drug substitution therapies and newer medicines to reduce craving.

SUD 24-hour care (Residential) programs are those that provide 24-hour, live-in SUD care using VA funded beds dedicated to house Veteran patients participating in the program.

SUD Intensive Outpatient programs include day-treatment, partial hospitalization, and intensive outpatient clinic-based programs that provide at least 3 hours of services per patient per day for at least 3 days per week.

SUD Standard Outpatient programs are clinics that provide less intensive ambulatory addiction treatment services. Specifically, these outpatient programs offer less than 3 hours of services per patient per day or less than 3 days per week of SUD services.

Resources:
A list of locations can be accessed: http://www2.va.gov/directory/guide/SUD_flsh.asp?isFlash=1

Keywords: health care, substance abuse, support services
Woman Veterans Health Care Program

Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
Must be eligible for VA medical programs and must be a woman.

Program Description:

Women’s primary care includes: general care, mental health, and military sexual trauma (MST).

General care includes health evaluation and counseling, disease prevention, nutrition counseling, weight control, smoking cessation, and substance abuse counseling and treatment as well as gender-specific primary care, e.g., cervical cancer screens, breast cancer screens, birth control, preconception counseling, HPV vaccine, and menopausal support.

Mental health includes evaluation and assistance for issues such as depression, mood, and anxiety disorders; intimate partner and domestic violence; sexual trauma; elder abuse or neglect; parenting and anger management; marital, caregiver, or family-related stress; and post-deployment adjustment or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Women—and men as well—may experience repeated sexual harassment or sexual assault during their military service. Special services are available to women who have experienced MST. VA provides free, confidential counseling and treatment for mental and physical health conditions related to MST.

Specialty care includes screenings, reproductive health, and rehabilitation, homebound, and long-term care. Management and screening of chronic conditions includes heart disease, diabetes, cancer, glandular disorders, osteoporosis, and fibromyalgia as well as sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS and hepatitis. Reproductive health care includes maternity care, infertility evaluation and limited treatment; sexual problems, tubal ligation, urinary incontinence, and others. VA is prohibited by legislative authority from providing either in-vitro fertilization or abortion services.

VA referrals are given to those in need of rehabilitation therapies such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech-language therapy, exercise therapy, recreational therapy, and vocational therapy. Homebound and long-term care services are available as well, limited to those meeting specific requirements.

Resources:
A list of VA medical facilities can be accessed: http://www.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp?isflash=1
The latest eligibility and enrollment information for VA medical services can be accessed: http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/

Keywords: health care, women
COMMUNITY RESOURCES
National Call Center for Homeless Veterans
Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
*Available to all Veterans facing or at risk of homelessness.*

Program Description:
The National Call Center for Homeless Veterans, run by the VA, is a 24/7 hotline where trained counselors connect Veterans, their families, and support networks with specific VA services to help avoid or overcome homelessness. The hotline, 1-877-4AID-VET, coordinates the local provision of services and follows up with case management by identifying staff at VA medical centers who can help. The local contacts work to link Veterans to needed VA and community services.

While successful, challenges in its execution exist in rural America. These challenges include few, if any, homeless shelters, limited hours, and large geographic areas where services are often stretched over multiple counties. Other challenges may include limited access to and general lack of services, affordable housing, child care, credit counseling, family reconciliation, health care, substance use treatment, behavioral health, dental, vision and specialty care, re-entry services, and transportation. More than two-thirds of all shelters are located in larger cities, leaving fewer resources for rural America.

Resources:
The number for the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans is: **1-877-4AID-VET**

Keywords: homelessness, referral services
Project CHALENG
Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
Eligible Applicants: At the local level, VA medical centers and regional offices designate CHALENG Points of Contact (POCs) who are responsible to conduct annual meetings. These CHALENG POCs - usually local VA homeless center/project coordinators - work with local agencies throughout the year to coordinate services for homeless Veterans.

Eligible Beneficiaries: Veterans experiencing homelessness are the beneficiaries of all Project CHALENG programs.

Program Description:
CHALENG was designed to be an ongoing assessment process that describes the needs of homeless Veterans and identifies the barriers they face to successful community re-entry. All Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISN) and VA medical centers (VAMCs) have developed plans synchronized with community partners. The Veterans Health Administration’s (VHA) National Homeless Programs Office provides technical assistance and policy guidance and disseminates best practices to the field to assist the VISNs and VAMCs in fully implementing and coordinating their plans.

Project CHALENG enhances coordinated services by bringing the VA together with community agencies and other federal, state, and local governments who provide services to the homeless to: assess the needs of homeless Veterans living in the area; make the assessment in coordination with representatives from state and local governments, appropriate federal departments and agencies, and non-governmental community organizations that serve the homeless population; identify the needs of homeless Veterans with a focus on health care, education and training, employment, shelter, counseling, and outreach; assess the extent to which homeless Veterans’ needs are being met; develop a list of all homeless services in the local area; encourage the development of coordinated services; take action to meet the needs of homeless Veterans; inform homeless Veterans of non-VA resources that are available in the community to meet their needs.

Resources:
More information on Project CHALENG can be accessed: http://www.va.gov/homeless/chaleng.asp

Project CHALENG’s 18th annual progress can be accessed:

Keywords: referral services, service coordination
STAND DOWN
Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
A Stand Down is an event held in a local community where a variety of social services are provided to homeless Veterans. Committees formed specifically to put on the event stage most Stand Downs. Veteran service organizations, National Guard and Reserve units, homeless shelter programs, health care providers, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Labor staffs, Veteran-helping-Veteran programs, and concerned citizens from the community organize and stage the events.

Program Description:
At Stand Down events, homeless Veterans are provided with a broad range of necessities including food, clothing, medical, legal and mental health assistance, job counseling and referral, and most importantly, companionship and camaraderie. Stand Down events are run by volunteers and organizations across the country who give their time and expertise to address the unique needs of homeless Veterans.

Stand Down organizers partner with local businesses and service providers, including: state Workforce Agencies, Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist, Local Veteran’s Employment Representative (LVER) staff, the VA, HUD, HHS, FEMA, VSOs, and local non-profit organizations. There is no specific formula to plan and hold a Stand Down. Some offer basic services, while others offer more by including entertainment and cultural activities to their programs.

Appropriate use of Stand Down grant funding includes, but is not limited to: the purchase of food, bottled water, clothing (cold weather shoes, boots, underwear, socks, and coats), sleeping bags, and shaving and personal hygiene kits; preparation of meals; rental of facilities and/or tents; special one-time costs for the duration of the Stand Down event such as electricity, equipment rentals, advertising, event posters, portable rest facilities, janitorial and kitchen supplies, and communications or internet access; hiring of security personnel; rental of transportation equipment (bus, van, car, taxi, etc.) and/or actual gasoline expenses of volunteer drivers to transport homeless Veterans to and from the Stand Down event; and other pertinent items and services for homeless Veteran participants as deemed appropriate by the Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (VETS).

Resources:
More information on the Stand Down program can be accessed: http://www.va.gov/homeless/standdown.asp


For more help, contact a local VA medical center or call the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at 1-877-424-3838.

Keywords: community-based, service coordination
Vet Centers

Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
Veterans and their family members are eligible to participate in the Vet Center Program if they fought in: World War II, American Merchant Marines, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, Persian Gulf, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn, Operation Joint Endeavor, Operation Joint Guard, Operation Joint Forge, the Global War on Terrorism, or have experienced sexual trauma and/or harassment, or need bereavement counseling.

Program Description:
Vet Centers across the country provide a broad range of counseling, outreach, and referral services to combat Veterans and their families. Vet Centers guide Veterans and their families through many of the major adjustments in lifestyle that often occur after a Veteran returns from combat. Services for a Veteran may include individual and group counseling in areas such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), alcohol and drug assessment, and suicide prevention referrals. All services are free of cost and are strictly confidential.

Vet Centers are community-based and part of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The goal of the Vet Center program is to provide a broad range of counseling, outreach, and referral services to eligible Veterans in order to help them make a satisfying post-war readjustment to civilian life.

The Vet Center program offers readjustment counseling which is a wide range of psychosocial services offered to eligible Veterans and their families in the effort to make a successful transition from military to civilian life. They include: individual and group counseling for Veterans and their families; family counseling for military related issues; bereavement counseling for families who experience an active duty death; military sexual trauma counseling and referral; outreach and education, including PDHRA, community events, etc.; substance abuse assessment and referral; employment assessment and referral; VBA benefits explanation and referral; and screening & referral for medical issues including TBI, depression, etc.

VA’s readjustment counseling is provided at community-based Vet Centers located near Veterans and their families. All Vet Center services are prepaid through military service. Contact your nearest Vet Center through information provided in the Vet Center Directory or listings in your local blue pages. Vet Center staff are available toll free and around the clock at 877-WAR-VETS (927-8387). All Vet Centers maintain non-traditional appointment schedules, after normal business hours, to accommodate the schedules of Veterans and their family members.

Resources:


Keywords: referral services, service coordination, support services, transition services
GENERAL RESOURCES
Compensated Work Therapy Program
Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
Homeless Veterans eligible for VA benefits.

Program Description:
VA's Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) Program is a national vocational program comprised of five unique programs which assist homeless Veterans in returning to competitive employment: Incentive Therapy, Sheltered Workshop, Transitional Work, Supported Employment, and Transitional Residence. Veterans in CWT are paid at least the federal or state minimum wage, whichever is higher.

CWT Veterans have been successfully employed over the years in various competitive positions including, but not limited to, health care, information technology, manufacturing, warehousing, construction trades, clerical and office support, retail and the services delivery. CWT programs develop an individual rehabilitation plan for each Veteran.

There are five main CWT programs for Veterans. Incentive Therapy (IT) is a pre-employment program that provides a diversified work experience in the VA medical center for Veterans who exhibit severe mental illness and/or physical impairments. The Sheltered Workshop Program provides an opportunity for experience and assessment in a simulated work environment. The Transitional Work (TW) is a pre-employment vocational assessment program that operates in the VA medical center and local community businesses. TW participants are screened by vocational rehabilitation staff, assessed and matched to a work assignment for a limited time as deemed clinically appropriate. Every TW participant has an Individual Treatment or Service Plan and is provided a VA Vocational Specialist. The Supported Employment (SE) program consists of competitive employment with therapeutic supports integrated into treatment. The focus of SE is to assist Veterans with psychosis and other serious mental illness gain access to meaningful, competitive employment.

The Transitional Residence (TR) program is a work-based Psychosocial Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program offering a therapeutic residential setting for Veterans involved in CWT. The TR program provides a rehabilitation-focused residential setting for Veterans recovering from chronic mental illness, chemical dependency, and homelessness.

Resources:
A list of State Compensated Work Therapy Program can be accessed: http://www.va.gov/HEALTH/cwt/Locations.asp
A list of Compensated Work Therapy contacts can be accessed: http://www.va.gov/HEALTH/cwt/Contact.asp
More information on the Compensated Work Therapy Program for employers can be accessed:

Keywords: homelessness, vocation training
Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP)

Administered through: DoL

Eligibility Requirements:
The grant provides funds exclusively to Veterans, transitioning service members, and their spouses. Applications for funds under the Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program, including DVOP, will be accepted only from the designated administrative entity that operates the employment service delivery system within the state. The grant also gives the State the flexibility to determine the most effective and efficient distribution of their staff resources based upon the distinct roles and responsibilities of the two positions.

Program Description:
Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) staff develop increased hiring opportunities within the local work force by raising the awareness of employers of the availability and the benefit of hiring Veterans. DVOP specialists are actively involved in outreach efforts to increase program participation among those with the greatest barriers to employment. The case management approach, taught by the National Veterans' Training Institute, is generally accepted as the method to use when providing vocational guidance or related services to eligible Veterans identified as needing intensive services.

DVOP specialists provide intensive services to meet the employment needs of disabled Veterans and other eligible Veterans, with the maximum emphasis directed toward serving those who are economically or educationally disadvantaged, including homeless Veterans and Veterans with barriers to employment. DVOP specialists are actively involved in outreach efforts to increase program participation among those with the greatest barriers to employment which may include, but should not be limited to: outplacement in VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program offices; VA Medical Centers; routine site visits to VSO meetings; Native American Trust Territories; Military installations; and, other areas of known concentrations of Veterans or transitioning service members.

Resources:
- A list of job centers can be accessed: http://www.servicelocator.org/
- A list of regional and state VETS offices can be accessed: http://www.dol.gov/vets/aboutvets/contacts/main.htm#RegionalStateDirectory

Keywords: employers, homelessness, physical disability, referral services, vocational training, work readiness
Homeless Veteran Supported Employment Program (HVSEP)

Administered through: DoL

Program Description:

The Homeless Veteran Supported Employment Program (HVSEP) provides vocational assistance, job development and placement, and ongoing supports to improve employment outcomes among homeless Veterans and Veterans at-risk of homelessness. Formerly homeless Veterans who have been trained as Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists (VRSs) provide these services.

Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists (VRS's) will individually help determine an appropriate employment goal using informed choice. VRS assist with resume development, interviewing skills, job searches, job leads, job coaching (helping you learn the job at the employers work site) and providing employers and program participants with ongoing supports in order to maintain long-term employment.

VRS's are able to meet in the community for assisted job searches and activities and provide transportation to and from interviews, job fairs and other job search related activities. VRS's identify transferable skills and help apply them to a variety of employment opportunities in your local community. Only jobs that the Veteran expresses interest in will be pursued in order to obtain immediate placement in a job that does not aggravate any health conditions.

VRS's are trained to address barriers such as: criminal backgrounds, support enforcement, or driving records. This program does not discriminate against any Veteran. Veterans obtain access to numerous programs and literature aimed to improve their marketability.

Eligibility Requirements:

Available to Veterans who are currently enrolled in one of the following one of the VA Homeless Programs: Health Care for Homeless Veterans, Veterans Homeless Prevention Pilot, Grant and Per Diem, HUD/VASH, Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (Domiciliary and CWT/TR), Health Care for Re-entry Veterans, Veterans Justice Outreach

In addition, you also must meet these other basic requirements: be eligible for VHA services; be interested in obtaining immediate competitive employment; have had a sporadic work history; have not been able to obtain or maintain employment long term on your own.

Resources:

For information about possible employment services in their area, Veterans can call the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans hotline at 1-877-4AID-VET. Veterans will be connected to a trained VA staff member. Hotline staff will conduct a brief screen to assess their needs. Homeless Veterans will be connected with the Homeless Program point of contact at the nearest VA facility. Contact information will be requested so staff may follow-up.

Keywords: homelessness, vocation training, work readiness
Homeless Veterans
Reintegration Program (HVRP)
Administered through: DoL

Program Description:

The Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) provides services to assist homeless veterans reintegrate into meaningful employment within the labor force and to stimulate the development of effective service delivery systems that will address the complex problems homeless veterans face. Grantees provide an array of services through a case management approach that directly assists homeless veterans as well as provides critical links to a variety of supportive services available in their local communities. The program is "employment focused" and veterans receive the employment and training services they need in order to re-enter the labor force. Services provided include: job placement, training, job development, career counseling, and resume preparation. Supportive services, such as clothing provision; provision of or referral to temporary, transitional, and permanent housing; referral to medical and substance abuse treatment; and transportation assistance are also provided to meet the needs of this group. Since its inception, HVRP has featured an outreach component using veterans who themselves have experienced homelessness. In recent years, this successful technique was modified to allow the program to utilize formerly homeless veterans in various other positions where there is direct client contact such as counseling, peer coaching, intake, and follow-up services.

The program is enhanced through coordination with various veterans' services programs and organizations such as the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives stationed in the local employment service offices of State Workforce Agencies, Workforce Investment Boards, One-Stop Centers, Veterans' Workforce Investment Program, the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, HUD, and HHS.

Resources:

More information on HVRP can be accessed: [http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/fact/Homeless_veterans_fs04.htm](http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/fact/Homeless_veterans_fs04.htm)

Keywords: case management, homelessness, service coordination, supportive service, vocational training
Incarcerated Veterans Transition Program (IVTP)

Administered through: DoL

Eligibility Requirements:
Applications for IVTP funding are accepted from a wide range of state and local agencies and organizations familiar with resources in their areas and the population to be served.

Eligible entities include:
• State Workforce Investment Boards as defined in Section 111 and 117 of the Workforce Investment Act
• Local Public Agencies
• Private, non-profit organizations including faith-based and community-based organizations

Program Description:
IVTP is a grant managed by the U.S. Department of Labor Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (USDOL/VETS) Program. Under the program, grantees provide supportive services to eligible incarcerated Veterans who are at risk of becoming homeless. The intent of the program is to provide direct services through a case management approach that leverages federal, state and local resources. Incarcerated Veterans are connected with appropriate employment and life skills support as they transition from correctional facilities into the community with the goal of meaningful employment in the labor force. IVTP grants also to stimulate the development of effective service delivery systems that will address the complex problems facing incarcerated and/or transitioning incarcerated Veterans who are at risk of homelessness.

IVTP grantees provide comprehensive services for targeted Veterans with a focus on employment. Some of the services offered include: job search assistance, career counseling, classroom training, life-skills support services, job placement and follow-up activities. In addition to employment services, applicants who receive funding must: conduct early intervention and outreach at one or more levels of federal, state, and local correctional facilities; provide direct supportive services through a case management approach to include referral for health care, addiction counseling and treatment, and housing services; and network with and leverage other Federal, State and local providers to connect participating Veterans with workforce development, employment, and retention resources.

Resources:
More information on IVTP can be accessed: http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/ivtp/main.htm

Keywords: case management, homelessness, incarceration, referral services, support services, work readiness
Program Description:
Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) conduct outreach to employers and engage in advocacy efforts with hiring executives to increase employment opportunities for Veterans, encourage the hiring of disabled Veterans, and generally assist Veterans to gain and retain employment. LVER staff conduct seminars for employers and job search workshops for Veterans seeking employment, and facilitate priority of service in regard to employment, training, and placement services furnished to Veterans by all staff of the employment service delivery system.

The program provides funding through State Employment Security Agencies to support dedicated staff positions to provide job development, placement, and support services directly to qualified Veterans. The program ensures that there is local functional supervision of State Employment Service/Job Service ensuring compliance with federally mandated regulations designed to ensure that Veterans receive the maximum assistance in employment and training opportunities. The program provides outreach to Veterans through all community agencies and organizations.

To meet the specific needs of Veterans, particularly Veterans with barriers to employment, DVOP and LVER staff are thoroughly familiar with the full range of job development services and training programs available at the State Workforce Agency One-Stop Career Centers and Department of Veterans' Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program locations.

Resources:
A list of job center locations can be accessed: http://www.service locator.org/
A list of regional and state VETS offices can be accessed: http://www.dol.gov/vets/aboutvets/contacts/main.htm#RegionalStateDirectory

Keywords: referral services, support services, vocational training, work readiness
Transition Assistance Program (TAP)  
Administered through: DoL

Eligibility Requirements:
Any eligible veteran can use the program.

Program Description:
The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) was established to meet the needs of separating service members during their period of transition into civilian life by offering job-search assistance and related services.

Recently, the DOD and VA have led the efforts of the Veterans Employment Initiative Task Force, interagency partners, and the White House Economic and Domestic Policy Council staffs in redesigning the Desert Storm-era Transition Assistance Program to better prepare service members for challenges as they leave the military and become Veterans.

The redesigned TAP provides training that will build skills to enable transitioning service members to meet career readiness standards established by DOD. The training, known as Transition GPS (goals, plans, success), is comprised of interlinked curriculum, services, and processes conducted by numerous partners — DOD, the military services, VA, DOL, Small Business Administration, and Office of Personnel Management. Training consists of comprehensive three-day workshops at selected military installations nationwide. Workshop attendees learn about job searches, career decision-making, current occupational and labor market conditions, and resume and cover letter preparation and interviewing techniques. Participants are also provided with an evaluation of their employability relative to the job market and receive information on current Veterans’ benefits.

Service members leaving the military with a service-connected disability are offered the Disabled Transition Assistance Program (DTAP). DTAP includes the normal three-day TAP workshop plus additional hours of individual instruction to help determine job readiness and address the special needs of disabled Veterans.

Resources:
- TAP curriculum can be accessed: http://jko.jten.mil/courses/tap/TGPS%20Standalone%20Training/start.html
- A list of TAP offices can be accessed: http://www.taonline.com/TapOffice/Find-TAP-office

Keywords: physical disability, transitional assistance, vocational training, work readiness
Veterans Justice Outreach Program
Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
Eligible Applicants: Each VA medical center has been asked to designate a facility-based Veterans’ Justice Outreach.

Eligible Beneficiaries: Veterans experiencing homelessness, those in frequent contact with the criminal justice system, and the reentering Veteran population are the primary beneficiaries of this program.

Program Description:
The purpose of the Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) Program is to avoid the unnecessary criminalization of mental illness and extended incarceration among Veterans by ensuring that eligible justice-involved Veterans have timely access to VHA services as clinically indicated. Veterans Justice Outreach Specialists are responsible for direct outreach, assessment, and case management for justice-involved Veterans in local courts and jails, and liaison with local justice system partners.

Resources:
Help finding legal assistance can be accessed: http://www.statesidelegal.org/findinghelp

A list of VJO Outreach Specialist Contacts can be accessed: http://www.va.gov/homeless/vjo.asp#contacts

More information about Veterans Treatment Courts can be accessed: http://www.justiceforvets.org/

Keywords: incarceration, legal
Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative (VTCLI)

Administered through: DoT

Eligibility Requirements:
Eligible applicants for the program must be existing Direct Recipients under FTA's Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula program, as well as local governments, states, and Indian Tribes. However, applicants who are not existing FTA grantees are strongly encouraged to identify an FTA grantee to act as a pass-through grantee. States may submit consolidated proposals for projects in a given state.

Program Description:
The initiative eases the ability of disabled Veterans to arrange for locally available transportation services to connect them with work, education, health care, or other services. The initiative strengthens and promotes “one-call” information centers and other tools that connect Veterans to available community transportation resources. In other words, eligible participants can call or go online to be connected to an available transportation option that will get them where they need to be. Although technically open to anyone with a disability regardless of Veteran status, participants must live within the jurisdiction of the program grant recipient. Because grant recipients are often located in areas with high numbers of Veterans like metropolitan areas, many rural Veterans may lack access.

The Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative (VTCLI) is an innovative, federally coordinated partnership that will make it easier for U.S. Veterans, active service members, military families, and others to learn about and arrange for locally available transportation services that connect them with work, education, health care, and other vital services in their communities. Drawing on existing federal resources, and in consultation with advocates for Veterans and people with disabilities, projects are being funded in urban, suburban, and rural communities around the nation to strengthen and promote “one-call” information centers and other tools. As a result, Veterans may quickly and conveniently turn to trusted sources who have been specially trained to help them access local transportation options and other support services, ranging from workforce training to food pantry locations.

Resources:

A list of selected projects can be accessed: [http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13094_13528.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13094_13528.html)

For more information email: VeteransTransportation@dot.gov

Keywords: service coordination, transportation
Veterans Transportation Service
Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
Available to veterans without access to transportation, particularly those who are visually impaired, elderly, or immobilized due to disease or disability. Eligibility requirements vary by location.

Program Description:
To enhance the VHA system, the Veterans Transportation Service (VTS) is a new transportation program for immobilized and remote VA patients to enhance access to programs available at local VA Medical Centers (VAMCs). VTS seeks to provide transportation services to include vehicle routing and scheduling software for VA Medical Facilities. The ride scheduling and routing systems will include GPS modules for VTS vehicles. Users can go online or call to schedule a ride.

The program fosters cooperation between different community transportation service providers, including: Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs); community and commercial transportation providers; federal, state, and local government transportation services; and non-profits, such as United We Ride. The initiative coordinates various transportation entities to work together through a transportation delivery model. The VA notes that the program will especially benefit those individuals living in remote, rural areas. The VA aims to have the program available in 50 percent of all VA health systems by 2015.

This initiative will not replace current activities but will rather supplement existing benefits and programs to improve access to VA health care.

The program is currently active in 45 sites and will be implemented at remaining locations by 2015.

Resources:
A list of locations where the program is available can be accessed: http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vts/

Keywords: service coordination, transportation
Veterans Workforce Investment Program
Administered through: DoL

Eligibility Requirements:

Applications for funds will be accepted from State and Local Workforce Investment Boards, public agencies, non-profit organizations. Applicants must have a familiarity with the area and population to be served and the ability to administer an effective and timely program.

Brief Program Description:

The Veterans Workforce Investment Program supports employment and training programs through grants or contracts to meet the needs for workforce investment activities of Veterans with service-connected disabilities, Veterans who have significant barriers to employment, Veterans who served on active duty in the armed forces during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized, and recently separated Veterans.

The annual funding for Veterans Workforce Investment Programs (VWIP) is authorized by legislation and derived as a percentage of the total annual Workforce Investment authorization. Most of the appropriated funds are used to support two-year grants awarded to eligible entities through a competitive, Solicitation-of-Grant Applications (SGA) process conducted in even-numbered years. Eligible entities include state and local governments, private, not-for-profit organizations including community- and faith-based organizations.

These programs can provide for, but are not limited to training (formal classroom or on-the-job training), retraining, job placement assistance, and support services, including testing and counseling. Grantees may choose to supplement the core training by offering other services that also enhance the employability of participants.

Veterans may also be eligible for services under other Workforce Investment Act titles, which assist economically disadvantaged or dislocated workers with employment, training, and other workforce development services. VWIP allows for specialized employment, training, and educational resources to be tailored to meet the needs of the specific target populations of Veterans served. In many programs, minority, female, economically disadvantaged, homeless and/or disabled Veterans can be targeted to receive these specialized resources. Projects that enhance direct Veterans' training-related services, emphasize service to sub-categories of the eligible Veterans target groups, and demonstration or research projects that are considered unique or innovative receive priority consideration.

Resources:


Keywords: minorities, physical disabilities, support services, vocational training, women, work readiness
Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) VetSuccess Program
Administered through: VA

Eligibility Requirements:
Active Duty Service Members are eligible if they: expect to receive an honorable discharge upon separation from active duty, obtain a memorandum rating of 20 percent or more from the VA, and apply for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) services, or (until December 31, 2014) are participating in the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) or are certified by the military as having a severe injury or illness that may prevent them from performing their military duties, apply for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) services, and report for an evaluation with a VR&E counselor before separating from active duty.

Veterans are eligible if they have received, or will receive, a discharge that is other than dishonorable, have a service-connected disability rating of at least 10 percent, or a memorandum rating of 20 percent or more from the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA), and apply for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) services.

Program Description:
Veterans may receive vocational rehabilitation and employment services to help with job training, employment accommodations, resume development, and job seeking skills coaching. Other services may be provided to assist Veterans in starting their own businesses or independent living services for those who are severely disabled and unable to work in traditional employment. Once a Veteran is established as eligible for the program, he/she is scheduled to meet with a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) for a comprehensive evaluation to determine if he/she is entitled for services. A comprehensive evaluation includes: an assessment of the Veteran's interests, aptitudes, and abilities; and an assessment of whether service connected disabilities impair the Veteran's ability to find and/or hold a job. A VRC then works with the Veteran to complete a determination if an employment handicap exists. An employment handicap exists if the Veteran's service connected disability impairs his/her ability to obtain and maintain a job. Entitlement to services is established if the Veteran has an employment handicap and is within his/her 12-year basic period of eligibility and has a 20 percent or greater service-connected disability rating.

Services that may be provided by the VR&E Program include: comprehensive rehabilitation evaluation to determine abilities, skills, and interests for employment, vocational counseling and rehabilitation planning for employment services, employment services such as job-training; job-seeking skills; resume development and other work readiness assistance; assistance finding and keeping a job, including the use of special employer incentives and job accommodations; on the job training (OJT); apprenticeships, and non-paid work experiences; post-secondary training at a college, vocational, technical or business school; supportive rehabilitation services including case management, counseling, and medical referrals; and independent living services for Veterans unable to work due to the severity of their disabilities.

Resources:
- The Veteran Employment Center can be accessed: https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/jobs
- More information on eligibility can be accessed: http://www.benefits.va.gov/vacrehab/eligibility_and_entitlement.asp

Keywords: physical disabilities, support services, vocational training, work readiness
Keywords

Case Management
- 3 HUD-VASH Vouchers
- 26 Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP)
- 27 Incarcerated Veterans Transition Program (IVTP)

Community-Lead
- 21 STAND DOWN

Family
- 10 Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)

Health Care
- 14 Health Care for Re-Entry Veterans (HCRV) Program
- 15 Healthcare for Homeless Veterans
- 16 Homeless Veterans Dental Program
- 17 Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment Program
- 18 Woman Veterans Healthcare Program

Homelessness
- 1 Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans
- 3 HUD-VASH Vouchers
- 10 Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)
- 12 Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Program
- 15 Healthcare for Homeless Veterans
- 16 Homeless Veterans Dental Program
- 19 National Call Center for Homeless Veterans
- 23 Compensated Work Therapy Program
- 24 Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP)
- 25 Homeless Veteran Supported Employment Program (HVSEP)
- 26 Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP)
- 27 Incarcerated Veterans Transition Program (IVTP)

Home Loans
- 13 VA Home Loan Program
Home Modifications
- 2 Home Improvements and Structural Alterations (HISA)
- 5 Section 504 – Very Low-Income Repairs Loans and Grants
- 9 Special Home Adaptation (SHA)/ Specially Adaptive Housing (SAH) Grants
- 11 Temporary Residence Assistance

Homeownership
- 13 VA Home Loan Program

Incarceration
- 14 Health Care for Re-Entry Veterans (HCRV) Program
- 27 Incarcerated Veterans Transition Program (IVTP)
- 30 Veterans Justice Outreach Program

Legal
- 30 Veterans Justice Outreach Program

Low-Income
- 4 Section 202 – Supportive Housing for the Elderly
- 5 Section 504 – Very Low-Income Repairs Loans and Grants
- 6 Section 515 – Rural Rental Housing Loans
- 7 Section 521 – Rural Rental Assistance Program
- 8 Section 811 – Supportive Housing for People with Disabilities

Mental Health
- 1 Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans
- 3 HUD-VASH Vouchers
- 7 Section 521 – Rural Rental Assistance Program
- 8 Section 811 – Supportive Housing for People with Disabilities
- 15 Healthcare for Homeless Veterans

Minorities
- 33 Veterans Workforce Investment Program
Physical Disability

- 2 Home Improvements and Structural Alterations (HISA)
- 3 HUD-VASH Vouchers
- 6 Section 515 – Rural Rental Housing Loans
- 7 Section 521 – Rural Rental Assistance Program
- 8 Section 811 – Supportive Housing for People with Disabilities
- 9 Special Home Adaptation (SHA)/ Specially Adaptive Housing (SAH) Grants
- 11 Temporary Residence Assistance
- 24 Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP)
- 29 Transition Assistance Program (TAP)
- 33 Veterans Workforce Investment Program
- 34 Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) VetSuccess Program

Referral Services

- 19 National Call Center for Homeless Veterans
- 20 Project CHALENG
- 22 Vet Center Program
- 24 Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP)
- 27 Incarcerated Veterans Transition Program (IVTP)
- 28 Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER)

Rent

- 4 Section 202 – Supportive Housing for the Elderly
- 6 Section 515 – Rural Rental Housing Loans
- 7 Section 521 – Rural Rental Assistance Program
- 8 Section 811 – Supportive Housing for People with Disabilities

Seniors

- 4 Section 202 – Supportive Housing for the Elderly
- 5 Section 504 – Very Low-Income Repairs Loans and Grants
- 6 Section 515 – Rural Rental Housing Loans
- 7 Section 521 – Rural Rental Assistance Program

Service Coordination

- 20 Project CHALENG
- 21 STAND DOWN
- 22 Vet Center Program
- 26 Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP)
- 31 Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative (VTCLI)
- **32** Veterans Transportation Service

### Substance Abuse

- **1** Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans
- **3** HUD-VASH Vouchers
- **17** Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment Program

### Support Services

- **1** Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans
- **3** HUD-VASH Vouchers
- **4** Section 202 – Supportive Housing for the Elderly
- **8** Section 811 – Supportive Housing for People with Disabilities
- **10** Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)
- **12** Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Program
- **15** Healthcare for Homeless Veterans
- **17** Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment Program
- **22** Vet Center Program
- **26** Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP)
- **27** Incarcerated Veterans Transition Program (IVTP)
- **28** Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER)
- **33** Veterans Workforce Investment Program
- **34** Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) VetSuccess Program

### Transition Assistance

- **22** Vet Center Program
- **29** Transition Assistance Program (TAP)

### Transportation

- **31** Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative (VTCLI)
- **32** Veterans Transportation Service

### Vocational Training

- **23** Compensated Work Therapy Program
- **24** Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP)
- **25** Homeless Veteran Supported Employment Program (HVSEP)
- **26** Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP)
- **28** Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER)
- **29** Transition Assistance Program (TAP)
- **33** Veterans Workforce Investment Program
- **34** Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) VetSuccess Program
Women

- 18 Woman Veterans Healthcare Program
- 33 Veterans Workforce Investment Program

Work Readiness

- 14 Health Care for Re-Entry Veterans (HCRV) Program
- 24 Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP)
- 25 Homeless Veteran Supported Employment Program (HVSEP)
- 27 Incarcerated Veterans Transition Program (IVTP)
- 28 Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER)
- 29 Transition Assistance Program (TAP)
- 33 Veterans Workforce Investment Program
- 34 Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) VetSuccess Program
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