



Ending Veteran Homelessness Highlights:

All in! Partnering to End Homelessness among Veterans

This resource was developed through community efforts across the country to end homelessness among Veterans and reflects practices that local communities have successfully implemented toward achieving that goal. It is focused on strategies for Community Veteran Leadership committees to implement locally.

Why Develop Partnerships? Collaboration is at the heart of any successful community effort that attempts to reach a difficult goal such as ending homelessness among Veterans. For the effort to be transformative, partnerships need to span across sectors and silos. Seek community partners who are mission-driven and somehow ‘touch’ the issue of Veterans experiencing homelessness to add expertise -- regardless of the source of their funding.

Establish Municipal and Philanthropic Leaders as Partners

Focus on **community leaders and champions, municipal workers and emergency responders** for potential partnerships. There are numerous roles to play – including identifying locations of Veterans experiencing homelessness, participating on committees, and helping volunteer with surge efforts and “Community Connect” programs. Prominent leaders and mayors can lend their platform to raise the profile of your effort and increase community investment of time and funds.

Philanthropic organizations can be crucial as key conveners of influential champions and by using funding to incentivize or match funds for discrete purposes. **Faith-based organizations** are natural partners - look for churches, synagogues and mosques to work with.

Look for Veteran Organizations

Consider approaching **Veteran Service Organizations** such as Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Vietnam Veterans of America (VVOA), **county Veteran officers, active duty staff** on military bases, and recruiting offices. They could fill various roles such as funding unmet needs, peer mentoring, marketing the effort to landlords, providing furniture and goods, or accessibility features in housing such as building a ramp or adding grab bars.

Volunteers and Students

Don’t forget the resource of **students as interns and volunteers** to help in coordinating community canvassing or surges, PR/marketing and media, inputting data, and developing statistical reports. Local high schools, clubs or scout troops may have community service requirements. Places to post for potential interns include www.interns.com and www.idealists.org. Additionally, young people in **Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC)** programs could lend a helping hand.

Increase Housing Options through Community Landlords

Community Landlords (defined as not being part of a corporate entity) are an important source of partnerships for accessing affordable housing options, as well as networking to new landlords and business community members. New housing units can be accessed quickly through landlord engagement and partnership as part of a quality leasing strategy. **Find new landlords** through referrals from existing landlords, letters from the mayor or county, landlord/property management associations, housing authorities, board members and employees, or by posting notices in community virtual boards or newsletters.

Criminal Justice Systems

Connect with **criminal justice systems** as a potential partner. Jail and court systems are involved in Veteran's issues and can collaborate with housing providers before the Veteran is released to divert them from the homeless response or criminal justice systems.

Widen the Scope beyond the Homeless Response System

Plan to include **non-traditional partners** that may have a mission to serve specific populations of people in need such as Veterans (businesses such as home supply stores, hotels), service organizations (Civitan's, Jaycees, Lions Club, Rotary, Kiwanis), Chambers of Commerce, Downtown Development Authorities, employment and transportation providers, healthcare, child care, etc. **Develop a one pager** with potential funding or volunteer needs and present to these groups.

Caring for Pets of Unsheltered Veterans Experiencing Homelessness

Many Veterans are reluctant to come into shelter if they would have to leave their animal behind and uncared for. Seek out **organizations that assist with animal sheltering or foster care** as an interim step while the Veteran is planning for the transition to permanent housing and can be re-united with their pet. The Humane Society and many specific breed organizations are a few places to start.

Publicize the Effort to Gain Additional Community Partners

Increase the transparency of your mission to end homelessness among Veterans:

- Make a dedicated website, Twitter or Facebook page
- Use other social media to broadcast your goals and intentions publically
- Get others involved, post items needed or specific missions needing help
- Chart your progress- create a data driven dashboard

Disclaimer: This tool provides examples from communities without any edits from HUD. They are included only as useful examples or templates. HUD has not reviewed them to determine if they meet all funding requirements, including whether all costs depicted are eligible. HUD is not endorsing the examples as strategies that all communities should adopt. These are not official HUD documents.