

# Recommended Steps to Assist Veterans Experiencing Homelessness

## Respond to Phone Call or Email

What to do when you receive a phone call or email from a veteran experiencing homelessness.

- Have a pen and paper nearby to take notes.
- Write down their name and phone number.

## Listen

- Often, the veteran or family member will provide a lot of important information if you let them explain their situation, what they need help with, or are asking for.
- Based on what they stated, you may get a better understanding of the problem. You may identify other issues the veteran may need assistance with as well. Write them down for future reference.

## Ask Questions

- Are you currently homeless or at risk of being homeless?
- Where are you currently living?
- Do you have immediate family members to include children that are homeless along with you?
  - Some shelter or facilities are unable to accommodate families; thereby separating the families.
  - Some shelters or facilities are specifically for women.
- Are you enrolled in VA Healthcare?
  - The Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT) and homeless veteran programs such as Homeless Veteran Reintegration Program (HVRP) and U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing programs (VASH) or HUD-VASH are managed by the Veterans' Health Administration (VHA). They have a variety of resources and supportive services to assist homeless veterans.
- Are you in receipt of VA Benefits such as compensation or pension?
  - A Veteran that is service connected is better enabled to obtain VA healthcare and access to homeless veteran programs
  - They likely are receiving a monthly monetary compensation or pension award.

- Determine where they are currently located
  - Based on where they are located, locate the closest VA Hospital and direct them to it.
  - Their location will also dictate which American Legion Task Force Chairperson to contact (reference list in continuity book). The chairperson should have a knowledge of the local resources within their respective state.
  - Their location will also dictate which Veteran Integrated Service Network (VISN) region they are in, so that you may contact the correct coordinator or refer the veteran to them (reference list in continuity book).

### Research the Issue

- Once you have identified the issue, you may have to do some research and follow up with the veteran once you have potential solutions.

### Consider Resources

- Often, the problem or issue will dictate the appropriate resource.
- Make appropriate referrals to VA, non-profit organizations, Veteran Service Organizations, etc.
- Local American Legion Post

### Follow-up

- Ask the veteran to follow up with you so that they can update you on the outcome. Did the solution work? You may call and follow up with them as well.

### Important Phone Numbers

- National Call Center for Homeless Veterans – 877-424-3838
- Veterans Crisis Line – 1-800-273-8255, Press 1
- VA Health Care – 1-877-222-8387
- Veteran Benefits – 1-800-827-1000
- Washington DC VA Medical Center – 1-877-328-2621
- Washington DC VA Medical Center “Women Veterans’ Program Manager” – 202-745-8345
- Get Connected. Get Help: [Dial 211](#) on phone