

# Stand Down Overview

## Background and Outcomes

In times of war, combat units were removed from the battlefield to a place of relative security and safety to rest and recuperate. This recovery model inspired Vietnam veterans Robert Van Keuren and Dr. Jon Nachison to develop the first Stand Down in 1988 with the support of Vietnam Veterans of San Diego. Now in its 25th year, this event remains a grassroots, community-based intervention where homeless veterans are brought together in a single location to access community resources and supplies needed to begin addressing their individual problems and rebuilding their lives.

In 2010, over 190 independent Stand Down events served over 52,000 veterans and family members. Over 27,000 volunteers participated in these events, providing services, logistics support, and companionship. Department of Labor-Veterans Employment and Training Service (DOL-VETS) provided funding for 81 events in 2010 to help facilitate employment readiness and connectivity to employment and training services. DOL-VETS' financial support is a critical component of Stand Down events and is the only Federal program devoted exclusively to supporting these initiatives in the community.

More information on the history and development of Stand Down can be found in the [Stand Down Program Design Manual](#).

## Development Models

The traditional Stand Down model pioneered in San Diego is considered a Class A event and includes three full days of services and activities targeted to meeting the basic needs as well as the longer term rehabilitation objectives of homeless veterans.

Class B and C events are two and one day Resource Fairs. These events offer some level of direct service provision on site, but often focus on providing goods and supplies to meet basic needs with partner refer-



als for more extensive service delivery following the Stand Down. Homeless Veteran Health Fairs (Class D) and Homeless Veteran Job Fairs (Class E) are one day events that provide physical and mental health care services or employment and training referrals, respectively. Health Fairs often include benefits claims processing and follow-up appointments, while Job Fairs often include consultation from DVOPs/LVERs or HVRP grantees, referrals to Career One Stop resources, and connectivity to needed basic skills and training resources.

According to the Stand Down Calendar Year 2010 Survey conducted by the Homeless Veterans Programs Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs at the Department of Veterans Affairs, 81% of Stand Down events were one day resource, health, or job fairs, while the remaining 19% were more traditionally modeled multi-day events. 55% of events included overnight sleeping services.

More information on Stand Down models and development can be found in the [Stand Down Guide](#). Additional guidance on the development process can be found in NCHV's "[Stand Down: History and Program Structure](#)" training materials.

## Services and Partners

Stand Down is designed to help the nation's estimated 67,000 homeless veterans on any given night "combat" life on the streets through a "hand up, not hand



out” philosophy. Events include a wide array of services and resources depending on local capacity and the needs of the veterans who attend.

Basic needs are met through provision of hot food, clothing and physical and mental health care. Legal assistance, benefit claims processing, child care services and job counseling and referrals are provided by community and government partners.

## Funding Resources

DOL-VETS awards Stand Down funding through the Homeless Veterans’ Reintegration Program (HVRP) on an annual basis, pending funding reauthorization. This noncompetitive grant is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis to support one day or multi-day events at up to \$7,000 or \$10,000, respectively. Eligible entities include state workforce agencies, state and local workforce investment boards, veterans service

organizations, local public agencies and nonprofit organizations, including community and faith-based organizations. HVRP grantees are encouraged to engage in Stand Down events in their community and may apply for Stand Down funding support independently of their HVRP grant.

Additional information on the application process for DOL-VETS Stand Down support can be found in the [Stand Down Federal Register Notice](#) and [associated materials](#) or NCHV’s training materials on [Stand Down Financing and Planning](#).

Stand Down organizers are encouraged to collaborate with the staff members of their local VA Medical Center for the provision of medical services and benefits processing. Community organizations may qualify for additional financial support of up to \$3,000 per day through their Medical Center. For more information, organizers should contact the [Health Care for Homeless Veterans Office at their local Medical Center](#).

In-kind donations of goods and services can help meet needs within tight budgets. Organizers are encouraged to leverage these local resources. Several national initiatives have been developed to provide donated resources to Stand Down events.



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