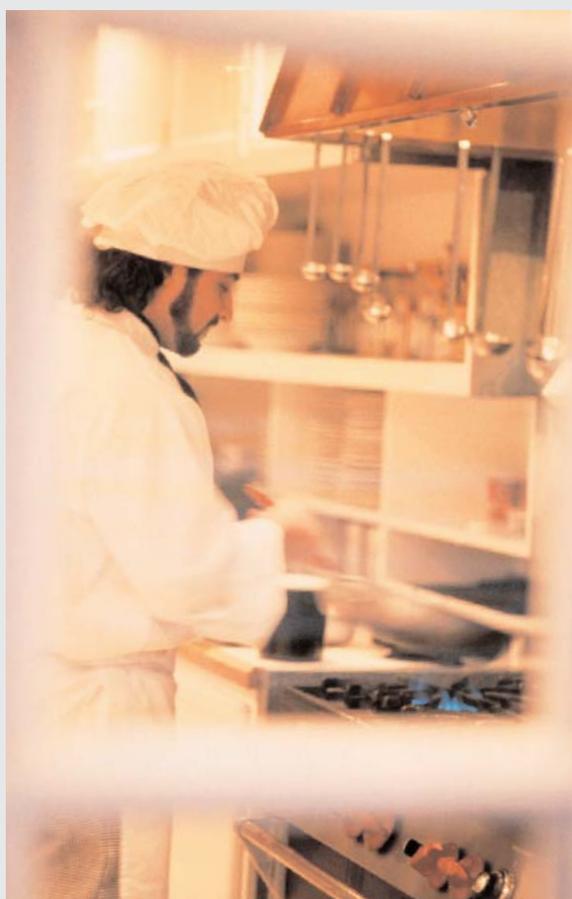


Employment Assistance Guide for Service Providers Helping Homeless Veterans



NATIONAL COALITION for HOMELESS VETERANS

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Introduction

This guide was produced through a U.S. Department of Labor-Veterans' Employment and Training Service (USDOL-VETS) technical assistance grant to serve as a quick reference resource to assist government agencies, community-based organizations, social workers, case managers and others who are helping homeless veterans prepare for and obtain employment.

Homeless veterans have the same legal rights as all veterans to employment assistance, preferences in federal hiring practices, and eligibility for Departments of Veterans Affairs and Labor employment programs. However, their homelessness presents unique challenges and potential obstacles. Use this guide to develop a better understanding of the issues affecting homeless citizens and to effectively serve this special veteran population.

Connecting With the Community

Helping homeless veterans obtain steady, gainful employment may seem like a daunting challenge, but if you take time to connect with the local homeless service provider community, you will find you have valuable allies and the support you need to succeed. The fact is, in most communities, you will be welcomed to join an already established team of government officials, community-based homeless service providers, social workers, medical specialists and counselors who are working together to help homeless individuals and families. This guide will help show you the way.

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Understanding the Issues

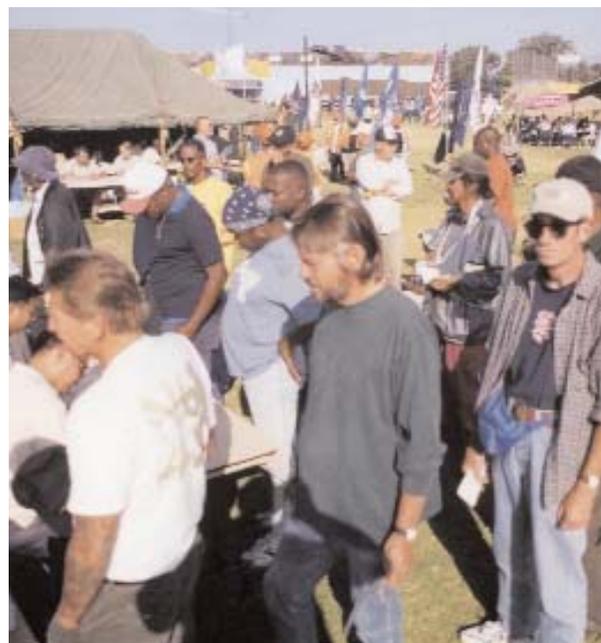
Until 1994, there was no empirical data in any reliable form that demonstrated the prevalence of veterans among the nation's homeless population. Service providers knew many of their homeless clients were veterans, but there were only two small federal programs in place to help them – the Department of Labor (DOL) Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program (GPD).

That year, the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (NCHV) and the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH) conducted a state-by-state survey and released their findings, "A Report to the Nation." That survey showed a significant percentage of America's homeless people were military veterans.

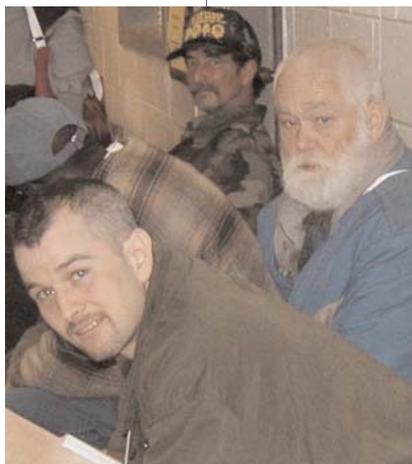
Congress commissioned the Urban Institute and the Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) to perform a more comprehensive survey of the nation's homeless population in 1996. Completed in 1999, "The National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients (NSHAPC)" remains a reliable source of information about homelessness in America. The survey reported:

- ◆ 33% of homeless men in America are veterans.
- ◆ 23% of all homeless people in America are veterans.
- ◆ 89% of homeless veterans have received honorable discharges.
- ◆ 67% of homeless veterans have served three years or longer.
- ◆ Homeless veterans have attained higher education levels than non-veteran homeless people.
- ◆ 79% of homeless veterans live in large metropolitan areas.

These findings helped put the homeless veterans issue on the national public policy agenda. The VA and DOL took immediate and significant steps to increase funding for HVRP and GPD, the two largest veteran-specific homeless assistance programs in the nation today.



Homeless veterans at a Stand Down, a community program providing services and referrals to more than 30,000 veterans at 157 events nationwide each year.



The survey results also proved, to an absolute certainty, that the nation's homeless assistance programs were not fully embracing this large segment of the homeless population.

Today, the VA estimates that about 131,000 veterans are homeless on any given night – accounting for one-fifth of the entire homeless population – and roughly twice as many experience homelessness throughout the year. This marks a considerable decrease in veteran homelessness estimates from only a decade ago, but nonetheless signifies a present and persistent problem.

Increasing veterans' access to homeless assistance services on the local level and preventing homelessness among America's new generation of combat forces returning from wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is dependent upon reliable data about homeless veterans and the services available to them in every community. All federal homeless assistance grants require locality-specific needs assessments that reflect the number of homeless people and the services they require. This guide will show you how to identify the local service providers that can support your work.

Causes of Homelessness

Homelessness is the end result of problems that an individual cannot resolve without assistance. Because each person deals with challenges and stresses differently, there is no way to predict how and when homeless veterans and those at risk of becoming homeless will ultimately realize they need help. The majority of Vietnam veterans who eventually sought homeless assistance did not request help until eight to 12 years after their discharge (*NCHV, VA*).



Generally, the causes of homelessness can be grouped into three categories: economic hardships, health issues and lack of affordable housing. These issues impact all homeless individuals, but veterans face additional challenges when trying to overcome these obstacles including: prolonged separation from traditional supports such as family and close friends; highly stressful training and occupational demands that can affect personality, self-esteem and the ability to communicate with people in the civilian sector after separation from military service; and non-transferability of some military occupational specialties into the civilian work force.

■ *Mental Health Issues*

The overwhelming majority of veterans return from military service and successfully reintegrate into society as productive citizens. Studies, however, show that up to one-third of combat veterans are likely to experience some clinical degree of depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or other emotional/psychological difficulties directly related to their military experience (*VA Iraq War Clinician Guide, 2004*). Debilitating mental and physical health problems are a leading cause of homelessness, particularly among combat veterans.

The VA reports that up to 30 percent of the 184,000 veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan who sought VA medical care since separating from the military exhibited potential symptoms of post-traumatic stress, drug abuse, or other mental and emotional disorders. Close to one-half of those – 30,000 – could possibly be diagnosed with PTSD. Of greater concern was the May 2006 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report that found nearly 80 percent of Iraq War veterans whose Post-Deployment

Survey responses indicated they were at risk of developing PTSD were not referred to Department of Defense or VA facilities for mental health screening and counseling. As American troop deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan approach the 2 million mark, it is reasonable to anticipate that as many as 600,000 or more young veterans may eventually seek mental health counseling and treatment services during the next decade.

■ *Physical Health and Disabilities*

According to the most recent VA CHALENG report (March 2009), medical services and TB testing are the two highest *met* needs of homeless veterans. Help with medication, treatment for substance abuse, and hepatitis C testing, meanwhile, are the fourth-, fifth- and sixth-highest *met* needs, respectively. These statistics are encouraging, considering how access to health services is critical in order to treat and prevent the health problems associated with homelessness.

While the VA has greatly increased the size and services of its nationwide health system, many communities are underserved by VA programs and community health services. Many low-income veterans cannot afford health insurance, or otherwise work for small, independent businesses that do not offer health insurance coverage. These veterans and their families are one major medical problem or financial crisis removed from severe economic hardship that may, and often does, result in an increased risk of homelessness.

Because of the increased demand for health services from the VA health care system, waiting times for VA medical

appointments have been recorded at two months or longer. For veterans in crisis, this becomes a source of increased apprehension and frustration, and therefore can contribute to an increased risk of homelessness.

■ *Economic Hardships*

Economic hardships usually involve employment issues and mounting debt. The cost of housing in most communities makes it unlikely for a single-wage earner to be able to afford a comfortable and safe rental unit. A person making minimum wage only makes about \$1,160 a month and would need to find an apartment for \$348 – which is extremely rare – to have enough money for food, utilities, transportation and other necessities. Even if one is lucky enough to find a low-rent apartment, there is little extra money for insurance, clothing, education, entertainment and recreation.

Young veterans who want to live independently once they return home from military duty face incredible economic pressures. They are transitioning from an environment in which housing, monthly income and other necessities are provided into a world in which everything has a price tag. The cost of housing often prevents younger veterans from living independently. Unless they are able to save money as they plan for their futures, these veterans are already at a higher risk of becoming homeless than their more securely rooted civilian contemporaries.

Many people who have never served in the military have difficulty managing personal finances. Without a considerable degree of discipline, young veterans can quickly become burdened with debt before they realize they are headed for financial disaster. That burden reduces opportunities for self-advancement, imperils economic stability and can significantly increase the risk of becoming homeless.



National Guardsmen and Reservists also face significant economic pressures, even though most return to their pre-deployment occupations. Often their income while on active duty is lower than what they earned as civilians, so they may be depleting their savings or increasing their debt during military service. This is especially true for families that depend on a single primary wage earner's income.

■ *Unemployment and Underemployment*

Unemployment and underemployment are two of the most critical issues affecting homeless veterans. Particularly for younger veterans, many military occupational specialties during wartime – weapons specialists, munitions handlers, door gunners on helicopters and infantrymen – are not transferable to the civilian sector. The occupation of infantryman is problematic because although law enforcement is a great option for some of these veterans, the availability of these jobs is statistically insignificant compared to the large number of job-seeking combat veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. And, increasingly, many of those positions require college credits to be eligible for consideration.

Many transferable military occupations of younger veterans – warehousemen, clerical and food service workers, health care assistants and lower level workers with limited experience – are on the low end of the wage scale. In many markets, veterans may be competing for rare employment opportunities with civilians who have more site-based training or more personal contact with potential employers and their crews or staff.

For individuals who must rely solely on their own incomes to support themselves and their families, economic pressures are compounded by the difficulty of paying for and attending educational programs to improve their earning potential. For single heads of household, the issue of paying tuition and fees is often not as prohibitive as child care and other necessary expenses associated with going back to school.

Studies show that gainful employment at a livable wage with opportunities for advancement is the foundation for maintaining economic stability and reducing the risk of homelessness. Market factors such as layoffs, plant closings, high unemployment rates, and changes in a region's commercial base that alter the nature of available jobs usually affect younger, less experienced workers the most.

Lack of Affordable Housing

Housing must be addressed on three levels: (1) temporary shelter, (2) transitional living facilities with supportive services, and (3) permanent housing with or without supportive services.

Veterans who lose their housing – regardless of the reasons – will most likely have to progress through all three levels before they become self-sufficient and able to live independently. Depending on how long a veteran has lived on the street, that progression can take up to five years or longer to complete. Veterans with serious mental illnesses or other disabilities may never be able to achieve full independence. Veterans with histories of alcohol and drug abuse, legal problems or incarceration face extreme obstacles when trying to obtain and maintain housing.

Because of limited public assistance resources, homeless programs are usually subject to a priority system that favors single parents with dependent children, the elderly and the disabled over veterans without an obvious substance abuse disorder, mental illness or other disability. The reality is that, in virtually every community in America, there is a critical shortage of safe, decent affordable housing for individuals and families with low and extremely low incomes (*National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty, Harvard University, 2006*). More than 1.5 million veterans live below the federal poverty level – that’s 1 out of every 16 Americans who have served in the military (*2000 U.S. Census*).

1. Emergency Shelter

Most communities have shelters that provide emergency assistance on a daily basis to victims of catastrophic events, domestic violence and homelessness. Most of these are restricted to individuals, the main exception being shelters that accept women with children. There are very few shelters that are able to receive men with dependent children.

The availability of social workers and referrals to supportive services varies widely, and people who are known to be homeless are usually asked to leave the premises each morning and are not allowed to check back in until late afternoon.



Photo courtesy of Century Housing

Above: Cabrillo Apartments, supportive housing operated by U.S. Veterans Initiative and financed by Century Housing Corporation of Culver City, CA, and scattered-site group homes operated by community-based and private service organizations provide safe, affordable housing with services to help veterans transition out of homelessness.



This practice makes it difficult to connect homeless veterans with service providers who can help them, even from VA sources, particularly if the veteran is dealing with serious emotional or mental disorders. For veterans with alcohol or substance abuse issues, this may be their only recourse until they complete a sobriety or drug rehabilitation program. In those cases, they most likely will need a case manager from a veteran service provider or veterans service organization (VSO) to work with them to ensure completion of the program in order to become eligible for enrollment in a transitional housing facility.

Veterans without substance abuse problems who must reside in an emergency shelter while waiting for placement in a transitional program may need similar support because of the emotional stress and lower self-esteem often developed by people who find themselves in this situation.

2. Transitional Housing with Supportive Services

Transitional housing programs are designed to provide temporary housing in a safe, alcohol- and drug-free environment to help homeless people work toward the goal of independent living. Supportive services that are

provided – either directly by the organization or through partnerships with other community programs – include health care, mental health assessments and treatment, employment services, transportation and clothing, assistance applying for benefits such as food stamps, and social security income supports. Most programs have up to a 24-month eligibility limit, with the expectation that homeless clients begin working and be able to move into their own rental housing units during that term.

The VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program (GPD) is a partnership for community-based organizations that provide those services and work closely with VA medical facilities and benefits offices to make sure veterans receive the benefits they earned through their military service. About 15,000 beds are operated by community-based organizations in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico with roughly 2,200 still in the planning stage.

The VA estimates its homeless programs reach about 100,000 veterans each year, although perhaps more than 260,000 experience homelessness at some time during the year. It is likely that some of these veterans who are not part of VA homeless programs receive assistance from other community resources, but there is no way to determine how many do and what type of assistance they are receiving. The VA continues to invest in the GPD to increase the capacity of community service providers.

3. Permanent Housing

Helping the homeless work their way back into permanent housing and economic self-sufficiency is the goal of all comprehensive homeless assistance programs. Many organizations in the private sector and an increasing number of government-subsidized programs utilize a “Housing First” approach. This model moves homeless people and families into housing units – usually multi-family housing projects – relatively quickly and then



makes supportive services available to them. Some projects do not require proof of sobriety or drug-free status prior to placement.

Clients are assigned case workers who encourage them to participate in rehabilitation programs and apply for services, but often there is no requirement that they comply with those recommendations. The primary defense of this approach is that it reduces the costs of emergency room care and law enforcement activities with respect to homeless people.

Private and government-subsidized permanent housing programs with eligibility requirements are more commonly referred to as Section 8 or housing choice rental units. Applicants must sign lease agreements and agree to follow site-based rules to remain in the units. In most communities, the need for these subsidized rental housing units far exceeds the supply, and waiting lists are measured in years if they are open at all.

Recognizing the lack of affordable housing in their communities, some veteran-specific transitional housing programs have been developing permanent housing opportunities for veterans who are ready for independent living. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)-VA Supportive Housing Program provides 20,000 vouchers for chronically homeless veterans, but for other programs, veteran service providers must compete with other housing projects for limited HUD funding and constantly search for additional funding sources to provide this housing option.

Presently, many of the permanent housing units being planned by veteran service providers are more accurately described as “permanent supportive housing” – rental units that will be offered to veterans who need services such as case management, income supports, outpatient mental health care, and long-term physical and occupational therapy. This means veterans at risk of becoming homeless solely because of low incomes will remain at risk for the foreseeable future.

Veterans Victory Farm in Fitzwilliam, NH, is the nation's first therapeutic agricultural residency program for veterans coping with serious mental illness. The innovative program is operated by Veterans Hospice Homestead of Fitchburg, MA.

P

ersonal Considerations

Whether you provide employment preparation and placement assistance to homeless veterans as part of a case management team or as an employment specialist for a government or private agency, you will become one of the homeless client's most trusted confidants. In the process of identifying the client's occupational interests, training and experience, you will undoubtedly learn a great deal about the other supportive services he or she needs to successfully transition out of homelessness to full employment and permanent housing.

In some cases, you may well become the primary source of referral information for the homeless client. This section gives a brief overview of the various unique challenges these individuals encounter to guide your efforts to cultivate and maintain their trust.

■ *Residence*

Homeless veterans who are not enrolled in a homeless assistance or supportive residence program often have no fixed address, which means receiving mail and phone calls may be a problem. During your client assessment process, determine how you and prospective employers will keep in touch with your client. You may have to help the homeless client make suitable contact arrangements.

- ◆ If staying at a shelter, the veteran should obtain permission to use its address and telephone number for job applications. Community shelters often have limits on how long a person can stay, so a long-term alternative for contact is desirable.
- ◆ If transient, the veteran should obtain permission to receive mail and phone calls at an acceptable location for the short term. This can be a local shelter, VA regional office or clinic, veterans service organization, church, or even your office.
- ◆ Clients should be referred to a transitional housing program as soon as possible to access other supportive services they need and to increase their prospects of obtaining steady, gainful employment. For information on how to help your client find housing, go to www.nchv.org and click on "Are You a Homeless Veteran?"



Homeless veteran assistance referral information is available online at www.nchv.org. Click on "Are You a Homeless Veteran?"

■ *Health and Hygiene*

Depending on how long they have been without a permanent residence, homeless veterans may have serious health and hygiene issues that must be addressed.

Veterans who are not already enrolled in a supportive residence program should be referred to the nearest VA medical center or clinic, or a local community clinic for assessment and treatment for the following:

- ◆ Hepatitis C, HIV and tuberculosis (TB) – All homeless people are at a higher risk of contracting these infectious diseases than the general population, and homeless veterans are at an even higher risk for hepatitis C and TB.
- ◆ General health screening
- ◆ Dental care – The VA has a dental care program for veterans who are participating in homeless assistance residency programs.
- ◆ Mental health assessment – A large percentage of homeless veterans experience depression or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) related to their military service and periods of homelessness.
- ◆ Substance abuse – Untreated psychosocial disorders often lead to self-medication with alcohol and illegal drugs. Approximately three-quarters of homeless veterans have substance abuse and/or mental health issues. Addiction is a disease that requires treatment and follow-up supportive counseling. Become familiar with the programs in which your clients participate.

■ *Women Veterans*

For the first time in U.S. history, women comprise about 11 percent of American troops serving in combat theaters in Iraq and Afghanistan. The VA estimates women will soon account for 10 percent of the veteran population. Women veterans have special needs and challenges; many are single parents with dependent children. The VA and community-based service providers have developed programs offering specialized services for women.



- ◆ All **VA medical centers** and many Readjustment Counseling (Vet) Centers have a designated Women Veterans Program Manager to help women veterans access VA benefits and health care services. Call 1-877-222-8387 to find the nearest VA medical center.
- ◆ The VA began a systemwide initiative in November 2008 to make comprehensive primary care for women veterans available at every VA medical facility – that is, VA medical centers and community-based outpatient clinics. According to a GAO report released in July 2009, VA medical facilities are in various stages of implementing this initiative.
- ◆ All regional offices of the **Veterans Benefits Administration** have a Women Veterans Coordinator to help women veterans apply for VA benefits and assistance programs. Call 1-800-827-1000 to locate your local office, or go to www.vba.va.gov/VBA/benefits/offices.asp.
- ◆ Most **State Departments of Veterans Affairs** have a designated Women Veterans Coordinator to help women veterans. Check the phone book blue pages under “State Government, Veterans Affairs,” or go to www.naswvc.com/page2.html.

Personal Identification

Many homeless veterans do not have the personal identification documents required to obtain employment. Along with an application and a resume, your client may need the following:

- ◆ **Photo ID** – These are VA eligibility and veteran status confirmation cards with the veteran’s photo. Contact the VA Homeless Veteran Coordinator at the nearest VA medical center for information about how to obtain a photo ID. To find the center serving your area, look in the phone book blue pages under “U.S. Government, Veterans Affairs.” State Motor Vehicle Departments also provide this service for a fee.
- ◆ **DD 214** – Homeless veterans are entitled to one copy of their service and medical records free of charge. Send requests to: National Personnel Records Center, Military Personnel Records, 9700 Page Ave., St. Louis, MO 63132-5100.

Homeless veterans, through their DVOP/LVER or case manager, may fax the request for records to 314-801-9195. Be sure to write “Homeless veteran case” clearly on the form.

The National Archives and Records Administration stores military personnel files. To submit a request, visit www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records.

State Offices of Veterans Affairs often have military records of veterans who are state residents. Go to www.nasdva.net for your state office’s contact information.

- ◆ **Birth Certificate** – Contact the appropriate state government office in the veteran’s state of birth.
- ◆ **Social Security Card** – Apply at the nearest Social Security office (check the phone book blue pages under “U.S. Government, Social Security Administration”). Because of tightened security at some federal buildings, contact your local office to see if there are special procedures your clients must follow to complete the application process.

C Community Partners

In most communities across America there already exists an active and experienced network of service providers ready to help you better serve your homeless clients. This section will guide you to the agencies and charitable organizations that will serve as your strongest allies.

■ Community-Based Organizations

Community- and faith-based organizations (CBOs and FBOs) provide more direct services for homeless veterans than all federal facilities combined. These organizations usually work within regional networks in partnership with federal and state agencies to provide emergency and transitional housing, employment counseling and job placement services, access to health care, legal aid, substance abuse and mental health services, life skills training, and other supportive services that prepare homeless veterans to once again become productive members of society. Many of these organizations will be sending you job-ready veterans – those who have participated in job preparation and training programs.

To learn which organizations can help you better serve your homeless veteran clients, refer to the following:

- ◆ **National Coalition for Homeless Veterans** – A national organization wholly dedicated to providing services for homeless veterans, NCHV offers valuable information and guidance about veteran-specific assistance programs in many communities. Go to www.nchv.org and click on “Homeless Veteran Service Providers” for contact information for your area.
- ◆ **The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development** has a “Communities” section on their website that lists community-based housing, shelter and service providers for the homeless in every state. These organizations serve as the primary emergency and transitional assistance caregivers in their com-



Homeless Court at Veterans Village of San Diego helps resolve legal barriers to employment and housing.

munities and work collaboratively to provide the full range of assistance needed by homeless individuals and families. To find a list of emergency services available in your state, go to www.hud.gov/homeless/hmlsagen.cfm.

- ◆ **Coalitions for the homeless** are networks of service providers working together to help homeless people. They exist in most cities and urban counties. Look in your local phone book or contact your mayor’s office for information. You can also view a directory of local homeless service organizations at www.nationalhomeless.org/directories/index.html.
- ◆ **Local charitable organizations** – Local chapters of national organizations can be a valuable source of information on employment and other supportive services available in your community. Contact the nearest office of the Salvation Army, Volunteers of America, United Way, Goodwill, Catholic Charities or other charitable organizations. Local yellow pages often have a section for “Homeless” or “Homeless Services” that includes listings of organizations that help homeless citizens.
- ◆ **Veterans service organizations (VSOs)** such as The American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, AMVETS, Paralyzed Veterans Association, Blinded Veterans Association, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Vietnam Veterans of America, and Non Commissioned Officers Association offer employment-related services for veterans in various localities. Many of these organizations have veterans service officers who help veterans file for VA benefits and often serve as veterans’ representatives in their search for assistance.

Contact local posts or chapters and ask about their services and other possible community connections.

- ◆ **Stand Downs** – These are one- to three-day events offering homeless veterans a broad range of necessities including food, clothing, medical services, legal and mental health assistance, job counseling and referrals. Stand Downs are usually sponsored by community- and faith-based organizations, and many are conducted by VA medical centers and clinics. These outreach and service referral events provide assistance to more than 30,000 veterans nationwide each year.

Employment specialists should participate in these programs to forge strong community ties and provide employment counseling for homeless veterans. A list of scheduled Stand Downs and contact information for event coordinators can be found at www.nchv.org/standdown.cfm.

■ *Community/Government Partnerships*

- ◆ **Department of Housing and Urban Development** – Most federal homeless program funding is administered through HUD, which allocates funds according to approved “Continuum of Care” plans. Local homeless service providers and government agencies work together to develop these plans. HUD maintains a state-by-state list of agencies and community-based organizations that provide assistance to homeless individuals and families. Go to <http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/states>.



Veteran volunteers at Operation Stand Down Nashville

◆ **Department of Labor-Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (DOL-VETS)**

The DOL-VETS *Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program* (HVRP) facilitates the reintegration of homeless veterans into the labor force through grants that are awarded to nonprofit community-based organizations, workforce investment boards, and state government agencies offering employment and job-readiness services. DOL-VETS also funds Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Programs (DVOPs) and Local Veterans’ Employment Representatives (LVERs) at employment offices nationwide. Call your local state employment or job service office and ask for the veteran representative to locate HVRP and veteran assistance programs available in your area.

The *Veterans Workforce Investment Program* (VWIP) provides grants to states and community-based, faith-based and local public organizations to offer workforce services targeted to veterans who have service-connected disabilities; active duty experience in a war or campaign; have recently separated from the service; or are facing significant barriers to employment, including homelessness. For programs in your area, contact your nearest DOL-VETS office. Office locations are listed at www.dol.gov/vets/about/vets/contacts/main.htm.

- ◆ **Department of Veterans Affairs CHALENG** – Each year the VA conducts a survey of its health care facilities and the nation’s homeless veteran service providers and clients through the Community Homelessness Assessment, Local Education and Networking Groups (CHALENG) Project. Survey information includes an estimate of the number of homeless veterans in each medical center service area, the services that are available to help them, and an appendix that identifies the participating service organizations. Each VA medical center has a designated point of contact. For the CHALENG contact nearest you, go to www.va.gov/homeless and click on “CHALENG Report.”
- ◆ **VA Veterans Health Administration Homeless Veteran Service Coordinators** – Every VA medical center has a Homeless Veteran Coordinator who can give you information about local services for homeless veterans provided through the Veterans Health Administration. Services include outreach, case

management, referrals to benefits counselors, and linkage to health care services and housing assistance. For local contacts, go to www1.va.gov/homeless/page.cfm?pg=21.

- ◆ **VA Veteran Benefits Administration (VBA) Homeless Veteran Coordinators** – Every VA Regional Office has an assigned Homeless Veteran Coordinator who can help expedite the VA benefits claims process for homeless veterans. To find the nearest VBA office, go to www1.va.gov/directory/guide/allstate_flesh.asp.
- ◆ **State Directors of Veterans Affairs** – Every state has a Director of Veterans Affairs. These offices are not associated with the VA and may provide additional services to veterans that include housing assistance, employment programs, education grants and emergency loans. Services vary widely from state to state. For contact information in your state, go to www.nasdva.net.
- ◆ **County Veteran Service Officers (CVSOs)** – These are locally funded veteran representatives authorized to help veterans file claims for benefits to which they are entitled and provide referrals to supportive services they need. Not all states have CVSOs. Check the phone book blue pages to see if there is one in your area, or check online at http://nacvso.org/?page_id=14.
- ◆ **State Offices on Aging** – Department of Labor Title V programs, administered by State Offices or Bureaus on Aging, focus on employment training for veterans age 55 and older and their spouses who meet low-income criteria, which includes homelessness. Check the phone book blue pages under “State Government” for contact information; it may be listed, however, under “Human Services” or “Public Assistance.”



Communicating with Employers

■ *Legal Considerations*

Many homeless veterans have histories of medical issues, substance abuse and legal problems, and you must be aware of the restrictions on your activities. Generally, you are free to discuss these issues with your client, but the veteran is the only one who has an absolute legal right to divulge medical and criminal histories to a potential employer. Your role should be limited to:

- ◆ Helping prepare the veteran to answer questions about past health and legal issues. Be honest and direct, and help the veteran draft statements that attest to the actions taken to address past problems. These can be presented to employers if requested or used during preparation for interviews.
- ◆ Accessing VA medical and service records to complement the case management support the veteran is receiving through a supportive residential program, or to help the veteran develop an individual employment plan. If you are serving as a de facto case manager, you should have the veteran complete the Request for and Consent to Release Information from Claimant’s Records, VA Form VA-3288.

■ *Regarding Homelessness*

You are encouraged to maintain follow-up contact with homeless veterans after they have accepted employment. This is necessary to assess the success of your clients and to evaluate the suitability of employment opportunities for other veterans.

- ◆ When the outcomes are positive, cultivate your association with companies that have benefited from successful placements.
- ◆ Care should be exercised to focus only on the skills, work ethic and job performance of the veteran clients. Do not engage in discussions with employers about private, personal matters.
- ◆ NEVER guarantee that a client will perform at a satisfactory level. The veteran’s performance is beyond your control. Your integrity as an employment specialist must be safeguarded.

C

ommunicating with Veterans

It is not unusual for a person to experience anxiety and frustration when applying for employment and undergoing the strain of interviews. Homeless veterans often have the added burden of impaired self-esteem, fear of failure and other psychosocial obstacles to overcome.

In many cases, the veteran will need supportive case management and various counseling services long after gaining employment. Part of your assessment will necessarily have to involve the veteran's mental and emotional stability as it relates to the stress level of certain jobs.

You may find that it is sometimes difficult to make a connection with a homeless veteran. Their trust is not easily earned. Some seek instant solutions and don't return when their expectations are not met. Advise your client up front that seeking employment takes time, and be prepared to coach them through frustration. Make certain your clients know your door is always open, and you will go the distance with them.

■ *Coaching the Homeless Job Seeker*

- ◆ Make sure the client does the work when looking for employment. Offer guidance and assistance with resume preparation and filling out applications, but don't take over. This will be a critical learning and personal growth opportunity for the veteran. Your objective should be to train your client how to search for and obtain steady, gainful employment.
- ◆ During the initial assessment, you will be matching the client's current skills and work experience with available jobs. However, this is also an excellent opportunity to help clients develop employment plans that reflect their aspirations and coach them on how to achieve their goals.
- ◆ Obtain the client's permission to talk to his or her case manager about the need for additional job preparation, counseling or training. The case manager will be one of your most influential allies.
- ◆ Be honest with the client to minimize frustration. In some cases, you will have to make it clear that he or she is essentially starting over. Encourage the veteran to participate in education and training programs that will create better career opportunities.

- ◆ Work with the veteran's case manager to identify local and state programs, benefits and social services that may augment the veteran's income.
- ◆ Help clients understand that successful long-term placement is ultimately their responsibility and dependent upon their motivation, commitment and satisfactory performance.

Veterans Service Organizations

Most veterans service organizations (VSOs) have regional veterans service officers who help veterans obtain benefits to which they are entitled. Some help homeless and at-risk veterans find the supportive services they need. Most VSOs have active auxiliary units that take a leadership role in providing assistance to veterans in their communities. Look in your phone book for local posts belonging to the following organizations, or visit their websites:

- ◆ AMVETS (www.amvets.org)
- ◆ Blinded Veterans Association (www.bva.org)
- ◆ Disabled American Veterans (www.dav.org)
- ◆ Jewish War Veterans (www.jwv.org)
- ◆ Military Order of the Purple Heart (www.purpleheart.org)
- ◆ Non Commissioned Officers Association (www.ncoausa.org)
- ◆ Paralyzed Veterans of America (www.pva.org)
- ◆ Veterans of Foreign Wars (www.vfw.org)
- ◆ Vietnam Veterans of America (www.vva.org)
- ◆ The American Legion (www.legion.org)

Temporary Financial Assistance from the national headquarters of The American Legion is cash aid to help maintain a stable environment for the children of veterans. Contact a local post to obtain an application. Applications are approved by the national headquarters, so the process may take several weeks.

E

mployment Resources

Use this section to guide your employment assistance efforts. Refer to the following sources, in addition to your local job listing services, to help your clients prepare for their job search, qualify and apply for vocational training and educational programs, and find immediate employment opportunities.

◆ Department of Labor-Veterans' Employment and Training Service (DOL-VETS)

The *Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program* (HVRP) provides grants to service providers across the nation to help homeless veterans return to the workforce. HVRP is rated as one of the most successful homeless assistance programs in the nation, boasting the highest job placement and retention rates among national employment assistance initiatives.

HVRP provides employment preparation and job search services, but a grantee's continued funding under the program relies on a sustained record of successful job placement and retention.

Organizations that receive HVRP funds also provide access to transitional housing and supportive services to ensure clients are able to successfully return to society as productive citizens. To find programs in your area, refer to the HVRP and DOL-VETS directories at the back of this guide.

Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERs) are employment specialists funded by DOL-VETS and stationed in more than 2,000 state, municipal and county employment offices nationwide. LVERs are trained and certified by the National Veterans' Training Institute (NVTI) in Denver to help veterans prepare for and secure employment.

These employment specialists work closely with government agencies, community-based service organizations and local employers to identify employment opportunities. To find the LVER serving your area, call your state employment office or contact DOL-VETS at www.dol.gov/vets/aboutvets/contacts/main.htm.



- ◆ **Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)** – The VA's website can help job seekers create resumes, find on-the-job training and apprenticeship programs, and search for jobs by state. For more information about VA employment assistance services, programs and contact information for your area, go to www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre/index.htm.
- ◆ **National Coalition for Homeless Veterans** – Many community-based organizations provide employment preparation and placement services. Employment assistance is often part of a holistic program offering housing and other supportive services. For a list of service providers in your area that can provide information and local employment assistance, go to www.nchv.org and click on "Homeless Veteran Service Providers," or call 1-800-VET-HELP.
- ◆ **State Employment Offices** – Every state government has an employment services and assistance department that provides information and supportive services to job seekers. Although each state is different, most offer comprehensive job listings, veteran-specific assistance programs (usually in partnership with DOL and VA programs), and information about unemployment benefits and training programs. If you have not already done so, search your state's employment assistance website for services that are offered, application policies, contact information and

office locations. On most Internet search engines, simply type in the state name followed by “employment.”

- ♦ **State Offices of Veterans Affairs** – Every state has a Director of Veterans Affairs. These offices are not associated with the VA and provide additional assistance to veterans, which may include employment training and job placement services. For contact information in your state, go to www.nasdva.net, or look in the phone book blue pages under “State Government, Veterans Affairs.”

■ *Online Employment Resources*

- ♦ **AMVETS Career Center** – Allows job seekers to browse available jobs, set up a “job agent” to receive emails about jobs matching their criteria, and post resumes so employers can find them. Go to <http://careers.amvets.org>.
- ♦ **CareerBuilder** – Job search site that allows users to post resumes and search jobs in every industry and field. Go to www.careerbuilder.com.
- ♦ **Craigslist** – Website with online classified listings for cities in all 50 states. Craigslist has job listings broken down by industry, and the local nature of the site allows for more focused job searching. Go to www.craigslist.org.
- ♦ **Helmets to Hardhats** – This program offers former military personnel career opportunities in construction trades nationwide. Candidates can access information about careers and create a profile via the Helmets to Hardhats website. The profile will show hiring managers the transferable skills your client acquired during his or her military service. Go to www.helmetstohardhats.org.
- ♦ **HireVetsFirst** – Comprehensive career website for veterans as well as managers and human resources specialists. Tools include a one-stop career center, military skills translator and resume writer. Go to <http://hirevetsfirst.dol.gov/>.
- ♦ **JobBankInfo.org** – Listing of employment opportunities nationwide. Job seekers can access job banks in every state as well as information on careers, resumes and interviews, and education and training.
- ♦ **Job-Hunt.org** – Site providing comprehensive employment services including: job listings by state, online application capabilities and information on state benefits for job seekers.
- ♦ **Jobs4Vets.com** – Local employment site for job seekers and employers. Jobs4Vets offers the following tools for veterans to manage their career search: a job database, career email notifiers, a resume database and distribution, a career event calendar and a continuing education guide.
- ♦ **Military.com** – Website that brings together and informs current and former servicemembers. Military.com offers a Veteran Careers section, which it touts as “the largest veteran job board in the world.” Search jobs, build your resume, network with other veterans, attend a veteran career fair or access other resources. Go to www.military.com/careers.
- ♦ **MilitaryConnection.com** – Collection of military resources and information. MilitaryConnection.com connects veterans, transitioning servicemembers and their spouses with government and civilian employers.
- ♦ **Monster.com** – One of the leading search engines that allows job seekers to search a job database, as well as post their resumes and create user profiles. This information is accessible to employers who can search for potential employees who match their desired criteria.
- ♦ **RecruitMilitary** – Nationwide, full-service, military-to-civilian recruiting firm. RecruitMilitary offers a job search, career fair information, transition resources, job resources and resources for military spouses. Go to www.recruitmilitary.com.
- ♦ **VetCentral** – Operated by the JobCentral National Labor Exchange, which is provided by leading U.S. employers and the National Association of State Workforce Agencies. VetCentral provides job referrals and other job search resources specifically for veterans. Go to www.jobcentral.com/vetcentral.
- ♦ **Veterans Today** – Site bringing several veteran resources to one location. Veterans Today features news, forums, benefits, jobs and more. Updated regularly with career news, job fairs, resume services, transition resources, and a job

search and resume posting feature. Go to www.veteranstoday.com.

- ◆ **Yahoo HotJobs** – Yahoo’s job site allows users to find jobs, post resumes, research careers at featured companies, compare salaries and get career advice. Go to www.hotjobs.com.

■ *Disabled Veteran Employment*

The great majority of homeless veterans are impacted by mental illness, substance abuse disorders or physical disabilities that may be service-connected or are the result of their homelessness.

Employment specialists should be aware of the federal programs in place to serve disabled veterans and how to help their clients access them.

Unless disability status has already been established, the process of determining disability and qualification for some programs will take time. In most cases, however, you should proceed with your employment assistance efforts while applications for disability benefits are pending.

- ◆ **America’s Heroes at Work** is a Department of Labor project that addresses the employment challenges of returning servicemembers living with traumatic brain injury and/or post-traumatic stress disorder. The site features information and tools to help those veterans – particularly those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan – succeed in the workplace. Go to <http://americasheroesatwork.gov/>.
- ◆ **Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)** – ODEP provides national leadership on disability employment policy by developing and influencing the use of evidence-based disability employment policies and practices, building collaborative partnerships, and delivering authoritative and credible data on employment of people with disabilities. Go to www.dol.gov/odep/index.htm.
- ◆ **Department of Labor-Veterans’ Employment and Training Service** – The Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program (DVOP) provides funding through state employment agencies and many community-based homeless service providers nationwide to support dedicated staff who develop and provide employment and job training opportunities for disabled veterans. The program promotes and develops on-the-job training, apprenticeships and other employment services in the private and federal sector.

For more information on the DVOP, contact your nearest DOL-VETS office at www.dol.gov/vets/aboutvets/contacts/main.htm.
- ◆ **Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) Program** – The VA’s CWT program is available to veterans who meet certain criteria and are enrolled in a therapeutic or supportive residential program. The primary goal of the CWT program is to provide veterans with psychosocial disorders an opportunity to develop work skills and obtain employment to maximize their independence and quality of life. The program involves intense case management support, employment, transitional housing and a wide range of supportive services. Contact a local VA medical center to see if there are programs in your area.
- ◆ **Department of Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services** offers a nationwide employment training program for service-connected disabled veterans who qualify for vocational rehabilitation. In addition to employment and educational training programs, these offices can provide eligible disabled veterans with job-specific training and, in some cases, job placement assistance. The VA also helps eligible disabled veterans obtain assistive technology devices to enhance employment opportunities and promote self-sufficiency. For information and local contact information, go to www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre/vrs.htm.
- ◆ **Social Security Administration (SSA)** – The SSA provides supplemental security and disability income to disabled Americans, regardless of veteran status, and administers a national service network designed to help disabled people return to the workforce without losing the disability and health care benefits to which they are entitled.

The SSA features a comprehensive website that guides employment specialists and job seekers to descriptions of supplemental security income and other benefits; employment assistance

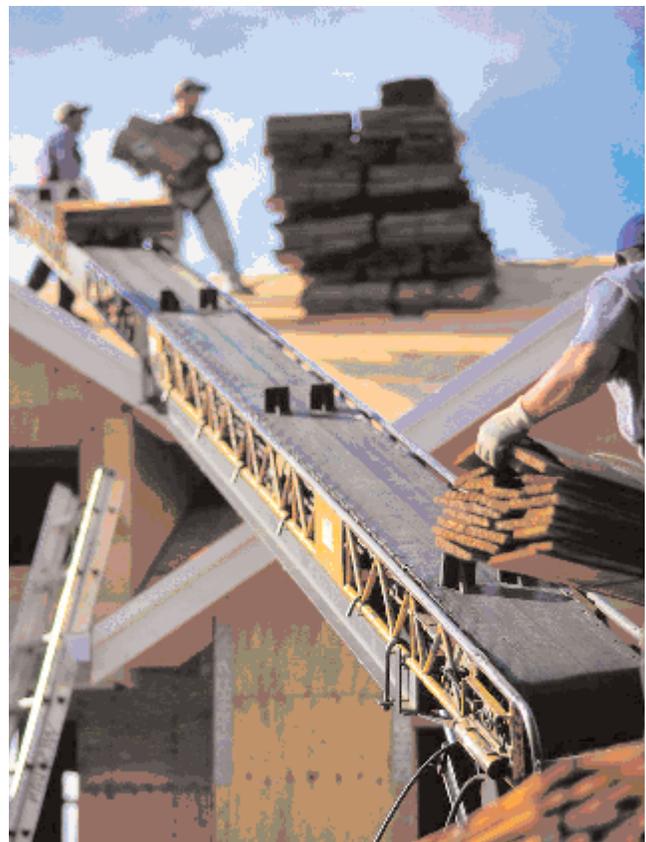
programs for disabled workers, including the national “Ticket to Work” program; online SSA benefits applications; and local employment contacts and services. You can also download a copy of the “Red Book,” a valuable resource for employment specialists working with disabled people who are trying to re-enter the workforce, at www.ssa.gov/redbook. Go to www.ssa.gov and click on “Disability.”

■ *Other Employment Resources*

- ♦ **America’s Career InfoNet (ACINet)** helps people make better, more informed career decisions. It is ideal for job seekers, employers, and human resource and workforce development specialists. From learning about typical wages and employment trends to checking education, knowledge, skills and abilities against requirements for most occupations, this site is your source for the most extensive set of career resources available online. Go to www.acinet.org.
- ♦ **America’s Service Locator (ASL)** allows users to find the nearest location delivering valuable job and career training, assistance and information. Users can print maps that show point-to-point directions for selected service providers. Quickly and effectively connecting customers to America’s Workforce Network services – from a national level to local One-Stop offices or other service providers – is ASL’s top priority. Go to www.servicelocator.org.
- ♦ **CareerOneStop** – CareerOneStop, formerly known as America’s Career Kit, is a DOL-sponsored suite of web-based applications. The CareerOneStop portal provides easy access to the features and tools of America’s Job Bank, Career InfoNet and Service Locator. It organizes the information on these websites and offers additional career-related resources as well. Go to www.careeronestop.org.
- ♦ **Department of Labor Employment & Training Administration (ETA)** – This DOL agency has responsibility for the development and administration of training programs and services for the nation’s workforce. ETA is a member of America’s Workforce Network – the nationwide

system of workforce organizations that provides information and services to employers, job seekers and employment specialists. Access to programs at state and local levels can be obtained by calling the America’s Workforce Network toll-free help line at 1-877-US2-JOBS. For more information, go to www.doleta.gov.

- ♦ **The Job Accommodation Network (JAN)** – The workplace of the 21st Century is open to everyone. JAN dispels misconceptions and provides information about Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) job accommodations and the employability of people with disabilities through its site and 1-800-ADA-WORK hotline. Go to www.jan.wvu.edu.
- ♦ **USAJOBS** – One-stop electronic information center for federal employees, agencies and departments looking to gain the education, training and skills necessary to succeed in the rapidly changing workplace. Includes job search assistance and application guidelines. Go to www.usajobs.gov.



Special Employment Programs

- ◆ **Post-9/11 GI Bill** – This bill provides financial support for education and housing to individuals with at least 90 days of aggregate service on or after Sept. 11, 2001, or individuals discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days. All discharges must be honorable in order to be eligible for benefits.

The amount of support that an individual may qualify for depends on where he or she lives and what type of degree he or she is pursuing.

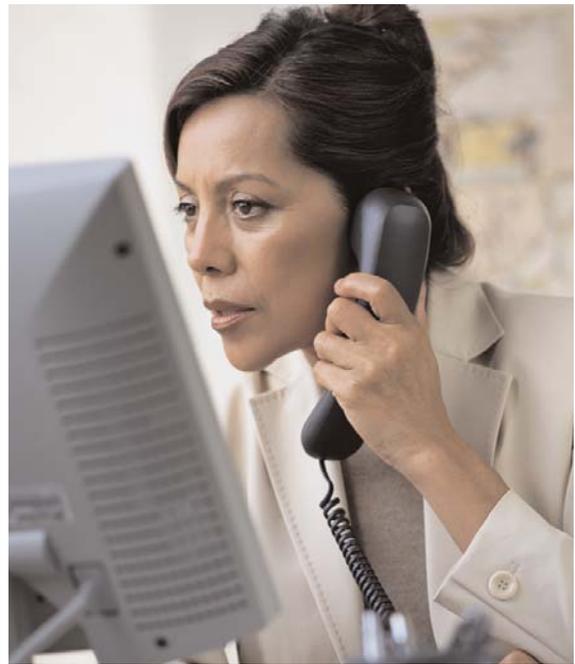
Approved training includes graduate and undergraduate degrees, as well as vocational/technical training. For more information, go to www.gibill.va.gov.

- ◆ **SBA New Patriot Express Loan Initiative** – The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has launched the “Patriot Express Pilot Loan Program,” a streamlined loan product based on SBA’s highly successful SBA Express Program but with enhanced guarantee and interest rate characteristics.

Patriot Express is available to military community members including veterans, service-disabled veterans, active duty servicemembers participating in the military’s Transition Assistance Program, Reservists and National Guard members, current spouses of any of the above, and widowed spouses of servicemembers or veterans who died during service or of a service-connected disability.

The new Patriot Express Loan is offered by SBA’s network of participating lenders nationwide and features SBA’s fastest turnaround time for loan approvals. Loans are available up to \$500,000 and qualify for SBA’s maximum guaranty of up to 85 percent for loans of \$150,000 or less and up to 75 percent for loans over \$150,000 up to \$500,000. For loans above \$350,000, lenders are required to take all available collateral.

The Patriot Express Loan can be used for most business purposes including start-up, expansion, equipment purchases, working capital, inventory or business-occupied real estate purchases. Details can be found at www.sba.gov/patriotexpress.



- ◆ **VeteranEmployment.com** – This comprehensive website allows veterans to search and apply for employment. The job bank includes positions available at businesses and agencies nationwide that have veteran hiring preferences. Also included are a section on security clearances and a section to help veterans prepare a resume and perform well during the interview process. Go to www.veteranemployment.com.
- ◆ **VetJobs.com** – Regarded by veterans service organizations as the leading Internet site for reaching the 14 million veterans currently in the work force, as well as the 250,000 military personnel who transition each year and their family members. VetJobs is an excellent resource for candidates in information technology, program and project management, sales, linguistics, logistics, transportation, human resources, manufacturing, engineering, finance, healthcare, accounting and senior management.

VetJobs is owned and operated by veterans for veterans. In January 2000, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States exclusively endorsed the company and purchased 10 percent. Since then, VetJobs has garnered many veterans service organizations’ endorsements. The site offers a wealth of guidance and resource information for veterans to enhance their employment prospects. Go to www.vetjobs.com.

HVRP Directory

The following organizations provide employment training, preparation and placement services with grants from the DOL-VETS Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP).

Aletheia House - Birmingham, AL 35201
(205) 324-6502

Arizona Opportunities Industrialization Center
Phoenix, AZ 85004
(602) 254-5081

County of Pima - Tucson, AZ 85713
(520) 243-6760

United States Veterans Initiative
Phoenix, AZ 90301
(602) 305-8585

Able-Disabled Advocacy, Inc. - San Diego, CA 92105
(619) 231-5900

City of Sunnyvale - Sunnyvale, CA 94086
(408) 730-7232

Goodwill of Santa Clara County - San Jose, CA 95112
(408) 869-9230

Mental Health Systems, Inc. - San Diego, CA 92123
(858) 573-2600

New Directions, Inc. - Los Angeles, CA 90073
(310) 914-4045

North County Interfaith Council, Inc.
Escondido, CA 92025
(760) 489-6380

People Assisting the Homeless (PATH)
Los Angeles, CA 90004
(323) 644-2257

The Salvation Army Harbor Light
Los Angeles, CA 90015
(213) 553-3253

San Diego Second Chance Program
San Diego, CA 92114
(619) 234-8888

Swords to Plowshares - San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 252-4787 x 338

United States Veterans Initiative
Long Beach, CA 90810
(562) 388-8016

United States Veterans Initiative
Riverside, CA 92518
(951) 656-6891

Vietnam Veterans of California
Santa Rosa, CA 95402
(707) 578-2785

Vietnam Veterans of San Diego
San Diego, CA 92110
(619) 393-2077

Volunteers of America Greater Los Angeles
Los Angeles, CA 90010
(213) 289-1500

Weingart Center Association - Los Angeles, CA 90013
(213) 627-9000

City and County of Denver - Denver, CO 80204
(720) 944-2875

All Faith Consortium, Inc. - Washington, DC 20009
(202) 671-1600

City of Jacksonville, Florida - Jacksonville, FL 32202
(904) 630-1776

Hillsborough County Board of Commissioners
Tampa, FL 33602
(813) 301-7344

Volunteers of America, Florida - Tampa, FL 33605
(813) 321-6924 - *for Broward, Miami-Dade and
Monroe counties*
(813) 321-6926 - *for Cocoa, FL*

Samaritan House of Atlanta, Inc. - Atlanta, GA 30312
(404) 523-1234 x 112





Network Enterprises, Inc. - Honolulu, HI 96819
(808) 833-1923

United States Veterans Initiative - Kapolei, HI 96707
(808) 391-7963

Goodwill Industries of Central Iowa
Des Moines, IA 50313
(515) 265-5323

Goodland Industries of the Heartland
Iowa City, IA 52240
(319) 337-4889

Goodwill Industries of Central Illinois
Peoria, IL 61615
(309) 369-8878

The Inner Voice, Inc. - Chicago, IL 60612
(312) 226-2730

Transitional Living Services, Inc. - Woodstock, IL 60098
(815) 334-0504

Volunteers of America, Illinois - Chicago, IL 60605
(312) 564-2302

HealthNet, Inc. - Indianapolis, IN 46203
(317) 931-3055

Volunteers of America, Kentucky
Louisville, KY 40217
(502) 636-0771 - *also serving Boone, Cabell, Jackson and
Kanawha counties in West Virginia*

Quad Area Community Action Agency, Inc.
Hammond, LA 70401
(985) 320-6197

Volunteers of America, Greater New Orleans
New Orleans, LA 70119
(504) 482-2130

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Boston, MA 02111
(617) 210-5951 - *for Quincy, Brockton and Plymouth*
(617) 210-5952 - *for Worcester, Fall River and New
Bedford*

Interseminarian Project Place, Inc. - Boston, MA 02135
(617) 542-3740

New England Center for Homeless Veterans
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 371-1732

United Veterans of America, Inc. - Leeds, MA 01053
(413) 584-4040 x 2277

Veterans, Inc. - Worcester, MA 01605
(508) 791-0956

Maryland Center for Veterans Education & Training, Inc.
Baltimore, MD 21202
(410) 576-9626

WayStation, Inc. - Frederick, MD 21701
(301) 662-0099

Goodwill Industries of Greater Grand Rapids, Inc.
Grandville, MI 49418
(616) 532-4200

Michigan Veterans Foundation - Detroit, MI 48201
(313) 831-5500

Volunteers of America, Michigan
Lansing, MI 48912
(517) 484-4414 x 100

Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans
St. Paul, MN 55101
(651) 222-0613

City of St. Louis, Department of Human Services
St. Louis, MO 63103
(314) 612-5957

St. Patrick Center - St. Louis, MO 63101
(314) 802-0671

Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry,
Inc. - Asheville, NC 28801
(828) 259-5300

Wake County Human Services
Raleigh, NC 27610
(919) 508-0718

Harbor Homes, Inc. - Nashua, NH 03060
(603) 882-3616

United States Veterans Initiative - Las Vegas, NV 89101
(702) 366-0456

Albany Housing Coalition, Inc. - Albany, NY 12210
(518) 465-5251

America Works of New York, Inc.
New York, NY 10017
(212) 599-5627

Black Veterans for Social Justice, Inc.
Brooklyn, NY 11206
(718) 852-6004

Goodwill Industries of Western New York, Inc.
Buffalo, NY 14206
(716) 854-3494

The Saratoga County Rural Preservation Company, Inc.
Ballston Spa, NY 12020
(518) 885-0091

United Veterans Beacon House, Inc.
Bay Shore, NY 11706
(631) 665-1517

Veterans Outreach Center, Inc. - Rochester, NY 14620
(585) 546-4250

Ohio Valley Goodwill Industries Rehabilitation Center,
Inc. - Cincinnati, OH 45215
(513) 771-4800 x 6221

Volunteers of America of Greater Ohio, Inc.
Cleveland, OH 44141
(614) 372-3110 - *for Dayton, Montgomery County*
(614) 372-3090 - *for Columbus, Franklin County*
(216) 541-9000 - *for Greater Cleveland area, Cuyahoga
County*



Easter Seals, Oregon - Portland, OR 97239
(503) 228-5108

Central City Concern - Portland, OR 97209
(503) 226-7387

Impact Services Corporation
Philadelphia, PA 19134
(215) 739-0243

The Philadelphia Veterans Multi-Service & Education
Center, Inc. - Philadelphia, PA 19106
(215) 923-2600 x 14

Veterans Leadership Program of Western Pennsylvania,
Inc. - Pittsburgh, PA 15203
(412) 481-8200

YMCA of Greater Harrisburg - Harrisburg, PA 17103
(717) 234-7931

Operation Stand Down Nashville, Inc.
Nashville, TN 37203
(615) 321-3919

American GI Forum National Veterans Outreach
Program, Inc. - San Antonio, TX 78205
(210) 223-4088

Career and Recovery Resources, Inc.
Houston, TX 77002
(713) 754-7067

Goodwill Industries of Houston - Houston, TX 77043
(713) 699-6361

Service of the Emergency Aid Research Center for
the Homeless (SEARCH)
Houston, TX 77002 - (713) 276-3077

Washington Department of Veterans Affairs
Olympia, WA 98504
(360) 725-2236

Center for Veterans Issues, Ltd. - Milwaukee, WI 53208
(414) 345-4273

Veterans Assistance Foundation, Inc.
Newburg, WI 53060
(608) 372-1283

Volunteers of America, Wyoming and Montana
Sheridan, WY 82801
(307) 672-0475

DOL-VETS National Staff Directory

**Office of the Assistant Secretary for Veterans’
Employment and Training**
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Ave., NW, Room S-1325
Washington, DC 20210

The mission statement for VETS is to provide veterans and transitioning servicemembers with the resources and services to succeed in the 21st century workforce by maximizing their employment opportunities, protecting their employment rights and meeting labor-market demands with qualified veterans today.

OASVET — Office of the Assistant Secretary for Veterans’ Employment and Training

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Ismael “Junior” Ortiz, Deputy Assistant Secretary
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John M. McWilliam, Deputy Assistant Secretary
(202) 693-4721

Amit Magdieli, Special Assistant, (202) 693-4717

Ruth M. Samardick, Director of Compliance & Investigations, (202) 693-4700

Ron Drach, Director, Government & Legislative Affairs, (202) 693-4749

Office of Agency Management and Budget (OAMB)

FAX: (202) 693-4755

F. Paul Briggs, Director (202) 693-4713
briggs.fergus@dol.gov

Angela Freeman, Deputy Director (202) 693-4715
freeman.angela@dol.gov

Office of Operations and Programs (OOP)

FAX (202) 693-4755

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George “Mike” Parker, Deputy Director
(202) 693-4750, parker.george@dol.gov

Sheena Marshall, Administrative Assistant
(202) 693-4730, Marshall.Sheena@dol.gov



**Employment and Training Programs (ETP)
Division**

Transition Assistance Program (TAP), Veterans’ Workforce Investment Program (VWIP), Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP), Disabled Veterans’ Outreach/Local Veterans’ Employment Representative Programs (DVOP/LVER), Vocational Rehabilitation, and National Veterans’ Training Institute (NVTI) training

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Patrick Hecker, State Grants Lead
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davin.edward@dol.gov

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Margaret Hill-Watts, Support Contractor
(202) 693-4744, hillwatts.margaret@dol.gov

Hezekiah Barrett, Support Contractor
(202) 693-4744, barrett.hezekiah@dol.gov

Compliance and Investigation Division (CID)

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment
Rights Act (USERRA), Veterans' Preference (VP) and
Federal Contractor Reporting (VETS-100 Reporting)

FAX: (202) 693-4755

Ruth M. Samardick, Director of Compliance &
Investigations, (202) 693-4700

Rob Wilson, CID Division Chief
(202) 693-4719, wilson.robert2@dol.gov



**Regional Administrators for Veterans'
Employment and Training (RAVETs)**

Boston Region (CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PR
and Virgin Islands, RI, VT)

U.S. Department of Labor
J.F. Kennedy Federal Building, Room E-315
Boston, MA 02203

David W. Houle, RAVET
(617) 565-2080, houle.david@dol.gov

Philadelphia Region (DE, DC, MD, PA, VA,
WV)

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*The wounds of war never truly heal. ...
Rather, they are endured and give special
meaning to everything we achieve.*



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