



MARCHING HOME

A STRATEGY TO END VETERAN HOMELESSNESS IN ORANGE COUNTY

Marching Home: A Strategy to End Veteran Homelessness in Orange County

Executive Summary

The Marching Home: A Strategy to End Veteran Homelessness in Orange County is an effort by local, regional and federal partners to prevent and end homelessness among veterans in Orange County by December 2020. The initiative builds on the momentum of the 2019 Point In Time and the Orange County Board of Supervisors' efforts to address homelessness through the implementation of regional resources, collaboration and coordination.

With the leadership and support from the Orange County Board of Supervisors, the Marching Home: A Strategy to End Veteran Homelessness in Orange County is an initiative to develop systematic, intentional and sustainable multi-sector response to veterans in need of assistance and promote coordination and collaboration to meet the needs of the veteran population experiencing homelessness in Orange County.

The Marching Home: A Strategy to End Veteran Homelessness provides the strategic framework and identifies nine key areas of focus with 24 detailed goals that align with the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness' Criteria and Benchmarks for Achieving the Goal of Ending Veteran Homelessness (Appendix A) and the 10 Strategies to End Veteran Homelessness (Appendix B).

Evaluate the Status and Needs of the Veterans on the Veterans Registry

- Understand the unique housing needs and barriers to housing veterans on the Veteran Registry are experiencing.
- Compare the findings of the veterans' housing needs to the available and developing housing resources to identify gaps in housing resources.
- Work with the System of Care to address and reduce barriers to housing to ensure veterans experiencing homelessness can transition to permanent housing.

Maintaining an Accurate Veteran Registry and Track Progress towards Housing

- Train service providers and street outreach teams on the Veteran Registry on a monthly basis, including how to confirm whether a veteran experiencing homelessness is listed on the Veteran Registry and how to add veterans experiencing homelessness to the Veteran Registry form to ensure it is reconciled.
- Implement a tracking mechanism within the Veteran Registry that measures timeframes between referrals and enrollments into various available housing options, as well as move-in dates to permanent housing.
- Track the progress the community is making towards solving veteran homelessness and to decrease the length of time veterans experience homelessness, the following measures will be incorporated into weekly Veteran Registry conversations regarding the status of the Initiative:
 - Monthly inflow of veterans experiencing homelessness into Orange County's Veteran Registry.
 - Monthly outflow of veterans experiencing homelessness in Orange County and transitioning to permanent housing.
 - Number and type of housing referrals, including the number of veterans searching for housing and timeframe.

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Community Planning and Engagement

- Promote community awareness and engagement in the initiative, Marching Home: A Strategy to End Veteran Homelessness in Orange County, by providing monthly updates on the progress to key stakeholders.
- Increase the level of collaboration and coordination with other key stakeholders, including, but not limited to, Grant and Per Diem providers, Veterans Justice Outreach and Homeless Veterans Community Employment Services.
- Expand community planning efforts in Orange County to develop additional supportive services and housing resources.
- Standardize policies and procedures and document protocols that expedite veterans to appropriate resources and supportive services.

Diversion and Prevention for Veterans

- Utilize Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF) funding to support diversion and prevention activities to prevent veterans from experiencing homelessness or entering the homeless system of care.
- Create a comprehensive veteran specific resource guide that details all available programs and specific agencies that can assist veterans in obtaining the resources to be self-sufficient.

Street Outreach and Shelter Coordination

- Ensure veterans experiencing homelessness are contacted at least twice a month and provided with support and assistance to access emergency shelter and other supportive services.
- Establish a veteran priority for filling vacant emergency shelter beds and transitional housing beds in each Service Planning Area.
- Provide transportation to ensure linkages to services, shelter and housing referrals increase.

Increase Income and Connection to Available Benefits: Rebuilding for Sustainable Futures

- Facilitate quarterly trainings to assist street outreach, emergency shelter and homeless services providers on how to request veteran specific documentation through various means including online, forms, application.
- Ensure every veteran has the needed documentation to access and confirm eligibility for income, benefits and medical care.
- Co-locate community-based organizations at the Veterans Service Office to create a one-stop shop of supportive services for veterans who are at-risk of homelessness and experiencing homelessness for increased accessibility and warm hand off.
- Ensure every veteran on the Veteran Registry is connected to healthcare, income sources and mainstream benefits.

Coordinated Entry System and Case Conferencing Meetings

- Ensure active and consistent participation from street outreach and emergency shelter providers in weekly case conferencing meetings to discuss available housing options for veterans experiencing homelessness.

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Expedite Veteran Housing Resources in Orange County

- Reduce the length of time between HUD-VASH referral to leasing of an apartment unit.
- Implement a Housing Navigation Service using SSVF funding to support veterans searching for housing who have a HUD-VASH voucher or need assistance securing permanent housing.
- Expand the Landlord Incentive Program to overcome barriers to identifying a housing unit when utilizing a HUD-VASH or Section 8 voucher in Orange County.

Housing Retention and Stabilization

- Ensure veterans who transition successfully into housing remain housed with a retention rate of 95 % at six months and 90 % at one year after obtaining permanent housing.

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Framework for Marching Home: A Strategy to End Veteran Homelessness in Orange County

The Office of Care Coordination in developing the strategic framework for Marching Home: A Strategy to End Veteran Homelessness in Orange County (hereinafter referred to as “Initiative”) incorporated the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness’ Criteria and Benchmarks for Achieving the Goal of Ending Veteran Homelessness (Appendix A). These criteria and benchmarks inform the goals and steps to be taken locally as outlined in the Initiative in order to reach functional zero in Orange County by December 2020. Functional zero will be reached when the number of veterans experiencing homelessness within Orange County is less than the average number of veterans being connected with permanent housing each month. Achieving functional zero will demonstrate that the capacity of the Veterans’ System of Care and its ability to quickly and efficiently connect veterans with housing and ensure that veteran homelessness within the community will be rare, brief and non-recurring.

The Office of Care Coordination recognizes that achieving the goal of ending veteran homelessness by December 2020 will require systematic, intentional and sustainable multi-sector investments, coordination and collaboration to meet the needs of the veteran population experiencing homelessness in Orange County. Those investments and collaborations will evolve and expand until the goal to achieve functional zero is reached in Orange County.

Lead Conveners – Office of Care Coordination and OC Community Resources

- Susan Price, Director of Care Coordination, County Executive Office
- Zulima Lundy, Office of Care Coordination, County Executive Office
- Shannon Legere, Director of Housing and Homeless Programs, OC Community Resources
- Rebecca Ricketts, Coordinated Entry System (CES) Coordinator, OC Community Resources

Marching Home Committee

The Office of Care Coordination, in developing the initiative, Marching Home: A Strategy to End Veteran Homelessness in Orange County (Marching Home), convened key stakeholders in the veteran services community that would facilitate multi-sector investments, coordination and collaboration to meet the needs of the homeless veteran population to ensure their successful transition into appropriate housing options.

These key stakeholders will make up the Marching Home Committee (Committee) going forward and will be tasked with providing feedback to the strategy to ensure its implementation is responsive to the goals and objectives identified within the document. The Committee is comprised of individuals providing homeless services and services within the veteran community (Appendix B details membership). The Committee believes achieving the goal of Ending Veteran Homelessness in Orange County by December 2020 is possible and is committed to support the Initiative and its implementation in the community.

Key Partners for Ending Veteran Homelessness in Orange County

Office of Care Coordination – Division of the County of Orange, County Executive Office. The Office of Care Coordination engages across Orange County, working with cities and community-based organizations to strengthen regional capacity and multi-city, multi-sector investments to prevent and address homelessness, coordinate public and private resources to meet the needs of the homeless population in Orange County and promote integration of services throughout the community that

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improve the countywide response to homelessness. The Office of Care Coordination intends to provide leadership, technical assistance and operations guidance across the multiple systems involved in the success of ending veteran homelessness in Orange County. Additional Information related to the Office of Care Coordination can be found at <http://www.ocgov.com/gov/ceo/care>.

OC Community Resources

Community Investment Division – Division of OC Community Resources that serves as the administrative support to the Orange County Development Board and is primarily responsible for administering programs and activities of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in Orange County. This includes two One Stop Centers which provide comprehensive employment and training services located in each service planning area. Additional information related to the Community Investment Division can be found at <http://www.occommunityservices.org/cid>.

Housing and Homeless Services – Division of OC Community Resources that operates Housing and Community Development, the Orange County Housing Authority, serves as the Collaborative Applicant for the Orange County Continuum of Care and manages and implements the Coordinated Entry System. Additional information related to Housing and Homeless Services can be found at <http://www.occommunityservices.org/hcd>.

Veterans Service Office – Part of OC Community Resources. The Veterans Service Office provides assistance and connection to resources to ensure that veterans and their dependent(s) receive the entitlements they have earned for their military service. Additional information related to the Veterans Service Office can be found at <http://www.veterans.ocgov.com/about>.

OC Health Care Agency

Outreach and Engagement – The County of Orange Health Care Agency (HCA) Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Outreach and Engagement (O&E) Team supports individuals who are homeless or those at risk of homelessness who are struggling with mental health and/or substance use issues. The program's goal is to engage and connect homeless individuals to mental health, substance use, shelter and community based resources. HCA BHS O&E work countywide, and are available for community response by calling (800) 364-2221. When Veterans or military-connected individuals are in need of BHS outreach or treatment, specialized veteran-focused services are available through the HCA BHS OC4Vets program. If HCA O&E engages with a veteran, then HCA BHS OC4VETS is called upon to respond providing coordination between both services.

OC4Vets – OC4Vets supports military veterans, active military service members, and their families to access mental health, substance use and community-based resources. OC4Vets' clinical staff assess for behavioral health and supportive service needs, develop plans for attaining goals, provide short-term counseling and case management, and link participants to supportive services. Trained Veteran Peer Navigators support participants with outreach and linkage to behavioral health, housing and employment services. Services are provided regardless of discharge status, era or branch of service. OC4Vets is co-located at the Veteran Service Office (VSO) in Santa Ana. To learn more about OC4Vets, call (714) 480-6476 or look online at www.ochealthinfo.com/oc4vets.

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

VA Long Beach Healthcare System – The VA Long Beach Healthcare System is one of the most diversified health care system in the VA and it includes the Tibor Rubin VA Medical Center and two

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community-based outpatient clinics located in Anaheim and Santa Ana, Orange County. The VA Long Beach Healthcare System provides comprehensive inpatient, outpatient and extended care programs providing healthcare to more than 50,000 veterans.

VA Clinics in Anaheim and Santa Ana – The VA Clinics located in Anaheim and Santa Ana are an extension of the VA Long Beach Healthcare System. These clinics make VA primary care, mental health, telehealth, laboratory, audiology, radiology, optometry and podiatry services available to the VA Healthcare eligible veterans in Orange County.

VA Community Resource and Referral Center (CRRC) – Orange County’s one-stop shop service center for homeless Veterans and their families, as well as Veterans at-risk for homelessness. The CRRC provides case management, peer support, initial VA exams, transportation, locker use, emergency food and clothing as well as linkage with VA and community resources to address housing, financial, legal, medical and mental health needs. Any veterans who is determined eligible for the HUD-VASH program must go to this location to begin the application and referral process.

VA Justice Outreach (VJO) Program – The aim 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 Veterans Health Administration (VHA) services, as clinically indicated. The VJO specialists provide direct outreach, assessment and case management for justice-involved Veterans in local courts and jails and liaison with local justice system partners.

Public Housing Authorities – There are four public housing authorities serving the Orange County jurisdiction. All four public housing authorities have amended their administrative plan with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide set-aside Section 8 vouchers for homeless populations and project based vouchers for housing developments. Additionally, three of the public housing authorities – Orange County, Anaheim and Santa Ana – received a total of 1,363 HUD Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers to serve veteran households experiencing homelessness:

- Orange County Housing Authority – 989 HUD-VASH vouchers
- Anaheim Housing Authority – 94 HUD-VASH vouchers
- Santa Ana Housing Authority – 280 HUD-VASH vouchers
- Garden Grove Housing Authority does not have a HUD-VASH voucher program.

Goodwill of Orange County’s Tierney Center for Veteran Services – Offers comprehensive resources serving veterans and their families, regardless of when veteran served, discharge status or branch of service. Provides a one-on-one navigator to focus on each veteran and their family-specific needs including connection to employment, career counseling, healthcare and benefits, financial counseling and assistance, education resources, legal assistance, Chapter 31 services and more.

United to End Homelessness – United to End Homelessness is an initiative led by Orange County United Way that launched in early 2018. United to End Homelessness is committed to ending homelessness in Orange County and implementing the recommendations of the 2017 study by UC Irvine “Homelessness in Orange County: The Cost to Our Community.” Within the initiative, United to End Homelessness offers a regional landlord incentive program called Welcome Home OC to assist homeless veterans who are searching for a unit to rent that accepts a tenant-based voucher. The landlord incentive program promotes participation of private landlords and management companies across Orange County to make their units available to rent to homeless veterans with a voucher and provides financial assistance to

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veterans to transition into permanent housing that may include security deposits for rent and utility assistance, credit reports, and application fee payments and contingency funds to make minor improvements or repairs, unit holding fee payments and other incentives to overcome barriers to housing.

Mental Health Association of Orange County – Mental Health Association offers a continuum of programs and services to help clients connect with needed treatment and specialized resources. A large component of their programs is aimed at helping individuals experiencing homelessness gain employment, access disability benefits; receive housing assistance and continuing treatment.

Saddleback College Veterans Education & Transition Services (VETS) – Saddleback College VETS Program eases the transition process and provides opportunities to U.S. Military Veterans to continue their education while receiving support services. These supportive services include but are not limited to new student guidance, counseling, scholarship and financial aid assistance, access to emergency grants, outreach to the military affiliated community, a venue for community building and more. Additionally they help military students in accessioning eligible benefits from the Veterans Administration including those of the Forever GI Bill.

Organizational Structure for the Initiative

The County of Orange recognizes that ending veteran homelessness requires a multi-disciplinary approach and multi-sector engagement. Identifying key partners in the community and establishing long-lasting working relationships will provide increased care coordination, continuity of care and resource accessibility to the veteran population experiencing homelessness.

Additionally, there are a number of key groups engaged to coordinate and address the needs of veterans in the community. These key groups will facilitate the Initiative and provide ongoing progress reports of the Initiative's implementation.

Orange County Board of Supervisors – The Board of Supervisors oversees the management of County government and many special districts. The Board's legislative and executive activities support the development and implementation of programming and resources for the benefit of all residents in Orange County. The Board of Supervisors have a leadership role in the implementation and execution of the Initiative and to date have supported housing developments and resources aimed at addressing the needs of veterans experiencing homelessness.

OC Veterans Advisory Council – OC Veterans Advisory Council is an advisory body to the Orange County Board of Supervisors, which was created in March 1978. The OC Veterans Advisory Council is comprised of nine members appointed by the Orange County Board of Supervisors, who are veterans with an honorable discharge and residents of Orange County.

The function and duties of the OC Veterans Advisory Council are to:

- Advise the Board of Supervisors on issues of importance to veterans and their dependents based on input from the veteran community
- Provide a source of liaison and communication with various groups relative to veterans' issues
- Promote involvement in veteran-related events and functions within the County

OC Veterans Advisory Council holds public meetings on the third Wednesday of the month from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Veterans Service Office; additional information regarding their meeting schedule can be found at <http://www.veterans.ocgov.com/advisory>.

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Commission to End Homelessness – The Commission to End Homelessness works in collaboration with the County government, 34 city governments, business sector, philanthropic organizations, community organizations, faith-based organizations, health care, public safety and other interested stakeholders to promote an effective response to homelessness within Orange County. The Director of Care Coordination works with commission members to focus on the intersection of homelessness across the five components of the County of Orange System of Care which include behavioral health, healthcare, housing, community corrections, and benefits and support services to advise on regional policy and implementation strategies. The Commission to End Homelessness is currently focused on affordable housing development, data and gaps analysis, best practice research, social policy and systemic change.

Orange County Continuum of Care Board - The Orange County Continuum of Care Board is the governing body for the Orange County Continuum of Care. They are committed to the goal of ending homelessness and are organized to carry out the responsibilities required under the Continuum of Care Program regulations, 24 CFR Part 578. Additionally, the Orange County Continuum of Care Board has a number of committees aimed at coordinating and collaborating on specific functions and programs associated with the Continuum of Care Program. The committees contribute to the ongoing planning, coordination and collaboration of homeless services and programs in regards to the Initiative in the following ways:

Street Outreach – Develop a multi-disciplinary approach to street outreach and coordinate street outreach response across the jurisdiction, assist in the reconciliation and maintenance of the Veteran Registry.

Emergency Shelters – Incorporate best practices and evidence based models in the operation of emergency shelters, assist in the reconciliation and maintenance of the Veteran Registry.

Coordinated Entry System – Coordinates and prioritizes available housing resources for veterans experiencing homelessness.

Housing Opportunities – Best practices and evidence based models that increase permanent housing placement and improve housing stability and retention.

Data and Performance – Tracks performance of street outreach, emergency shelter, rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing programs.

Orange County Veterans and Military Families Collaborative – The Orange County Veterans and Military Families Collaborative (OCVMFC) is a coalition of service organizations that facilitates access to comprehensive services for veterans, service members and their families. OCVMFC was established in 2013 and currently consists of over 100 member organizations that serve the needs of over 130,000 Orange County Veterans and their families. OCVMFC has a number of working groups that meet on a monthly basis to coordinate resources and assistance from local organizations to best support veterans and their families. These working groups include:

- Behavioral Health
- Children & Families
- Education
- Employment
- Government Relations
- Housing
- Faith-Based
- Legal & Re-entry
- Public Relations & Outreach
- Resources

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The OCVMFC convenes an at-large quarterly meeting to provide updates on the progress and work accomplished by the working groups and provides presentations on key topics. Additional information relating to the OCVMFC, including their monthly committee meeting schedule, can be found at <https://ocvmfc.info/>.

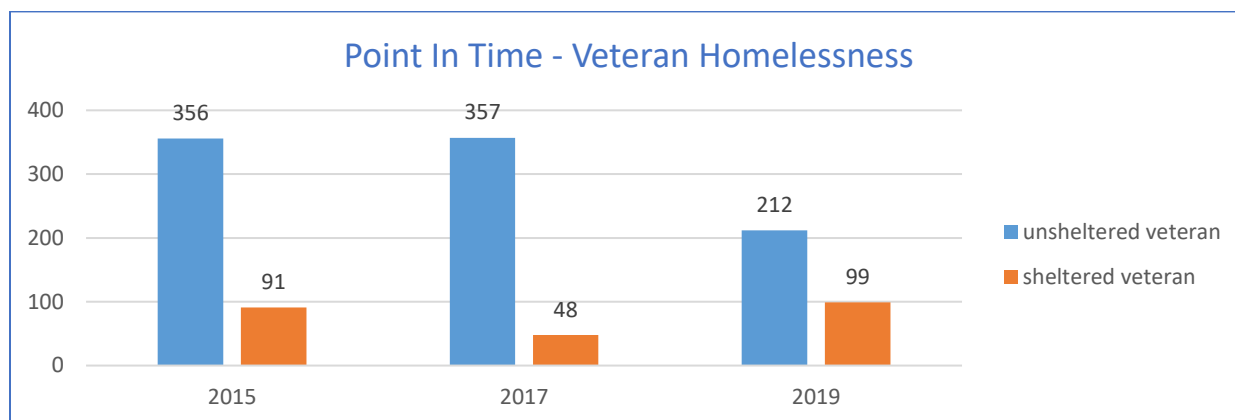
Scope of Veteran Homelessness

California

The 2017 Point In Time Count in the State of California identified 11,472 veterans experiencing homelessness – 3,815 (33.3 %) sheltered and 7,657 (66.7 %) unsheltered. This was an increase of 161 (1.4 %) veterans compared to the 2015 Point In Time Count. The State of California experienced an increase in veteran homelessness in 2017 whereas all of the Continuums of Care across the nation saw an overall decrease of 16.1% in veteran homelessness.

Orange County

Orange County has experienced a 30.4 % (136) decrease in veteran homelessness from 2015 to 2019 as reported in the Point In Time counts. During the 2019 Point In Time Count a total of 311 Veterans were identified as experiencing homelessness in Orange County. Of these 212 (68.2%) were unsheltered and 99 (31.8%) were sheltered. The 2019 Point In Time results reflect actual veterans encountered in emergency shelter, transitional housing or on the streets of Orange County. The 2013, 2015 and 2017 Point In Time Count previously utilized an extrapolation methodology to arrive at the final results, including for this subpopulation which made it hard to evaluate the accuracy of the Veteran Registry at the time. The 2019 Point In Time count process was also leveraged to complete a reconciliation of the Veteran Registry, whereby 95 of the 212 (44.81 %) unsheltered veterans provided additional information, including confirmation of veteran’s status and eligibility for U.S. Department of Veterans’ Affairs (VA) Healthcare and Services.



2019 Point In Time

The 2019 Point In Time effort provided Orange County an opportunity to outreach to all veterans experiencing homelessness and reconcile the Veteran Registry through voluntary participation.

Homeless veterans staying in emergency shelters and transitional housing programs the night of Tuesday, January 22, 2019, were counted as experiencing sheltered homelessness. Homeless veterans encountered on the streets the mornings or evenings of Wednesday, January 23, and Thursday, January 24, 2019, were

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counted as experiencing unsheltered or street-level homelessness. In both instances, the veteran was asked to provide additional personal identifying information, which is used to reconcile with the current Veteran Registry and also provide street outreach teams with needed contact and frequent location information for subsequent connection to supportive services and housing resources.

The recorded identifying information included 13 data elements (Appendix C) which were determined to be most needed in confirming veteran status and potential benefit and housing program eligibility in partnership with the VA local office and veteran service providers. There were 95 veterans who provided this additional information during the 2019 Point In Time.

It is important to note that during the 2019 Point In Time Count determination of veteran status was based on self-report by answering affirmatively to any of the two following questions:

- Have you served in the United States Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard)?
- Were you ever called into active duty as a member of the National Guard or as a Reservist?

For the purposes of the Veteran Registry, a veteran is anyone who served in the armed forces, including persons who served on active duty from the military reserves or the National Guard, regardless of how long they served or the type of discharge they received.

Evaluate the Status and Needs of the Veterans on the Veterans Registry

GOAL: Understand the unique housing needs and barriers to housing veterans on the Veteran Registry are experiencing.

GOAL: Compare the findings of the veterans' housing needs to the available and developing housing resources to identify gaps in housing resources

GOAL: Work with the System of Care to address and reduce barriers to housing to ensure veterans experiencing homelessness can transition to permanent housing.

As recommended by United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), U.S. Departments of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Housing and Urban Development (HUD), OC Community Resources maintains a Veteran Registry, also commonly referred to as the "By Name List," which functions as a snapshot of veterans experiencing homelessness in the county. The Orange County veteran service providers and community have been working towards creating and adopting guidelines and processes to maintain the list up-to-date under the leadership of OC Community Resources and in partnership with the VA.

The Orange County veteran service provider, OC Community Resources and the VA meet on a weekly basis to review new additions to the Veteran Registry and discuss next steps as they support veterans' transition from homelessness into permanent housing. Being able to properly assess veterans experiencing homelessness and determine their level of service needs and ongoing care coordination is key in ensuring housing appropriateness and housing stability.

The VA Community Resource and Referral Center (CRRC) has clinical staff that is able to conduct a triage assessment to first determine the eligible programs the veteran can access and then evaluate and target resources to better meet needs of veterans presenting for services. This includes mental health, substance use treatment and physical health services requested by the veteran. It is important to recognize that

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some of the veterans experiencing homelessness in Orange County have high acuity needs that require a higher level of care.

As of July 9, 2019, the Veteran Registry for Orange County had identified 294 veterans experiencing homelessness in the community.

- 98 (33.33 %) veterans are sheltered
- 196 (66.67 %) veterans are unsheltered

Of the 294 veterans identified on the Veteran Registry, there was a preliminary verification and eligibility process to explore available housing option, including:

- HUD-Veterans' Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers based on VA Healthcare eligibility,
- Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF),
- Grant and Per Diem (GPD) programming,
- 1736 Family Crisis Center Rapid Rehousing program,
- Institutional care based on their high vulnerability and acute medical and/or behavioral health needs, and
- Affordable housing option.

Of the veterans that have been identified to be preliminarily eligible for HUD-VASH and/or SSVF, approximately half are currently accessing the resource. The low percentage of veterans accessing available resources illustrates an opportunity for the System of Care to increase coordination and collaboration to overcome barriers to accessing available resources and housing. Street outreach and emergency shelter providers need to facilitate referral linkages for veterans experiencing homelessness to begin working towards permanent housing and looking at creative solutions that may increase service access.

Maintaining an Accurate Veteran Registry and Tracking Progress towards Housing

GOAL: Train service providers and street outreach teams on the Veteran Registry on a monthly basis, including how to confirm whether a veteran experiencing homelessness is listed on the Veteran Registry and how to add veterans experiencing homelessness to the Veteran Registry form to ensure it is reconciled.

GOAL: Implement a tracking mechanism within the Veteran Registry that measures timeframes between referrals and enrollments into various available housing options, as well as move-in dates to permanent housing.

GOAL: Track the progress the community is making towards solving veteran homelessness and decreasing the length of time veterans experience homeless. The following measures will be incorporated into the weekly Veteran Registry case conferencing to note the progress of the Initiative:

- Monthly inflow of veterans experiencing homelessness into Orange County's Veteran Registry
- Monthly outflow of veterans experiencing homelessness in Orange County and transitioning to permanent housing
- Number and type of housing referrals, including the number of veterans searching for housing and timeframe

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In November 2018, the Office of Care Coordination, Long Beach VA and Volunteers of America started meeting to develop and implement a transition plan for the Veteran Registry to be managed by the County's Coordinated Entry System. In March 2019, the full transition of the Veteran Registry to OC Community Resources took place reconciling the results from the 2019 Point In Time Count. The OC Community Resources as the Collaborative Applicant for the Orange County Continuum of Care and the lead for the Coordinated Entry System took lead of the Veteran Registry for the Orange County Continuum of Care in partnership with the VA Coordinated Entry System Administrator. The Veteran Registry is reviewed in detail during weekly meetings with street outreach and emergency shelter providers.

For the purposes of the Veteran Registry, individuals who self-report as veterans and are engaging in homeless services or experiencing homelessness in Orange County are added to the Veteran Registry. The Coordinated Entry System Coordinator has implemented a Veteran Registry Form (Appendix D) which facilitates adding veterans experiencing homelessness to the Veteran Registry. The Veteran Registry Form may be submitted in person, via email or completed utilizing an online form. The information provided by street outreach and veteran services providers is managed by the Coordinated Entry System and shared with the community on a regular schedule to ensure its reconciliation and upkeep.

The Veteran Registry is an evolving registry that captures information necessary to follow up with veterans experiencing homelessness, including their location, shelter status, eligible housing resources and progress towards permanent or other appropriate housing placement. The guiding principles of the Coordinated Entry System have been integrated into the Veteran Registry to ensure that prioritization of the most vulnerable veterans and the veterans with the longest lengths of homelessness are prioritized and expedited for housing linkages.

Identifying veterans experiencing homelessness on the streets and in shelters will necessitate the partnership of local law enforcement and emergency medical services, who are often the first line of services these individuals engage, as well as street outreach teams, shelter operators and homeless services providers. These key partners serve as the liaison between the veterans experiencing homelessness and the leadership staff that are implementing this strategy and the progress associated with the efforts.

Implementing a robust tracking mechanism of the veteran's engagement and progress towards housing within the Veteran Registry will create a baseline to measure the timeframe from initial engagement to permanent housing. Having established a baseline timeframe will allow for further refinement in the process over time to decrease the length of homelessness veterans experience and identify key areas where additional coordination and collaboration is needed.

Community Planning and Engagement

GOAL: Promote community awareness and engagement in the Initiative by providing monthly updates on the progress to key stakeholders.

GOAL: Increase the level of collaboration and coordination with other key stakeholders, including, but not limited to, Grant and Per Diem providers, Veterans Justice Outreach and Homeless Veterans Community Employment Services.

GOAL: Expand community planning efforts in Orange County to develop additional supportive services and housing resources.

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GOAL: Standardize policies, procedures and document protocols to expedite veterans to appropriate resources and supportive services.

The Orange County System of Care for veterans is mobilizing in order to meet the goals of the Initiative. The complex nature of eligibility criteria, referral processes and requirements necessitates that street outreach, emergency shelter providers and homeless service providers expedite linkages for veterans to the available and needed supportive services with urgency, removing systemic barriers. Referral linkages must be integrated; the more comprehensive the response to veterans experiencing homelessness can be, the more success will be achieved in ending veteran homelessness.

Diversion and Prevention for Veterans

GOAL: Utilize Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF) funding to support rapid resolution, diversion and prevention activities to prevent veterans from experiencing homelessness or entering the homeless system of care.

GOAL: Create a comprehensive veteran-specific resource guide that details all available programs and specific agencies that can assist veterans in obtaining the resources to be self-sufficient.

Current SSVF grantee, Volunteers of America, has prioritized a portion of its funding to rapid resolution, which includes prevention and diversion activities. Rapid resolution is to be an added service under the existing SSVF grant agreement. Volunteers of America has to promote new and creative responses to assisting veterans experiencing homelessness. Rapid resolution is an intervention designed to prevent immediate entry into homelessness or immediately resolve a household's homelessness once they enter shelter, transitional housing or an unsheltered situation. Rapid resolution includes both diversion and rapid exit strategies with the aim of ensuring that homelessness is avoided or is as brief as possible when it does occur.

On May 17, 2019, the VA released an updated version of the SSVF Rapid Resolution Service Compliance Guide. Current SSVF providers in Orange County are reviewing the guide in detail and beginning to have planning discussions to strategize on rapid resolution implementation for the Initiative. Additionally, to assist in this process the VA released an SSVF Rapid Resolution Planning Toolkit which is being used by Orange County providers. The SSVF Rapid Resolution Toolkit is aimed at assisting communities and their SSVF programs effecting a system-wide implementation of Rapid Resolution interventions. The Planning Toolkits brings forth a strategic framework and key areas of focus for the Orange County's System of Care for Veterans to determine the design and implementation of SSVF Rapid Resolution in the short-term and long term.

To begin the process of implementing and incorporating prevention and diversion practices with our veteran service providers, street outreach teams and emergency shelter operators, OC Community Resources in partnership with the Family Solutions Collaborative and Volunteers of America hosted a Diversion and Conflict Mediation Training on Thursday, June 12 and Friday, June 14, 2019, that will provide everyone with a basic understanding and with helpful tools to mediate and resolve conflict. These trainings and others will be available on an annual basis to promote a common knowledge base of evidence-based and best practices among all street outreach, homeless and veteran service providers.

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Leveraging information available from the various veteran specific community groups, non-profit and community organizations, and key stakeholders compiling of programs and agency details is a short-term goal. The Veteran Resource Guide will be widely distributed and made available to the various stakeholder groups engaged in the Initiative and who are likely to encounter a veteran at risk or currently experiencing homelessness.

Street Outreach and Shelter Coordination

GOAL: Ensure veterans experiencing homelessness are contacted at least twice a month and provided with the needed support and assistance to access emergency shelter and other supportive services.

GOAL: Establish a veteran priority for filling vacant emergency shelter beds or transitional housing beds in each Service Planning Area.

GOAL: Provide transportation to ensure linkages to services, shelter and housing referrals increase.

In order to maintain an updated Veteran Registry in our community, it is important that street outreach teams are engaging veterans experiencing homelessness on a regular basis, providing the needed supports and providing updates to the Veteran Registry to reflect the housing plan or case plan for each veteran. This will allow other street outreach teams to note what options have been explored or what steps are to be taken to continue to support the veteran towards achieving appropriate housing placement. Techniques and strategies on how to best follow up with veterans on the streets or other place not meant for human habitation will be coordinated monthly at the Street Outreach Committee of the Orange County Continuum of Care.

In the event that a veteran living on the streets is seeking an emergency shelter or a transitional housing opportunity, the System of Care will respond effectively and seek to provide a bed for that veteran that meets their needs. Operators of emergency shelters and transitional housing within the System of Care will need to establish a priority or preference for veterans to fill vacant beds. Veterans making the decision to engage in shelter are oftentimes making a difficult first step towards their path to permanent housing and offering the support and further engaging them should result in reduced lengths of homelessness and increased placement into appropriate housing options. Techniques and strategies on how to best prioritize veterans for available shelter beds or transitional housing opportunities will be discussed in more detail at the Shelter Committee of the Orange County Continuum of Care.

Increased Income and Connection to Available Benefits: Rebuilding for Sustainable Futures

GOAL: Ensure every veteran has the needed documentation to access and confirm eligibility for income, benefits and medical care.

GOAL: Facilitate quarterly trainings to assist street outreach, emergency shelter and homeless service providers on how to request veteran-specific documentation through various means including online, forms and applications.

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GOAL: Co-locate community-based organizations at the Veterans Service Office to create a one-stop shop of supportive services for veterans who are at risk of homelessness and experiencing homelessness for increased accessibility and warm hand off.

GOAL: Ensure every veteran on the Veteran Registry is connected to healthcare, income sources and mainstream benefits.

Often, individuals need to confirm one's veteran status. Street outreach, homeless service providers and emergency shelter providers should assist veterans in obtaining at least one of the following documents:

- Veteran's Department of Defense (DD) Form 214 Certificate of Release Discharge from Active Duty
- Veterans Benefits Administration Statement of Service (SOS)
- Veterans Health Administration Veteran's Identity Card
- Veterans Health Information Systems and Technology Architecture(VISTA) printout from Veterans Health Administration healthcare provider
- Hospital Inquiry System (HINQS)
- VBA award letter of service-connected disability payment or non-service connected pension
- Veterans Choice Card
- National Archives Form 13038 which primarily is used to replace a lost or destroyed Report of Separation. Military Personnel Records (MPR) uses this form most often when reconstructing military service data lost in the fire at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis on July 12, 1973.
- VA Photo ID Card - starting in November 2017. The 2015 Veterans Identification Card Act orders the VA to issue a hard-copy photo ID to any honorably discharged veteran who applies.

Veterans can order military records online by visiting www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records. Utilizing the online process is simple and should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete. However, noting that access to internet and technology is often a barrier for veterans experiencing homelessness, the Initiative encourages connection with the local Veteran Service Office, VA CRRC, or any veteran and/or homeless service provider. Additional Helpful Links can be found in Appendix E and F.

The Orange County Veterans Service Office actively pursues the rights of veterans of the United States Armed Forces, their dependents and survivors to receive VA benefits. They work collaboratively with the VA, with nationally chartered veteran's organizations, and others, to assure veterans, their dependents and/or survivors receive the entitlements the veterans earned while serving our country.

The functions and services available through the Orange County Veterans Service Office are extensive. The following list identifies benefits and services to veterans and their dependents or survivors.

- Entitlement to:
 - Compensation and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation
 - Disability and Death Pension
 - Burial Benefits and Gravesite Markers
 - Education Benefits
 - Vocational Rehabilitation
 - Veterans Education Assistance Program Refund Contributions
- VA Life Insurance Policies:

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- Obtain Proceeds from a VA Life Insurance Policy
 - Waiver of VA Insurance Premiums
- CalVet Information:
 - CalVet Dependents College Tuition Fee Waiver Program
- Discharge Review:
 - Discharge Upgrades
- VA Home Loan:
 - Home Loan Guarantee Eligibility
- Admission to Veterans Homes of California, a long-term care facility for California veterans who are aged or disabled, located in eight cities throughout the state - Barstow, Chula Vista (San Diego), Fresno, Lancaster, Redding, Ventura, West Los Angeles and Yountville (Napa Valley).
- Legal clinic in partnership with Veterans Legal Institute
 - Free legal advice and counsel, assistance and resources in the areas of discharge upgrades.

Additionally, the Veterans Service Office recognizes that there is a need to facilitate access to other community-based resources which are needed to stabilize the veteran in housing such as financial and benefit assistance including CalFresh, General Relief, disability income, for example. As such, the Veterans Service Office is making office space available for community-based resources to co-locate within their building to facilitate linkage to services and warm hand-offs between programs and resources to replicate the best practice of a one-stop shop for veteran services at a smaller scale. Long term, the Veterans Service Office is interested in replicating the County of Los Angeles Department of Military and Veterans Affairs commonly referred to as the Bob Hope Patriotic Hall that makes a 10-story building available for a variety of veteran services organizations and government departments to assist the veterans and their families.

Employment services will be coordinated with veterans experiencing homelessness as it provides an opportunity for them to be able to increase their income and successfully transition into and sustain housing stability. Increasing access to employment services will ensure that veterans experiencing homelessness receive proper training to more readily secure and retain employment. These services are often co-located at emergency shelters and transitional housing providing further wrap-around services for veterans. Systematically, the Initiative and key partners will coordinate the following employment and benefit programs for veterans:

Goodwill of Orange County's Tierney Center for Veteran Services provides comprehensive resources to veterans and their families regardless of years of service, character of discharge and veteran status. The Tierney Center connects veterans with a fellow veteran to offer peer career counseling, navigate through available training and development opportunities and the application process to secure employment. Additionally, they provide financial literacy counseling and assistance, legal assistance and VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Chapter 31) services.

Chrysalis is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping low-income and homeless individuals get prepared, secure and retain employment, which are critical steps in becoming self-sufficient. Their core program includes job preparation classes, resume building, practice interview, and service plan, which clients are able to complete in an average of two weeks. When the core program is completed, clients continue to receive one-on-one employment coaching and job leads, referrals to external partners for barrier removal services, access to scholarship funds, and the opportunity to work a transitional job with Chrysalis Enterprises.

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Veterans' Employment-Related Assistance Program (VEAP) was awarded to the County of Orange by the State of California Employment Development Department to provide Veterans with employment and training services. The project is targeted toward meeting veterans' unique needs and occupational goals with an emphasis on individuals who recently returned to civilian life. The goal of this initiative is to promote the use of regional industry sector strategies as the framework to help unemployed and underemployed veterans with significant barriers to employment transition from military careers to rewarding civilian employment. Veterans served by VEAP funds must be in at least one of the priority groups, including: veterans recently separated from active military duty within the last 48 months, campaign, disabled, homeless and others. VEAP will provide veterans the opportunity to obtain education in industry-recognized certificates and/or degrees as well as the assistance to gain employment in high wage, high-growth industries. The project provides veterans access to supportive services, mental health and behavioral health services, and wrap-around services such as assistance with housing, medical care, substance abuse, peer navigation, job coaching, case management, and transportation assistance through our many established partners in the community.

Veteran Housing Resource Fairs aimed at further outreaching to veterans experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness and providing needed resource linkages. The VA in partnership with the County of Orange will be organizing Veteran Housing Resource Fairs events at each of the Service Planning Areas on a rotating basis on the last Friday of the month. The Veteran Housing Resource Fairs will bring together VA, County and community-based resources to one location and have an expected attendance of up to two hundred veterans.

VA Resources

- HUD-VASH Triage Screening
- Homeless Outreach
- Medical Screenings
- Veteran Benefits Assistance
- Mental Health Resources
- VA Registration
- Transportation

County of Orange Resources

- Health Care Agency's OC4Vets
- OC Veteran Services Office
- Orange County Housing Authority

Community-Based Resources

- Volunteers of America
- U.S. Veterans Initiative
- Veterans Legal Institute
- Jamboree Housing
- Battle Buddy Bridge

Coordinated Entry System and Case Conferencing Meetings

GOAL: Ensure active and consistent participation from street outreach and emergency shelter providers in weekly case conferencing meetings to discuss available housing options for veterans experiencing homelessness.

The Veteran Coordinated Entry System utilizes a No Wrong Door model with multi-site centralized accesses. Street outreach and emergency shelter providers are encouraged to participate in the Veteran Coordinated Entry System and in weekly case conferencing meetings led by the Coordinated Entry System Coordinator. During these meetings, the Veteran Registry is reviewed in detail; street outreach and emergency shelter providers are able to collaborate in solutions aimed at quickly assisting veterans to transition into an appropriate housing option.

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OC Community Resources in partnership with the Long Beach VA will continue to streamline the process to confirm veteran status, discharge status, VA Healthcare eligibility, additional housing and benefit eligibility for each individual in the Veteran Registry. Currently, the mechanism that is in place eases the burden on the veteran experiencing homelessness and is primarily facilitated by OC Community Resources but there is an increased need for a more timely process. In order to complete this initial screening at this time, the veteran's full name, including alias, social security number and date of birth are needed to reference and compare VA records. These are the data elements also collected during the 2019 Point In Time count, whereby 95 veterans provided this information to expedite their care.

As initial screenings are completed through the Veteran Registry, these findings are shared with participating street outreach, supportive service and emergency shelter providers to facilitate housing and case management plans. The participation of VA CRRC staff in these weekly case conferencing meetings has reduced barriers to accessing VA resources, increased coordination and expedited linkages. Additionally, the Coordinated Entry System Coordinator serves as a liaison between the public housing authorities in the referral process for HUD-VASH.

Initial screenings for eligible housing resources and supportive services may not be completed for veterans whose veteran status and character of discharge cannot be confirmed using locally available database. These veterans, with assistance from street outreach and supportive service and emergency shelter providers, will need to complete a request for their military service records or other documentation to further refine housing plan. The Veteran Coordinated Entry System will work with other available housing resources, including those that are prioritized through the Individual and Family Components of the Coordinated Entry System to identify and appropriate housing resources for the veteran experiencing homelessness.

In line with the Federal Criteria and Benchmarks, the Initiative will quickly work to transition individuals to the appropriate type of housing with the needed supportive services intervention to facilitate transition. However, upon the veteran's request, the County, VA, and/or nonprofit homeless service providers work to connect veterans to appropriate behavioral health treatment services including detoxification, mental health and substance use treatment (Appendix F).

The Coordinated Entry System utilizes an established prioritization schema approved by the Continuum of Care Board to connect veterans and their families experiencing homelessness with available housing opportunities. Housing opportunities available through the Coordinated Entry System include Permanent Supportive Housing, HUD-VASH Housing Choice Vouchers, Rapid Rehousing, and other housing opportunities as they become available.

Coordinated Entry System prioritization is a dynamic process. Coordinated Entry System will prioritize veterans and their families with the longest length of homelessness in the community and highest service needs as determined through case conferencing. A regional Service Planning Area distribution prioritization based on the most recent finalized Point In Time count is used to distribute non-designated County resources by Service Planning Area to avoid requiring individuals or families to move long distances unless by participant choice. The 2019 Point in Time Count found the following distribution of veteran individuals and families experiencing homelessness: 36 % in North, 52 % in Central and 12 % in South. Another factor in the prioritization process is connection to emergency shelter, which is aimed at increasing system flow and maximizing limited housing opportunities. Exceptions to the above prioritization process may be made through case conferencing and as appropriate to meet client needs.

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At this time, the number of available HUD-VASH vouchers exceeds the number of chronically homeless veterans, as such the VA has expanded beyond the chronically homeless priority population to provide vouchers to all eligible veterans in Orange County including the following homeless populations who are particularly vulnerable, including:

- Female veterans
- Veterans with custody of children
- Veterans 65 and older
- Veterans who served in Iraq or Afghanistan during Operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom or New Dawn.

Expedite Veteran Housing Resources in Orange County

GOAL: Reduce the length of time between HUD-VASH referral to leasing of an apartment unit.

GOAL: Implement a Housing Navigation Service using SSVF funding to support veterans searching for housing who have a HUD-VASH voucher or need assistance securing permanent housing.

GOAL: Expand the Landlord Incentive Program to overcome barriers to identifying a housing unit when utilizing a HUD-VASH or Section 8 voucher in Orange County.

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)

The purpose of the SSVF Program is to provide supportive services to very low income veteran families who:

- i. Are residing in permanent housing and are at risk of becoming homeless,
- ii. Are homeless and scheduled to become residents of permanent housing within a specified time period or
- iii. After exiting permanent housing within a specified time period, are seeking other housing that is responsive to such very low income veteran family's needs and preferences.

SSVF program requires Support Services to include outreach, prevention case management, connection to VA benefits and programs, connection to public benefits and mainstream community resources and Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA). TFA can be rapid re-housing assistance (at minimum 60 % of funding) and Homelessness Prevention Assistance (at maximum 40 % of funding).

In Orange County, the following organizations received SSVF funding for FY2019-20:

- Volunteers of America was awarded \$3,078,074 to serve 420 veterans in Orange County.
- U.S. Veterans Initiative was awarded \$3,583,221 to serve Los Angeles County, Orange County, San Bernardino County and Riverside County. Through this funding U.S. Veterans Initiative is to permanently house 30 veterans experiencing homelessness in Orange County.

U.S. Housing and Urban Development – Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)

The HUD-VASH program combines Housing Choice Vouchers rental assistance for homeless Veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the Department of Veteran Affairs. VA provides these services for participating Veterans at VA medical centers (VAMCs) and community-based outreach clinics. The HUD-VASH minimum eligibility requirements in Orange County require that veterans are experiencing

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homelessness, have an income below 50 % Area Median Income (AMI) and are eligible for VA healthcare. The VA agrees to make HUD-VASH referrals from the Veteran Registry, exclusively.

Referrals to HUD-VASH are made through the CRRC located at 888 W. Santa Ana Blvd., Suite 150, Santa Ana CA 92701. Their offices are open Monday through Friday from 8 am to 4 pm. The CRRC will determine eligibility and refer to Orange County Housing Authority, Santa Ana Housing Authority or Anaheim Housing Authority based on the veteran’s housing preferences and community ties. No appointment is necessary, walk ins are welcome.

The Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA) has been awarded 989 HUD-VASH vouchers. As of April 2019, the following is the disposition of HUD-VASH Vouchers:

- 92 vouchers have been committed to Project-Based Vouchers
- 575 vouchers are currently leased-up
- 60 vouchers have been issued to Veterans who are searching for housing
- Approximately 240 vouchers remain available, pending VA referrals

To assist veterans in locating an available housing unit to utilize their HUD-VASH voucher, the Orange County Board of Supervisors committed \$250,000 to Orange County United Way’s United to End Homelessness for a Landlord Incentive Program. The Landlord Incentive Program is aimed at increasing the number of landlords and number of available units accepting housing choice vouchers by providing security deposits for rent and utility assistance, credit report and application fee payments, contingency funds to make minor improvements or repairs, unit holding fee payments and other landlord incentives to overcome barriers to secure housing units.

As of April 2019, 405 HUD-VASH tenant-based Housing Choice Vouchers are available in Orange County for referrals from the VA:

- Orange County Housing Authority – 250 vouchers
- Santa Ana Housing Authority – 105 vouchers
- Anaheim Housing Authority – 50 vouchers

The following is the known status regarding 267 HUD-VASH project-based vouchers committed by the various Public Housing Authorities in Orange County:

Housing Authority	Project	# of VASH Units	Estimated Completion Date
Santa Ana	Santa Ana Veterans Village	75	March 2020
Orange County	Placentia Veterans Village	49	August 2020
Orange County	Salerno at Cypress	15	September 2020
Orange County	Jamboree PSH	20	January 2021
Santa Ana	Francis Xavier	3	March 2021
Orange County	Fountain Valley Housing	8	May 2021
Santa Ana	Legacy Square	8	July 2021
Santa Ana	North Harbor Village	89	2021
TOTAL		267	

The two Veteran Villages being built in Orange County with an estimated completion date in 2020 follows a best practice that is being implemented across the nation. The Veteran Village model meets the unique needs of military veterans who are experiencing homelessness by providing permanent supportive and affordable housing options in a setting that promotes camaraderie and service engagement. The Veteran

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Villages will provide immediate access to critical onsite supportive services that will assist veterans to transition to permanent housing and integrate into the community. Utilizing HUD-VASH housing choice vouchers and project basing these at the Veteran Villages also helps overcome the gaps in availability of affordable rental housing units to apply the rental subsidies to.

Continuum of Care Funding

1736 Family Crisis Center was awarded \$371,609 during the FY 2018 Continuum of Care Notice of Funding Availability to operate a rapid rehousing program targeting veterans with dishonorable discharge status, who may not be eligible to access housing resources through the VA. The Orange County Continuum of Care program, which is annually renewable, meets a gap in the system of care, targeting a veteran population that is traditionally excluded from VA Healthcare, programs and services.

Additionally, the Orange County Continuum of Care through the Coordinated Entry System will refer veterans experiencing homelessness to appropriate resources including permanent supportive housing or Continuum of Care tenant-based vouchers, should the veteran benefit from a higher level of care and supportive services to transition into permanent housing.

On March 27, 2019, the Orange County Continuum of Care approved the FY 2019 Continuum of Care Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) priorities that include project funding for veteran households who need a high level of care but do not meet eligibility or priority requirements for HUD-VASH as a result of veteran status and/or character of discharge. This increased funding priority is anticipated to provide additional avenues to permanent housing for veterans who are not eligible for VA resources.

Housing Retention and Stabilization

GOAL: Ensure veterans who transition successfully into housing remain housed with a retention rate of 95 % at six months and 90 % at one year after obtaining permanent housing.

It is important to continue working with veterans even when they have transitioned into housing and work with them to address issues that may lead to housing instability. Veterans transitioning into permanent housing have to adapt to new environments and utilize independent living skills to access needed supportive services and treatment in a timely and appropriate manner. Veteran service providers should be encouraged to visit veterans at least twice a month initially and then reduce visits to once a month as the veteran adapts to his/her new environment. Veterans housed through HUD-VASH will receive supportive services through the VA for a minimum of one year after obtaining permanent housing. The Initiative plans to provide wrap-around services to the veterans who are housed to ensure retention is measured at six months and one year, respectively.

Appendix A

Federal Criteria and Benchmarks for Achieving the Goal of Ending Veteran Homelessness

The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) released guidelines to help communities benchmark their progress towards ensuring that every Veteran has a place to call home. Criteria and benchmarks work together to provide an ongoing assessment of a community's response to homelessness. While the criteria focus on describing essential elements and accomplishments of the community's response, benchmarks serve as important indicators of whether and how effectively that system is working on an ongoing assessment of available information and data. Over 70 communities and three states across the country have successfully achieved the goal of ending Veteran homelessness.

Criteria

1. Community has identified all veterans experiencing homelessness.
2. The community provides shelter immediately to any veteran experiencing unsheltered homelessness who wants to be sheltered.
3. The community provides service-intensive transitional housing only in limited instances.
4. The community has capacity to assist veterans to swiftly move into permanent housing.
5. The community has resources, plans, partnerships, and system capacity in place should any veteran become homeless or be at risk of homelessness in the future.

Benchmarks

1. Chronic and long-term homelessness among veterans has been ended. The community has no veterans experiencing chronic or long-term homelessness with the rare exceptions of veterans who have not yet accepted an available permanent housing intervention and those veterans that have accepted a permanent housing intervention but are still actively in the process of identifying, securing or moving into a unit.
2. Veterans have quick access to permanent housing. The community has a system in place to connect veterans experiencing homelessness to permanent housing in an average of 90 days or less, measured from the day they are identified as experiencing homelessness to the day they enter permanent housing.
3. The community has sufficient permanent housing capacity. The number of veterans exiting homelessness and moving into permanent housing is greater than or equal to the number of veterans entering homelessness.
4. The community is committed to Housing First and provides service-intensive transitional housing to veterans experiencing homelessness only in limited instances.

To read the entire Criteria and Benchmarks for Achieving the Goal of Ending Veteran Homelessness document released by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness please visit:

https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Criteria_and_Benchmarks_for_Ending_Veteran_Homelessness_June_2019_Update.pdf

Appendix B

10 Strategies to End Veteran Homelessness

The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness released the 10 Strategies to End Veteran Homelessness that states and communities have implemented to end homelessness for veterans.

1. Start at the Top: Get state and local leaders to publicly commit to and coordinate efforts on ending veteran homelessness.
2. Implement a Housing First System orientation and response.
3. Implement a coordinated entry system.
4. Set and meet ambitious short- and long-term goals by deploying all resources effectively.
5. Improve transitional housing performance and consider adopting different models and/or converting or reallocating resources into supportive housing.
6. Engage and support private landlords as partners.
7. Identify and be accountable to all veterans experiencing homelessness.
8. Conduct coordinated outreach and engagement efforts.
9. Increase connections to employment.
10. Coordinate with legal services organizations to solve legal needs.

To read the entire 10 Strategies to End Veteran Homelessness document released by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness please visit:

https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Ten-Strategies-to-End-Veteran-Homelessness-v3.pdf

Appendix C – Marching Home Committee Members

- Alfonso Ceja, Coordinator, Volunteers of America
- Bobby McDonald, Chair, OC Veterans Advisory Committee
- Christina Weckerly-Ramirez, Behavioral Health Service Navigation Programs, Health Care Agency
- Cory Vigil, Chair of Priority 1 Housing Working Group and Strong Family Strong Children
- Denton Knapp, Director, Tierney Center for Veteran Services, OC Goodwill
- Dustin Halliwell, Coordinated Entry System Coordinator, Veterans Affairs
- George Searcy, COO, Jamboree Housing
- Holly Sumner, HUD-VASH Triage Case Manager, Veterans Affairs
- Jade Smith, Veterans Outreach Supervisor, Tierney Center for Veteran Services, OC Goodwill
- Jason Austin, Behavioral Health Services, Health Care Agency
- Jessica Fajota, Program Manager, Volunteers of America
- Judson Brown, Santa Ana Housing Authority and Chair of the Orange County Continuum of Care Board
- Katrese Epps, Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program Coordinator, Veterans Affairs
- Karl Calhoun, Veterans Affairs
- Orange County Sheriff Department Representative
- Paul McDonough, HUD-VASH Supervisory Social Worker, Veterans Affairs
- Rebecca Ricketts, Coordinated Entry System Coordinator, OC Community Resources
- Renee Ramirez, Director, OC Community Services, Veteran Service Office
- Richard Beam, Veterans Affairs Long Beach Healthcare System
- Shannon Legere, Director, Housing and Homeless Programs, OC Community Resources
- Sofia Nava, HUD-VASH Case Manager, Veterans Affairs
- Stephanie Saldivar, Healthcare for Homeless Veterans, Veterans Affairs
- Sue Parks, President & CEO, Orange County United Way
- Susan Price, Director, Director of Care Coordination, County Executive Office
- Taunya Taylor, Volunteers of America
- Virginia Adame, Program Director, Volunteers of America
- Zulima Lundy, Office of Care Coordination, County Executive Office

Appendix D – 2019 Point In Time: Veteran Registry Update Form



Veteran Registry Update Form

When a Veteran is encountered during the 2019 Point In Time Count, please ask for permission to collect the information below to update the Veteran Registry (also referred to as the By Name List). Updating the Veteran Registry will help us identify all veterans experiencing homelessness within Orange County, understand their housing needs and follow up with them to connect them to available resources.

Team Captain's Name: _____ Contact Phone #: _____


City or Unincorporated Area: _____ Team #: _____


Survey Date: _____ Shift: _____

Veteran #1

1. First Name	2. Middle Initial	3. Last Name
4. Date of Birth	5. Social Security Number	6. Branch of Military Service
7. Phone Number	8. Email Address	9. Other Ways to Contact Veteran
10. Have you, or have you been, enrolled in VA Healthcare?		<input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes
11. Are you connected to a Service Provider?		<input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes
11a. If Yes, who is the Service Provider? Name of Case Manager or Street Outreach Worker?		
12. Locations Veteran Frequents – address, cross streets, landmarks, map #		
13. Observations – Description of Veteran		

Appendix E – Veteran Registry Form: Adding veterans experiencing homelessness to registry





VETERAN REGISTRY

STREET OUTREACH WORKER INFORMATION

Survey Date _____

Surveyor's Name _____

Agency _____

Will this veteran be a part of your caseload? Yes No

Phone Number _____

VETERAN INFORMATION

First Name _____

Middle Name _____

Last Name _____

Birth Date _____ Social Security Number _____

Military Branch _____

Discharge Status _____

Cell Phone _____

Email _____

Alternate Contact Method _____

Location(s) veteran frequents _____

Location veteran normally sleeps Shelter Transitional housing
 Outdoors Vehicle (car, truck, can, RV, etc)

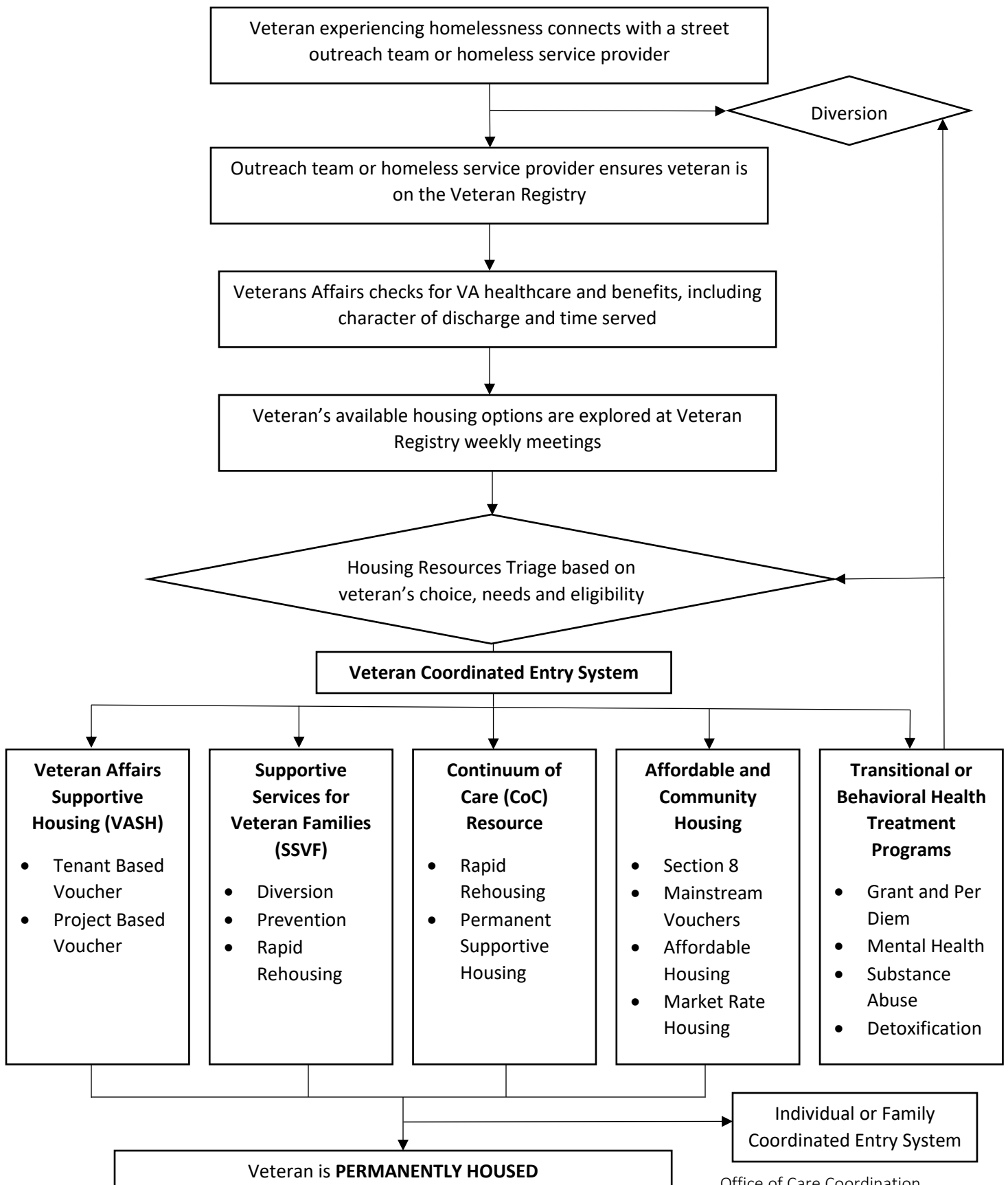
Household Type Individual [single]
 Individual [adult + partner(s)]
 Family [minor children]

Household Size _____

Signed Veterans Affairs release of Information Signed HMIS Release of Information

updated 2/21/19

Appendix F – Veteran Coordinated Entry System Flow



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Appendix G – Additional Helpful Links

- Applications for Veterans Choice Card: <http://www.va.gov/opa/choiceact/>
 - Eligibility information provided via hotline
- E-benefits enrollment: <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/>
- Online application for VHA service: <https://www.1010ez.med.va.gov/sec/vha/1010ez>
 - Eligibility confirmation will be mailed to the Veteran
- DD214 online: <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>
 - Put “Expedite: Homeless Veteran” in the comments section
- DD214 telephone application: call 314-801-0800 to request same day service
 - Form will be mailed to the Veteran

Appendix H – Certificate of Release of Discharge from Active Duty



Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty

DD214

What is a DD214?

The DD214 is an official report of a veteran’s status as a separated or retired military service member and provides the veteran’s military service details.

How to request a DD214 for a veteran

Requests may be submitted online by using eVetRecs at <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>. Click eVetRecs to open eVetRecs. Complete all questions to request a personal military history. Print the signature verification page. Fax the signed signature verification page with a cover letter to (314)801-0764 for emergency requests due to homelessness or housing insecurity.

I Want to Request:
 • DD 214/Separation Documents: [eVetRecs \(online - printer required\)](#) | [Mail or Fax](#)

If you are unable to complete the request using eVetRecs, you may download and complete the SF-180 with the veteran and fax the signed form with a cover letter to (314)801-0764 for emergency requests due to homelessness or housing insecurity.

Time: 10-14 days for emergency requests

- 1. Complete eVetRecs or SF-180
- 2. Fax **SIGNED** verification or SF-180 with cover letter to (314)801-0764

April 18, 2019