



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Fact Sheet

Office of Public Affairs
Media Relations

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June 2018

Homeless Veteran Community Employment Services (HVCES)

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has made ending homelessness among Veterans a top priority. This unprecedented effort has dramatically decreased homelessness and increased successful outcomes for Veterans and their families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. VA and our Federal, state, local, and non-governmental partners recognize that ending Veteran homelessness is not a single event in time, but rather a deliberate continuing effort.

Employment is a key element in helping Veterans transition permanently out of homelessness or to avoid it all together by increasing access to permanent housing and improving housing stability. Employment provides an improved quality of life, increased self-confidence and independence, opportunities for socialization, and a decreased reliance on institutional care. As part of efforts to end homelessness among Veterans, in fiscal year (FY) 2014, VA enhanced employment services for Veterans through implementation of Homeless Veteran Community Employment Services (HVCES).

HVCES is staffed by Vocational Development Specialists who function as Community Employment Coordinators (CEC) and Employment Specialists. Community Employment Coordinators (CEC) are funded at each VA medical center (VAMC). The Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) and Department of Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Programs have funded Employment Specialists at a limited number of VAMCs based on local needs.

HVCES provides a range of site-specific employment services rather than being a discrete program. There are no eligibility requirements for Veterans to receive assistance from HVCES other than participation in a VHA homeless program. HVCES staff ensure a range of employment services are accessible to Veterans who have experienced homelessness. These Veterans may need individualized support to overcome barriers preventing them from returning to work, such as; a poor work history; lack of transportation and appropriate clothing; history of justice involvement; and co-occurring substance use and/or mental health issues. HVCES staff, embedded in homeless programs within the medical centers, complement existing medical center-based employment services, and are a bridge to employment opportunities and resources in the local community.

HVCES staff are tasked with:

- Working with VA employment services (Compensated Work Therapy (CWT), Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E)) and homeless program staff to identify employment resources available to serve homeless and at-risk Veterans, including chronically homeless and difficult to serve Veterans.

- Collaborating with community, state, and federal partners (outside of VA) to provide training and support services to Veterans that are not available within the VA.
- Engaging employers to develop new job opportunities for Veterans who have experienced homelessness.
- Ensuring ongoing support services are available to homeless Veterans once they return to work, and providing assistance to employers to address any issues with workplace adjustment.

HVCES Program Highlights:

- In FY 2017 approximately 7,000 Veterans exited homeless residential programs with employment (GPD, CWT/TR, and DCHV). This represents a consistent upward trend in these employment rates over the past four (4) years. In addition, employment rates for Veterans housed through HUD-VASH exceeded the national target.
- At the end of April FY 2018, the employment rates for Veterans exiting homeless residential programs continue their upward trend and the employment rate for Veterans housed through HUD-VASH is exceeding the 2018 national target by 4%.

Employment Rates					
	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FYTD 18
GPD, DCHV, and CWT/TR at Exit	42%	45%	50%	51%	53%
Grant & Per Diem (GPD)	46%	51%	53%	55%	59%
Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans (DCHV)	30%	34%	37%	38%	38%
Compensated Work Therapy/Transitional Residence (CWT/TR)	46%	50%	54%	51%	56%
HUD-VASH Employment Rate	n/a	n/a	39%	42%	44%

Future Directions:

- In April 2018, a goal was established to assist 10,000 Veterans served by VHA specialized homeless programs obtain employment over the next twelve (12) months. A major strategy towards this goal is the development of comprehensive linkages between Veterans Health Administration (VHA) homeless programs and the Department of Labor (DOL) Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS).

For more information on HVCES, please visit:
<https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/HVCES.asp>

Contact Us

To find the VA facility nearest to you, please visit:

<http://www1.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp>

More detailed information on all of VA's Programs for Homeless Veterans can be found on the internet at www.va.gov/homeless.

If you, or a Veteran you know, are at risk of homelessness contact VA's National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at **1-877-4AID-VET (1-877-424-3838)** to speak to a trained VA responder.

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