

2024-2025 Homeless Veteran Program

The Department Homeless Veteran Program has two goals:

The first is to assist homeless veterans in our communities by referring them to local community resources where they can receive immediate direct assistance. This may include direct immediate assistance provided by your Post within your ability to do so, or to provide transportation to resources. These services should be part of the duties of the Post Service Officer, Post Chaplain, Post Hospital Chairman and every member.

The second is to create awareness of the homeless veteran problem in Michigan by obtaining and distributing information on the number of homeless veterans in the State, where they are and what services are available to them in their local communities. To do this we will rely on available information from public and VA sources as well as information received from Posts on local resources not found in public forums.

We are creating a Homeless Veteran Resource Directory to be distributed to you and other groups in the community. The Directory will contain local contact information for agencies and organizations within each County which provide shelter, housing assistance, utility assistance and food assistance. Completion of this Directory requires input from you on the organizations in your community that provide these services. There is a resource referral information form on this page which you may use to forward this information to me.

Also on this program page, we will post a separate document providing updated web links and contact information for established VA and State / County resources as well as known community agencies and organizations.

PROGRAM ACTIVITY REPORTING:

Post or Post member activities associated with serving homeless veterans or promoting awareness about homeless veterans should be reported using the Department online reporting tool as a Community Service project.

This Committee will work closely with the Department VMS / Veteran Mental Health & Welfare Committee on identifying and supporting programs that serve veterans and their families to prevent homelessness and seek solutions to this problem and give that information to you through the resource information on this program page. We will also work with the Department Service Office to ensure you have the information to make referrals to proper local Service Officers to provide disability claim, pension claim or medical benefit assistance.

All of these activities, and many others such as the ideas below are reportable as community service projects assisting veterans. Activities that serve to prevent homelessness among those veterans and families in danger are part of our program.

PROGRAM SUPPORT IDEAS:

There are many ways that you and your Post can be actively involved in assistance homeless veterans or veterans and families in danger of becoming homeless:

- Identify VA or other Homeless Veteran Standdowns and volunteer
- Work with VA or other organizations and sponsor a community Standdown

- Identify and volunteer at other events that support veterans that are homeless or in danger of becoming homeless such as community job fairs or benefit resources fairs
- Volunteer at local homeless shelter facilities or provide direct assistance to them
- Volunteer at local food pantries sponsored by churches or other community service groups or provide direct support to them.
- Volunteer at County Council on Aging programs that serve the homeless, homebound or veterans in danger
- Volunteer at Meals on Wheels or similar programs that serve homebound community members that are in danger of becoming homeless
- Volunteer at local transportation programs that provide transportation to the homeless or homebound to medical or agency appointments

These are just a few ideas. Every community has hidden resources serving the homeless or those in danger of becoming homeless. Find them and look for ways to support them.

DONATIONS:

We encourage Posts to make donations to the Department Homeless Veteran Fund. This fund is maintained as a restricted fund by the Department and is used to assist veterans in emergent situations on the determination of the Department officers. The funds may also be used on a limited case-by-case basis to support local VFW Post efforts that promote awareness programs in their communities or provide assistance to local organizations that assist homeless veterans within the funds ability to do so. This assistance is only possible with your support through your donations. Your Post or personal donations may be made by credit card by using the Department online donation option and earmarked for the Homeless Veteran Program, or you may donate by check sent to Department and earmarked for the Homeless Veteran Program. Your Post Relief Fund may be used for these donations. Your donations will not be shown on the Department donation report due to space restrictions however, a report will be provided to the Department All State Director for that program credit.

Posts may also make donations directly to community organizations that serve the homeless locally such as shelters or food pantries. You may receive credit for these donations by providing proof of the donation made such as a copy of the check or receipt from the organization.

OTHER SUPPORT:

You may request myself as a Department Representative at your community or Post event by completing the Department Officer assignment online request form. These requests will be approved by the State Commander on a case-by-case basis within budget constraints. In making your request, please provide as much information about the event as possible.

With your help, we can have an impact on veteran homelessness in Michigan, one veteran at a time.

Homeless Veteran Program Director
 Barbara Locke
 6 S. Hart St.
 Hart, MI 49420
 barbara.locke@frontier.com
 231-873-4460