



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Fact Sheet

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Homeless Veteran Community Employment Services (HVCES)

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has made ending homelessness among Veterans a top priority, undertaking an unprecedented campaign to dramatically increase successful outcomes for Veterans and their families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. VA remains committed to the goal of ending Veteran homelessness. VA and our Federal, state and local and non-governmental partners recognize that ending Veteran homelessness is not a single event in time, but rather is a deliberate effort towards achieving the goal, and then continued follow-on efforts to make sure that the goal is maintained.

Employment is one of the key elements in helping Veterans transition permanently out of homelessness or avoid it all together. 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 homeless among Veterans, VA is enhancing employment services and opportunities for homeless Veterans through implementation of Homeless Veterans Community Employment Services (HVCES). A primary goal of HVCES is to ensure that a range of employment-related services are accessible to Veterans who are unemployed, underemployed, or at risk of becoming unemployed, in order to mitigate factors related to a current episode of homelessness and/or to prevent a future episode of homelessness. HVCES are expected to complement existing medical center-based employment services.

In fiscal year (FY) 2014, in order to help improve employment outcomes and reach the most difficult to serve homeless Veterans, VA funded the hiring of Community Employment Coordinators (CEC) at each VA medical center (VAMC) under the framework of HVCES. The Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) and Department of Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Programs funded employment specialists at a limited number of VAMCs. Employment Specialists were funded based on the needs of the local VAMC.

Two of the key staff positions in HVCES program are:

- **Community Employment Coordinators (CEC)**

The CEC is a central figure (liaison, advocate, technical advisor) in the assessment and development of employment services for homeless Veterans at the local VAMC. They are responsible for the ongoing orientation training of the homeless services continuum (i.e., homeless program providers, grantees, VA employment program staff, etc.) to increase the role of employment in permanent housing as well as oversight regarding employment outcomes or Veterans receiving homeless services. CECs also provide direct assistance in connecting Veterans to the appropriate and least restrictive VAMC and/or community-

based employment service leading to competitive employment with appropriate support.

The CEC is a change champion who promotes the development of community employment opportunities and partnerships to end Veteran homelessness. The CEC works closely with VA employment programs such as Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) and Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)/Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment. They also liaise with Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) and Grant and Per Diem (GPD) grantees that target employment; other Federal agencies including the Department of Labor’s Homeless Veteran Reintegration Program; and local community, non-profit and faith-based organizations that provide employment services to homeless Veterans.

• **HCHV and HUD-VASH Employment Specialists**

The HCHV and HUD-VASH Employment Specialists are responsible for assessing the vocational needs of homeless Veterans and providing direct services and referrals to include, but not be limited to:

- Access to job listings;
- Resume preparation;
- Benefits counseling;
- Job negotiations regarding reasonable accommodations;
- Assistance with completion of job applications;
- Coordination and transportation to interviews;
- Interview skills training;
- Job development;
- Job placement; and
- Ongoing support for job retention

The HCHV and HUD-VASH Employment Specialists are direct service providers and work closely with the local CECs. They are embedded into the Homeless Program team and often work collaboratively with other VA employment programs such as the CWT Program.

HVCES Program Highlights:

- From FY 2014 to FY 2015, the number of Veterans exiting homeless residential programs with employment (GPD, CWT/Transitional Residence (CWT/TR), and Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans (DCHV)) increased by 9 percent.

Employment Rates		
	FY 14	FY 15
GPD, DCHV, and CWT/TR at exit - National Targets	42%	45%
Grant & Per Diem (GPD)	46%	51%
Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans (DCHV)	30%	34%
Compensated Work Therapy/Transitional Residence (CWT/TR)	46%	50%

For more information on HVCES, please visit:

http://www.va.gov/homeless/employment_programs.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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