

SSVF Priority 1 Community Plan

Date Completed/Revised:

0	2	/	1	2	/	2	0	1	5
Month			Day			Year			

Continuum of Care (CoC) Name: Colorado Springs/El Paso County		CoC #: CO504
CoC Representative: Anne Beer		Title: Vice President, Income & Housing Stability
Phone/Email: (719) 632-1543/abeer@ppunitedway.org		
Person Completing this Plan: Craig Schlattmann		Title: Program Manager, Homes for All Veterans, Rocky Mountain Human Services
Phone/Email: (719) 424-2378/cschlattmann@rmhumanservices.org		

1. Primary Planning and Coordination Group: Identify the primary group responsible for planning and coordinating efforts to prevent and end homelessness among Veterans in the CoC. Identify the principal members of this group and their affiliation.

Primary Group Name:	
Principle Members	Affiliation
Anne Beer	CoC Collaborative Representative
Aimee Cox	City of Colorado Springs
Michael Jay	VA, HCHV Coordinator, Colorado Springs CBOC
Craig Schlattmann	Rocky Mountain Human Services (SSVF Grantee)

2. Ongoing Review and Coordination: Briefly describe how often (e.g., monthly) the above group or a related review/coordination group meets to review Veterans who are homeless, track progress toward re-housing, and coordinate efforts. Include a summary of what information is reviewed during these meetings.

This group will meet monthly. Information to be reviewed will be numbers of Veterans awarded vouchers by HUD-VASH, number of open vouchers in the community, numbers of Veterans re-housed by SSVF, numbers of new Veterans assessed by CoC Coordinated Assessment (both sheltered and unsheltered), and coordinated case review for Veterans enrolled in VASH and SSVF but not yet in permanent housing. Progress will be assessed against initial goals and informed by new data from the January Point In Time, the Spring "Project Connect" outreach event, and the Fall Homeless Veterans Stand Down.

3. SSVF Grantees Serving CoC Geography: Identify each SSVF funded agency serving Veterans in the CoC geography and each SSVF total grant award amount for FY15, including priority 1 ("surge"), 2 (renewals), and 3 (other new) awards. If one agency has multiple awards, list each separately. Pro-rate a grant award amount if the award covers more than one CoC geography. Include the projected annual number of households each grantee can serve and the total number of households across all grantees.

Grantee Agency Name	Grant Amount	Total Annual Projected Households	Total Annual Projected Households: Rapid Re-Housing	% of Total Households to be Assisted with Rapid Re-Housing
Rocky Mountain Human Services	\$1,000,000 (Priority 1)	300	180	60%
Rocky Mountain Human Services	\$400,000 (Priority 2)	200	120	60%
TOTAL	\$1,400,000	500	300	60%

4. Annual Demand and Need for Rapid Re-Housing Assistance: Using the *Veterans Demand Analysis and Progress Tracking Tool* or other demand analysis data agreed to by the primary group above, identify:

- The most recent actual or projected annual unduplicated number of homeless Veterans (on street and/or who access emergency shelter, Safe Havens, or transitional housing, including GPD) in the CoC geography, by household type
- The number of those Veterans who will need rapid re-housing assistance to exit homelessness
- The number of Veterans needing rapid re-housing assistance who are projected to be eligible for SSVF RRH assistance.

	Annual Unduplicated Homeless Veteran Households	Estimated # of Needing RRH (a)	Projected # to be Assisted with SSVF RRH (b)	Projected # to be Assisted with Other RRH (c)	Gap (a-(b+c))
Households without Children	466	303	288	15	0
Households with Children	33	21	20	1	0
Total Homeless Veteran Households	499	324	308	16	0

5. CoC Goals for Ending Homelessness Among Veterans: List the CoC's goals for ending Veteran homelessness by the end of 2015 (fill in additional related goals the CoC has determined, if relevant).

What are the CoC's goals for the estimated number of Veterans, including chronically homeless Veterans, who will be homeless as of the night of the January 2016 PIT Count?

	All Homeless Veteran Households (including CH)			Chronically Homeless Veteran Households		
	Sheltered	Unsheltered	TOTAL	Sheltered	Unsheltered	TOTAL
Households without Children	18	10	30	0	5	5
Households with Children	2	0	0	0	0	0
Total Households	20	10	30	0	5	5

Has the CoC established other goals related to preventing and ending homelessness among Veterans by the end of 2015? Yes No

If "Yes", please describe:

In announcing the Mayor's Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness on October 16, 2014, Mayor Bach set the goal for Colorado Springs to house at least 100 homeless Veterans in 2015, and reduce to 30 the number of unsheltered Veterans counted in the January 2016 PIT. On 23 January, the CoC Governing Board officially endorsed the "Community Plan to End Veteran Homelessness", attached. The CoC Governing Board is currently developing more specific goals related to operationally defining "functional zero" for Veteran homelessness in our community. When met, these new goals will specify that every homeless Veteran who desires permanent housing is housed within reasonable timeframes, that outreach efforts are intentional and persistent in order to build relationships with and engage those who are "not yet ready," and will ensure future Veteran homelessness is brief, rare and of limited recurrence.

6. SSVF Integration into CoC Coordinated Assessment System: Briefly describe how Veterans access SSVF assistance (across all SSVF grantees) via the CoC's coordinated assessment system (e.g., "All Veterans who present to the CoC coordinated assessment center are screened for their current situation, needs, and SSVF eligibility. Then....). If not yet fully developed, describe your plans and implementation timeframe. Specifically address:

- How Veterans who present for shelter are screened and diverted to SSVF homelessness prevention assistance when they have somewhere safe and appropriate to stay that night.
- How Veterans who become literally homeless are screened and triaged to SSVF rapid re-housing assistance as soon as possible once it is clear the Veteran is unable to resolve their homelessness without assistance.

The CoC Coordinated Assessment process is currently in development. The VI-SPDAT for both individuals and families has been integrated into our community's HMIS, including the capability for scoring, ranking/prioritizing, and matching to available housing resources. We are gathering the information needed to set up the resources, create the secondary assessments for the matching process, customize the rules for matching, and complete the background system set-up. Implementation will begin with the Veteran population (VI-SPDAT data collection has already begun in paper form), then move on to the chronically homeless.

Since Rocky Mountain Human Services (RMHS) is the only SSVF grantee in the CoC, all Veterans in Colorado Springs/EI Paso County who present at shelters or with other homeless service providers are referred to RMHS for SSVF eligibility screening. As the first agency in the CoC to pilot coordinated assessment using the VI-SPDAT tool (paper form), RMHS staff provides initial triage to determine the appropriate level of intervention for the presenting Veteran household. In the last month, the local VA HCHV staff agreed to begin using the VI-SPDAT during screening of Veterans coming to them for services. Eventually, all community shelters and homeless service providers will use a VI-SPDAT-based coordinated assessment tool to triage Veterans to appropriate services, while ensuring that Veterans are connected to RMHS for SSVF eligibility screening.

7. Long-Term System Improvements: Briefly describe how the CoC plans to utilize SSVF Priority 1 and all other SSVF funding over the next three years to foster long-term system improvements and optimization so that homelessness is prevented whenever possible and when it does occur, it is rare and brief. Specifically address areas for improvement related to:

- a) Further integrating SSVF assistance into the CoC's planning, oversight processes and coordinated assessment system.
- b) Ensuring comprehensive coordination with VA systems and other VA funded programs.
- c) Improving or establishing partnerships with community-based services and public/private housing providers.

- Using SSVF Priority 1 grant resources, RMHS plans to open a Veteran Housing Resource Center (VHRC) in Colorado Springs. This facility will provide a "one-stop" location for Veterans experiencing a housing crisis to access SSVF, VASH and other housing resources. Open office space will be made available to partner agencies including VASH, Veteran Service Officers, state Veteran Employment Representatives and other agencies.
- Transportation is a challenge for homeless Veterans in Colorado Springs as services are often widely dispersed. Using SSVF Priority 1 grant resources, RMHS will establish a Veteran shuttle service to provide an enhanced transportation option to appointments and community services, particularly for Veterans with limited mobility.
- Coordination between local SSVF and VA HCHV staffs are on-going and is improving through frequent regularly scheduled case coordination meetings between VASH, CWT and SSVF management.
- RMHS SSVF staff members will continue to participate as members in CoC committees (eg. Coordinated Assessment and Housing Placement, Computer Management System Advisory) and on the CoC Governing Board to ensure integration of SSVF assistance in CoC planning and processes.
- Landlord engagement will be facilitated with regular meetings and social events, and through referral incentives.

8. Other Strengths and Challenges: Briefly describe any additional strengths and/or challenges relevant to your achieving VA and local goals.

Challenges

The primary challenge in Colorado Springs/El Paso County is housing availability. A recent Affordable Housing Needs Assessment revealed a significant gap in affordable housing. A total deficit of 24,513 affordable and available units was identified, and there are only 16 affordable and available units for every 100 extremely low income renters (earning between \$0 and \$17,259) in El Paso County. A rental vacancy rate of 2.33% further indicates a very tight housing market. Anecdotally, providers managing federal vouchers for housing have found it increasingly difficult to find units that meet both the required Fair Market Rent limits and Housing Quality Standards.

A second notable challenge is lack of transitional housing options. The Crawford House, a privately- funded 90-day shelter provides contract beds to the local VA HCHV office. However, capacity is limited; there is normally a waitlist for this facility. There is no VA Grant & Per Diem funded transitional housing in Colorado Springs.

Strengths

Ending homelessness is a priority in Colorado Springs, and the community is bringing significant leadership and resources to meet local challenges and end Veteran homelessness.

Leadership. The Mayor has made ending homelessness a priority in our City government by launching the Initiative to End Homelessness in Colorado Springs and assigning a senior staff person to implement the solutions in the plan. The Mayor also joined the Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness and dedicated resources to Veteran serving programs. The community has also strengthened its Continuum of Care and recently approved a new governance charter and seated a governing body made up of providers, business, government and faith-based representatives.

Resources. Local government and the Continuum of Care have come together to leverage and expand resources available to support ending veteran homelessness:

Emergency Solutions Grant funds will be used to expand Veteran outreach through RMHS.

In collaboration with the Colorado Springs Police Department Homeless Outreach Team (HOT), RMHS is also recruiting and training outreach volunteers to conduct outreach to unsheltered Veterans.

HOME funds will support Tenant Based Rental Assistance for a minimum of 15 veterans referred to the Colorado Springs Housing Authority through RMHS.

Public and private funds supported an additional 150 winter shelter beds. RMHS is conducting outreach to veterans at the emergency shelter.

In Spring 2015, collaboration between the community and State will bring a Pathways Home Colorado Supportive Housing Toolkit to Colorado Springs to develop new units of permanent supportive housing.