

SSVF: Community Plan Summary

Date Completed/Revised: 7/1/2015

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| Continuum of Care Name: | Maine Balance of State CoC | CoC Number: | ME-500 |
| CoC Representative: | Cindy Namer | Title: | Director of Homeless Initiatives |
| Phone/Email: (207) 626-4632 cnamer@mainehousing.org | | | |
| Person Completing this Summary: | Carolyn Cutting | Title: | Veterans Inc. Regional Manager |
| Phone/Email: (207) 240-2566 carolyncutting@veteransinc.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. List the principal members of this group and their affiliation.

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|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| Primary Group Name: | Maine Homeless Veteran Coordination Team | | |
| Principal Members | Affiliation | | |
| Phil Allen | Preble Street Veteran Housing Services (SSVF Grantee) | | |
| Jennifer Trowbridge | Washington Hancock Community Agency (SSVF Grantee) | | |
| Carolyn Cutting | Veterans Inc. (SSVF Grantee) | | |
| Carol Kulesza | HCHV Coordinator, VA Maine HCS | | |
| Clif Graves | Maine State Housing Authority | | |
| Bill Burney | U.S. Dept of HUD | | |
| Susan Whittington | VA Grant Per Diem Liaison | | |
| Eliza Quill | Bread of Life JTG Shelter Case Manager | | |
| Michael Tilton | ESM, Inc. | | |
| Alley Smith | Veterans Inc. Case Manager | | |
| Ray Michaud | Veterans Inc. Site Coordinator | | |
| Lucy Barnhardt | Outreach/HMIS Specialist | | |
| Robbie Jones | Preble Street Veteran Housing Services, Bangor Supervisor | | |
| Michael Merrill | Program Manager, Veteran Services Volunteers of America | | |
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2. Ongoing Review and Coordination: Briefly describe how often (e.g., monthly) the above group meets to review progress and coordinate efforts. Include a summary of what information is reviewed during these meetings.

Although the SSVF Grantees meet regularly, the Maine Homeless Veteran Coordination Team was just recently formed and plans to meet quarterly, with immediate efforts to expand membership and to ultimately meet monthly. Also, the team will work with Maine Balance of State CoC Leadership to possibly develop a Veterans Sub-Committee at the Maine CoC. Our first goal will be defining functional zero is in the community, focusing on Augusta, Bangor, Waterville, Saco and Biddeford. The SSVF Grantees continue to hold regular conference calls (at least three a month) to be sure that all three grantees are coordinating on strategies to house more veterans and families. Information reviewed includes updates on housing authority veteran preference, rental inventories, voucher program availabilities to include HUD-Vash, sharing information regarding community agencies that have funding to assist with veteran needs, VA webinar and other training opportunities. Besides reviewing progress toward overall goals this team continues to work to develop a current list of homeless veterans, so community partners can better target and coordinate efforts. We have made strides in this area, as outlined in our strengths update (Section 4). Discussions have begun in earnest about a coordinated release of information form, to support this endeavor. Meeting notes are shared with the group, so discussion continues and there is careful documentation of progress for future reporting. Defining functional zero is a top priority in Q4, at this point the goal is to decrease the number of days a Veteran is homeless from 90 to 78 days, a 20 percent decrease.

3. Annual Demand, Goals, and Strategies for Achieving and Sustaining Functional Zero: Identify the estimated number of Veterans who are homeless annually and the community/CoC goals and strategies for achieving a functional end to Veteran homelessness by the end of 2015 (overall community/CoC goals, not just SSVF grantees). If one or more of the goals and strategies below have not yet been established for the community, leave blank and identify the date by which they will be established. See the **Ending Homelessness Among Veterans Overview** for additional guidance.

3A. Estimated Annual Number of Homeless Veterans: Identify the total unduplicated number of Veterans expected to be homeless in 2015 using data from the SSVF Edition of the Veteran Homelessness Gaps Analysis Tool FY15Q3 or data assumptions that have already been adopted by the community, such as the *VA CoC Gaps Analysis Tool (GAT)*.

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|--------------------------------|-----|
| Estimated Annual Total: | 282 |
|--------------------------------|-----|

3B. Community/CoC Goals: Identify your community's/CoC's key goals and targets.

A. Permanent Housing Placement Target & SSVF Rapid Re-Housing Placement Target:
Complete and attach *SSVF Edition of Veteran Homelessness Gaps Analysis Tool FY15Q3 OR an CoC Gaps Analysis Tool – Strategy 4 (SSVF) Worksheet*

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| B. Length of Time Homeless Goal (max or average days): | 78 | days |
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| C. January 2016 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count Goal | Sheltered | Unsheltered | Total |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Number of Veterans expected to be counted as homeless during the CoC's January 2016 PIT count: | 70 | 7 | 77 |
| Of number above, how many will also be counted as chronically homeless: | 21 | 4 | 25 |

3C. Implementation Strategies: What strategies are being used to achieve and sustain functional zero?

| | Yes/No/Under Dev |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| A. Has your community identified every Veteran who is homeless right now by name? | Under Dev |
| | |
| B. Does every Veteran who is homeless now have a Housing Plan and access to safe (and low barrier as needed) shelter and/or permanent housing? | Under Dev |
| C. Is every Veteran who becomes homeless rapidly engaged and offered shelter and/or housing that meets their needs? | Yes |
| If so, is this true no matter where they are initially engaged in your community or what shelter or unsheltered location they may be in? | Under Dev |
| D. Are sufficient SSVF resources allocated to ensure there are no RRH gaps or turn-always? | Yes |
| E. Are you using SSVF to rapidly re-house Veterans who are waiting on VASH or other PSH assistance if VASH/PSH is not available immediately or in near future? | Yes |

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

Strengths continue to be the dedication of the Maine Homeless Veteran Coordination Team members, as well as open communication with the VA Medical Center. The Maine Homeless Veteran Coordination Team continues to evolve, however due to the large geographical area of the Maine CoC, in-person meetings have been limited – conference calls and sub-group meetings have occurred since the original plan submission in May. A key action step since the initial summary report is coordination with Maine State Housing to develop a report that will provide the specific number of Veterans in each of the 40 shelters in Maine that report to HMIS; this is the first step in creating a list of every Veteran who is homeless right now. To determine the actual names represented by the numbers the Maine Homeless Veteran Coordination Team will develop a coordination process, piloting it with one large shelter.

Identifying the housing authorities who have a Veteran preference has been another strength, encouraging other housing authorities to consider doing so as well will be a campaign moving forward.

More coordination and earlier referrals are helping Veterans receive services sooner, therefore the length of time a Veteran is homeless should also decrease; the new goal, average homeless 78 days instead of 90, a 20 percent decrease.

Defining homelessness for this community is ongoing, but expect the new reports that help the team pinpoint Veterans can be reviewed/analyzed, getting us closer to defining zero.

The unsheltered count for Veterans is difficult to pinpoint, due to the rural landscape. These more remote areas of the state also have few shelters, so it is more difficult to name all Veterans as they are not easily tracked. When unsheltered Veterans move indoors they are generally prevention cases, as there are limited shelters. This is an ongoing challenge.