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News Release

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(202) 461-7600
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VA and PenFed Foundation Work Together to Prevent Veteran Homelessness

Commitment is Part of the VA's Expanded Partnership Efforts

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is teaming up with the Pentagon Federal Credit Union Foundation (PenFed Foundation) to strengthen efforts to prevent Veteran homelessness. This new partnership will expand the PenFed Foundation's existing Military Heroes Fund Emergency Assistance Program to include all Veterans. Previously, the program was available only to Veterans of the Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF) conflicts.

Through this partnership, the PenFed Foundation and VA will work together to provide emergency financial assistance for Veterans who are experiencing unexpected financial setbacks and are at risk of becoming homeless. The foundation will be able to provide emergency financial assistance for Veterans in need of one-time payments for back utilities, creditors, security deposits, and rental deposits. To date, the PenFed Foundation's Military Heroes Fund has already provided more than \$4 million in assistance to Veterans.

As a part of the partnership, Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Homeless Program staff will connect Veterans who are facing overdue or arrearage payments to the PenFed Foundation for emergency financial assistance. This partnership and pledge embodies the mission of MyVA, launched last year to reorient VA around the needs of Veterans by collaborating with Veterans, employees, private industry, nonprofits, and other stakeholders.

"VA's new partnership with the PenFed Foundation will greatly benefit Veterans who are facing overdue bills and are at risk for homelessness," said VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald. "As we work with local communities throughout the Nation to help them end Veteran homelessness, partnerships like these are critical to ensuring we are doing everything possible to support Veterans who may be facing financial hardship and are at risk of losing their homes. Whether through their Military Heroes Fund or their support of the Defenders Lodge, the PenFed Foundation has shown they are dedicated to improving the lives of Veterans and we are proud to call them a partner."

We are absolutely right to hold up our military service members as American heroes," said PenFed Foundation President and CEO James Schenck. "Anyone, who at one time or another, wrote a blank check made payable to the United States of America – for an amount of up to and including their own life has paid their citizenship dues in full, as far as I'm concerned. It's up to the rest of us to ensure that when these heroes need heroes, someone is there to answer the call."

For more information about VA's homeless initiatives, visit www.va.gov/homeless/. For more information about the PenFed Foundation's programs supporting Veterans, visit www.penfedfoundation.org.

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