

ABOUT VETERANS' HOMELESSNESS IN THE CENTRAL VALLEY

Although veterans make up 8% of the overall population in the United States, according to a recent Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) study, 12% of the homeless population are veterans — 16% if you're counting adults only.

- Veterans are twice as likely as other Americans to become chronically homeless.
- Veterans are more at risk of becoming homeless than non-veterans
- The number of homeless Vietnam-era veterans, male and female, is greater than the number of soldiers who died during the war.
- Primary causes of homelessness among veterans are:
 1. Lack of income due to limited education and lack of transferable skills from military to civilian life (especially true of younger veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan)
 2. Combat-related physical health issues and disabilities
 3. Combat-related mental health issues and disabilities
 4. Substance abuse problems that interfere with job retention
 5. Weak social networks due to problems adjusting to civilian life
 6. Lack of services.

According to the 2014 Project CHALENG (Community Homelessness Assessment, Local Education and Networking Groups) Survey (www.va.gov/homeless/docs/challeng/52015_CHALENG_2015_Fact_Sheet.pdf) conducted by the Department of Veterans Affairs The following are the top unmet needs of homeless male veterans

Top Ten Highest Unmet Needs, male Homeless Veterans Need (1=unmet ... 4 met)

- Registered Sex Offender Housing 2.04
- Child Care 2.20
- Legal Assistance to Prevent Eviction and Foreclosure 2.25
- Legal Assistance for Child Support Issues 2.28
- Legal Assistance to Help Restore a Driver's License 2.31
- Family Reconciliation Assistance 2.33 May 2015
- Legal Assistance for Outstanding Warrants and Fines 2.33
- Financial Guardianship 2.35
- Discharge Upgrade 2.37
- Financial Assistance to Prevent Eviction or Foreclosure

Top Ten Highest Unmet Needs, females Homeless Veterans Need (1=unmet ... 4 met)

- Registered Sex Offender Housing 2.02
- Child Care 2.31
- Family Reconciliation Assistance 2.47
- Credit Counseling 2.48
- Legal Assistance for Child Support Issues 2.49
- Legal Assistance to Prevent Eviction and Foreclosure 2.51
- Legal Assistance to Help Restore a Driver's License 2.52
- Legal Assistance for Outstanding Warrants and Fines 2.52 9
- Dental Care 2.53 10
- Financial Guardianship 2.54

According to the United States Census there are approximately 2 million Veterans in California and 2.5% of that number or 50,000 are estimated to reside in Fresno County alone. Between 8-10% of those Veterans are women. Fresno currently ranks 25th in the U.S. for numbers of homeless Veterans. However, according to a 2013 Continuum of Care Study Fresno, Madera ranks 3rd highest in the percentage of unsheltered Veterans among Major City Continuums of Care. The VA Homeless Program reports that a recent "Point in Time" count identified 477 homeless Veterans in Fresno County alone. Their HUD VASH housing program provides vouchers for low cost housing. Currently they have 335 Veterans housed. Due to the increase number of homeless veterans they have been awarded 15 additional vouchers for Merced Count, 17 for Tulare County and 43 vouchers in Fresno.