

HUDVET News

HUD Veteran Resource Center



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Henry G. Cisneros, Secretary

Office of Community Planning and Development
Andrew Cuomo, Assistant Secretary

HUD Announces Funding To Assist Homeless Veterans

Vice President Al Gore, Secretary Henry G. Cisneros, and Assistant Secretary Andrew Cuomo recently announced the award of more than \$750 million in HUD grants to almost 300 communities across the country to provide economic opportunities for homeless persons and for people on welfare and others in need.

President Clinton and Secretary Cisneros have made the fight against homelessness a top priority. Three years ago, HUD forged a new policy called Continuum of Care that rewards communities that work together and coordinate housing programs for homeless persons. These awards respond to local, comprehensive planning efforts that include participation by nonprofit organizations, the business community, foundations, government, neighborhood groups, and homeless and formerly homeless persons.

During the past year, HUD has been working closely with Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) and the White House Interagency Task Force on Veterans to help ensure that the department's homeless programs are helping veterans. In April 1996, Andrew Cuomo established a new HUD Veteran Resource Center and added a new staff position—Liaison for Veteran Affairs—intended to improve outreach to VSOs. This effort has included several national mailings and participation in VSO conferences.

Providing assistance to homeless veterans was a priority in the 1996 Continuum of Care homeless assistance



Assistant Secretary Andrew Cuomo, HUD Veteran Liaison Bill Pittman, and other senior staff meet with representatives of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), National Employment, and National Homeless Committees.

competition. HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros and Assistant Secretary Andrew Cuomo recently announced that 44 veteran-specific programs and 660 projects, whose clientele will include homeless veterans, have been awarded a total of \$450 million in Federal homeless assistance funds.

The 1996 Continuum of Care competition was designed to encourage communities to coordinate their homeless programs through an inclusive process that involves nonprofit organizations, governmental representatives, veterans organizations, and other community members. Communities with the most inclusive, coordinated process that addresses the needs of all of the homeless subpopulations, including veterans, were rewarded.

Prior to submission of the applications, the CPD Assistant Secretary conducted an interactive national satellite broad-

cast directed toward veteran service organizations and others who seek to help homeless veterans. The discussion centered on activities and issues impacting veterans, including the 1996 homeless assistance competition. The broadcast went to 40 HUD Field Offices, 140 Veterans Affairs Field Offices, and hospitals and medical centers.

Among the projects that assisted veterans, the following were selected to receive funding this year:

- Vet House Services Safe Haven in Sacramento, CA, which applied through the Sacramento County Continuum of Care application and is slated to receive \$310,695 in Supportive Housing Program (SHP) funds. The objective of Vet House Services Safe Haven is to provide a safe haven for the hard-to-reach homeless veteran population, targeting primarily those with severe

HUD Funding for Vets (cont.)

mental illness who live on the streets and have been unable or unwilling to participate in supportive services. The services that Vet House Services Safe Haven will offer include direct outreach, residential services, and supportive services. During the project, a minimum of 432 veterans will reside at Safe Haven for at least 24 hours, with an estimated 25 percent staying between 3 and 7 days. Overall, 4,380 bed nights will be available per year, with an expected utilization rate of 80 to 85 percent. In addition, a minimum of 1,200 veterans will receive drop-in nonresident client support services during the term of the project.

- The Veterans Outreach Center, Inc. (VOC), Rochester, NY, which will receive \$700,130 in SHP funds through Rochester's application. The

VOC will develop transitional housing with supportive services for homeless veterans and family members. The project will allow 40 homeless people to move "off the streets" annually; provide them with housing and a stringent program of services and support for up to 2 years; and help them achieve the greatest self-sufficiency possible. This project will fill a gap in Monroe County's Continuum of Care by offering transitional housing with supportive services to the subpopulation of homeless veterans.

- The Inner Voice, Inc., Chicago, IL, which received \$1,184,700 in Shelter Plus Care Program funds, through the city's Continuum of Care application. The grant will enable the Inner Voice to develop tenant-based rental assistance housing opportunities for homeless persons

who have varying disabilities. The program will target veterans and others who have resided for a minimum of 6 months at a transitional or second-stage residence sponsored by the Inner Voice, or at another homeless service facility. The overall objective is to restore individuals to self-sufficiency through educational, vocational, job placement, supportive services, and housing assistance. When fully operational, this project will provide the appropriate supportive services necessary to maintain stable housing for 30 homeless individuals and/or families, including two who suffer from serious mental illnesses, 22 who have chronic substance abuse problems, and three who have AIDS or related diseases.

For more information on these projects, call HUDVET at 1-800-998-9999. (TDD 1-800-483-2209).

Columbia Study Shows Continuum of Care Is Working

A Study by the Barnard-Columbia Center for Urban Policy

During the past three years, HUD has initiated an array of new policies to address the critical problem of homelessness in the United States. HUD's new approach to breaking the cycle of homelessness, known as the Continuum of Care, consists of two key elements: (a) a coordinated community-based process of identifying needs and building a system to address those needs, and (b) increased funding to provide communities with the resources needed to build the system of care. To understand how and to what degree the implementation of this approach is progressing, the Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) at HUD contracted with the Barnard-Columbia Center for Urban Policy to carry out an independent study of the implementation of the Continuum of Care.

On September 13, HUD released the findings from the Barnard-Columbia study entitled *The Continuum of Care: A Report on the New Federal Policy to Address Homelessness*. The study looked at both measurable quantitative changes reflected in the Clinton Administration's policies to address homelessness, and qualitative changes in communities as a result of the implementation of the Continuum of Care approach.

In its examination of applications funded since 1990, the study shows that the initial implementation of the Continuum of Care concept has resulted in increased funding from both government and nongovernment sources. Overall, HUD McKinney funding increased from \$403.7 million to \$1.1 billion (an increase of 169.5 percent) between 1992 and 1995. In addition, by Fiscal Year 1995, nearly every McKinney dollar allocated by HUD was

matched by additional funds and services from other community resources. The value of leveraged resources went from \$37.5 million in 1992 to \$1.1 billion in 1995 (an almost 3,000-percent increase).

Also, the report states that HUD has moved toward its goal of shifting Federal resources from short-term emergency measures toward programs that provide transitional and permanent housing. Funding for transitional and permanent housing programs increased from \$331.2 to \$931 million (181.1-percent increase) over this time, while emergency funding for shelter and services increased from \$72.4 to \$156.8 million (a 116.5-percent increase).

The result of these increased resources and the new policy direction is that the number of persons served by HUD's homeless programs may have increased

Continuum of Care (cont.)

as much as 14 times. The overall proposed number of persons assisted rose from 20,142 in 1992 to 289,621 in 1995 (1,337.9 percent increase).¹ Among these persons are a significant number with disabilities, such as mental illness, substance abuse, or HIV/AIDS. The number of persons with disabilities proposed to be served by programs specifically designed for them increased 843.4 percent, from 2,816 to 26,565.

The qualitative analysis of the implementation of the Continuum of Care was accomplished through a series of case studies that took place at nine representative sites across the country, including Boston, the State of Kentucky, the Denver Metro area, Miami/Dade County, Detroit, Las Vegas, Houston/Harris County, New York, and San Diego. The study found that while the majority of sites had begun some degree of more comprehensive planning for homelessness during the early 1990s, the HUD Continuum of Care Initiative spurred a more focused and structured process for identifying existing resources, needs, service gaps, and funding priorities in each site. Additionally, the study points out that there is significant agreement across sites that HUD has become a real partner with local communities in planning and implementing the Continuum of Care. According to the research, the appeal of HUD's current Continuum of Care policy among local governments and service providers is largely attributed to the flexibility it offers local communities to prioritize their own needs and develop locally driven solutions. HUD's framework for designing local Continuum of Care initiatives is supported across all the sites. According to the study, the partnership, as opposed to the "big brother," approach is greatly valued.

¹ The number of persons proposed to be assisted by the SHP program in 1995 may be too high for a variety of reasons that are thoroughly discussed in the full study; therefore, the total for all three programs may also be too high.

HUD Homeless Assistance to Veterans Continuum of Care Projects 1995 vs. 1996

	1995	1996
Projects Serving Veterans Specifically* ¹		
Dollars	\$10 million	\$23 million
Grantees	8	44
Projects Serving Veterans and other Homeless* ²		
Dollars	\$15 million	\$427 million
Grantees	15	660
TOTAL FUNDING		
Dollars	\$25 million	\$450 million
Grantees	23	704

*1. Note: The \$23 million figure for 1996 does not include an addition \$2.6 million in Homeless Veterans Employment and Training grants co-funded by HUD and the Department of Labor.

*2. The 1995 data is based on a review of projects that voluntarily referenced veterans as part of the homeless population served. In 1996, HUD specifically requested that applicants indicate *if they would be providing* housing and services to veterans. 660 projects indicated that veterans are among the population expected to be served.

HUD Veteran Resource Center–HUDVET Information You Can Use

HUDVET provides important information about the full range of resources available at HUD, with a special emphasis on those for homeless veterans. The center serves:

- Veteran Service Organizations
- Religious organizations
- Federal, State, and local government agencies
- Individuals
- Veterans
- Homeless groups
- Educational institutions
- Other nonprofits

Questions concerning HUD's Homeless Assistance Programs can be directed to HUDVET.

Phone: 1-800-998-9999
TDD: 1-800-483-2209
Fax: 1-301-251-5027



Dear Veteran Advocates:

Traditional thinking said that the only place to go in the Federal government if you were a veteran was the Department of Veterans Affairs. During the Clinton Administration, this has changed. HUD and other agencies now serve on a White House Interagency Task Force on Veterans.

In addition, HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros chairs the Interagency Council on the Homeless with Co-Chair Jesse Brown, Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Moreover, we have been working closely with other Federal agency officials such as Preston Taylor, the Department of Labor's Assistant Secretary for Veterans Employment and Training, resulting in a jointly funded DOL/HUD \$2.6 million homeless veteran job training initiative.

Less than a year ago, Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) came to HUD and asked to work in partnership with us to ensure that HUD better serves our

veterans, especially those who are homeless. According to estimates, veterans make up one-third of the homeless population. When we looked at our programs, we recognized that veteran groups did not understand the HUD grant application process. As a result, few veteran-specific projects were awarded funding. We agreed that our first challenge was to educate veteran advocates on how to participate in the community-based *Consolidated Planning* process. The *Consolidated Plan* serves as the foundation for HUD funding. I made a commitment to VSOs that HUD would work with them in meeting this challenge. This newsletter highlights the astounding results we should all be proud to share.

Since that meeting I have appointed a Liaison for Veteran Affairs, Bill Pittman, a combat-disabled veteran. We established a Veteran Resource Center called HUDVET that provided technical assistance to VSOs and other veteran

advocates applying for HUD's 1996 Continuum of Care Competition. HUDVET also held a national video teleconference with support from DOL and VA and mailed more than 6,000 pieces of HUD informational materials. The results of this effort (as documented by the chart on page 3) are nothing less than remarkable.

Recently I had the opportunity to speak with the Veterans of Foreign Wars, National Employment, and National Homeless Committees. We discussed the future role of VSOs in ensuring their communities' *Consolidated Planning* process addresses veteran issues. To this end, HUDVET stands ready to assist you in your veteran service efforts. I look forward to continuing to work with you.

Sincerely,



Andrew Cuomo
Assistant Secretary

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