

## SECTION 6: VETERANS COORDINATED ENTRY

### 6.1 OVERVIEW

The Vermont Veterans Committee on Homelessness (VVCH) is a statewide organization that serves both federally recognized Continua of Care. Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH) is the organization that represents the Balance of State Continuum of Care (VT 500). The Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA) is the organization that represents the Chittenden County Continuum of Care (VT 501). This policy is specific to the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness.

This section outlines the process Lead Agencies and Assessment Partners with VCEH will use to assist Veterans in gaining access to Veteran specific resources. Referral Partners will follow VCEH policy and procedures to refer Veterans, like all persons, to the local Lead Agency to participate in coordinated entry.

The stated goal of the Veteran's Homeless programs is to end homelessness among Veterans. The resources available are federal, state, local and private funded programs. In addition to Veteran-specific resources, Veterans can access non-Veteran specific resources for people experiencing homelessness through the Coordinated Entry process.

The VVCH will follow the VCEH Coordinated Entry policies and procedures in the Balance of State, unless there is a required variance outlined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or HUD, specific to Veteran resources.

### 6.2 DEFINITIONS

**Veteran:** A person who served in the active Military, Naval, Air Service, regardless of length of service, and who was discharged or released there from, excluding any one who received a dishonorable discharge or was discharged or dismissed by reason of a General court-martial (PL 114-315; 38 USC § 2002(b)).

- Active duty means full time duty in the active military service of US Title 10. Hence, the National Guard and Reserve Members must have been called into Federal Service, by the President.

**Veteran family:** A Veteran who is a single person or a family in which the head of household, or the spouse/guardian of the head of household, is a Veteran.

**Vermont Veterans Committee on Homelessness (VVCH):** The VVCH is a joint committee of the Chittenden Homeless Alliance and the VCEH. It is an all-volunteer committee made up of representation from Veteran service providers and other Veteran specific organizations. The VVCH provides the organizational structure to help Veterans access all of the Veteran specific homeless assistance resources available. The VVCH serves to ensure homelessness among Veterans is rare, brief and non-recurring.

**Veterans Committee Representative (VCR):** This position will be a full-time paid position housed in SSVF@UVM initially. The primary role of this position will engage with the Veteran and facilitate access into the Coordinated Entry System.

**Coordinated Entry Housing Assessments:** The existing VCEH Housing Assessment from VCEH (VT-500, the Balance of State) will be used to determine order of priority and guide housing referrals.

**Federal Benchmark Generation Tool (FBGT):** The FBGT is a statewide Master List used by the VVCH. It provides data to help determine how successful the VVCH and Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness are in meeting the federally mandated benchmarks of achieving an end to Veteran homelessness. It is only used by the Veteran Service providers.

### 6.3 Available Veteran Resources

Veterans who qualify, will be eligible for housing assistance in 5 Veteran-specific programs:

- HUD-VASH (Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing) is permanent supportive housing. This program is administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in partnership with local Public Housing Authorities.
- Grant Per Diem (GPD) is a service-enriched transitional housing program. Veterans who are enrolled in GPD are still considered homeless and should be added to the Local Master list. GPD is administered by the U.S Department of Veterans Affairs in partnership with local homeless service provider agencies.
- Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) is primarily a Rapid Re-Housing program. Funding is also available for Homelessness Prevention on a case by case basis only. SSVF is grant funded through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Healthcare for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) services provide social work case management for eligible Veterans through the VA Medical Center. HCHV is able to serve Veterans who may not be eligible or are waiting enrollment in another program.
- Other Veteran Housing Partners, such as Dodge House.

### 6.4 Referral Process

- Veterans will be referred to a Lead Agency of the Local Coordinated Entry Partnership by referral partners to complete the assessment.
- Lead Agencies and Assessment Partners will follow the Coordinated Entry process as outlined in the VCEH Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures.
- If the initial point of contact for a Veteran is a CE Assessment Provider (Lead Agency or Assessment Partner), that provider will follow the VCEH Coordinated Entry process – i.e., place the household on the local Master List, etc.
- Lead Agency or Assessment Partner will make a referral to the VVCH in HMIS (or the equivalent in cases where DV/SV are present).
- Veterans Committee Representative (VCR) will accept the referral in HMIS.
- VCR will place the Veteran on the FBGT, determine what resource will best serve the Veteran (& their family, if applicable) based on the VCEH Housing Assessment and prioritization policy.
- VCR will refer the Veteran to a Veteran service provider within 3 business days.
- VCR will support referrals between local CoC Master Lists, and support participation in multiple local Master Lists as allowed under the Coordinated Entry process.

- It is the responsibility of the Veteran Service Provider to update the FBGT bi-weekly.
- For Veterans who present at a non-HMIS Referral Partner, that Referral Partner will follow the policies and procedures outlined in the VCEH Policies and Procedures for Referrals.
- Veterans may remain on the local Master List until they exit to permanent housing or to the inactive list per the VCEH Policies and Procedures.
- Clients who report to be Veterans but don't meet eligibility requirements for any Veteran specific program will be referred by the VCR back to the Lead Agency of the Local CoC.
- The VCR will coordinate with Lead Agencies to address erroneous data duplications, review Veteran status of households on the Master List, and generally support coordination and data integrity.
- VA Homeless program staff will actively participate (either virtually or in person) in the case conferencing process that takes place amongst the community partners within local CoC's (commonly referred to as Housing Review Team/HRT or Housing Solutions Team/HST). In communities where case conferencing does not happen regularly, VA Homeless program staff will coordinate with local CoC/CE staff as a means of utilizing the full spectrum of services and resources available to persons experiencing homelessness within the given community.

## 6.5 Domestic Violence, Sexual Violence, Dating Violence and Stalking

The VCR will work closely with the Victim Service Provider in the local CoC based on client choice, to ensure personal information is de-identified and all policies and procedures related to safety and access are followed. Each Veteran Service Provider will also follow their specific policies and procedures in regards to Veterans fleeing domestic/sexual violence.

## 6.6 Inactive List

Each Veteran Service Provider, during their bi-weekly updates of the FBGT, will check current clients start dates to ensure a Veteran who has reached 90 days with no contact will be manually entered in the FBGT as inactive (Unknown/Missing). The VCR will work closely with the Local Lead Agencies to ensure no Veteran is inadvertently placed on the Local Master list as inactive. The VCR will also provide feedback to the Lead Agencies to add Veterans names to the Local Master List when needed.

## 6.7 Non-Participation

A Veteran who wishes to not participate in coordinated entry, Veteran-specific services or with a specific agency/provider will still be eligible for services based on his/her eligibility. The VCR will work closely with the Local Lead Agency and the network of Veterans Service Providers to de-identify the Veteran and provide the Veteran access to the resources that will best suit them.