

2021

Vermont Veterans Committee on Homelessness

GOVERNANCE CHARTER

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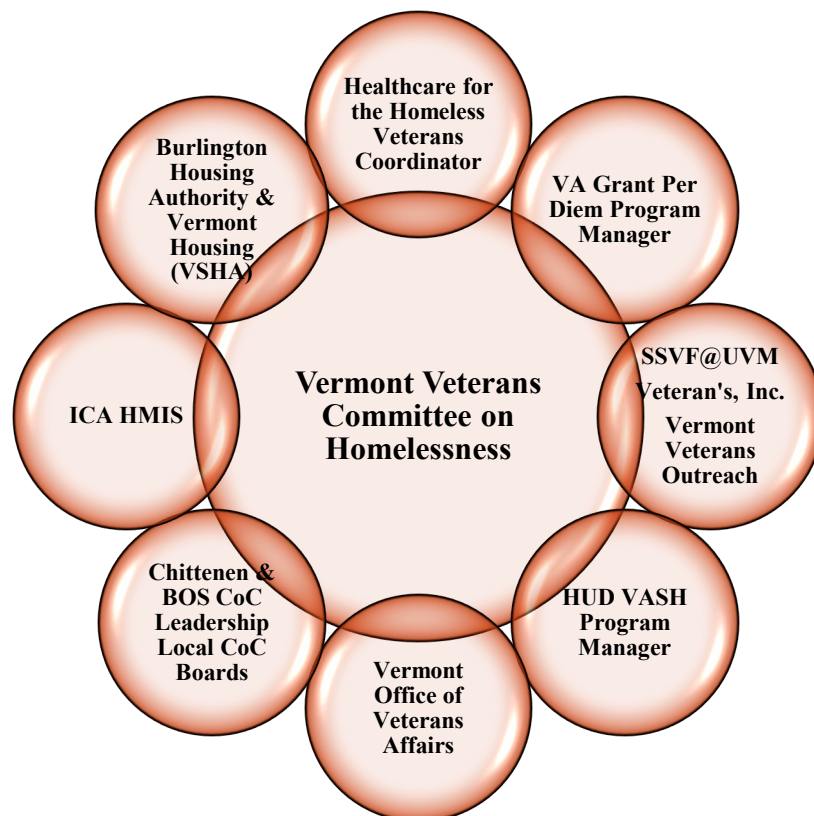
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1. Purpose

The Vermont Veterans Committee on Homelessness (VVCH) was formed in collaboration with several Vermont agencies and organizations to ensure all homeless Veterans are immediately identified, have access to shelter, are assisted in developing an active housing plan, and permanently housed as quickly as possible. This goal will be accomplished by VVCH acting as a joint sub-committee for the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance and the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness, tracking Veterans via a Priority List, prioritizing and matching housing resources and applicable services for Veterans who are experiencing homelessness, as indicated in Vermont's Plan to End and Prevent Homelessness and Long-Term Stayer Initiative.

2. Committee Membership

Membership, as a minimum, consists of representatives from the following agencies, organizations and groups.



3. Committee Responsibilities

The VVCH is a joint subcommittee of the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA) Continuum of Care and Balance of State (BOS) Continuum of Care (COC) and shall be responsible for the following:

- ❖ Managing and updating Veterans Priority List
- ❖ Ensuring privacy, release of information, and consent protocols are in place to protect Veteran information as contained on the Priority List (per individual agency and organization requirements)
- ❖ Staying abreast of current initiatives and evidence-based best practices pertaining to ending and preventing homelessness for Veterans
- ❖ Updating the COCs on Priority List progress (as agreed upon by all parties)
 - Prioritizing and matching Veterans to housing and services
- ❖ Actively participating in local COC meetings
- ❖ Actively participating in the planning and implementing of Vermont's Coordinated Entry System

There will be 2 sub-committees of the VVCH:

- ❖ Executive Committee: Charged with administrative tasks of the VVCH including policy development and review
- ❖ Case Conferencing Committee: Charged with the case conferencing/review of homeless Veteran's identified on the FBGT (as described in #11 below)

4. Elected Officers

VVCH will recognize a Chair, Vice-Chair, VVCH Voting Member, Case Conferencing Facilitator, Scribe, and Veterans Committee Representative. A description of officer responsibilities is as follows:

- ❖ Chair
 - Drafts and distributes meeting agenda
 - Facilitates regularly scheduled Executive Board meetings
 - Acts in the role of point – person between VVCH and Federal, State and local partners
- ❖ Vice-Chair
 - In absence of the Chair:
 - Drafts and distributes meeting agenda
 - Facilitates regularly scheduled meetings
 - Serves as the Chair
- ❖ Veterans Committee Voting Member
 - Serves as the official voting member to the two federally recognized CoCs, VT-500, BoS and VT-501, Chittenden County
 - Provides monthly reports to the Executive Board on CoC meetings
- ❖ Case Conferencing Facilitator
 - Leads the discussion, keeps time, keeps the focus of the group engaged, and ensures all relevant providers have space to share
 - Solicits action steps and leaders for follow up tasks
- ❖ Scribe*
 - Drafts and distributes meeting minutes for review
 - Other duties as assigned by the Chair or Vice-Chair

- ❖ Veterans Committee Representative*
 - Manages the Federal Benchmark Generation Tool
 - Works collaboratively with state and local CoCs
 - Ensures accurate reporting of data
 - Coordinates with local CoC CE Leads to “scrub” the Master List, checking for Veteran status identification, connection to services and data integrity
 - Acts as List Manager for Case Conferencing meetings

Elected positions can be combined, one person can assume the role of multiple positions with the approval of the Executive Board.

The positions of Scribe and Veterans Committee Representative are appointed positions with the approval of the Executive Board.

5. Term of Office, Nominations, Vacancies, Resignations & Removal

Term of Office:

- ❖ Officers shall serve a term of *1 year*. Term period will be: July 1 – June 30 for all elected officers.

Nominations:

- ❖ Annually, the VVCH members will be solicited for candidates to act in the Officer roles. The membership will vote for each position as needed, or annually.

Vacancies:

- ❖ When an unexpected vacancy occurs the Chair or Vice-Chair have the authority to appoint another member to fill the unexpired term.

Resignations & Removal:

- ❖ A representative may resign at any time by giving notice to the Chair. In addition, Officers may be removed from their position by a majority vote of the VVCH members for repeated absences, misconduct, failure to participate, or violation of conflict of interest or confidentiality policies.

6. Voting

In the event where an action or decision requires a committee vote, there shall be one vote per agency, association, or individual. VVCH members may recuse themselves if such a vote presents a conflict of interest. Votes will be accepted electronically as needed. A quorum is required to pass any voted measure. Warnings for votes shall be issued one week in advance of votes due.

7. Consent for Release of Information

Committee members may use their own agency or organization consent for release of information forms which will allow for the identifiable information contained on both intra-agency and Priority List. Cross agency sharing agreements will be established as needed. At all times, the committee will maintain client confidentiality and shall not discuss or share any By-Name list or information contained therein with agencies or organizations not identified on consent for release of information forms nor for the purposes outside the scope of the committee in ending Veteran homelessness

8. Veteran By-Name List - Format

To ensure applicable data element collection, and information required for Vermont to claim an end to Veteran homelessness, VVCH will use the Federal Benchmark Generation Tool (FBGT) provided by USICH as it's Priority List. The list will be updated, at a minimum, bi-weekly and contains data necessary for calculating Federal Benchmarks and tracking data, such as general demographics, date of initial engagement, current living situation, active housing plan creation, last known address, program acceptance or denial, program refusal and case management contacts.

9. Federal Benchmark Generation Tool

In order to maintain a current and accurate list of homeless Veterans, committee members will update the FBGT with their current data. The FBGT will then be sent to the Veterans Committee Representative (VCR) who will then consolidate all information to the master list.

10. VVCH Veteran Access, Engagement, Assessment, & Referral

- ❖ Veteran Access– A coordinated effort is made by all of the Charter's partners to identify homeless veterans and place them on the priority list.
- ❖ Engagement – Case management agents make contact with homeless veterans that are identified. There are instances where a person declines support and or services. Further attempts are made to engage the veteran, but an informed denial of services should be respected.
- ❖ Assessment – All identified homeless veterans are screened in accordance with current CoC and VVCH policy as it applies to coordinated entry. Those categorized as “chronic” receive priority for case management and services.
- ❖ Referral – Those found qualified to receive homeless services are referred to the appropriate service organization for case management.

11. Prioritizing & Matching – Housing Resources and Services

The process of prioritizing is meant to ensure effective utilization of housing resources and services so that Veterans with the longest homeless history, and those with most severe needs are prioritized for and matched with the most appropriate housing resources and services to meet their needs. VVCH may consider the following:

- ❖ Longest history of homelessness
- ❖ CE Assessment results/score
- ❖ Severe medical issues
- ❖ All other factors being equal – *tie breaker* considerations may include:
 - Safety concerns
 - Applicable eligibility components
 - PH housing placement denial from program or refusal by Veteran

In addition to Veteran-specific resources, Veterans will have equal access to non-Veteran CE specific resources that remain available to the non-Veteran community, following CE prioritization policy.

12. Case Conferencing

VVCH will review the information as documented on the FBGT during, at least 2x/month case conferencing meetings. The committee will review progress and barriers to achieving Veteran's housing goals, troubleshoot any housing or service issues which may arise, and clarify service provider roles. Reviewing the priority list is a critical component of case conferencing, and staff participating during case conferencing meetings should possess in-depth knowledge about the status, needs and preference of each Veteran being discussed. On a case-by-case basis, the committee may include a Veteran during a separate case conferencing meeting to discuss their specific situation. The determination and prioritization of which Veteran(s) will be included in case conferencing will be determined by the VCR, in conjunction with the Case Conferencing Facilitator.

In addition to VVCH specific case conferencing, opportunities for local, community-based case conferencing will be identified within the local CoC's, either within currently established community-based meetings or ad-hoc meetings. 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 available to persons experiencing homelessness within the given community.

13. Code of Conduct, Attendance and Recusal Process

Code of Conduct & Attendance:

- ❖ VVCH must exercise care, diligence and continually ensure confidentiality protections. All members must complete work they have agreed to undertake on behalf of this committee in a timely manner. In addition, members must attend meetings, be prepared to actively participate, and work in collaboration with other VVCH members, or provide advance notification for any meeting absences.

Recusal Process:

- ❖ The VVCH purpose is to ensure that homeless Veterans are placed into the most appropriate housing with the level of services that meets their needs, and for which they are eligible. If at any time there is a conflict of interest whereby an organization or individual cannot be objective due to a direct interest in prioritizing and/or matching housing resources and services for Veterans experiencing homelessness, then that organization, representative of the organization or individual will recuse themselves from the process in order to mitigate any perceived conflict of interest. The recusal may be oral or in writing. In addition, the VVCH may request an organization, representative of organization or individual to recuse themselves from any activities.

14. Approval of Governance, Policies & Procedures and Subsequent Amendments

This Governance and any subsequent amendment to it must be approved by a majority of VVCH members. The Members will review the Governance annually, or as needed, and will recommend changes to improve the functioning of the committee as it pertains to ending and preventing homelessness for Vermont Veterans.