

more VA \$ for h'less

THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE TO END HOMELESSNESS, INC.

July 20, 1995

Mary
Let's discuss
response.
xmtg

Nan P. Roman
Vice President of
Policy and Programs

Jeremy Ben-Ami
Deputy Assistant to the President
for Domestic Policy
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Jeremy:

Thank you again for coming to speak at our conference last month. It was good to meet you, and it was very good for the people in attendance to hear from someone in the White House about the President's commitment to dealing with the issue of homelessness. I appreciate your coming.

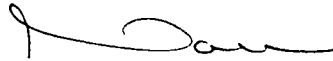
I met recently with some other housing advocates and Molly Brostrom on your staff. It was a useful meeting and we appreciated her time. We are, of course, **very** concerned about the House action to cut homeless funding by half. We appreciate any help the White House can give us on this score. It seems that we should all be "making hay" out of the fact that they cut funding to the most vulnerable people in America -- the homeless, the elderly, the disabled and people with AIDS -- while offering a tax cut to the wealthy. Even if Americans don't have compassion for poor people, I don't believe that they want to see more people on the streets. At any rate, we would be happy to help in any effort to highlight the absurdity of asking those with nothing to shoulder a disproportionate share of the burden of balancing the budget.

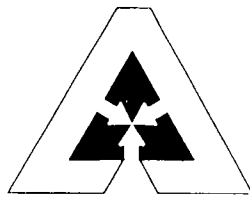
Finally, I wanted to send you a copy of a letter we sent to Chairman Lazio (of the House Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity) on the issue of funding to homeless veterans. As the letter says, this is an issue that has long been of concern to us at the Alliance. We think that the Department of Veterans Affairs should be -- and is -- primarily responsible for delivering that assistance which can best be delivered by veteran-sponsored organizations or through veterans-specific programs. This is their job. We think that HUD should be responsible for meeting the needs of homeless veterans as they constitute part of the population of single homeless people. This could be through veteran-specific programs or, as is more common, through programs for single adults. I think HUD has done a good job of this. We estimate that approximately 25% of

HUD homeless funds go to veterans. The letter to Chairman Lazio attempts to clarify this point in light of information we had received that he might be considering a veterans set-aside in the HUD homeless money. We would favor more spending by the Department of Veterans Affairs for homeless veterans.

It was good to meet you in June. I look forward to working together to achieve our common goals as the year progresses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan", with a stylized flourish at the end.



THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE TO END HOMELESSNESS, INC.

July 18, 1995

Nan P. Roman
Vice President of
Policy and Programs

Congressman Rick A. Lazio
314 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing in response to discussion I have heard about restoring some of the HUD McKinney Act money by obtaining \$150 million from the Department of Veterans Affairs appropriations and setting it aside for homeless veterans-specific programs.

Let me first say that the National Alliance to End Homelessness has a long history of concern about meeting the needs of single homeless people, particularly men. This group is made up largely of veterans. We have found that it is often more popular and more politically palatable to serve families with children, and as a result the needs of single adults are frequently neglected. This is an issue about which we must be constantly vigilant.

The Alliance also believes that some problems of homeless veterans can best be dealt with by other veterans. Certainly we should encourage veteran-run organizations, and in fact the Department of Veterans Affairs does just this. The Department, the second largest department in the federal government, has an annual budget of \$37.7 billion devoted entirely to meeting the needs of veterans, including those who are homeless. It runs a number of programs that are specific to homeless veterans. They include:

- ◆ Homeless Chronically Mentally Ill Veterans Program
- ◆ Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans Program
- ◆ Compensated Work Therapy/Therapeutic Residence Program
- ◆ HUD/Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program (HUD Section 8 certificates given to VA for distribution to homeless veterans)
- ◆ Drop-In Centers for homeless veterans.
- ◆ Comprehensive Homeless Centers

Also, homeless veterans are eligible for the benefits, health care and other support services provided by mainstream VA programs. These include:

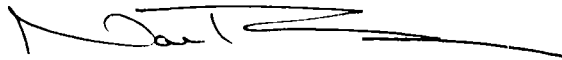
- ◆ Inpatient Health Care
- ◆ Discharge Planning (for those leaving VA inpatient care)
- ◆ Outpatient Health Care
- ◆ Veterans Benefits Administration Benefits (pensions and benefits) (special homeless coordinators in regional offices specifically work to enlist homeless veterans for these benefits, as well as providing counseling and referral to other VA programs).

In addition to these Department of Veterans Affairs programs targeted specifically to veterans, the HUD homeless programs serve a great many veterans. You may have received a copy of a recent letter noting that very little of the money went to "veteran-specific programs." This may be true. However, a great deal of the HUD homeless money **does** go to assist veterans --- HUD and VA estimate that 25% of FY95 funds will assist veterans. In addition, there are estimates that 25% to 33% of HOPWA funds go to homeless veterans with AIDS.

Certainly helping homeless veterans must be a high priority for our nation. Should we be doing a better job? Of course. In fact, we should be doing a better job of assisting all homeless people. Because of the resources available to them through the Department of Veterans Affairs, veterans **do** get funds targeted directly to them through veterans-specific programs. This is as it should be.

HUD McKinney Act funds serve a broad spectrum of homeless people, including veterans and also including families, the chronically mentally ill, young people, homeless single women, people with AIDS and more. The National Alliance to End Homelessness urges you to maintain HUD Homeless Grant funding to meet this broad-based need. We look forward to working with you to ensure a full and adequate appropriation, as well as a well-designed program to achieve this aim.

Sincerely,



Nan Roman
Vice President for Policy and Programs



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20410-7000

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

May 13, 1996

Dear Veteran Advocate:

The Department of Housing and Development has undertaken a number of initiatives to serve our nation's veterans. We have recently established a HUD Veteran Resource Center to improve the accessibility of information on our programs for veterans and their service organizations.

As part of the Clinton administration's continuing commitment to veterans we invite you to participate in an interactive national satellite broadcast, **Wednesday, May 22, 1996** from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. The purpose of the broadcast will be to discuss current activities and issues impacting veterans, including the 1996 Notice of Funding Availability for Homeless Assistance which we refer to as the "SuperNOFA". You will have an opportunity to ask questions about other HUD programs.

As you may know, the SuperNOFA is a national competition for Federal funds open to all state and local governments and eligible not-for-profit organizations. The NOFA provides funding for a range of community-based services such as health care, job training, outreach, transitional and permanent housing. We call this our "Continuum of Care" effort.

If you are interested in participating, please call your nearest HUD Field Office for information on the location of the broadcast site in your area. (See the enclosed list.) The Department of Veterans Affairs is also hosting sites. For these locations please call your nearest VA Medical Center and ask to speak to the designated point of contact for homeless issues.

I look forward to talking with you on the 22nd. If you have questions regarding the homeless SuperNOFA before then, please contact the HUD Veteran Resource Center at (800) 998-9999.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Andrew Cuomo", written over a horizontal line.

Andrew Cuomo

Enclosure

HUD FIELD OFFICE CONTACTS

BOSTON	Robert L. Paquin	617/665-5342
HARTFORD	Mary Ellen Morgan	203/240-4508
MANCHESTER	David J. Lafond	603/666-7640
NEW YORK	Joseph A. D'Agosta	212/284-0771
BUFFALO	Michael F. Merrill	716/551-5742
NEWARK	Frank B. Sagarese	201/622-7900
PHILADELPHIA	Joyce Gaskins	215/656-0624
BALTIMORE	Harold Young	410/962-2520 x3116
PITTSBURGH	Bruce Crawford	412/644-5493
RICHMOND	Joseph K. Aversano	804/278-4503
WASHINGTON, DC	James H. McDaniel	202/275-0994 x3163
ATLANTA	John Perry	404/331-5139
BIRMINGHAM	William H. Dirl	205/290-7645
COLUMBIA	Ed Bradley	803/765-5564
GREENSBORO	Charles T. Ferebee	910/547-4005
JACKSON	Jeanie E. Smith	601/965-4765
JACKSONVILLE	James N. Nichol	904/232-3587
KNOXVILLE	Virginia E. Peck	423/545-4396
LOUISVILLE	Ben Cook	502/582-5394
CARIBBEAN	Carmen Cabrera	809/766-5576
MIAMI-SO. DADE	Richard P. Garra-brant	305/682-4570
CHICAGO	James Barnes	312/353-1696
COLUMBUS	John E. Riordan	614/469-6743
DETROIT	Richard Paul	313/226-4343
INDIANAPOLIS	Robert F. Poffenberger	317/226-5169
MILWAUKEE	Lana J. Vacha	414/297-9113
MINNEAPOLIS	Shawn Huckleby	612/370-3019
FORT WORTH	Carlos R. Renteria	817/885-5483
ALBUQUERQUE	Frank Padillo	505/766-1372
LITTLE ROCK	Billy M. Parsley	501/324-6375
NEW ORLEANS	Greg Hamilton	504/589-7212
OKLAHOMA CITY	David H. Long	405/553-7569
SAN ANTONIO	John T. Maldonado	210/229-6820
KANSAS CITY	William Rotert	913/551-5484
OMAHA	Gregory A. Bevirt	402/492-3144
ST. LOUIS	James Cunningham	314/539-6524
DENVER	Guadalupe M. Herrera	303/672-5414
SAN FRANCISCO	Steve Sachs	415/436-6544
HONOLULU	Patty A. Nicholas	808/522-8180
LOS ANGELES	Herbert L. Roberts	213/251-7235
PHOENIX	Martin H. Mitchell	602/379-4754
SEATTLE	John W. Peters	206/220-5150
ANCHORAGE	Colleen Bickford	206/220-5151
PORTLAND	John G. Bonham	503/326-7018



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20410-7000

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

OCT 5 1995

MEMORANDUM FOR: Community Planning and Development
Division Directors

ATTENTION: Technical Assistance Coordinators

FROM: *Jacquie M. Lawing*
Jacquie M. Lawing, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic
Development, DE

SUBJECT: Supportive Housing Program (SHP) Technical Assistance:
Involving Veterans Organizations in Continuum of Care

During a recent Community Planning and Development Division Directors' conference call, the importance of veteran-specific service and housing providers for homeless persons and general homeless service and housing providers working together on a local continuum of care was emphasized. The purpose of this memorandum is to reinforce that message and provide suggestions for achieving that linkage within local continuum of care systems.

Veteran-specific service providers are very familiar with the special needs of veterans and the availability of local veteran services but may not be aware of and connected to the array of social and general homeless services available in the community. Likewise, the broader group of community service providers generally aware of and involved in the array of homeless needs and services may know little about veterans' needs and specific efforts to address these needs.

The continuum of care technical assistance "kick-off" meetings to be held across the country throughout the fall provide an excellent opportunity to encourage coordination between these groups. Special efforts are needed to ensure that veteran-specific service providers understand the importance of their involvement in the continuum of care system and are invited to participate in the meetings.

You probably have relationships with many of the veteran-specific service providers in your area. In addition to these contacts, TONYA, Inc. has compiled a mailing list of veterans' organizations throughout the country provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Please contact TONYA to make certain your list is complete, and TONYA can assist you with the invitations, if needed.

In planning the agenda for the kick-off meetings, you should allocate time for veteran-specific service providers and other service providers to discuss how each can contribute to, and derive benefits for their clients from, a successful continuum of care system.

The demand/response system for technical assistance provides another means for achieving linkages between veteran-specific service providers and homeless service providers. Requests for technical assistance for this purpose should focus on one or both of two objectives.

1. Ensuring that the veteran-specific service providers understand the continuum of care system and the importance of that system in addressing the multiple needs of homeless veterans and in accessing HUD financial assistance. (A part of such requests could be training for veterans' organizations in how to effectively compete in future competitions for federal homeless assistance.) Also, ensuring that other organizations in the community understand the important role that veteran-specific service providers play in a continuum of care system.
2. Helping homeless service providers understand how to identify veterans among the homeless population, what common physical and psychological problems veterans face, and how to help address these problems. With respect to addressing veterans' problems, homeless service providers can also be assisted in identifying programs targeted for veterans and understanding the benefits available to veterans under these programs.

If both objectives are met, homeless veterans will be better served and will receive more opportunities to move from homelessness to permanent housing and stability.

If you have any questions about this memorandum, please call Cynthia Hernan at (202) 708-6302.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20410-7000

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

March 15, 1996

Dear Colleague:

We are pleased to announce the creation of the **HUD Veteran Resource Center**. Through HUD's Veteran Resource Center, we hope to provide important information about the full range of resources and initiatives available to you from HUD, as well as linking you and your efforts with other valuable resources across all levels of government. You'll be able to contact this resource center through a toll-free number as well as through our Home Page on the Internet.

While HUD works with communities to address their housing and community development needs, we place a special emphasis on those most in need -- the homeless. At any given time, more than 600,000 men, women and children sleep on our cities' streets; more than one-third are men and women who once served their country. While we are dedicated to helping veterans meet a full range of housing, community and economic development needs by creating jobs and new opportunities, we must also take special aims to target the needs of veterans who are homeless.

President Clinton and HUD Secretary Cisneros are committed to working side by side with communities across the country to help break the cycle of homelessness among all Americans, including our military veterans. We understand that the only way we can tackle this problem is by forging comprehensive strategies -- strategies that recognize the particular needs of each segment of the homeless population, and which provide for a coordinated approach for meeting those needs. We call this strategy the Continuum of Care and we want to help you -- as a representative of veterans who are homeless -- to become a part of it's success in your community.

We have worked hard over the past three years to make all of our programs work better for our clients. We have streamlined burdensome processes and cut needless paperwork. Under Secretary Cisneros, we have fought for more and more funding -- nearly tripling our homeless budget since 1992 to \$1.6 billion, and providing more than \$2.5 billion in resources to states and communities. These funds, coupled with our efforts to slash bureaucracy are helping communities address their particular homeless needs in effective, comprehensive manners.

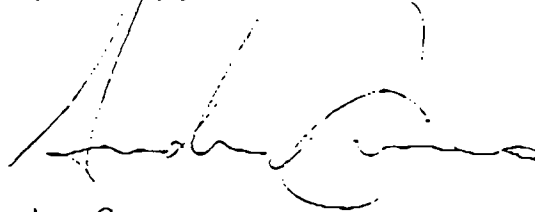
I am also proud to announce the appointment of a special liaison, Bill Pittman, a combat disabled veteran who will head up the Veteran Resource Center efforts. Bill is ready to help us ensure strong communication with Veteran Service Organization's in communities across the country and to provide you with the guidance you need to take full advantage of all HUD programs. Please contact Bill at (202)708-0614 ext 4349 or TDD (202) 708-9300.

The first mission of the Veteran Resource Center will be to inform Veteran groups and VSO's of our 1996 Homeless Assistance SuperNOFA. This nationwide competition is open to all local and state governments and not-for-profits to provide a full range of housing and services for each segment of a community's homeless population. Through this competition, you can access flexible resources to fund your outreach, shelter, health care, job training, and transitional and permanent housing efforts.

Our efforts to help veterans who are homeless are exciting, but nothing can really happen without you.

I look forward to working with you.

Very sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Cuomo', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Andrew Cuomo



Special Update

The Interagency Council on the Homeless

Reaching Out to Help Homeless Veterans

About a third of the adult homeless population has served their country in the armed services. On any given day, as many as 250,000 veterans are living on the streets or in shelters, and perhaps twice as many experience homelessness over the course of a year. Many other veterans are considered at risk because of their poverty, lack of support from family and friends, and precarious living conditions in cheap hotels or in overcrowded or substandard housing.

Although veterans who served in combat do not appear to face any higher risk of homelessness than those without combat experience, the number of homeless Vietnam veterans today is greater than the number of U.S. servicemen who died during the Vietnam war, and a small number of Desert Storm veterans are also showing up in the homeless population.

Almost all homeless veterans are male (about two percent are female), and the vast majority are single. Homeless veterans tend to be older and more educated than homeless non-veterans. But, similar to the general population of homeless adult males, about 40 percent of homeless veterans suffer from mental illness and (with considerable overlap) slightly more than half suffer from alcohol or other drug abuse problems. About 10 percent suffer from post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Nearly 50 percent are African-American or Hispanic.

Homeless veterans are eligible for a variety of benefits, health care, and other support services from regular or mainstream VA programs. Using conservative estimates, these VA programs annually direct several billion dollars of assistance to hundreds of thousands of at-risk and homeless veterans. For example, many veterans currently receiving VA benefits or residing in VA hospitals, nursing homes, or domiciliaries would be homeless or at risk if they did not receive this help.

To supplement the homeless assistance from its mainstream programs, VA offers an array of special programs and initiatives specifically designed to help homeless veterans live as self sufficiently and independent as possible. In fact, VA is the only Federal agency that provides substantial hands-on assistance directly to homeless persons. Although VA's assistance is limited to veterans and their dependents, VA's major homeless-specific programs constitute the largest integrated network of homeless treatment and assistance programs in the country.

VA Mainstream Program Assistance

Inpatient Health Care. Each year, 171 VA hospitals and other facilities provide about one million episodes of inpatient care to veterans, including tens of thousands of homeless veterans. This inpatient care provides at least a temporary alternative to shelters or the streets — and often serves as a starting point for more extensive rehabilitation.

Discharge Planning. VA's Social Work Services Homeless Coordinators help homeless and at-risk veterans leaving VA inpatient care avoid homelessness by providing referrals to VA and non-VA community care and housing and employment assistance, ensuring receipt of available benefits, linking up the vets with family and friends, and providing post-discharge follow-up.

Outpatient Health Care. VA health facilities also annually provide over 40 million clinic stops of outpatient health care, including basic medical care, alcohol and substance abuse treatment, mental health care,

vocational rehabilitation, referrals, and counseling. Many of the assisted veterans are homeless or at risk. VA's 202 Readjustment Counseling Service Vet Centers offer special outpatient social services, counseling, and referrals to war zone veterans, and their Homeless Veteran Coordinators serve over 10,000 homeless veterans each year.

VBA Benefits. The Veterans Benefits Administration annually provides more than \$17 billion in VA pensions and benefits to about four million veterans — many of whom are homeless or at risk, or would be without the benefits. To reach more homeless veterans, special homeless coordinators at VBA's 58 Regional Offices annually make over 3,000 visits to homeless facilities and over 3,500 contacts with non-VA agencies working with the homeless, and provide over 12,000 homeless veterans with benefits counseling and referrals to other VA programs. VBA has also instituted new procedures to reduce the processing time for homeless veterans' benefits claims.

Special VA Homeless Assistance Programs & Initiatives

VA's specialized homeless treatment programs have grown and developed since they were first authorized in 1987. These programs strive to offer a continuum of care that includes:

- aggressive outreach to those veterans living on the streets and in shelters who otherwise would not seek assistance;
- clinical assessment and referral to needed medical treatment for physical and psychiatric disorders, including substance abuse;
- long-term transitional assistance, case management and rehabilitation
- employment assistance and linkages with income supports, and;
- supported permanent housing.

HCMI Program. VA's 57 Homeless Chronically Mentally Ill Veterans program sites provide extensive outreach, physical and psychiatric health exams, treatment, referrals, and ongoing case management to homeless veterans with mental health problems (including substance abuse). As appropriate, the HCMI program places homeless veterans needing more intensive treatment into one of its roughly 125 contracted community-based facilities. The program serves over 19,000 homeless veterans each year, with over 3,000 receiving residential treatment. The average length of stay in community-based residential care is 72 days, and the average cost per day is approximately \$38.00. Eleven Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) outreach teams provide similar HCMI-type assistance to another 3,700 veterans, but without the residential care component.

Homeless Dom's. VA's 33 Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans program sites provide biopsychosocial treatment and rehabilitation to homeless veterans. Treatment takes place in approximately 1,500 dedicated beds at VA medical center domiciliaries. These homeless dom's annually provide residential treatment to over 3,000 homeless veterans with health problems. The average length of stay is 130 days.

CWT/TR. In VA's Compensated Work Therapy/Therapeutic Residence program, disadvantaged at-risk and homeless veterans live in one of 40 community-based supervised group homes while working for pay in a VA Compensated Work Therapy program (also known as Veterans Industries). Veterans in the CWT/TR program work about 32 hours per week, with average earnings of \$580 per month. Veterans pay an average of \$142 per month toward maintenance and upkeep of the residence. The average length of stay is 136 days.

HUD-VASH. In this joint Supported Housing program with the Department of Housing and Urban Development, VA staff at 29 VAMCs provide ongoing case management and other needed assistance to homeless veterans in permanent housing supported by 1300 specially-designated HUD rental assistance vouchers. HUD has recently made an additional 700 vouchers available. VA will dedicate case management staff at 11

new sites and expand staffing to accommodate additional vouchers at 9 sites.

Drop-In Centers. These programs provide a daytime sanctuary where homeless veterans can clean up, wash their clothes, and participate in a variety of therapeutic and rehabilitative activities. Linkages with longer-term assistance are also available. VA currently operates nine drop-in centers

SSA-VA Joint Outreach. At eleven sites, the Social Security Administration and VA's HCMI and Homeless Dom staff coordinate outreach and benefits with SSA staff to increase the number of veterans receiving SSA benefits and otherwise assist in their rehabilitation. In this demonstration project, both applications and benefit awards have increased significantly and the processing time has decreased dramatically.

Acquired Property Sales for Homeless Providers. This program makes all the properties VA obtains through foreclosures on VA-insured mortgages available for sale to homeless provider organizations at a discount of 20 to 50 percent, depending on time on the market. Some of these properties are now available for lease, as well.

Comprehensive Homeless Centers. VA's Comprehensive Homeless Centers (CHCs) place the full range of VA homeless efforts in a single medical center's catchment area and coordinate their administration within a centralized framework. With extensive collaboration with non-VA efforts, VA's CHCs in Brooklyn, Cleveland, Dallas, Pittsburgh, San Francisco and West Los Angeles work to create a comprehensive continuum of care to reach out to homeless veterans and help them escape homelessness.

Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program. This new program allows VA to provide grants and per diem to assist public and non-profit entities establish and operate new supportive housing and supportive services for homeless veterans. Grants may also be used to purchase vans to do outreach and provide transportation for homeless veterans. VA has set aside \$6 million in funding for this program in Fiscal Year 1995.

VBA-VHA Special Outreach and Benefits Assistance. Under a provision of Public Law 102-590, VHA is funding eleven Veterans Benefits Counselors. These specially funded staff provide outreach, benefits counseling, referral and additional assistance to veterans applying for VA benefits. This special initiative is in addition to the VBA's ongoing efforts to assist homeless veterans.

VA Creates Partnership with National Service Corporation. VA and the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (NCHV) are working under a grant from the Corporation for National Service. Under this grant AmeriCorps members are working with local VA Medical Centers, Regional Benefits Offices and community based groups in Houston and Los Angeles renovating housing, doing street outreach, helping to find employment and assist in providing ongoing case management to homeless veterans. Half of the AmeriCorps members recruited in these cities are veterans themselves. In Washington NCHV is going to hold a Stand Down the weekend of October 27-29, 1995.

VA Assistance to Stand Downs. VA programs and staff have actively participated in each of the over 50 Stand Downs for Homeless Veterans run by local coalitions in various cities each year. In wartime stand downs, front line troops are removed to a place of relative safety for rest and needed assistance before returning to combat. Similarly, peacetime stand downs give homeless veterans 2-3 days of safety and security where they can obtain food, shelter, clothing, and a range of other assistance, including VA-provided health care, benefits certification, and linkages with other programs.

VA Surplus/Excess Property for Homeless Veterans Initiative. With support of GSA and DoD, VA's Office of Acquisition and Material Management and Mental Health and Behavioral Sciences have initiated a program to distribute Federal personal property such as hats, gloves, socks, boots, sleeping bags, furniture and other items to homeless veterans and homeless veteran programs. In less than two years this initiative has distributed more than \$6 million worth of surplus goods and has more than \$1 million in inventory. A newly

established Comprehensive Work Therapy program employs formerly homeless veterans to unload, inventory and ship these goods across the country from its Lyons, New Jersey location.

Community Homelessness Assessment, Local Education Networking Groups (CHALENG)

For Veterans. VA held a series of mini homeless summits at each VA medical center. This effort is not only providing needed information about the needs of homeless veterans but is bringing all relevant agencies and organizations together in each medical center's catchment area to energize new community-wide efforts to improve assistance to homeless veterans and develop new strategies. CHALENG (Community Homelessness Assessment, Local Education Networking Groups) for Veterans meetings will continue to be held for the foreseeable future.

Program Monitoring and Evaluation VA has built a strong monitoring and evaluation system to evaluate all of its homeless programs. The Northeast Program and Evaluation Center (NEPEC) at VAMC West Haven, CT provides important information about veterans served, the therapeutic and cost effectiveness of the specialized programs. This evaluation information is vital to assist program managers determine new directions to pursue in order to expand and improve services to homeless veterans.

Partnerships with Others. Despite everything described here, VA does not have the resources to assist every homeless veteran. Ending homelessness among veterans, or all homelessness, will take a combined effort by federal, state, and local government, the private sector, and voluntary efforts. Toward this end, VA has developed numerous partnerships at the local level with public and private agencies and nonprofit organizations, including veterans service organizations.

Program Growth. VA directed almost \$76 million to its homeless assistance programs in FY 1995 (more than doubling its homeless specific budget since FY'92 \$10 million increase over FY 1994). Among other things, the new funds are supporting several new Homeless Chronically Mentally Ill programs, new Comprehensive Homeless Centers, and a \$6 million grant program for public and non-profit providers serving homeless veterans.

Current Important News

Application for VA's Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program. More than 100 applications were received from public and non-profit entities requesting more than \$38 million. Application packages are being reviewed and \$6 million in funding is expected to be awarded this summer.

Direct Leases with Service Providers on Medical Center Grounds. A directive to all Medical Center directors was recently sent out from Undersecretary of Health, Dr. Kenneth W. Kiser urging each facility to review their sites and if there is underutilized space to allow providers to use the sites for services for the homeless. VA already has four direct lease agreements and anticipates more to be signed.

More Information Regarding VA Homeless Assistance Efforts

To obtain more information about VA homeless programs and initiatives in your area, please call 1-800-827-1000 or your local VA Medical Center or Regional Office. For additional general information about VA homeless assistance efforts, please contact the VA Homelessness Office (075D), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Room 915, Washington, DC 20420 [Phone 202-273-5760 Fax 202-273-5716].

Department of
Veterans Affairs

Memorandum

Date:

From: Under Secretary for Health (10)

Subj: Making More VA Properties Available to Help Homeless Veterans

To: VAMC Directors

Although VA already provides a significant amount of assistance to homeless and at-risk veterans, we can and must, do more with our available resources to serve this needy and deserving population. One promising possibility is to increase the use of available VA properties for homeless assistance. Accordingly, we ask that each VAMC Director review the utilization of the real property and office space at his or her Medical Center and take steps, as appropriate, to accomplish the following:

- 1) Directly lease available and appropriate VA real property or space to local nonprofit organizations of your choice for the purpose of providing assistance to homeless veterans. You should note that a change to the regulations for the Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program (see Federal Register Vol. 60, No. 38, Monday, February 27, 1995 pages 10502-10504) has made sites on VA medical center grounds eligible for construction, expansion or remodeling funds if a nonprofit or non-federal government entity applies for a grant under this program. A lease will allow the nonprofit or non-federal entity to demonstrate site control. Ideally, these direct leases would help create emergency residential services on VAMC grounds to serve homeless veterans in the area, especially those awaiting admission into VA programs or discharged from VA care with nowhere else to go. The West LA VAMC's direct-lease project with the Salvation Army offers a good example. VAMC homeless program staff should be consulted regarding possible nonprofit lessees, and are valuable participants in any effort to integrate a nonprofit's use of a leased property with VA's own homelessness efforts.
- 2) Make sure all unused or under utilized properties at your facility, identified by Executive Order 12512, Real Property Utilization Survey, are promptly reported as required by Title V of the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act. Properties VA is in the process of directly leasing to nonprofit providers, need not be reported. However, VA cannot take any action to lease, or otherwise dispose of, a property already reported under Title V until 60 days after the availability of the property for lease under Title V is published in the Federal Register.

Page 2.

VAMC Directors

We ask that each VAMC report on its progress toward these two goals within 90 days of receiving this memorandum by contacting George L. Szwarcman, Esq., Director, Land Management Service (084C) in Central Office [202-233-7929 Fax: 202-202-233-7839]. Also, Mr. Szwarcman can provide additional information or other assistance regarding either direct leases to nonprofit organizations, or the requirements of Title V of the McKinney Act. Mr. Roger Casey, Program Director (111C), VA Homeless Service Providers Grant and Per Diem Program (202) 535-7311 can provide you with additional information regarding the provisions of the grant program.

Attached is additional information you may find helpful.

Thank you for your cooperation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kenneth W. Kizer', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kenneth W. Kizer, M.D., M.P.H.

Attachment

Useful Information Regarding Direct Lease and Alternate Cooperative Efforts to Assist Homeless Services

The main purpose of this attachment is to demonstrate ways VAMCs can set up new homeless assistance facilities in underutilized VAMC property -- like the West LA VAMC direct-lease project with the Salvation Army, and the Northampton VAMC direct lease with United Veterans of America, and to notify field facilities of changes in VA's Homeless Service Providers Grant and Per Diem regulations.

This attachment also provides information on how to identify available space, especially properties, and how you may begin to use them either for VA homeless program purposes or for direct lease to local, nonprofit homeless providers of their choice. These direct leases make sense for a number of reasons.

1. **Directly leasing properties to nonprofits offer the fastest way to put available properties to use helping homeless veterans.** VA has been attacked for not leasing more of its underutilized properties to homeless provider organizations. VA has listed a number of properties under Title V of the McKinney Act; however, none of the listed properties have been leased under that law. Direct leasing is an option that is available and should be examined. The President's personal interest in channeling more surplus Federal properties into homeless assistance makes the issue even more pressing.
2. **Through direct leases VA can improve the continuum of care for homeless veterans.** VA does not currently provide emergency shelter to veterans who need a place to sleep for the night, nor does VA have the statutory authority to do so. Although VA should not enter the shelter business, through leasing unused properties or space at local VAMCs to local homelessness providers, VA could help establish non-VA provider-managed services for homeless veterans on VA grounds. A variety of services including housing could be established through this lease approach.
3. **Direct leases allow VA to create "Entry Point" residential services.** As the West L.A. and Northampton facilities show, on-site, non-VA programs run by local nonprofits can also provide homeless veterans with a place to stay while they are waiting for admission into over-subscribed VA assistance programs or inpatient care, or waiting for scheduled treatments. Without such non-VA programs, homeless veterans waiting for admission or treatment are forced to return to the streets or to area homeless facilities -- and often miss their appointments or cannot be found when space opens up.
4. **Direct leases allow VA to create "Departure Point" residential services.** The direct-lease non-VA programs could also be used as places where veterans leaving VA care who have no immediate place to go could stay while working with VA staff to find more permanent housing (this would help address the criticism VA sometimes discharges homeless veterans right back to the streets).

5. **Direct lease properties facilitate VA outreach and service to homeless veterans.** The direct-lease shelters would also provide handy locations for VA homeless assistance programs to do outreach and provide various forms of assistance to homeless veterans in the area.
6. **Direct leases can save VA money and protect valuable buildings from costly deterioration.** As a result of the latest changes in the final regulations of VA's Homeless Service Providers Grant and Per Diem Program (see Federal Register Vol. 60, No. 38, Monday, February 27, 1995, pages 10502-10504) sites on VA grounds are eligible if non-profit or non-federal government applicants sought to "acquire" these properties through lease. The regulation has been amended to permit use of grant funds to construct, expand or remodel buildings located on VA medical center grounds. A corresponding change is made to allow leases to be used to demonstrate site control.
7. **Title V of McKinney Act.** Nothing herein modifies the current reporting requirements under Title V of the McKinney Act.



Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program

Authority: Public 102-590, Homeless Veterans Comprehensive Service Programs Act of 1992

Eligibility:

- Public and non-profit entities, including Indian tribal governments
- New programs, or new components of existing programs, to furnish outreach, rehabilitative services, vocational counseling and training, transitional housing, and a limited number of vans.
- Entities can be awarded amounts to cover up to 65 percent of the cost of acquisition, rehabilitation, construction or procurement.
- Service delivery plan must state that at least 75 percent of the population being served be veterans — no more than 25 percent of the population served may be to non-veterans.

Current Activity:

- In 1994 VA awarded \$5.6 million to 33 projects in 16 states.
- This week, teams are reviewing more than 100 applications from 38 states and the District of Columbia requesting more than \$38 million — \$6 million is available and will be awarded this summer.



Comprehensive Homelessness Assessment Local Education and Networking Groups (CHALENG) for Veterans

Authority: Public Law 102-405; Public Law 103-446

Assessment and Coordination:

- Each VA Medical Center in coordination with the local VA Regional Benefits Office shall meet with representatives of Federal, State and local governments and non-governmental organizations that have experience in working with homeless people.
- Each site shall identify the needs for health care, education and training, employment, shelter, counseling and outreach services for homeless veterans
- Each site shall report on the extent to which the needs are being met by programs offered by VA, other federal agencies, state and local governments and non-governmental organizations
- Each site shall develop a list with descriptions of all public and private programs that provide assistance to homeless persons or veterans.
- Each site shall seek to encourage the development of a coordinated plan among the public and private entities to serve homeless veterans

Current Activity:

- In 1994, VA conducted more than 120 meetings across the country with more than 4,000 persons from public and private entities in attendance.
- In 1995, VA will continue these meetings at each of its 171 VA Medical Centers and will aggressively reach out to all entities involved in providing services to homeless person to participate.
- Local resource guides listing services for homeless persons for each medical center catchment area are being prepared.

Local Points of Contact:

- Attached is a list of all VA points of contact for future CHALENG meetings. VA encourages your staff to get in touch with VA representatives regarding their participation in the next CHALENG meeting.

**COMMUNITY HOMELESSNESS ASSESSMENT, LOCAL EDUCATION AND
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