



CHEROKEE COUNTY
HOMELESS VETS PROGRAM

What is our program focus

- Homeless Veterans
- VA Claims
- Veteran mental health
- New focus – Female Veteran Domestic Violence

All of this and more done at No Cost to the Veteran

Veteran Homelessness

Why do veterans experience homelessness?

Veterans are [more likely](#) than civilians to experience homelessness. Like the general homeless population, veterans are at a significantly increased risk of homelessness if they have low socioeconomic status, a mental health disorder, and/or a history of substance abuse. Yet, because of veterans' military service, this population is at higher risk of experiencing traumatic brain injuries (TBI) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), both of which have been found to be among the [most substantial risk factors](#) for homelessness.

Among the recent Iraq and Afghanistan cohort of veterans—who are more frequently female than their older counterparts—an experience of sexual trauma while serving in the military greatly increases the risk of homelessness. Additionally, veterans often [experience difficulty](#) returning to civilian life, particularly those without strong social support networks, and may not have skills that can be easily transferred to employment outside of the military. Veterans face the same shortage of affordable housing options and living wage jobs as all Americans, and these factors—combined with the increased likelihood that veterans will exhibit symptoms of PTSD, substance abuse, or mental illness — can compound to put veterans at a greater risk of homelessness than the general population.

On any given night there 49,000 Homeless Veterans

Issues our Veterans face today

- Veteran Housing programs, ie. HUD VASH and SSVF are not available to house homeless Veterans today
- Recent Study of 32 apartment complexes in Cherokee County which account for over 9,000 apartments show that 100% SC Disabled Veterans cannot qualify for these apartments
- Veteran Mental health is now a large issue –
 - VA has spent \$150Bn on Veteran mental health in last 10 years without moving the needle –
 - Biggest issue is not having local community programs – Like Ours
 - Veterans to VA therapist ratio is 300:1
- All of these affect Getting Jobs

How does our program address these issues



Cherokee County Homeless Veterans Program

• Homeless Services

- VA Claims Support
- Emergency housing
- Food/Clothing/toiletries
- Jobs and resume building
- Furniture – on demand limited area
- Transportation Services – LYFT
- Community Medical Services through partnership
- Rent/Utilities Support
- Food Pantry



• Homeless Services

- Vehicle donation program for disabled/formerly homeless Veterans.
- Veteran Home Repair program for low income/elderly/disabled Veterans
- Various other programs throughout the year.
 - Veteran Fly Fishing program
 - Holiday Adopt a Vet program
 - Annual winter coat drive

• Program restrictions:

- Must be honorably discharged Veteran
- Funds are limited to availability
- Some services are limited by location

Check us out at <https://www.cherokeehomelessvets.com/mental-health-coalition>

Jim Lindenmayer at jlindenmayer80@gmail.com or at 678.983.7590. We are a 501c19 Veteran non-profit. We are also

On Facebook at [Cherokee County Homeless Veteran's Program \(cherokeehomelessvets.com\)](https://www.facebook.com/CherokeeCountyHomelessVeteransProgram/)

We can't do it alone

- We have a partnership with a fortune 50 company to provide Veteran organizations and local non-profits with paper products at no cost. We have supplied over \$1M worth of product in the last year to over 70 Veteran and non-profits groups
- We just reached a milestone of giving away our 61st donated vehicle to either a
 - Disabled Veteran
 - Veteran parent with small children who cannot afford a vehicle
 - Homeless Veteran who has turned their life around and needs a vehicle to get to work.
- Partnership with Cellphone/carrier program to provide no cost phones, text, data to homeless Veterans. **#1 need today**

Veteran Helping Veterans



Veteran Success stories

Veteran Profile – Displaced Male



- **Army Veteran**

- **Background**

- Homeless for 6 years
- Lived on couch in friends apartment for 3 years
- Divorced and distant from two children
- Lost job during down turn in economy and could not find job
- Recreational drug user – rehabilitated and drug tested

- **Program Background Success**

- Came to us in early December 2019 and exited our program 5 months later
- We connected Veteran with job where he worked for over two years
- Initially he had no income but within two months started paying half his monthly stay
- Moved out at 5 month point to move into a stable housing with another Veteran
- Program initially paid for 4 months of UBER/Lift to get him to job
- He created financial strength that will allowed him to graduate from our program and move out into community on his own
- Was donated a vehicle through our Vehicle donation program, that allowed him to secure better paying job to support him

Veteran Profile – Domestic Violence Female with Children



- **Navy Veteran**
- **Background**
 - Referred by 3rd Party from Fulton County
 - Husband Avoiding being served with TPO from Fulton County
 - Veteran is 100% SC
 - Husband was stalking Veteran Wife and kids
- **Program Background Success**
 - Program successfully hid female Veteran and children in hotels by working with other local county agencies to help put her up in hotels and move here a number of times
 - Worked with Cherokee County Schools to get children into schools as they had missed many days due to concerns of safety
 - Worked with Cherokee County Law enforcement to provide extra rounds while in hotel and coordinate with Fulton County Law enforcement on notification of TPO serving to husband
 - Provided clean phones for Veterans and older son and had their phones cleaned as this was one method that abusive father was tracking family
 - Veteran came to like Cherokee County so much that she has now taken up permanent residence and has leased her former home in Fulton County
 - Provided furniture and other household goods to furnish new apartment from outreach to local community
 - Working with Veteran on filing for SSDI as she was unaware she was eligible for this – provides additional income
 - Entered her into Mental Health counseling with VA via SSG Fox MH and Suicide Prevention grant
- **Barriers to Overcome**
 - Veteran has filed for divorce from abusive spouse



Veteran Profile –Homeless Male

- **Afghanistan Veteran – 30+ years old**

- **Background**

- Fell into Homelessness upon coming home from Afghanistan
- Was living on Sisters floor when we first made contact with him
- He called on a Tuesday to inquire about help from our program
- MOS in Military was Combat Engineer

- **Program Background Success**

- Interviewed him for intake on the next day (Wednesday)
- Prepared his resume and forwarded it to Electrical Company looking to hire Veterans
- Arranged Interview for the following Day (Thursday) where he was offered a job
- Hired but did not have vehicle to get to job which started following Monday – Our Car Donation program awarded him a Vehicle
- He has been at job for over six months now

- **Barriers yet to be overcome**

- None

Veteran Profile – Homeless Female 48

50% SC disabled



- **Army Veteran**

- **Background**

- Homeless and Lived on fixed income – VA SC Compensation of \$1,250/month
- Not able to hold current job due to medical issues
- No past drug/alcohol issues
- Could not support finding livable housing due to low income level

- **Program Background**

- Came to us in June 2020
- We initially put her up in hotel for two weeks while we investigated local apartments
- Found that she had not filed for review of her VA disability and filed for case review with Canton Office of Ga Department of Veteran Services
- Medical review scheduled and It was determined that she was due additional disability level to 100% which would provide her another \$1,750 per month plus any back pay.
- She co-paid with our program her motel stay of 30 days where she exited our program no longer being homeless

- **Barriers yet to be overcome**

- None

Veteran Profile – Disabled Female Veteran



- **Marine Veteran 50 years old**
- **Background**
 - Homeless for 31 years
 - Was receiving VA medical assistance for mental health issue that resulted from Marine time in Service
 - Was being denied Veteran Benefits due to claim she served less than 24 months
 - Could not hold job due to PTSD
- **Program Background**
 - Referred to our program in 2017
 - Upon intake it was identified that she qualified for exception to 24 Month time in service rule
 - VA healthcare never sent her to VA compensation during entire time of treatment
 - We pushed her case to Congressional Review level and contacted local TV station about her case
 - We also sent over 400 pages of VA Treatment records to VA compensation to support her case
 - TV article aired at 5 on a Thursday night, by 9 am the next morning she was granted 100% VA disability status (awarding her \$3000 per month income plus over \$50K in back compensation)
 - Total time she was in our program was six months
- **Barriers yet to be overcome**
 - None

Veteran Profile – Disabled Female Veteran



- **Navy Veteran 40+ years old with two children**
- **Background**
 - Was \$40,000+ in debt and was about to be evicted and homeless in Conyers
 - Contacted our program from referral
 - Had filed for VA compensation for PTSD/MST but was getting no support
 - Had talked to other Veteran programs but they could not help
- **Program Background**
 - Initial review of case showed again that the VA had mishandled her claim and that no VA medical treatments had made it to her compensation file – VA medical and VA compensation
 - Congressman would not take her case for escalation
 - We worked with the Canton office of the Georgia Department of Veteran Services to move her case to Canton so our team could work and hope to avert her from being homeless
 - Submitted 500+ pages of VA treatment records to VA compensation and files Congressional inquiry through District 11 Congressional office
 - Case was awarded in her favor within 4 months of our team involvement providing her over \$100,000 in back pay and over \$3,000 per month income going forward. She was able to pay her debts and get her life back in order without having to be homeless
- **Barriers yet to be overcome**
 - None

We do all of this because you Served

