



**New York State Division of Veterans' Services  
Report on Veteran Homelessness in New York State  
June 30, 2020**

**Introduction**

The New York State Division of Veterans' Services (DVS) has prepared this report pursuant to subdivision 6-a of section 353 of the Executive Law. The legislation that established this statute – which requires DVS to prepare a report regarding veterans experiencing homelessness in New York State – took note of 2013 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development data estimating that nearly 58,000 veterans across the country that year experienced homelessness on any given night.<sup>1</sup> The Legislature also noted that veterans with disabilities, post-traumatic stress disorder, and traumatic brain injuries are at increased risk of becoming homeless, and often represent a significant percentage of veterans returning from ongoing conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Further, this legislation acknowledged trends indicating an increase in the number of women veterans experiencing homelessness, as well as the difficulties such veterans face in obtaining shelter, childcare, and employment.

Readers of this report should note that definitions of the terms “homeless” and “veteran” vary by state and across different federal guidelines and programmatic requirements. This lack of coherence in definitions creates varying standards that make it difficult to perform accurate assessments from across New York State and between state and federal data. For consistency, this report utilizes the federal definitions<sup>2</sup> of these terms.

**Overview of Services for Veterans Experiencing Homelessness**

Services to veterans experiencing homelessness in New York State are funded and delivered through an array of federal, state, and local agencies and organizations, and are coordinated by regional and local planning bodies known as Continuums of Care (CoCs).<sup>3</sup> Nationally, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) leads the implementation of the federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness, driving

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<sup>1</sup> *The 2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress*, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, June 2014, p. 38, <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/AHAR-2013-Part1.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Under federal law, the term “veteran” means a person who served on active duty service in the Armed Forces of the United States, or service in the Army National Guard, Air National Guard, commissioned officer in the Public Health Service, commissioned officer of the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration or Environmental Sciences Services Administration, cadet at a United States Armed Forces service academy or provisions under 38 USC § 106, and who was released from such service under conditions other than dishonorable, per 38 USC § 101 (2); 38 USC § 101 (21); 38 USC § 106. The federal definition of the term “homeless” under the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009 is specified in 42 USC § 11302.

<sup>3</sup> “What is a Continuum of Care?” National Alliance to End Homelessness, January 14, 2020, <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/what-is-a-continuum-of-care/>.



action among 19 federal member agencies and fostering partnerships at every level of government and with the private sector.<sup>4</sup> The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) offers resources, initiatives, programs, coordination, and guidance to assist veterans experiencing homelessness, and promotes rapid access to permanent housing for veterans.<sup>5</sup> The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) administers the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP), an employment-focused competitive grant program.<sup>6</sup> The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is the primary agency providing direct services for veterans experiencing homelessness through three key roles:

- Conducting coordinated outreach to proactively seek out veterans needing assistance;
- Connecting homeless and at-risk veterans with housing solutions, health care, community employment services, and other supports; and
- Collaborating with federal, state, and local agencies as well as employers, housing providers, faith-based and community nonprofits and others to expand employment and affordable housing options for veterans exiting homelessness.<sup>7</sup>

In New York State, the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) Housing and Support Services administers programs providing a continuum of services for homeless and at-risk individuals, as well as low-income households.<sup>8</sup> These programs prevent homelessness, provide shelter for the homeless, construct supportive housing for the homeless, and offer essential services to stabilize housing situations and increase levels of self-sufficiency.<sup>9</sup> OTDA administers the Homeless Housing and Assistance Program (HHAP), which provides capital grants and loans to not-for-profit corporations, charitable and religious organizations, municipalities, and public corporations to acquire, construct, or rehabilitate housing for individuals experiencing homelessness and unable to secure adequate housing without special assistance.<sup>10</sup> The FY 2021 Executive Budget sets aside \$5 million to expand permanent supportive housing for homeless veterans within this program.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> "United States Interagency Council on Homelessness," Accessed June 10, 2020, <https://www.usich.gov/>.

<sup>5</sup> "Veteran Homelessness," U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development HUD Exchange, Accessed June 9, 2020, <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/resources-for-homeless-veterans/>.

<sup>6</sup> "Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program," U.S. Department of Labor, Accessed June 9, 2020, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/vets/programs/hvrp>.

<sup>7</sup> "Veterans Experiencing Homelessness," U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs, Accessed June 9, 2020, <https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/index.asp>.

<sup>8</sup> "Housing and Support Services (HSS)," New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Accessed June 8, 2020, <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/housing/>.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> "Homeless Housing and Assistance Program (HHAP)," New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Accessed June 10, 2020, <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/housing/hhap.asp>.

<sup>11</sup> "Governor Cuomo Announces Greatest Funding In State History to Combat Homelessness and Expand Access to Affordable Housing and Supportive Services Included in FY 2021 Executive Budget," Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, January 10, 2020.



The New York State Department of Labor (NYS DOL) dedicates staff to coordinate and monitor services to homeless veterans served by HVRP grantees.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, in areas of the state with limited supplies of affordable housing, New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR) sets priorities for homeless veterans using rental subsidies. The Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) provides services and resources to individuals experiencing homelessness, but does not oversee veteran-specific programs.

DVS, the Department of Taxation and Finance (DTF), and the Office of the State Comptroller jointly administer the Homeless Veterans Assistance Fund.<sup>13</sup> As of October 2019, this fund held \$820,749. The funds are received by DTF and held for review by the Comptroller. These funds have not been awarded or distributed.

### **Background on Initiatives to End Veteran Homelessness**

In 2003, a report by the Coalition for the Homeless noted the prevalence of veteran homelessness in America, including in New York.<sup>14</sup> Nationally, about 250,000 veterans were homeless on any given night – roughly 25% of the national homeless population – while VA programs for homeless veterans were reaching only approximately 40,000 of those veterans. Nearly half of homeless veterans had served during the Vietnam era, with a growing number having served in the 1991 Gulf War.<sup>15</sup> The report, which was released when the U.S. invasion of Iraq had newly begun and the war in Afghanistan was in its second year, warned that the new era of war would “create a new generation of homeless veterans,” and raised alarms that the budget for VA and HUD efforts to address veteran homelessness at the time was “woefully inadequate.”<sup>16</sup>

On November 3, 2009, Eric Shinseki, retired four-star general, former U.S. Army chief of staff, and then-Secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, unveiled the VA's comprehensive plan to end homelessness among veterans within five years by marshalling the resources of government, business, and the private sector.<sup>17</sup> Dedicated funding and public-private efforts were targeted at moving veterans off the streets and

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<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-greatest-funding-state-history-combat-homelessness-and-expand-access>.

<sup>12</sup> “New York State Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) Fiscal Years (FY) 2015 – 2019 State Plan (FY 2020),” New York State Department of Labor, p. 12, Accessed June 9, 2020, [https://labor.ny.gov/workforce/swib/docs/NYS\\_JVSG\\_State\\_Plan\\_FY2020.pdf](https://labor.ny.gov/workforce/swib/docs/NYS_JVSG_State_Plan_FY2020.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> “Consolidated Laws of the State of New York / State Finance / Article 6: Funds of the State / Section 99-V\*2,” New York State Senate, Accessed June 9, 2020, [https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/STF/99-V\\*2](https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/STF/99-V*2).

<sup>14</sup> “War and Homelessness: How American Wars Create Homelessness Among United States Armed Forces Veterans,” Coalition for the Homeless, March 27, 2003.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, p. 2.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 3.

<sup>17</sup> “Secretary Shinseki Details Plan to End Homelessness for Veterans,” U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs, November 3, 2009, <https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=1807>.



at risk mitigation efforts to prevent veterans from ever experiencing homelessness in the first place.

On June 4, 2014, as part of the White House's Joining Forces initiative, then-First Lady Michelle Obama announced the launch of the Mayor's Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness. The challenge comprised five criteria for achieving the goal of ending veteran homelessness in a specific locality:

1. The community has identified all veterans experiencing homelessness;
2. The community provides shelter immediately for any veteran experiencing unsheltered homelessness who wants it;
3. The community provides service-intensive transitional housing only in limited instances;
4. The community has the capacity to assist veterans to swiftly move into permanent housing; and
5. The community has resources, plans, partnerships, and system capacity in place should any veteran become homeless or be at risk of homelessness.<sup>18</sup>

### **National Progress on Reducing Veteran Homelessness**

Federal investments in planning and targeted interventions to reduce the incidence and duration of homelessness among veterans have yielded significant reductions on a national level since 2009. At center is the "Housing First" model, a cost-effective, evidence-based approach to ending homelessness for the most vulnerable and chronically homeless individuals. "Housing First" prioritizes the placement of individual veterans into permanent housing and then assists them with healthcare and other supportive services to improve their stability and quality of life.<sup>19</sup>

Each year, localities around the country conduct one-night "Point-in-Time" (PIT) estimates of the number of persons experiencing homelessness in emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, and unsheltered locations in their community. In January 2019, the national PIT estimate of veterans experiencing homelessness was 37,085.<sup>20</sup> While more targeted resourcing is needed to end veteran homelessness nationally, the last decade has seen veteran homelessness reduced by half, as detailed in the chart

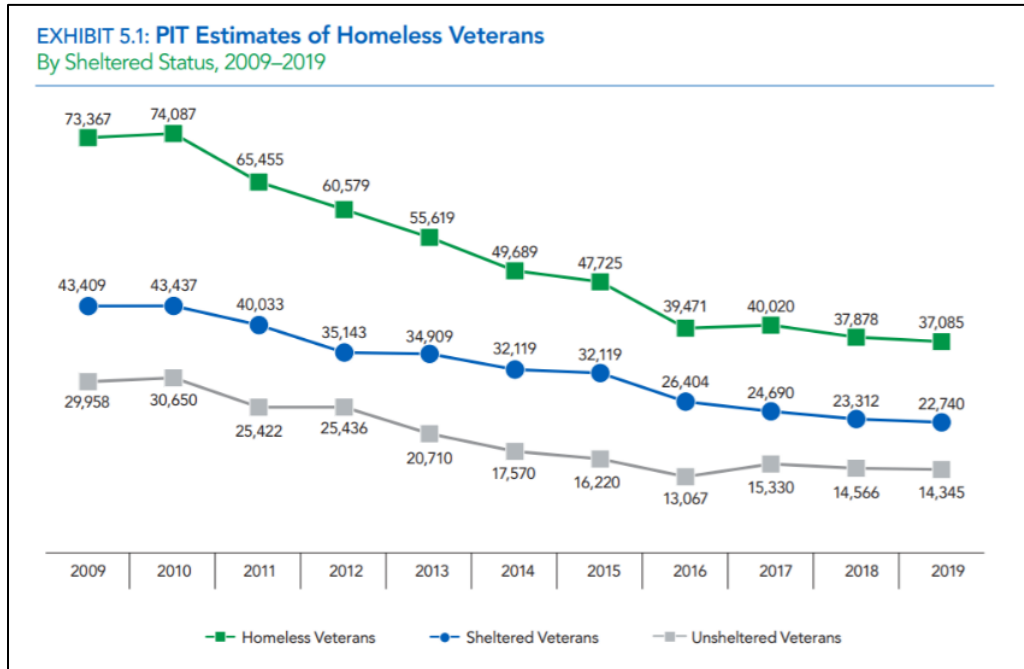
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<sup>18</sup> "Criteria and Benchmarks for Achieving the Goal of Ending Veteran Homelessness," Version 3, February 2017, [https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/Vet\\_Criteria\\_Benchmarks\\_V3\\_February2017.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Vet_Criteria_Benchmarks_V3_February2017.pdf).

<sup>19</sup> "Housing First," U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs, Accessed on June 10, 2020, <https://www.va.gov/homeless/nchav/models/housing-first.asp>.

<sup>20</sup> "Trump Administration Announces Continued Decline in Veteran Homelessness," U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, November 12, 2019, [https://www.hud.gov/press/press\\_releases\\_media\\_advisories/HUD\\_No\\_19\\_163](https://www.hud.gov/press/press_releases_media_advisories/HUD_No_19_163).

below, which is drawn from HUD's report, *The 2019 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress*.<sup>21</sup>



## **Federal Programs Assisting Veterans Experiencing Homelessness in New York**

### *HUD-VA Supportive Housing*

In 1992, VA and HUD established the HUD-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program to serve the most vulnerable homeless veterans and their immediate families. In 2008, Congress increased funding for HUD-VASH to provide HUD Housing Choice (Section 8) vouchers and VA supportive services for approximately 10,000 homeless veterans nationally that fiscal year.<sup>22</sup> Under HUD-VASH, VA provides case management and eligibility screening services while HUD allocates permanent housing subsidies based on the “Housing First” model.

Since 2008, 5,729 HUD-VASH vouchers have been issued to public housing authorities in New York State, as shown in the chart below:

<sup>21</sup> *The 2019 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress*, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, January 2020, p. 54, <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2019-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>.

<sup>22</sup> “Veterans and Homelessness,” Congressional Research Service, October 14, 2018.



<b>HUD-VASH Vouchers in New York State, 2008-2019<sup>23</sup></b>				
<b>Public Housing Authority</b>	<b>FY 2008-2013</b>	<b>FY 2014-2018</b>	<b>FY 2019</b>	<b>Total</b>
NYC Housing Authority	2,445	668	77	3,190
NYS Housing Trust Fund Corporation	705	350	0	1,055
Albany Housing Authority	210	126	10	346
Town of Amherst	210	125	0	335
NYC Dept of Housing Preservation and Development	83	171	0	254
Rochester Housing Authority	137	33	0	170
Syracuse Housing Authority	130	0	0	130
Poughkeepsie Housing Authority	60	0	0	60
Glens Falls Housing Authority	0	42	5	47
Rome Housing Authority	35	6	0	41
Village of Manlius/Christopher Community	15	21	0	36
Troy Housing Authority	0	10	5	15
Plattsburgh Housing Authority	0	10	5	15
Schenectady Municipal Housing Authority	0	10	5	15
Binghamton Housing Authority	10	0	0	10
Saratoga Springs Housing Authority	0	5	0	5
Amsterdam Housing Authority	0	0	5	5

*VA Grant and Per Diem Program*

The VA Grant and Per Diem (GPD) program was established in 1994 to fund community agencies providing supportive housing and/or supportive services for veterans experiencing homelessness. The program has offered grants for supportive housing (up to 24 months) and service centers offering services such as case management, education, crisis intervention, counseling, and services targeted towards specialized populations including homeless women veterans.<sup>24</sup> In September 2019, the GPD program awarded \$1,121,888 in annual grants for case management and transitional housing to providers in New York State working with six VA Medical Centers.<sup>25</sup>

*VA Supportive Services for Veteran Families*

The VA Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program was launched in 2011 to rapidly rehouse veteran families and to prevent homelessness for those facing

<sup>23</sup> "HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing HUD-VASH Vouchers 2008-2019," U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Accessed June 23, 2020, [https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PIH/documents/HUD-VASH\\_Vouchers\\_2008-2019.pdf](https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PIH/documents/HUD-VASH_Vouchers_2008-2019.pdf).

<sup>24</sup> "Grant and Per Diem Program," U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs, Accessed June 23, 2020, <https://www.va.gov/homeless/gpd.asp>.

<sup>25</sup> "Grant and Per Diem Program Case Management Grant Selection List," U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs, September 4, 2019, [https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/docs/GPD/GPD\\_CM\\_Awards\\_9-4-19.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/docs/GPD/GPD_CM_Awards_9-4-19.pdf).



imminent risk of losing their homes. Services are provided through grants to nonprofit organizations and consumer cooperatives with the capacity to offer outreach, case management, and assistance with benefits.<sup>26</sup> When first implemented, SSVF represented a new and unique model for VA. VA's report, *Effectiveness of Permanent Housing Program – FY 2012 Report* described SSVF:

It is a community-based, competitive grant program employing the principles of housing first to assist Veterans that are at imminent risk for losing their housing to maintain safe permanent housing. It is also designed to meet the need of Veterans that have fallen into homelessness, to rapidly re-engage with permanent housing and other supports to achieve community integration. It differs from VA's Grant and Per Diem program in that it focuses on permanent housing with supportive services being provided to maintain permanent housing in the community. It differs from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) - VA Supportive Housing (VASH) program in that the SSVF services are more time limited. Its focus is to assist those Veterans, who do not require the long term supports of HUD-VASH case management services, to maintain and sustain permanent housing. SSVF is highly flexible, Veteran-centric, and community-based.<sup>27</sup>

For FY 2020, \$28,757,836 in SSVF awards have been granted to fifteen community-based providers serving veteran families in New York State.<sup>28</sup>

### *Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program*

Initially authorized in 1987, the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) is an employment-focused competitive grant program of the U.S. Department of Labor and is the only federal grant to focus exclusively on competitive employment for homeless veterans.<sup>29</sup> HVRP grants in New York State are overseen by NYS DOL and operate in coordination with local CoCs and frequently in partnership with SSVF programs.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> "NCHAV - Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)," U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs, Accessed June 10, 2020, <https://www.va.gov/homeless/nchav/models/ssvf.asp>.

<sup>27</sup> *Effectiveness of Permanent Housing Program – FY 2012*, U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs, Accessed on June 10, 2020, p. 3, [https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/docs/SSVF/Effectiveness\\_of\\_SSVF\\_Program\\_Report\\_FY2012.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/docs/SSVF/Effectiveness_of_SSVF_Program_Report_FY2012.pdf).

<sup>28</sup> "FY 2020 SSVF Provider List," U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs, Accessed on June 10, 2020, <https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp>.

<sup>29</sup> "Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program," U.S. Department of Labor, Accessed June 9, 2020, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/vets/programs/hvrp>.

<sup>30</sup> "HVRP Publications," National Veterans' Technical Assistance Center, Accessed on June 10, 2020, <https://nvtac.org/grantees/resources-2/hvrp-publications-2/>.





## **New York State Progress on Reducing Veteran Homelessness**

New York State has had significant success in lowering the rate of veterans experiencing homelessness. In fact, HUD's 2019 *Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR)* to Congress reflected that New York State had the second-lowest rate of veterans experiencing unsheltered homelessness in the country at 1.8%.<sup>31</sup>

Following substantial federal support, between 2009 and 2019, New York State reduced the population of veterans experiencing homelessness by 78.4%<sup>32</sup> and several CoCs met the criteria listed above under the 2014 Mayor's Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness (see page 4 of this report). As of September 13, 2019, the following New York CoCs have effectively met the Mayor's Challenge criteria for having ended veteran homelessness: Albany, Buffalo / Western New York, Long Island, Poughkeepsie / Dutchess County, Rochester, Saratoga Springs, Schenectady, Syracuse, and Troy.<sup>33</sup>

New York City has had the highest number of homeless veterans in New York State, and has reduced veteran homelessness by nearly 90% since 2011.<sup>34</sup> In a letter dated December 29, 2015, the Executive Director of USICH confirmed that NYC "has achieved the milestone of effectively ending chronic veteran homelessness among veterans,"<sup>35</sup> and the city reports that it is "rapidly approaching 'Functional Zero,'" where homeless veterans are rehoused within 90 days of entering the system.<sup>36</sup> "Functional Zero" is a measurement that differs slightly from the Mayor's Challenge criteria, and is defined by HUD as "when the number of veterans experiencing homelessness within a community is less than the average number of veterans being connected with permanent housing each month."<sup>37</sup> HUD notes that while Mayor's Challenge criteria and "Functional Zero" differ, both ensure communities have a system in place to end veteran homelessness rather than only managing it.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> *The 2019 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress*, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, January 2020, pp. 12, 60, <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2019-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* p. 61.

<sup>33</sup> "Ending Veteran Homelessness: A Community by Community Tally," U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs, Accessed on June 30, 2020, <https://www.va.gov/homeless/endingvetshomelessness.asp>.

<sup>34</sup> "Housing," NYC Department of Veterans' Services, Accessed on June 10, 2020, <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/veterans/programs/housing.page>.

<sup>35</sup> "U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness: Letter to Mayor Bill de Blasio," NYC Department of Veterans' Services, December 29, 2015, [https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/home/downloads/pdf/press-releases/2015/NYC\\_Confirmation\\_Chronic\\_Milestone.pdf](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/home/downloads/pdf/press-releases/2015/NYC_Confirmation_Chronic_Milestone.pdf).

<sup>36</sup> "Housing," NYC Department of Veterans' Services, Accessed on June 20, 2020, <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/veterans/programs/housing.page>.

<sup>37</sup> "SNAPS In Focus: Ending Veteran Homelessness and What it Means for Zero: 2016 Communities," U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, April 7, 2016, <https://www.hudexchange.info/news/snaps-in-focus-ending-veteran-homelessness-and-what-it-means-for-zero-2016-communities/>.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*





## **New York State Progress on Veteran Employment**

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the unemployment rate for veterans in New York State in 2019 was 4% while the unemployment rate for non-veterans was 3.9%.<sup>39</sup> This represents an improvement over 2018, when New York State had an unemployment rate of 5% among veterans compared to 4% for non-veterans.<sup>40</sup> Nationally, the unemployment rate for veterans in 2019 was 3.1% and the rate for non-veterans was 3.6%.<sup>41</sup>

Despite modest progress, the unemployment rate for veterans in New York State remains higher than the national average, and higher than the rate of unemployment for non-veterans in New York State. Information on employment specific to veterans who have experienced homelessness or are at-risk for homelessness is not included in BLS data. More data and analysis are needed to drive coordinated action between federal, state, and local efforts to address veteran unemployment in New York State.

## **New York State Veterans Experiencing Homelessness**

On a single night in January 2019, the annual PIT survey estimated the number of veterans experiencing homelessness in New York State to be 1,270.<sup>42</sup> Of those, 684 (or 54%) were in NYC.<sup>43</sup> As shown in the table below, 91.0% of veterans experiencing homelessness identified as men, 8.7% identified as women, and 0.3% identified as transgender.<sup>44</sup>

A summary of known demographic data from the annual PIT estimate is detailed below, noting veterans experiencing homelessness in emergency shelters, transitional housing, and supportive housing, and those who were counted as unsheltered:

<b>2019 New York State PIT Estimate<sup>45</sup></b>						
<b>Demographics</b>	<b>Overall</b>	<b>Sheltered Emergency</b>	<b>Sheltered Transitional</b>	<b>Sheltered Supportive</b>	<b>Sheltered Total</b>	<b>Un- sheltered</b>
All	1,270	775	394	78	1,247	23
Female	110	91	12	6	109	1

<sup>39</sup> "Employment Situation of Veterans – 2019," U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Accessed June 30, 2020, <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/vet.htm>.

<sup>40</sup> "Employment Situation of Veterans – 2018," U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Accessed June 30, 2020, [https://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/vet\\_03212019.htm](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/vet_03212019.htm).

<sup>41</sup> "Employment Situation of Veterans – 2019," U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Accessed June 30, 2020, <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/vet.htm>.

<sup>42</sup> *The 2019 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress*, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, January 2020, p. 58, <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2019-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid. p. 64.

<sup>44</sup> Data Source: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2007-2019-PIT-Counts-by-State.xlsx>.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.



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Male	1,156	680	382	72	1,134	22
Transgender	4	4	0	0	4	0
Gender Non-Conforming	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	1,062	635	342	63	1,040	22
Hispanic/Latino	208	140	52	15	207	1
White	521	280	196	32	508	13
Black or African American	693	452	188	44	684	9
Asian	6	5	0	1	6	0
American Indian or Alaska Native	9	6	1	1	8	1
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	11	10	1	0	11	0
Multiple Races	30	22	8	0	30	0

The 2019 PIT data broken down by CoC indicates an overall decrease in veterans experiencing homelessness in New York State since 2011, with variances by locality that should be examined in subsequent reporting. For example, the 2019 PIT estimate for New York City shows a notable decrease in veteran homelessness of 85% since 2011, but a 13% increase from the year prior.

2019 New York State PIT Estimate by CoC <sup>46</sup>					
CoC Name	Sheltered	Un-sheltered	Total	+/- since 2011	+/- since 2018
Rochester/Irondequoit/Greece/Monroe County	65	5	70	59%	-4%
Elmira/Steuben, Allegany, Livingston, Chemung, Schuyler Counties	4	0	4	-91%	0%
Albany City & County	88	0	88	10%	5%
Cattaraugus County	1	0	1	-75%	0%
Syracuse, Auburn/Onondaga, Oswego, Cayuga Counties	40	1	41	-53%	0%
Schenectady City & County	12	0	12	20%	-54%
Buffalo, Niagara Falls/Erie, Niagara, Orleans, Genesee, Wyoming Counties	73	1	74	35%	-16%
Ithaca/Tompkins County	7	0	7	600%	-13%
Binghamton, Union/Broome, Otsego, Chenango, Delaware, Cortland, Tioga Counties	25	0	25	79%	47%
Troy/Rensselaer County	5	0	5	25%	400%
Wayne, Ontario, Seneca, Yates Counties	4	0	4	-89%	-80%
Jamestown/Dunkirk/Chautauqua County	3	0	3	0%	-25%
Clinton County	3	0	3	-57%	-25%
Utica/Rome/Oneida, Madison Counties	10	1	11	-15%	175%
Columbia/Greene County	4	0	4	0%	0%

<sup>46</sup> Data Source: <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2011-2019-PIT-Veteran-Counts-by-CoC.xlsx>.



Franklin County	2	0	2	0%	0%
Jefferson/Lewis/St. Lawrence Counties	2	0	2	-60%	-71%
Glens Falls/Saratoga Springs/Saratoga, Washington, Warren, Hamilton Counties	30	0	30	20%	15%
New York BoS	1	0	1	0%	0%
New York City	678	6	684	-85%	13%
Poughkeepsie/Dutchess County	7	0	7	-50%	40%
Newburgh/Middletown/Orange County	7	3	10	-47%	-41%
Nassau, Suffolk Counties/Babylon/Islip/ Huntington	124	4	128	-71%	-5%
Yonkers/Mount Vernon/New Rochelle/Westchester	41	1	42	-74%	-7%
Rockland County	3	0	3	200%	0%
Sullivan County	1	0	1	-91%	-67%
Kingston/Ulster County	7	1	8	-39%	60%

**Risk Factors Among Veterans for Homelessness**

Veterans continue to be overrepresented in homeless populations, appearing to have similar risk factors for homelessness as other adults, top among these being substance abuse, mental illness, and low income. When examining literature for risk factors specific to veterans, three criteria emerge as higher risk factors for veterans experiencing homelessness: “bad paper” discharges from the military, low pay grade/rank attained during service, and social isolation after military discharge.<sup>47</sup>

USICH notes additional risk factors for homelessness among veterans. For example, opioid use has appeared to increase risk of homelessness, with VA data reported in 2018 showing that the rate of homelessness for veterans who had initiated treatment for opioid use disorders was 10.2%, which was over 10 times the rate in the general population receiving care at the VA.<sup>48</sup> Also, among Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, the rate of homelessness for those experiencing military sexual trauma (MST) is approximately twice the rate of those not experiencing MST, with a slightly higher rate of experiencing homelessness among men who screened positive for MST as compared to women.<sup>49</sup>

**Conclusion**

The New York State Division of Veterans’ Services stands ready to assist veterans and their families who are experiencing or are at risk of experiencing homelessness. The

<sup>47</sup> Jack Tsai and Robert A. Rosenheck, “Risk Factors for Homelessness Among US Veterans,” *Epidemiologic Reviews*, Volume 37, Issue 1, 2015, Pages 177–195, January 16, 2015, <https://doi.org/10.1093/epirev/mxu004>.

<sup>48</sup> *Homelessness in America: Focus on Veterans*, United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, page 5, June 2018, [https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/Homelessness\\_in\\_America\\_Focus\\_on\\_Veterans.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Homelessness_in_America_Focus_on_Veterans.pdf).

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.



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dedicated and knowledgeable Veteran Benefits Advisors working at DVS provide free veterans benefits advising to help ensure that all New York veterans receive access to the benefits they have earned through their service to our state and nation. A toll-free information and referral hotline — 1-888-VETS-NYS (1-888-838-7697) — is available to refer veterans and their families to the Veteran Benefits Advisor nearest them.



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