



The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative

With a long-standing commitment to homeless military Veterans, the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) and the City of San Diego (City) are partnering on **The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative** to provide housing opportunities for up to 1,000 homeless Veterans in the city within one year, a new initiative of **HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO**, SDHC's landmark three-year Homelessness Action plan.

The initiative will invest close to \$12.5 million over two years in Federal, City and SDHC resources to provide housing in the city (ZIP code 92037 and ZIP codes that begin with 921, excluding 92118) for Veterans who are living on the streets or living in shelters. San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer first announced the initiative, which includes "Housing Our Heroes," a collaborative landlord-outreach effort, during his State of the City address in January.

The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative has four program components:

1. **Landlord Outreach – "Housing Our Heroes"**
2. **Rapid Re-housing Assistance**
3. **SDHC Federal VASH Vouchers**
4. **SDHC Federal Housing Vouchers with Supportive Services**

The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative will assist:

- 300 chronically homeless Veterans with an honorable discharge and a disabling condition who need supportive services and who qualify for the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) voucher program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which is administered by SDHC;
- 100 Veterans who are eligible for the HUD Sponsor-Based Housing Voucher program, which is administered by SDHC. Veterans will receive supportive services, such as case management; and
- Up to 600 additional homeless Veterans who will be provided with housing opportunities through the Rapid Re-housing Assistance program. Homeless Veterans need not have an honorable discharge to be eligible for Rapid Re-housing financial rental assistance.

All participants of **The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative** must be referred by SDHC partner agencies or organizations that provide supportive services to homeless San Diegans.

It is important that homeless Veterans add their names to a database that assesses their housing needs and vulnerability, which will help identify those homeless Veterans who are most in need. Agencies that will be able to add homeless Veterans to this Coordinated Assessment database, and that are located in the downtown area, are the Neil Good Day Center and The Joan Kroc Center at Father Joe's Villages.

Between 1,000 to 1,600 homeless individuals in the city are U.S. military Veterans, men and women who served their country, but they don't have a place to call home, according to data extrapolated from a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) analysis of the annual Homeless Point-in-Time Counts, required by HUD, which were conducted January 23, 2015, and January 23, 2014, as well as internal VA data.

The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative follows the Housing First model – to provide housing as quickly as possible, with supportive services as needed.



The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative

1. Landlord Outreach – “Housing Our Heroes”

Budget: \$4,408,551

Homeless Veterans Assisted: All homeless Veterans.

Landlords who rent their units to homeless Veterans are important partners in **The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative**. A low rental vacancy rate (currently 2.8 percent in the city, according to the San Diego County Apartment Association) and tight competition for affordable and market-rate apartments make it difficult for homeless Veterans to obtain rental housing.

This program provides incentives for landlords with rental properties in the city of San Diego who rent to homeless Veterans, such as:

- **Pre-inspections** – To expedite the rental process, SDHC will pre-inspect units to be rented to Veterans. The inspection certification is good for 60 days. In addition, the unit does not need to be occupied.
- **Incentive Payments for Landlords** – Landlords will receive \$500 for the first apartment they rent to a homeless Veteran and \$250 for each additional unit.
 - **Budget:** Up to \$677,500 total
- **Landlord Contingency Fund** – Funds will be set aside to help landlords cover expenses, such as repairs that exceed security deposits upon move-out, or to cover rent due to unforeseen vacancies.
 - **Budget:** Up to \$1 million total
- **Security Deposit & Utility Assistance** – An average of \$1,500 in security deposits and \$100 in utility assistance per household.
 - **Budget:** Up to \$1,470,000 total
- **Landlord Liaison** – SDHC will provide dedicated housing specialists to answer landlords’ questions, as well as to provide credit report and application assistance for homeless Veterans. SDHC will also coordinate recruitment fairs and training sessions for landlords, service providers and tenants.

For more information: email HousingOurHeroes@sdhc.org or call (619) 578-7768

Funding Sources: A grant from the City of San Diego resulting from the ground lease of San Diego Square; proceeds from the pending sale of Hotel Metro; HUD VASH Voucher Administration Fees; and HUD Extraordinary Administrative Fees for VASH vouchers.



HUD Secretary Julián Castro (right) speaking with landlord and U.S. Navy Veteran Chris Blatt (left) and U.S. Navy Veteran Leo, a VASH voucher recipient (center)



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2. Rapid Re-housing Assistance

Budget: \$1,967,250

Homeless Veterans Assisted: Up to 600 homeless Veterans and their families who become homeless because of an unexpected life experience, such as a job loss, domestic violence, or a medical crisis. Homeless Veterans need not have an honorable discharge to be eligible for this assistance.

Rapid Re-housing funds are awarded to nonprofit or for-profit service providers who apply for these funds through a competitive Notice of Funding Availability. The service providers will make these payments directly to the landlord;

- **Rental Payment Assistance** – Financial assistance varies; on average four to six months may be all that a homeless Veteran needs. However, in cases of extreme hardship, the funds may cover up to two years of rental payments.
- **Up-front Move-in Costs** – First and last month's rent, security deposits of \$1,500 on average per household, and utility deposit assistance of \$100 on average per household.

Nonprofit or for-profit service providers may also use these funds to provide case management and supportive services, such as mental health care, or to purchase furniture and/or move-in kits for homeless Veterans.

***Funding Sources:** A grant from the City of San Diego, resulting from the ground lease of San Diego Square, and proceeds from the pending sale of Hotel Metro*



Homeless Point-in-Time Count – 1.29.16



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3. SDHC Federal VASH Vouchers

Budget: \$2,685,600

Homeless Veterans Assisted: Chronically homeless Veterans with an honorable discharge and a disabling condition who need supportive services.

Additionally, 300 existing Federal HUD VASH vouchers are part of **The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative**.

VASH vouchers provide rental assistance to honorably discharged Veterans experiencing chronic homelessness while also having a disability.

SDHC obtained a waiver from HUD that allows for a 20 percent higher rent payment amount with a VASH voucher, effective February 1, 2016.

For example, the rent payment amount for a 1-bedroom apartment with a VASH voucher is now \$1,288 a month—up from \$1,074 a month.

SDHC partners with the VA San Diego Healthcare System to provide VASH vouchers.

The VA provides clinical health and case management services to VASH voucher recipients.

The local VA identifies Veterans who qualify for VASH vouchers. SDHC confirms their eligibility and enrolls them in the VASH voucher program.

The VASH voucher program is similar to the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, in which participants pay a portion of their rental costs. These Federal housing vouchers do not expire as long as the individual continues to meet qualifying criteria, such as income eligibility.

Funding Sources: HUD VASH funding

4. SDHC Federal Housing Vouchers with Supportive Services

Budget: \$3,410,800

Homeless Veterans Assisted: Homeless Veterans who are not eligible for Federal VASH vouchers.

Housing, combined with supportive services, such as mental health counseling; substance abuse treatment programs; and independent living skills classes help homeless Veterans begin to rebuild their lives.

Through a competitive Request for Proposals, SDHC will award 100 Sponsor-Based Housing Vouchers to nonprofit or for-profit organizations, or “sponsors,” to provide rental assistance to homeless Veterans to help pay for their housing.

Funding Sources: HUD Sponsor-Based Housing Vouchers and proceeds from the pending sale of Hotel Metro

Funding Approval Actions

February 12, 2016 – SDHC Board of Commissioners approved 6-0

March 1, 2016 – San Diego City Council approved 9-0



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Funding Sources

Extraordinary Administrative Fees for VASH Vouchers: A HUD program that supports the cost of administering VASH voucher programs, including landlord outreach activities, housing search assistance, pre-inspections of housing units, and additional services to ensure that VASH clients can move into their new homes as quickly as possible. — \$365,000

HUD VASH Voucher Administration Fees: — \$160,801

HUD VASH Rental Assistance: — \$2,685,600

HUD Sponsor-Based Housing Voucher Rental Assistance \$2,260,800

San Diego Square – A grant from the City of San Diego resulting from the ground lease of San Diego Square — \$4 million

Hotel Metro – Projected proceeds from SDHC’s impending sale of Hotel Metro. — \$3 million

Program Definitions

Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Vouchers: A HUD program, with supportive services from the VA, to provide monthly rental assistance to chronically homeless, honorably discharged Veterans with a disabling condition, who served in the military for at least two years. Additionally, qualifying criteria require that the Veterans or members of their household cannot be registered sex offenders. Participating Veterans must be able to complete activities of daily living and live independently in the community with case management and supportive services. SDHC administers this Federal program locally.

Income eligibility: *Up to 80 percent of the San Diego Area Median Income (\$45,400 a year for one person in 2015)*

Sponsor-Based Housing Vouchers: A HUD program that awards rental housing vouchers to nonprofit or for-profit organizations, or “sponsors” that provide supportive services to homeless individuals and families. This program can provide rental assistance for Veterans who do not qualify for VASH vouchers. SDHC administers this program locally, awarding housing vouchers to the sponsors through a competitive process.

Income eligibility: *Up to 80 percent of the San Diego Area Median Income (\$45,400 a year for one person in 2015)*

Rapid Re-housing Assistance: An SDHC program to help homeless Veterans and their families obtain a stable home as quickly as possible. The program is for Veterans who have become homeless because of an unexpected life experience, such as a job loss, domestic violence, or a medical crisis. Homeless Veterans need not have an honorable discharge to be eligible for this Rapid Re-housing Assistance.

Income eligibility: *There are no income requirements for this program.*



About SDHC's HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO

HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO, SDHC's three-year Homelessness Action Plan (2014-17) will impact the lives of as many as 1,500 homeless San Diegans.

Applying the power of its Federal, State and Local housing resources toward the goal of addressing homelessness, SDHC is a driving force in the implementation of the national Housing First model in the city of San Diego – to provide homeless individuals with housing as quickly as possible, with supportive services as needed.

HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO was announced on November 12, 2014 as a five-point action plan:

1. **Award Development Funds** – Up to \$30 million
2. **Commit up to 1,500 Federal Rental Housing Vouchers**
3. **Renovate Hotel Churchill** – 72 Units of Permanent Supportive Housing
4. **Invest “Moving to Work” Federal Funds to Acquire Property**
5. **Dedicate SDHC-owned Housing Units** – 25 for Homeless San Diegans

On December 3, 2015, SDHC announced new initiatives for the second year of **HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO**:

1. **The Guardian Scholars Program at San Diego State University (SDSU)** – Rental assistance for up to 100 students who have been homeless or at risk of homelessness.
2. **The Monarch School Project** – Federal housing vouchers for 25 families with students impacted by homelessness.
3. **Award Development Funds** – For the second consecutive year, up to \$10 million will be awarded to developers to create Permanent Supportive Housing or convert existing transitional housing to Permanent Supportive Housing, along with up to 300 Federal housing vouchers.

The 1,000 Homeless Veterans Initiative is the fourth new initiative announced as part of **HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO**'s second year.



Mayor Kevin Faulconer (podium), then-City Council President Todd Gloria (to the Mayor's left), SDHC President & CEO Richard C. Gentry (to the Mayor's right), and partners at the HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO News Conference – 11.12.14



About SDHC's HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO (Cont.)

HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO, First-year Accomplishments:

1. **Award Development Funds** – SDHC awarded \$8.2 million toward the construction of two new developments, Cypress Apartments in Downtown San Diego, which provides 62 permanent supportive housing units for homeless individuals and one manager's unit, and Talmadge Gateway Apartments in City Heights, which provides 59 permanent supportive housing units for homeless seniors and one manager's unit.
2. **Commit up to 1,500 Federal Rental Housing Vouchers** – SDHC awarded 180 new Federal rental housing vouchers to assist homeless and formerly homeless San Diegans. These vouchers will provide rental assistance for residents at: Cypress Apartments; Talmadge Gateway; as well as Alpha Square, a new construction development in the East Village neighborhood of Downtown San Diego that held its grand opening on November 18.
3. **Renovate Hotel Churchill** – Construction kicked off on June 30, 2015, and will be completed in June 2016. Hotel Churchill will remain affordable for 65 years. The \$20.5 million rehabilitation by SDHC and its nonprofit affiliate, Housing Development Partners (HDP), will set aside 72 units of Permanent Supportive Housing: 56 units for homeless Veterans; 8 units for youth aging out of the foster care system; and 8 units for adults exiting the corrections system who will also need supportive services.



*(Left to Right) U.S. Representative Scott Peters, Speaker of the California State Assembly Toni Atkins, SDHC President & CEO Richard C. Gentry, San Diego City Councilmember Todd Gloria, and HUD Secretary Julián Castro
Hotel Churchill Tour – 10.19.15*

4. **Invest “Moving to Work” Federal Funds to Acquire Property** – SDHC invested \$15 million in Federal “Moving to Work” funds to create affordable rental housing for low-income and homeless individuals. On May 1, 2015, SDHC purchased Village North Senior Garden Apartments (Village North) in the Clairemont Mesa community. Twenty percent of the apartments at Village North – 24 units – are being set aside for homeless seniors.
5. **Dedicate SDHC-owned Housing Units** – SDHC is one of the first public housing agencies in the nation to commit affordable rental housing that it owns (25 units) for homeless San Diegans. Between this program's launch on January 1, 2015, through October 31, 2015, this rapid re-housing component of HOUSING FIRST - SAN DIEGO assisted 31 homeless families, including five that became financially self-reliant and were able to move to permanent housing. This continuing commitment is an annual rental value of \$348,000.