

HUMAN SERVICES
CITY OF SAN ANTONIO



SAN ANTONIO

San Antonio is “Military City USA.” The City has a population of over 1.4 million residents including more than 265,000 active military service members, Veterans, and their families. Additionally, San Antonio is home to 107,466 Veterans, including 81,000 retired armed forces personnel, making it one of the largest military communities in the country.

In January 2015, Mayor Ivy Taylor signed on to the national Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness, and on May 9, 2016, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs confirmed the City of San Antonio had effectively ended Veteran homelessness.

The political will and public commitment to ending Veteran homelessness provided a path to permanent housing for **1,335** Veterans, including **123** Veterans experiencing chronic homelessness, most of whom had been on the streets for years. This unprecedented collaboration among local, federal, and private agencies demonstrated the effectiveness of resource coordination.

1,335
VETERANS
HOUSED



Key Strategies to End Veteran Homelessness:

Identify Leadership



To increase public awareness and community commitment to end Veteran homelessness, Mayor Taylor and the City Council championed the initiative and issued a call to action to the non-profit and business community. Developing political will and public commitment to meet the goals of the challenge were essential in establishing a foundation for success.



Establish A Working Group

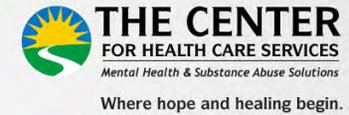
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The Department of Human Services (DHS) convened the Homeless Veteran Community Collaborative (HVCC), a working group of local homelessness and Veteran service providers, to identify, assess, and provide permanent housing options to Veterans experiencing homelessness. The HVCC began meeting bi-weekly in March 2015, and quickly adopted a common assessment tool and coordinated process to prioritize and offer permanent housing to all Veterans experiencing homelessness based on vulnerability. Major partners in the collaborative include:



Homeless Veteran Community Collaborative (HVCC)

- ★ South Alamo Regional Alliance for the Homeless (SARAH) Continuum of Care (CoC)
- ★ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs - South Texas Veterans Health Care System (VA-STVHCS)
- ★ San Antonio Housing Authority (SAHA)
- ★ Housing Authority of Bexar County (HABC)
- ★ American GI Forum National Veterans Outreach Program (AGIF)
- ★ Family Endeavors
- ★ Haven for Hope of Bexar County (Haven)
- ★ The Center for Health Care Services (CHCS)
- ★ SAMMinistries (SAMM)
- ★ United Services Automobile Association (USAA)



Create Dynamic By-Name List of Veterans Experiencing Homelessness

3 The HVCC created a dynamic by-name list of Veterans actively experiencing homelessness, with partners accountable for outreach, case management, and regular updates on their assigned Veterans. HVCC partners routinely utilize multiple internal and external data sources, including HMIS, as part of the coordinated access process, to identify Veterans to include on the Active Veteran List. This list is updated daily and includes all Veterans regardless of their discharge status, military status, or time served.



Conduct Coordinated Assessment & Entry

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The HVCC agreed on a common assessment tool, coordinated entry process, and accountability measures. Beginning July 1, 2015, the VI-SPDAT vulnerability assessment and scoring tool became a requirement at intake for all agencies that are part of the CoC. This scoring tool allows our community to prioritize Veterans with the most severe needs, so that scarce resources, like permanent supportive housing, are targeted to those who need it most. This prioritization process also ensures that no more Veterans in San Antonio will experience chronic homelessness.

HVCC partners routinely utilize homelessness prevention programs to prevent homelessness or quickly re-house Veterans and their families. If a Veteran does not qualify for SSVF homelessness prevention or VA housing or service programs, they are referred through a coordinated entry referral network that assesses the Veteran's eligibility for other programs funded by the CoC, State, County, City, or private dollars. Veterans who are not currently experiencing homelessness, but are accessing emergency rental, utility, food, or other assistance, are immediately identified by the community as being at-risk of experiencing homelessness and provided options to prevent homelessness.





Increase Funding for Permanent Housing

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To increase permanent housing opportunities, SARAH and HVCC partners realigned federal resources, while DHS redirected HUD's Emergency Solutions Grant, Fair Housing, and Housing Counseling, and HHS's Community Services Block Grant resources to support the initiative. DHS also required contracted agencies to prioritize services to Veterans and people experiencing chronic homelessness.



Community partners also identify permanent housing for all Veterans through collaborative working relationships with a network of reliable landlords. In order to provide rapid re-housing opportunities to Veterans, the HVCC partners work with more than 200 property managers and apartment complex owners.

The permanent housing programs offered by HVCC include services that promote long-term housing stability. Veterans exiting homelessness participate in a pre-screening process so that their strengths and needs can be assessed to develop a thorough Housing Stability Plan (HSP). They also receive regular follow-up by case managers and Navigators to prevent repeat episodes of homelessness.

Perform Gap Analysis & Identify New Resources



DHS and SARA identified gaps in the services and resources available to Veterans experiencing homelessness and prepared specific solutions to address each gap. This analysis created opportunities for local businesses and the community to become involved in ending Veteran homelessness.



As a result, in January 2016, USAA, a Fortune 500 company headquartered in San Antonio, joined the initiative, pledging \$2.1 million to provide essential unrestricted funding to serve Veterans regardless of eligibility for VA benefits; to expand the Navigator Support System; and to strengthen housing identification and retention. The unrestricted funding provided by USAA helped to solidify and strengthen the coordinated entry process.

DHS and the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) also introduced a Community Homeless Plan to address the challenges of homelessness through a balance of human services and public safety strategies. This plan includes creation of two multi-disciplinary SAPD IMPACT Teams, which consist of a SAPD Mental Health Unit officer, a San Antonio Fire Department Emergency Medical Technician, a CHCS Mental Health Specialist, and a Navigator. IMPACT serves as an initial point of contact in connecting individuals experiencing the longest periods of homelessness and those with severe mental illness and addiction to social services. The teams are vital to locating missing or inactive Veterans or identifying new Veterans who have entered homelessness and connecting them to HVCC partners and services.

RESOURCES

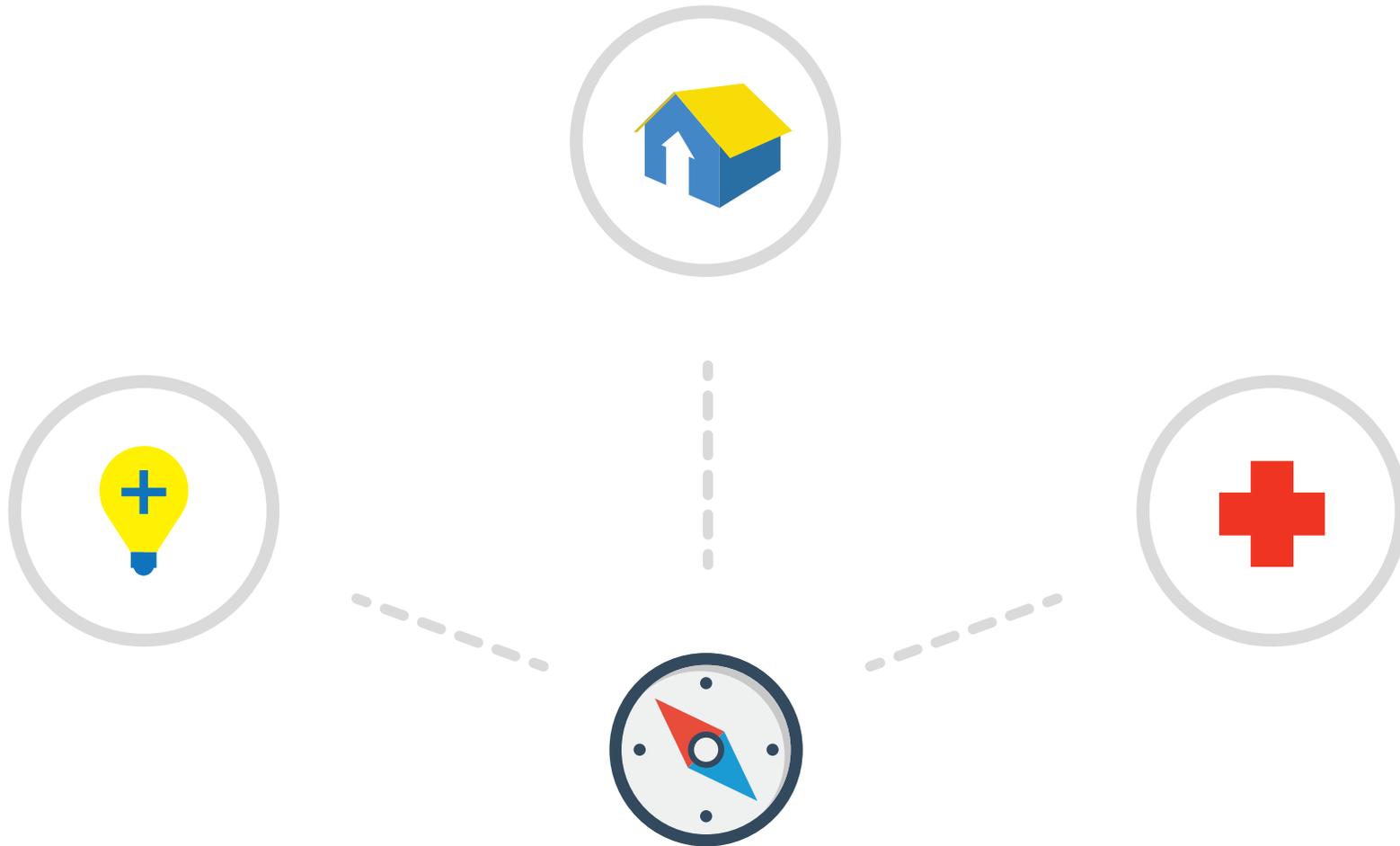


Other HVCC Partners

Implement Navigator Peer Support Program

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HVCC recognized early in the initiative that redirecting and identifying resources to support Navigation was a key to providing permanent housing opportunities to Veterans and ensuring they were successful in their housing. Navigators assist Veterans in the housing search and application process and, more importantly, develop ongoing relationships to ensure permanent housing is maintained.



MOVING FORWARD

Achieving these objectives does not mean that no Veteran will ever experience homelessness in San Antonio. However, the city, and our community partners throughout Military City USA, are committed to ensuring San Antonio Veterans will have stable housing and necessary support services to thrive.