



Assessing Whether Your Community has Achieved the Goal of Ending Veteran Homelessness

The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Department of Veterans Affairs have adopted [specific criteria and benchmarks for ending Veteran homelessness](#), in order to guide communities as they build the systems needed to achieve the goal.

The following questions can help you assess your community's progress. Our interagency review team will also ask for documentation that addresses these questions, if you choose to seek federal confirmation of your community's achievements. Please also read [these clarifications](#) and consult with one of your local federal representatives for guidance prior to submitting your responses.

- Your [HUD Field Office or Regional Office](#)
- Your [USICH Regional Coordinator](#)
- Your [VISN Network Homeless Coordinator](#)

Questions that Assess Whether Your Community Has Achieved the Criteria

1. Has your community identified all Veterans experiencing homelessness?

- a. How did your community identify all of the Veterans experiencing homelessness in your community?
- b. Can you describe the comprehensiveness of the outreach and engagement strategies, data sources, and other methods used to identify Veterans experiencing homelessness?
- c. Does your community have a by-name list of Veterans experiencing homelessness? Is that list updated regularly?
- d. Does the data include all homeless Veterans, including those who are in unsheltered locations and those who are in sheltered locations, such as emergency shelters, Grant and Per Diem and other transitional housing programs, other VA residential programs, and other temporary settings?
- e. Are all programs in your community accounted for in your list and data?
- f. Does your list and data include all people who served in the armed forces, regardless of how long they served or the type of discharge they received?
- g. Do your list and data include and clearly differentiate both Veterans that meet the definition of chronic homelessness and Veterans that are experiencing homelessness but do not meet the definition of chronic homelessness?
- h. Is your community able to provide comprehensive and current responses to the following questions?
 - i. How many Veterans are experiencing homelessness in your community?
 - ii. Of those Veterans currently experiencing homelessness, how many are unsheltered; in emergency shelter; in transitional housing; or in a safe haven?
 - iii. How many Veterans, sheltered and unsheltered, were identified in your Point-in-Time counts in 2014 and 2015?

iv. How many Veterans were identified in any more recent counts?

2. Does your community provide shelter immediately to any Veteran experiencing unsheltered homelessness who wants it?

- a. Does your community have the capacity to immediately offer some form of shelter to every Veteran and his or her family who wants it, including emergency shelter, bridge or transitional housing, or some other temporary setting?
- b. Is access to such shelter not contingent on sobriety, minimum income requirements, criminal records, or other unnecessary conditions?

3. Does your community only provide service-intensive transitional housing in limited instances?

- a. Does your community emphasize the use of transitional housing capacity as short-term bridge or interim housing while permanent housing opportunities are being arranged as quickly as possible?
- b. Are all Veterans offered a permanent housing opportunity prior to choosing to enter longer-term service-intensive transitional housing? Are those offers of a permanent housing opportunity also repeated frequently after a Veteran chooses to enter service-intensive transitional housing?

4. Does your community have the capacity to assist Veterans to swiftly move into permanent housing?

- a. What is the community-wide average length of time it takes for a Veteran to enter a permanent housing destination from the point of identification?
- b. How does that average compare to the federal benchmark of a 90-day average (with exceptions for small numbers of Veterans, as described in the criteria and benchmarks)?
- c. Is your community continually striving to reduce that average length of time?

5. Does your community have the resources, plans, and system capacity in place should any Veteran become homeless or be at risk of homelessness in the future?

- a. Does the community routinely use multiple data sources and conduct comprehensive outreach and engagement to identify Veterans?
- b. Does the community have an adequate level of resources and the capacity to provide appropriate services that will, whenever possible, prevent homelessness for at-risk Veterans?
- c. Does the community have an adequate level of resources and appropriate plans and services in place to promote the long-term housing stability of all Veterans who have entered permanent housing?

Questions that Assess Whether Your Community Has Achieved the Benchmarks

Please see the [specifications and benchmarks for ending Veteran homelessness](#) for more detail.

Benchmark A: Chronic Homelessness among Veterans has been Ended

1. What is the number of chronically homeless Veterans who are not in permanent housing?
2. What is the number of chronically homeless Veterans who have been offered a permanent housing intervention at least once every two weeks but who have either not yet accepted or not yet entered housing?

Benchmark B: Veterans have Quick Access to Permanent Housing

1. What is the total number of days it takes for all Veterans who become homeless to enter permanent housing?
2. What is the total number of Veterans who accessed permanent housing?
3. If your community-wide average is longer than 90 days, what are the factors in your community that account for a longer average length of time? What measures has your community taken to streamline the delivery of housing assistance to make this timeframe as short as possible?

Benchmark C: The Community has Sufficient Permanent Housing Capacity

1. Within the most recent 90-day period, what was the total number of Veterans exiting homelessness to permanent housing?
2. Within that same 90-day period, what was the total number of newly identified Veterans experiencing homelessness?

Benchmark D: The Community is Committed to Housing First and Provides Service-Intensive Transitional Housing to Veterans Experiencing Homelessness Only in Limited Instances

1. Within the most recent 90-day period, what was the total number of Veterans entering service-intensive transitional housing?
2. Within that same 90-day period, what was the total number of newly identified Veterans experiencing homelessness?

For More Information

For more guidance on documenting your community's achievement of the goal, [watch our webinar](#) and [read our responses to community questions](#). You should also consider using the [Federal Criteria and Benchmarks Review Tool](#) and [the Master List Template and Benchmark Generation Tool](#) to track your data.

As more communities approach and succeed in meeting the goal of ending Veteran homelessness, we will continue to review and evaluate the effectiveness of these criteria and benchmarks over time.