

Executive Summary

Homelessness amongst veterans in the United States is a growing problem especially since the U.S. is in a time of war. In general, contacting members of the homeless population can be a difficult task. Therefore, more effort must be put into ensuring that information and services are made available to those homeless citizens who have put their lives on the line for their country.

Researchers estimate that approximately 154,000 veterans are homeless on any given night, and approximately twice that number experience homelessness at some point over the course of one year. Of these homeless 67 percent served three or more years, 33 percent were stationed in a war zone, and 89 percent received an honorable discharge.

While organizations such as the Department of Veterans Affairs, Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services, and Soldier On provide comprehensive services to homeless veterans, there is a gap in the outreach process. Failure to notify and inform many homeless veterans who are in need of services is one of the biggest problems facing these organizations. The Department of Veteran Affairs reaches only 33 percent of homeless veterans over the course of a year. It is important to assist in outreach efforts in order to increase awareness of available services.

By creating a comprehensive resource brochure and distributing it to social service agencies, community centers, and places of worship, we may be able to help guide these homeless veterans to the appropriate services that they would otherwise not be aware of. The possible benefits of this are twofold. The providers will be able to see more veterans and offer them the appropriate services in a timely manner. Additionally, the brochure for outreach has been created at zero cost for any agency.

We have decided as a group that, in order to effectively provide services to homeless veterans, we must start by locating and notifying them of the programs and services for which they are eligible. The creation of the brochure is complete, and now it is just a matter of distributing it in order to serve those who have served all of us.