

# Engaging Landlords to End Veteran Homelessness

HONORING THEIR SERVICE WITH A HOME



**WELLS  
FARGO**

**CITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY  
HAVE MADE DRAMATIC  
PROGRESS ON THE ISSUE OF  
VETERAN HOMELESSNESS.**

Thanks to local leadership, targeted resources, and the use of data to drive best practices, veteran homelessness has fallen 47 percent since 2010—and the number of veterans sleeping on our streets has been cut nearly in half.



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has fallen 47 percent  
since 2010.**

## **THE NEED**

We must access existing housing. Cities cannot build enough affordable housing to end veteran homelessness.

## **THE CHALLENGES INCLUDE**

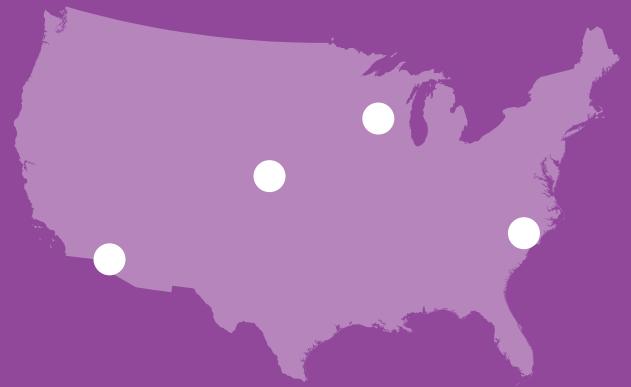
The existing lack of affordable housing, highly competitive rental markets, and the lack of landlords willing to rent to homeless veterans.

## **HOW WE'RE GETTING THERE**

Communities across the country are recognizing the need for housing units and nearly 1,000 local leaders have made a commitment to the issue through the Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness. Stakeholders are providing historic levels of funding to provide permanent and rapid re-housing to veterans.



To help cities address the challenges, the National League of Cities partnered with Wells Fargo and four cities to hold landlord engagement events.



## How did we select cities?

### KEY CRITERIA INCLUDED

- Participation in the Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness.
- City engagement with any of the federal technical assistance initiatives aimed at accelerating the implementation of best practices.
- Existing use of key best practices including a by-name-list of homeless veterans and regular case-conferencing meetings among service providers.

# CHALLENGE

## END VETERAN HOMELESSNESS



## WHO WAS INVOLVED IN THE EVENTS?

In addition to city officials, key players for these events included:

- Landlord and property management associations (e.g. Landlord Association of South Central Wisconsin and the Iowa/Nebraska Affordable Housing Management Association).
- Homeless service providers (e.g. local Continuum of Care; homeless outreach workers; transitional housing providers; Grant and Per Diem organizations; Supportive Services for Veteran Families administrators; community action agencies).
- Public Housing Authorities.
- Federal partners (e.g. Veteran Affairs Medical Center and HUD).



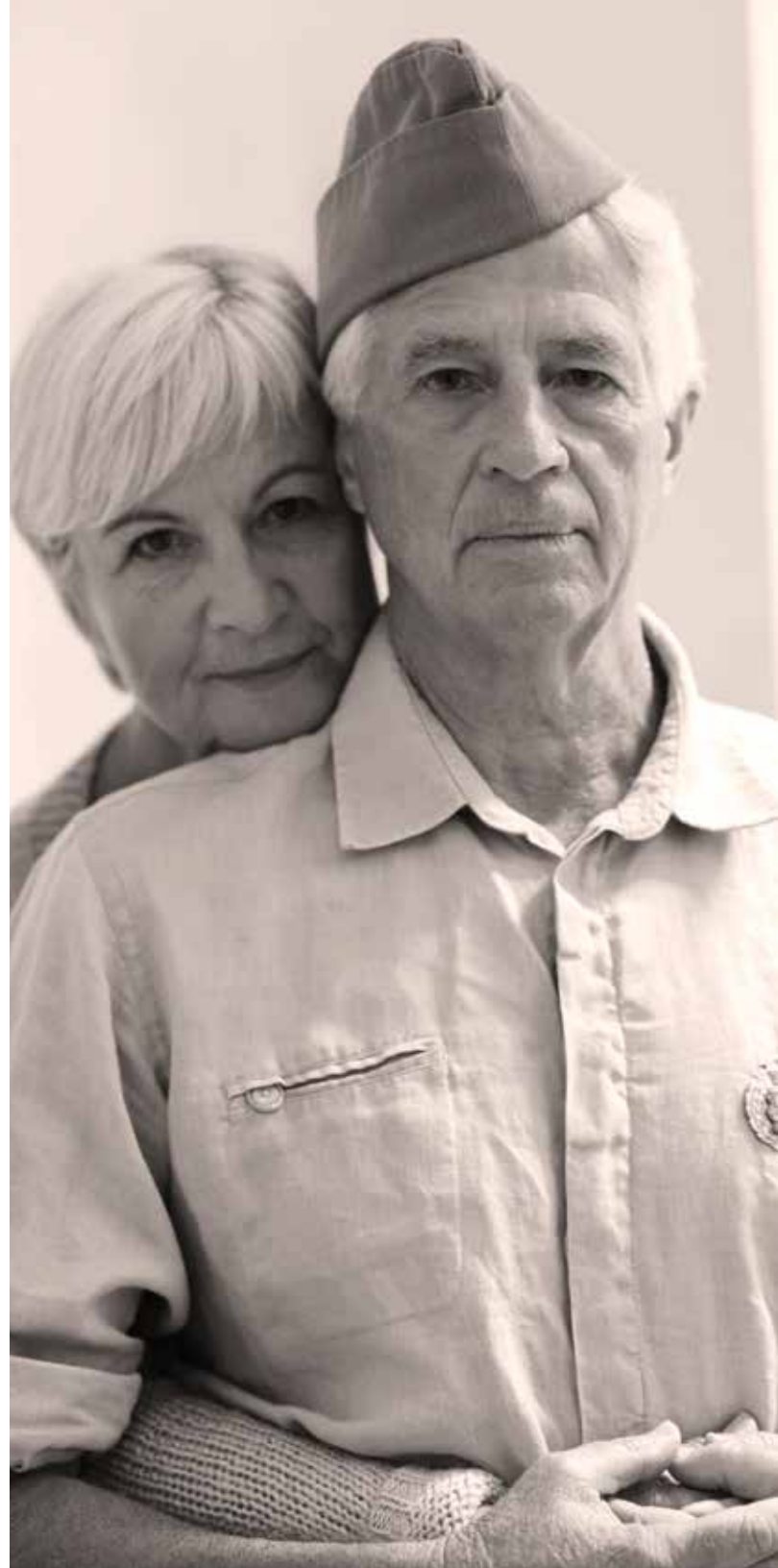


## **HOW DID WE REACH OUT TO LANDLORDS AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMPANIES?**

For these events, the landlords and property management companies associated with any or all of these groups received notice about the event.

## WHO RECEIVED NOTICE

- Landlords/property management companies with existing contracts with all area Public Housing Authorities.
- Landlords engaged with VA Medical Centers.
- Landlords engaged with SSVF providers.
- Landlord lists catalogued/maintained by any outside vendor used by area non-profits (e.g. Social Serve)
- Landlords/property management companies listed in the “Preservation Database” as using a state or federal subsidy.
- Membership of local landlord/property management member association.
- Multifamily housing rental properties that have Federal Housing Administration mortgage insurance and/or project based rent assistance contracts with HUD.



## WHAT INFORMATION DID WE COLLECT FROM LANDLORDS WHO REGISTERED OR ATTENDED THESE EVENTS?

- Basic contact information (mailing address, phone, and email)
- Number of units owned/managed
- Number of units currently vacant
- Type of units (i.e. studio, 1 bdrm, 2 bdrm, etc. - ideally of all units, but particularly those which are vacant)
- Rent on units (ideally of all units, but particularly those which are vacant)
- Willingness to be flexible on entry requirements?
- Willingness/desire to work with case managers in an on-going or as-needed basis?
- Credit checks performed?
- Willing to accept renter education certification in lieu of clean credit record/history of evictions?
- Criminal record checks performed?
- ADA compliant?
- Allow smoking?
- Allow pets? With or without deposit?
- Willingness to accept sex offenders?



# WHAT KEY LESSONS DID WE LEARN?

1

Mayoral/elected leader engagement/participation is key.

2

Engagement via co-sponsorship of events with local chapters of landlord/property management member associations is helpful.

5

Use cloud-based document/spreadsheet for registration process (e.g. Google Doc).

6

Keep participation/attendance of service providers to a minimum (only key leadership); engage them in a separate event.

3

Initial commitment of unit(s) announced at event are helpful.

4

Detailed and centralized registration process is necessary for maximum benefit (i.e. find out as much key information about the landlords and their properties as possible).

7

Have landlords speak who have participated in both HUD-VASH and SSVF.

8

Specify to community team leadership who should be conferred with about event and what commitment means (i.e. PHAs/invitations; SSVF providers; VAMC; overall reporting; prompt follow-up with landlords; integration with case conferencing/housing match teams).

# HOW DID THESE EVENTS HELP THESE COMMUNITIES AND THEIR HOMELESS VETERANS?

- Twenty veterans placed into housing, a 17 percent increase in housing placement.
- Deepened relationship with new mayor resulting in weekly meetings between the mayor and homeless service providers.
- Five new landlords partnering with homeless service providers resulting in providers not being able to fill all of the empty units offered by landlords.

- Community has housed 106 veterans since the event.
- Stakeholders credit the event with bringing together landlords and service providers for the first time, building/expanding relationships and helping with increase access to housing for veterans.

## CHARLESTON, SC



## TUCSON, AZ





- Five units committed by local company and announced at event.
- Representatives from 26 distinct landlord/property management companies attended the event with eight reporting having 152 vacant units of housing.
- Generated interest in similar event from Lincoln Homeless Coalition.

## OMAHA, NE



- One unit was committed by a local company, announced at the event and filled with a veteran.
- Following the event, another local company committed 2-4 units.
- Representatives from 17 distinct landlords/property management companies attended the event.
- Eight (8) of those 17 reported having a total of 590 vacant units of housing.

## MADISON, WI



To learn more about how NLC can support your community's efforts to end veteran homelessness, visit [www.nlc.org/veteranshousing](http://www.nlc.org/veteranshousing) -or- contact **Elisha Harig-Blaine**, Principal Housing Associate (Veterans & Special Needs) at [harig-blaine@nlc.org](mailto:harig-blaine@nlc.org) or (202) 626-3005.

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LEAGUE  
OF CITIES

CITIES STRONG TOGETHER

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