



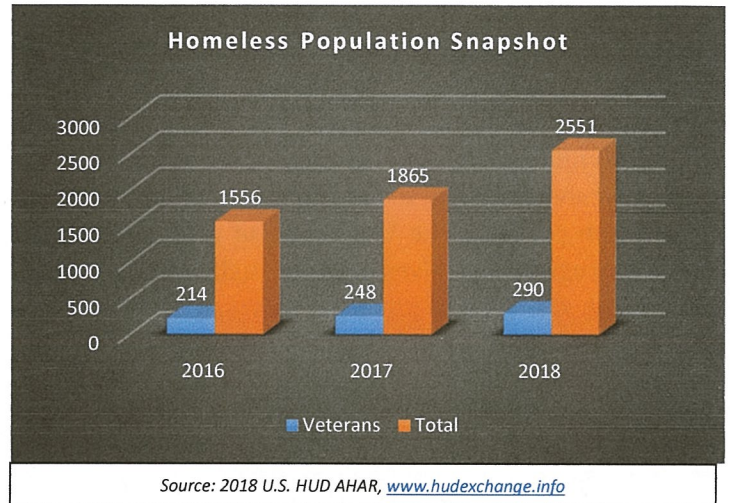
# Veterans Integration Centers (VIC)

## White Paper

The Veterans Integration Centers has been helping Veterans and their Families since 2005. As the only nonprofit that can immediately house a literally homeless Veteran, and their family, in one place, the VIC strives to be the premiere organization in New Mexico working to combat a crisis – homelessness among our Veteran families. In 2018 the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recorded a 2.8% increase in New Mexico's homeless population and a jump of 16.9 percent for homeless Veterans; one of the highest in the nation.

The VIC has created multiple programs that have become the model for how nonprofits and the community can work cohesively to combat Veteran homelessness. The VIC applies a “No Wrong Door” approach to service delivery. That is, we break barriers down that may otherwise keep a Veteran from seeking help or accessing services. No problem is too big and no concern too small; we strive to solve around these problems and work hard to help a Veteran family achieve success.

Through an aggressive application of the Housing First model of fighting homelessness, the VIC operates multiple housing options that address the full spectrum of needs. These include Emergency, Transitional and Rapid Re-housing options. These options ensure that a homeless veteran willing to accept help can effectively be removed from the streets and be placed in a safe and supportive environment immediately anywhere in New Mexico as their first step to long-term self-sufficiency and independence. For those who are at-risk of homelessness, our programs can provide an avenue to avoid becoming homeless and work on the barriers that keep them from being sustainable.



**Emergency Housing**, something to a problem that is grossly underfunded, but critically necessary in preventing homelessness, enables a literally homeless Veteran, and family of up to 4, to be immediately removed from the homeless event, thereby increasing their chance of success by 21%. Provided for up to 7 days, this program enables our teams to effectively assess and determine appropriate next steps to provide the Veteran with the best opportunity to address their struggles and become independent. Our program also goes one step further, and can be used by any agency in the state providing services to a Veteran without having to re-enroll them into VIC programs. Our goal is not to remove Veterans from their supportive system, but enable

others to help our Veteran families with a unified front of support.

Our **Transitional Housing** program, available for up to 2 years, allows the Veteran, and a family of up to 4, to continue their journey in a “transition” phase that will focus on the issues and problems that led to their homeless event. This includes multiple complex issues including trauma, PTSD, domestic violence or circumstances beyond their control. It includes financial readiness counseling and education, substance use disorder treatment, a re-education on life skills that many of us take for granted



including cooking, laundry, life planning, and an adjustment to relying on others as their new family rather than struggling alone and having no one to turn to for advice, help or support.

Our **Rapid Re-Housing** program is the final step toward new independence. Our team helps them move into their new apartment where they continue to receive the support of their new family. As the VIC says, we turn a "house into a home." By providing the Veteran family with all essential living needs including furniture for every room, a bed to sleep on, and the basic essentials for the kitchen, the VIC believes in providing everything a Veteran family needs so that they do not struggle and can continue their road to recovery. We do this through our **Donations and Move-In** program that enables the Veteran family to move into their new home seamlessly and re-distribute tax-deductible donations each year. With over 85% of what we receive returned to the Veteran community, our program is critical in the reintegration process. The VIC is one of very few programs that fills this unmet need. The program also gives back through employing two Veterans with part-time employment. Our way of paying it forward in our effort to improve employment opportunities for our Veterans.



**Operation Warrior Recovery:** By applying the tenants learned in military service, the VIC ensures that no Veteran family is left behind. We have dedicated Peer Support Specialists on staff, with lived experience, that can relate to the Veteran and their plight. Acting as a "battle buddy", the Peer Specialist provides a listening ear to prevent Veterans from becoming one of the 22 dying each day from suicide. They allow the Veteran to ask questions they may not normally ask their case manager and create their first new family member, for many in decades. This model of support has been proven to work effectively in suicide reduction, and

enables our programs to boast a 78% success rate (continued housing stability) 12-months after exit from our programs. With the national average at 64 to 67%, the VIC is making high strides in the homeless Veteran landscape for New Mexico.

Over 90% of the VIC staff are Veterans or family members, we believe in ensuring that all Veteran families are supported and can deal with the pressures in life productively. In being good stewards of the community, the VIC operates a **Food Pantry** in the second-most impoverished area of Albuquerque where we distribute over 87,000 pounds of USDA-approved food products each year to over 1100 needy families. This includes home delivery to housebound Veterans that are food insecure. Supported by agency's like the Roadrunner Food Bank, Sprouts Grocery and other great donors, the Pantry ensures that no family will be without a meal.



As the VIC moves into the future, we will continue to increase our services so that no Veteran is left behind. As the only organization in New Mexico with immediate housing services, including up to a family of 4, we are working toward finding new options to expand housing services and enable our aging Veteran families affordable housing options. This also includes our National Guard and Reserve Veterans who generally are ineligible for any federal programs, although they have served our great state, and this nation, with honor and distinction.

Working to provide services to our over 153,000 Veteran families in New Mexico poses many challenges. Aside from finding and providing new grant-funded programs and services, the highly rural environment of the state is challenging and poses other barriers to accessing services for our Veteran families. In turn, the limited affordable housing stock that continues to dwindle is an obstacle that creates a struggle for the organization and all Veteran families living at or below the poverty line. But, as we say at the VIC we will continue to provide services to our nation's Heroes and their families "*Beyond the Battlefield*" for as long as it takes!



***Supporting Veteran Families  
"Beyond the Battlefield"***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 07/15/2019**

Contact: Wendy Webber, Veterans Integration Centers  
Development Director  
wendy.webber@nmvic.org | 505-296-0800 (office) | 505-239-5334 (cell)

**VIC BEGINS NEW PROGRAM FOR VETERAN FAMILIES**  
***Operation Rapid Response to assist Veterans including National Guard & Reserve Veterans; and  
Un-remarried Surviving Spouses***

(Albuquerque, NM) –Since 2005, the Veterans Integration Center (VIC®) has supported over 12,000 Veterans and their families throughout New Mexico. With a primary focus on ending Veteran homelessness, the VIC is responsive to all Veteran needs and helping our nation's Heroes and their families, from every generation, find resources and services to meet those unique needs. The VIC serves over 450 Veteran families each year through a multitude of programs and housing services including Emergency, Transitional and Rapid Re-Housing models that enable a Veteran, and their family, to end the cycle of homelessness by moving toward sustainability and independence. The VIC also gives back by supporting over 1100 needy families in the community with our Food Pantry providing over 87,000 pounds of food annually to impoverished families.

Operation Rapid Response, a new program funded with a grant by the NM Behavioral Health Services Division (BHSD), will provide emergency housing and supportive services to eligible Veterans that now includes those who have or are currently serving in the National Guard or Reserve forces. The program will also include a new growing population in New Mexico: the un-remarried surviving spouse of a Veteran.

New Mexico has an estimated 4500 citizen Soldiers currently serving, over 150,000 registered Veterans, and a long history of service to our state and nation. The VIC has had to deny services to hundreds of New Mexico's part-time Heroes because of a lack of active military service outside of the state. Unfortunately, federal programs prohibit providing services to these New Mexico Heroes, and the VIC has always advocated that all Veterans, regardless of status, serve selflessly and should never be forced to suffer because of this problem. And, with one of the nation's largest older Veteran populations, there are many New Mexicans that are widowed because their Hero has passed and are on limited incomes quietly struggling to stay housed or find a way to start again.

The VIC has also made these funds available to partner organizations currently supporting Veteran families anywhere in New Mexico and can be accessed by contacting the VIC directly. Case Managers supporting Veterans in their area will work with VIC staff to meet a large unmet need in emergency housing funding, a key first step for a homeless Veteran families' road to recover

For additional information about the Veterans Integration Centers please visit [nmvic.org](http://nmvic.org) or call us at 505-296-0800.

###





# 2018 Annual Report

As Veteran homelessness continues to increase in New Mexico, the VIC is working hard to end the cycle and provide comprehensive services to all our nation's Heroes, including Veterans of the Active, National Guard, Reserve and Unremarried Surviving Spouses as we support Veterans & their families

*"Beyond the Battlefield"*

## POPULATION

**150,650**  
VETERANS In New Mexico

## PEOPLE

  **1 In Every 9**  
**New Mexicans**  
Is a **VETERAN**

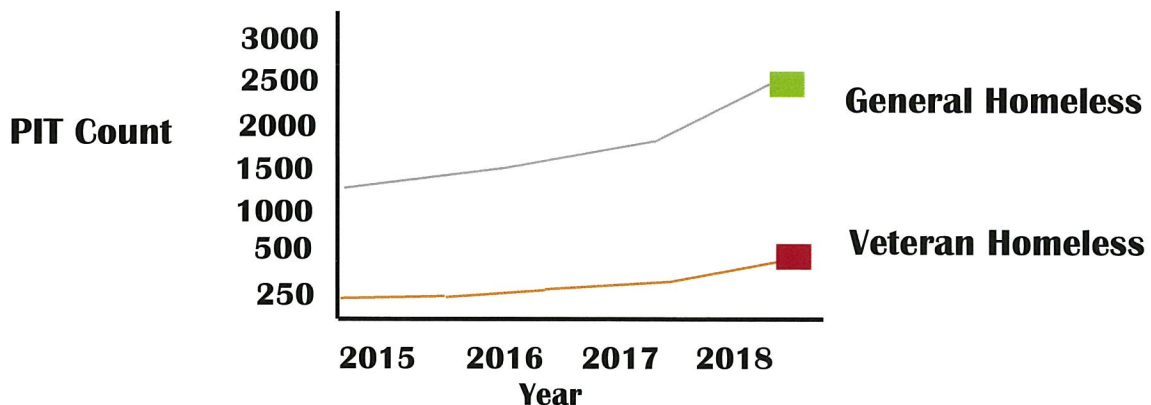
## AGE

**55 TO 74**  
Average Age of **VETERAN** In New Mexico

## THE PROBLEM

**8.9% VETERANS** Living  
In Poverty In New Mexico

## HOMELESS POPULATION



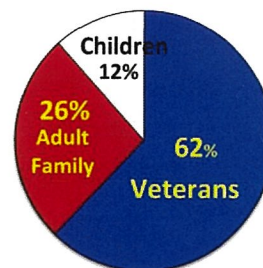
Source: 2015 – 2018, US HUD AHAR, [www.hudexchange.info](http://www.hudexchange.info)

**New Mexico is one of only a handful of states where the general homeless and homeless Veteran population has increased constantly over the last 4 years. Something has to be done to honor their service and struggle to reintegrate with society.**

**OUR Success is measured *One Veteran at a Time***

## FAMILIES ARE OUR MISSION

**452 VETERANS**  
**Family Members 191**  
**84 Children**





## HOUSING STABILITY

**518** FAMILIES

Housed

**78%** SUCCESS RATE

12 months After Exit

## FOOD SECURITY

**1,183** HOUSEHOLDS

Served

**87k** POUNDS

Food Distributed



---

## *What can **YOUR** Donation do to Help?*



**\$20**

Winter Coat



**\$30**

Pants &  
Pair of Shoes



**\$50**

One day of  
Emergency  
Housing & Food



**\$100**

One week of  
Meals & clothing  
for a child

With an overhead of **less than 10%**, and a commitment to serving Veterans and their Families throughout New Mexico for over 15 years, the VIC is committed to working with all partners to provide a comprehensive array of supportive services that enable Veteran families to break the cycle of homelessness. If you would like to work with us, or for more information, please contact us at [info@nmvic.org](mailto:info@nmvic.org) or call (505) 296-0800.



