

c. **HUD-VASH or Veteran Family.** A “HUD-VASH family” or “Veteran family” refers to either the single Veteran or a Veteran with a household composed of two or more related persons. The term “HUD-VASH family” or “Veteran family” also includes one or more eligible persons living with the Veteran who are determined to be important to the Veteran’s care or well being, or the surviving member(s) of a Veteran’s family, described in this definition, that were living with the Veteran in a unit assisted under the HUD-VASH Program at the time of the Veteran’s death. The composition of the household must be approved by PHA. The family must promptly inform PHA of the birth, adoption, or court-awarded custody of a child. Other persons may not be added to the household without prior written approval of the owner and PHA.

NOTE: HUD references “Family” in their regulations for HUD-VASH (Notice Public and Indian Housing (PIH) 2010-12 HA.) The partnerships with HUD and PHA require an understanding of their terminology to improve cross agency communication.

d. **Homeless.** The HUD-VASH Program follows the definition of “homeless” as authorized in 38 U.S.C. 2002(1) and The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended by S. 896 The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009.

NOTE: See <http://www.hudhre.info/hearth/>. Homeless refers to:

- (1) An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.
- (2) An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.
- (3) An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately-operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including hotels and motels paid for by Federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals or by charitable organizations, congregate shelters, and transitional housing).
- (4) An individual who resided in a shelter or a place not meant for human habitation and who is exiting an institution where the individual temporarily resided.
- (5) An individual or family who:
 - (a) Will imminently lose their housing, including housing they own, rent, or live in without paying rent, are sharing with others, and rooms in hotels or motels not paid for by Federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals or by charitable organizations, as evidenced by:
 1. A court order resulting from an eviction action that notifies the individual or family that they must leave within 14 days.
 2. The individual or family having a primary nighttime residence that is a room in a hotel or motel and where they lack the resources necessary to reside there for more than 14 days.

3. Credible evidence indicating that the owner or renter of the housing will not allow the individual or family to stay for more than 14 days, and any oral statement from an individual or family seeking homeless assistance that is found to be credible must be considered credible evidence for purposes of this clause.

(b) Has no subsequent residence identified.

(c) Lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing.

(6) Unaccompanied youth and homeless families with children and youth defined as homeless under other Federal statutes who:

(a) Have experienced a long-term period without living independently in permanent housing;

(b) Have experienced persistent instability as measured by frequent moves over such period; and

(c) Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of chronic disabilities, chronic physical health or mental health conditions, SUD, histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse, the presence of a child or youth with a disability, or multiple barriers to employment.

NOTE: The term "homeless" or "homeless individual" does not include any individual imprisoned or otherwise detained pursuant to an Act of Congress or a state law.

e. **Chronically Homeless.** The HUD-VASH Program follows the Federal definition of the term "chronically homeless" from the HEARTH Act, which states, with respect to an individual or family, that the individual or family:

(1) Is homeless and lives or resides in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter;

(2) Has been homeless and living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter continuously for at least 1 year or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years;

(3) Has an adult head of household (or a minor head of household if no adult is present in the household) with a diagnosable SUD, serious mental illness, developmental disability (as defined in section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15002)), post-traumatic stress disorder, cognitive impairments resulting from a brain injury, or chronic physical illness or disability, including the co-occurrence of two or more of those conditions; and

(4) A person who currently lives or resides in an institutional care facility, including a jail, SUD or mental health treatment facility, hospital, or other similar facility, and has resided there for fewer than 90 days must be considered chronically homeless if such person met all of the requirements described in subparagraph 4e prior to entering that facility.

e. Have the freedom and flexibility to develop innovative approaches to reach out to the community and assist homeless Veterans.

(1) Non-traditional approaches may include casual dress, irregular tours of duty, the use of office space donated by community agencies, and the coordination of activities with community groups.

(2) Staff independence may necessitate medical facilities to recognize additional considerations for program safety, employee security, and job effectiveness (available vehicles for outreach and case management activities, cellular phones, laptop connectivity, additional security services, etc.).

18. REFERRAL

Referral sources may include any of the following:

- a. The local CoC, community partners or other community-based stakeholders,
- b. VA's National Homeless Call Center (1-877-4AID VET or 1-877-424-3838),
- c. Veteran self-referral,
- d. Other VA Homeless programs, and
- e. Other VA or community medical facilities and programs including CBOCs and Vet Centers.

NOTE: *It is acceptable to evaluate a Veteran for participation in a HUD-VASH Program if the Veteran is a current participant in one of VA's homeless residential programs, such as MHR RTP, CWT-TR, or GPD. Veterans from these programs must meet the definition of homeless with priority for vouchers being given to those Veterans who are chronically homeless and most vulnerable. According to the HEARTH Act, individuals are no longer considered "chronically homeless" when the length of stay exceeds 90 days, however, this does not preclude admission to the HUD-VASH program if clinically indicated and substantiated. In such cases, a discussion must occur between the referring program and HUD-VASH staff.*

19. PROGRAM PARTICIPANT TARGETING

- a. Veteran participants in the HUD-VASH Program must be homeless and meet VA health care eligibility as defined by law and regulation.
- b. The target population for HUD-VASH needs to include the chronically homeless Veteran who is the most vulnerable and often has severe mental or physical health problems and/or SUD, with frequent emergency room visits, multiple treatment failures, and limited access to other social supports. However, other Veterans who are homeless with diminished functional capacity and resultant need for case management are also eligible for the program.