



MEDIA RELEASE

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MVA LAUNCHES HOMELESS SERVICES DIVISION TO REDUCE VETERAN HOMELESSNESS

L.A. County Department of Military & Veterans Affairs Leverages Funds Approved by Board of Supervisors to Launch New Division

LOS ANGELES, CA – The Los Angeles County Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (MVA) will officially launch its Homeless Services Division (HSD) thanks to funding approved today by the Board of Supervisors, which will enhance the One Team initiative with the Veterans Administration (VA), city, and community partners.

In calendar year 2023, thanks in large part to the VA-led One Team, 1,790 veterans were placed into permanent housing, a 38% increase over the previous year. The introduction of HSD builds upon that growth while laying the groundwork for even larger gains in the year ahead.

Allocating funds made available through Measure H, the Board approved \$1.9 million for MVA to launch its new division. Measure H was passed in March 2017 by more than “two-thirds of County voters to create the first revenue stream dedicated to addressing and preventing homelessness,” according to the L.A. County Chief Executive Office Homeless Initiative (CEO-HI).

Measure H was approved as a ten-year funding mechanism, set to expire in 2027 unless renewed.

“Los Angeles County is addressing our homelessness crisis with urgency, including offering intentional, targeted services to our veteran community. We can and we must end veteran homelessness, and the dedicated team within our MVA will get it done,” said Chair Lindsey P. Horvath. “Any service member living without shelter is a tragedy that we have the responsibility and opportunity to correct.”

HSD will consist of four primary functions: Master leasing/housing, targeted benefits establishment (including a legal clinic), matching services and resource centers.

The process of “master leasing/housing” will start with MVA locating suitable apartments across the county and then coordinating with CEO-HI and Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) to enter into a master lease which guarantees the landlord will receive full rent payment from LAHSA. In turn, LAHSA then operates as the property manager working with MVA, the Veterans Administration (VA) and other partners to fill the units within five days of their availability.

Master leasing as a program will remain engaged beyond the actual housing of veterans



and their families through VA case management, while MVA will establish connections to benefits and resources.

To achieve “targeted benefits establishment,” MVA accredited benefits representatives will monitor the “by-name list” of veterans experiencing homelessness, connecting with their case managers to ensure those veterans have the tailored, proactive support they need to establish benefits such as service-connected disability ratings, pension and social security. This will also include a legal clinic focused on discharge upgrades and assisting veterans with eligibility for VA healthcare and benefits.

Working with the city and council of governments across the county, MVA will explore establishing resource centers in communities where veterans reside, bringing services and Veterans Health Administration (VHA) partners to their communities.

“Ultimately, the mission of this new division will be markedly increased efficiency in our approach to veteran homelessness,” said MVA Director Jim Zenner. “The goal is to initiate innovation, increase access, reduce duplication of services, fill gaps and streamline service delivery.”

To achieve this goal, MVA will collaborate with CEO-HI, LAHSA, VHA, as well as other county departments and partners.

“I can’t emphasize enough the critical role our Board played in this development,” Zenner said. “They really led the way on this, and without their foresight and leadership we wouldn’t be making this announcement. Together with our partners, we see veteran homelessness as solvable and the county is doubling down on its commitment to get there”

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The LA County Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (MVA) provides assistance to L.A. County veterans, active service members and their families with resources, programs, services and state and federal benefits, including: compensation and pension claims, burial benefits and services, medical and mental health referral, education and vocational rehabilitation, home loans and grant applications, employment and job placement assistance, DMV veteran designation, legal service referrals, appeal processes, programs for incarcerated veterans, as well as aid and attendance.

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