

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
TUESDAY, APRIL 22, 2025**

MINUTE ORDER NO. 19

SUBJECT: ENDING VETERAN HOMELESSNESS (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

Homelessness remains a critical issue in the County of San Diego, particularly among the veteran population. As one of the largest military communities in the United States, San Diego is home to over 240,000 veterans who have made significant sacrifices in service to our country. However, many face substantial challenges during their transition from active duty to civilian life, including securing stable employment, accessing healthcare, and finding affordable housing in an increasingly competitive market.

The transition to civilian life often results in the loss of the support structures that veterans relied on during their active-duty military service. Combined with the region's rising housing costs, this leaves veterans vulnerable to homelessness.

According to a 2023 study by the Journal of American Medical Association psychiatry, veterans are more likely to suffer from mental health challenges and substance use disorders than the general population. Addressing veteran homelessness is not only a moral imperative but also a strategic priority for the County.

The County has made important strides in recent years to address homelessness, with targeted initiatives specifically focused on reaching functional zero for veteran homelessness. These efforts have yielded promising results, including increased housing placements, improved coordination with service providers, and expanded access to mental health and substance use disorder treatment. However, the scale and urgency of the issue demands a more streamlined, collaborative, and scalable response to accelerate progress and ensure that no veteran is left behind.

By creating a by-name list and targeting landlords via social media, the County will leverage data-driven, evidence-based strategies to expedite access to stable housing and treatment to end veteran homelessness regionwide.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

SUPERVISOR JIM DESMOND

1. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to develop a social media campaign that targets landlords to encourage increased participation in the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program and report back to the Board within 180 days with a strategy, cost and funding options. This strategy should include retargeting landlords who have previously participated in the program or expressed interest.
2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to develop a strategy to end veteran homelessness using a by-name-list specific to veterans and report back to the Board within 180 days.

3. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to assess the feasibility of establishing a fund to provide landlords participating in the VASH voucher program with financial assurance for property damage caused by VASH tenants and report back to the Board within 180 days.
4. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to collaborate with other jurisdictions to deploy the veteran by-name-list strategy regionwide. Report back with an update on collaboration efforts within 180 days.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Veterans are disproportionately impacted by substance use and mental health challenges, which can make securing stable housing more difficult. By developing a by-name list and engaging directly with landlords, we can improve access to housing and offer those who have served a stronger pathway to long-term stability.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The proposed action to identify funds to increase landlord participation in housing homeless veterans would contribute to the County of San Diego's Sustainability Goal of protecting health and wellbeing. Creating a veteran-specific by-name-list also contributes to the County of San Diego's Sustainability goal of protecting health and wellbeing.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for the actions requested are included in the Fiscal Year 2024-25 Operational Plan based on existing staff time in the Health and Human Services Agency funded by General Purpose Revenue and other funding sources. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years. There may be fiscal impacts associated with recommendations included in staff's report back to the Board, depending on the proposed strategy and feasibility. Any necessary appropriation and funding changes or additions would return to the Board for consideration and approval.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ACTION:

Noting for the record that this item was heard on April 23, 2025; ON MOTION of Supervisor Lawson-Remer, seconded by Supervisor Montgomery Steppe, the Board of Supervisors continued this item to May 6, 2025.

AYES: Lawson-Remer, Montgomery Steppe, Desmond

NOT PRESENT: Anderson

ABSENT: (District 1 Seat Vacant)

State of California)
County of San Diego) §

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of the Original entered in the Minutes of the Board of Supervisors.

ANDREW POTTER
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors



Signed
by Andrew Potter

