



Governor

Philip Murphy

Commissioner

Jacquelyn Suárez

OFFICE OF HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION:
BRINGING VETERANS HOME:
SYSTEM ENHANCEMENTS – SFY25

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS - SFY25

RFP Due Completed in DCA SAGE: No later than 11:59pm on 12/20/2024

I. Background Information: Bringing Veterans Home

The Bringing Veterans Home initiative serves unhoused individuals in New Jersey who meet either federal or state definitions of Veterans eligible for homelessness services, as well as service members and National Guard members experiencing homelessness. This comprehensive program aims to address veteran homelessness across the entire state, regardless of their specific military service classification.

The program has two primary objectives: first, to achieve an "effective end" to veteran homelessness by ensuring that the number of BVH-eligible persons experiencing homelessness can be routinely housed within 30 days. The second objective is to make veteran homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring through temporary and permanent homelessness system enhancements to ensure that all veterans experiencing homelessness in New Jersey have a dedicated pipeline to permanent housing.

The initiative is being led by the state's Office of Homelessness Prevention in partnership with the Department of Military and Veteran Affairs. The program will enhance existing veteran support services (such as Grant-Per-Diem programs, SSVF and HUD-VASH) with additional resources for diversion, rapid rehousing, street outreach, emergency sheltering, and permanent housing vouchers. Additionally, six regional hubs will be established to improve coordination across different jurisdictional lines between CoCs, VISNs, and other governmental entities.

Access to BVH services will be available through three main channels: existing service providers can make electronic referrals through the NJ Homelessness Management Information System or DCA's SimplyGov platform; community partners can submit referrals through a web-based form; and veterans can self-refer either through the web form, by calling NJ 211, or by visiting any affiliated housing or homelessness services provider or through engagement with a Bringing Veterans Home street outreach team. This multi-channel approach ensures broad accessibility to the program's services and is intended to rapidly scale inflow into the system to quickly resolve emergent cases of housing insecurity before they increase in acuity and complexity.

For operational guidelines and performance expectations, please see Appendix A, below.

II. Name of the Grant Program

BRINGING VETERANS HOME – SYSTEM ENHANCEMENTS - SFY25

III. DCA Contact Information

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Anthony Cassetta, Lead Contracts Administrator, Programs Section, OHP,
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IV. Purpose of the Grant Program

To address and effectively end: homelessness among eligible veteran populations through a multi-faceted approach as part of the Bringing Veterans Home initiative.

This program is divided into 6 different components, which are mutually supportive of both the Bringing Veterans Home housing voucher activities of the DCA's Office of Housing Assistance (SRAP/HOME/HUD-VASH) and the existing veteran homelessness services programs and components in the state's homelessness prevention and services ecosystem (e.g., SSVF, GPD, etc.).

V. RFP Due Date

RFP Due Completed in SAGE: No later than 11:59pm on 12/20/2024

Award Notification Date: On or about 1/15/2025

VI. Type of Funding & Regional Allocations

Total OHP Funds	\$21,000,000.00
Total Funding Available	\$21,000,000.00

Table 1: Total Available FY Funding

BVH Region	Initial Funding Amount
1	\$ 2,765,542.00
2	\$ 3,646,891.00
3	\$ 4,968,915.00

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4	\$	2,765,542.00
5	\$	2,765,542.00
6	\$	4,087,568.00

Table 2: Total Initial FY Funding - By Region

Note on funding allocations: Initial funding allocations have been modeled on existing resourcing of systems and current homelessness service gaps. Additional funding may be tactically deployed as needs evolve and trends emerge.

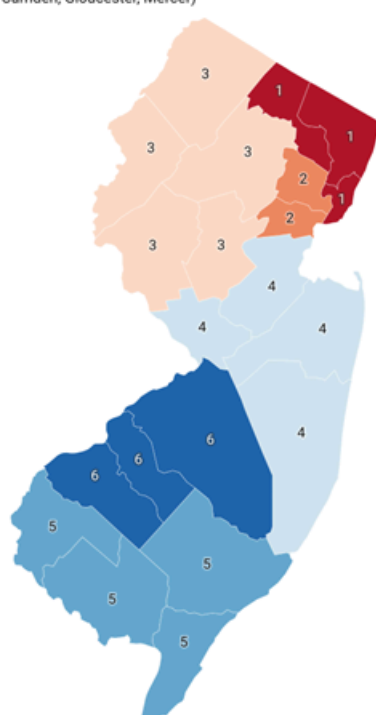
Bringing Vets Home: Service Regions

Regions: 1. Gateway Region (Bergen, Hudson, Passaic) 2. Metro Region (Essex, L Highlands Region (Hunterdon, Morris, Somerset, Sussex, Warren) 4. Coastal Region (Monmouth, Ocean) 5. Shoreline Region (Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, Salem) Region (Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Mercer)

On Regionalization:

Regionalization is critical to BVH's success because it bridges jurisdictional gaps between Continuums of Care, Veterans Affairs service areas, and county boundaries.

This coordinated approach ensures veterans receive consistent services regardless of location, eliminates service duplication, pools resources more efficiently, and creates clear accountability for housing outcomes within defined geographic areas.



Map: OHP/mjc • Source: OHP/DCA • Created with Datawrapper

Fig. 1: BVH Regions - State Map

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County	BVH Region	HUD CoC	VA VISN
ATLANTIC	5	NJ-500 - Atlantic City & County CoC	4
BERGEN	1	NJ-501 - Bergen County CoC	3
BURLINGTON	6	NJ-502 - Burlington County CoC	4
CAMDEN	6	NJ-503 - Camden City/Camden Cumberland Gloucester Cape May Counties CoC	4
CAPE MAY	5	NJ-503 - Camden City/Camden Cumberland Gloucester Cape May Counties CoC	4
CUMBERLAND	5	NJ-503 - Camden City/Camden Cumberland Gloucester Cape May Counties CoC	4
ESSEX	2	NJ-504 - Newark/Essex County CoC	3
GLOUCESTER	6	NJ-503 - Camden City/Camden Cumberland Gloucester Cape May Counties CoC	4
HUDSON	1	NJ-506 - Jersey City/Bayonne/Hudson County CoC	3
HUNTERDON	3	NJ-516 - Warren Sussex Hunterdon Counties CoC	3
MERCER	4	NJ-514 - Trenton/Mercer County CoC	3
MIDDLESEX	4	NJ-507 - New Brunswick/Middlesex County CoC	3
MONMOUTH	4	NJ-508 - Monmouth County CoC	3
MORRIS	3	NJ-509 - Morris County CoC	3
OCEAN	4	NJ-510 - Lakewood Township/Ocean County CoC	3
PASSAIC	1	NJ-511 - Paterson/Passaic County CoC	3
SALEM	5	NJ-512 - Salem County CoC	4
SOMERSET	3	NJ-513 - Somerset County CoC	3
SUSSEX	3	NJ-516 - Warren Sussex Hunterdon Counties CoC	3
UNION	2	NJ-515 - Elizabeth/Union County CoC	3
WARREN	3	NJ-516 - Warren Sussex Hunterdon Counties CoC	3

Table 3: Bringing Veterans Home Regions by County/CoC/VISN

VII. Eligibility Requirements for 'Bringing Veterans Home' Initiative

Basic Eligibility Criteria (Agency or Agency Collaborative)

Experience Requirements

- Must have at least 3 years of experience in one or more of:
 - Homelessness prevention
 - Street outreach
 - Homelessness diversion
 - Rapid re-housing
 - Other relevant veteran support services

Service Coverage

- Must be able to service the entire region for which they are applying
- Organizations can submit collaborative applications:
 - Must include an MOU outlining partnership roles
 - One agency must be designated as lead
 - Only one lead agency per region will be selected

Funding

- Initial grant funding will not exceed specified Regional Activity Award Amounts (Table 2)
- Preference given to organizations that can implement multiple components within a single region

Experience with Veterans

- Specific veteran homelessness service experience is preferred but not required

Detailed Requirements

1. Program Experience

Organizations must demonstrate:

- Existing programs in (at least one):
 - Emergency placement
 - Street outreach
 - Homelessness prevention
 - Homelessness diversion
 - Rapid re-housing
 - Housing navigation
 - By-name-list case conferencing and stakeholder engagement
- Commitment to Bringing Veterans Home processes and procedures (see Appendix A)

Must provide evidence of all of the following:

- Housing First principles implementation
- Low-barrier services
- Tangible outcomes tracking including:
 - Number of individuals/families served
 - Housing stability success rates
 - Transition timeframes
 - Recidivism rates
 - Client self-sufficiency improvements
- Case studies and testimonials

2. Resource and Partnership Network

Application must demonstrate:

- Diverse partnerships (government, non-profit, private)
- Documented success stories
- Clear outcomes data
- Client and partner feedback
- Innovative solutions and programs

3. Collaboration Requirements

Must show:

- Partnerships with:
 - Local/county law enforcement
 - Veteran Service Organizations (e.g., Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Jewish War Veterans, etc.)
 - Area's Continuum-of-Care (CoCs)
 - Public services (e.g., libraries)
 - Regional/local healthcare providers
- Active CoC membership
- Formal documentation (MOUs, MOAs, Letters of Support)

4. Housing First Commitment

Agencies must demonstrate commitment to:

- Low-barrier assistance
- Quick barrier resolution
- Immediate housing crisis response
- Client choice in services
- Community support connections

Documentation required:

- Memorandum or board resolution proving commitment (see Appendix B, for example)

5. Lived Experience Integration

Must show commitment to including Persons with Lived Experience and Expertise (PWLEE) through:

Key Principles:

- Centering PWLEE voices
- Creating safe, supportive environments
- Using inclusive communication
- Providing meaningful engagement opportunities
- Addressing power imbalances

Required Documentation (at least ONE of the following):

- Evidence of PWLEE voice prioritization
- Safe environment policies
- Inclusive communication materials
- Engagement methods
- Power balance strategies
- Inclusion and equity policies
- If still developing: detailed implementation plan with timeline

Application Notes

- All requirements must be thoroughly documented
- Evidence should be current and verifiable (i.e., outcomes and census reports should be verifiable via NJ HMIS)
- Both established programs and those showing good faith effort toward compliance will be considered
- The Bringing Veterans Home (BVH) initiative will require a high degree of daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly communication and data tasks.

VII. Ineligible entities

1. Entities listed on the DCA list of High-Risk grantees and, as applicable, the current audit submission is not overdue.
2. Entities listed on the State Debarment list, located at www.state.nj.us/cgi-bin/treas/revenue/debarsearch.pl
3. Entities whose annual information update has not been completed in DCA SAGE.

VIII. Target populations

Eligible households experiencing homelessness in New Jersey whose situations and circumstances meet the criteria defined below:

1. Bringing Veterans Home – Eligible Populations

To overcome the traditional hurdles to maximize homeless veteran, service member, and New Jersey National Guard member participation in the BVH initiative, the following eligibility criteria will be used:

- a. Persons experiencing homelessness in New Jersey meeting the federal definition of Veteran eligible for homelessness services
- b. Persons experiencing homelessness in New Jersey meeting the state statutory definition of Veteran.
- c. Service members (reservists) and National Guard members that, while not meeting the federal or state statutory definition of Veteran for homelessness services, are experiencing homelessness in the State of New Jersey.

2. Income Limitations & Assets

While there is not a specific income guideline or restriction for the delivery of services through programs funded through this grant program, unless otherwise specified, DCA and OHP expects that the majority of consumers accessing services to be at or below 120% Area Median Income (AMI).

3. Definitions of ‘homelessness’

Awardees will document that all project participants who receive BVH assistance meet one of the following categories:

Category A: Literal Homelessness

One or more of the following must describe the individual’s current situation or circumstances:

1. **No Fixed Home:** The veteran does not have a regular, adequate place to sleep at night.
2. **Unsuitable Living Conditions:** The veteran is staying somewhere not meant for people to live, such as, but not limited to:
 - A car
 - A park
 - An abandoned building
 - A bus or train station
 - An airport
 - A campground
 - Other place not meant for human habitation
3. **Temporary Shelter:** The veteran is living in a supervised shelter, including:

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- Emergency shelters
 - Safe Haven
 - Transitional housing (including Vets Haven and other GPD programs)
 - Hotels/motels paid for by charities, government programs, or self pay that prevents income to be used to achieve permanent housing
4. **Recent Institutional Stay:** The veteran is leaving a hospital, jail, or similar place after 90 days or less, and before that was in a shelter or unsuitable living condition.

Category B: Otherwise Unhoused

One or more of the following must describe the individual's current situation or circumstances:

1. **Couch Surfing:** The veteran is temporarily staying with friends or family because they have nowhere else to go.
2. **Frequent Moves:** The veteran often has to change where they are staying to avoid unsheltered homelessness.
3. **Housing Instability:** The veteran cannot keep a stable home or maintain a lease and has ended permanent housing placement twice over the past 12 months.

Category C: Fleeing Dangerous Situations

One or more of the following must describe the individual's current situation or circumstances:

1. **Escaping Harm:** The veteran is trying to get away from:
 - Domestic violence
 - Dating violence
 - Sexual assault
 - Stalking
 - An environment which is aggravating of service-connected disabling conditions (e.g., PTSD), which in the veterans self-attestation, will directly lead to future and immanent unsheltered conditions
 - Other dangerous or life-threatening situations
2. **No Other Options:** The veteran has nowhere else they can live safely.
3. **Lack of Resources:** The veteran does not have the money or support to find a permanent, safe home and without professional intervention in the next 24 hours, will be unsheltered as described in Category A, above.

By using this inclusive definition of homelessness, which builds upon the gaps existing in both the HUD and VA criteria, we aim to help all veterans facing housing challenges, from those living on the streets to those who are otherwise unhoused or in dangerous living situations. This approach will allow us to provide more comprehensive support and truly work towards effectively ending veteran homelessness in New Jersey.

VIX. Eligible activities

Bringing Veterans Home is a comprehensive initiative aimed at addressing and ending veteran homelessness in New Jersey. This program encompasses multiple interconnected activities designed to rapidly identify, engage, house, and support veterans experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

The following categories outline the key components of this effort. In each component, a minimum funding threshold is stated. **Applicants are expected to scope their program component or component costs to align with these minimums, plus a maximum of an additional 10% administrative cost.** Lastly, all components must align with the BVH inflow and operational procedures outlined in Appendix B of this RFP:

1. Street Outreach - Minimum Regional Program Funding: \$128,333.33

Description: Street Outreach under the Bringing Veterans Home initiative is a proactive and compassionate approach aimed at identifying, engaging, and building trust with veterans experiencing unsheltered homelessness in urban, rural, and suburban areas of New Jersey. The program operates without limitation on the number of engagements or frequency of contact to assist veterans with accessing services and exiting homelessness.

Objectives:

- Locate and establish rapport with unsheltered veterans
- Conduct rapid assessments to understand specific needs and vulnerabilities
- Provide immediate necessities and information on available services
- Facilitate transportation to connect veterans with services and resources
- Coordinate with other program components to ensure a seamless transition to housing

Approach: Outreach staff, consisting of dedicated professionals, traverse identified regions including camps, parks, under bridges, motels, shelters, meal sites, libraries, transit hubs, vehicles, and other outdoor or unsafe locations. They utilize a non-judgmental and client-centered approach, emphasizing harm reduction, trauma-informed care, and cultural sensitivity.

Eligible component costs:

1. Staffing

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- Full-time Outreach Coordinator
- Full-time Outreach Worker
- Part-time Peer Support Specialist
- 2. Transportation
- 3. Supplies (including hygiene kits, sleeping bags, etc.)
- 4. Technology (phones, tablets for data entry, mobile WiFi hotspot)
- 5. NJ HMIS Access
- 6. Emergency Supplies (food, water, and items for building rapport)
- 7. Clothing Allowance (high visibility gear for workers)
- 8. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and First-Aid Supplies
- 9. Training

Key Responsibilities:

- Conduct regular outreach in areas where homeless veterans are known to congregate
- Build relationships with homeless veterans and connect them to services
- Perform initial assessments and enter data into NJ HMIS
- Coordinate with emergency shelter, diversion, and housing navigation programs
- Participate in case conferencing and By-Name List processes
- Provide transportation assistance to connect veterans with services and housing opportunities

2. Rapid Rehousing - Minimum Regional Program Funding: \$1,731,125.00

Description: Rapid Rehousing (RRH) is a key component of Bringing Veterans Home, designed to quickly connect veterans experiencing homelessness to permanent housing through a tailored package of assistance that may include the use of time-limited financial assistance and targeted supportive services.

Objectives:

- Rapidly move veterans experiencing homelessness into stable housing
- Provide time-limited rental assistance and supportive services
- Increase self-sufficiency to maintain housing after the program ends

Approach: RRH programs provide tailored services to veterans, including:

- Housing identification
- Rent and move-in assistance (financial)
- Case management and supportive services

The program emphasizes a housing-first approach, client choice, and providing the minimum assistance necessary for the shortest time possible to achieve housing stability.

Eligible component costs:

1. Rental Assistance
 - Short-term (up to 3 months) or medium-term (4-12 months) rental assistance
 - Gradual reduction in rental assistance over time
2. Move-in Costs
 - Security deposits
 - Utility deposits
 - Basic furnishings
3. Supportive Services
 - Case management
 - Employment assistance
 - Healthcare coordination
 - Other services as needed to maintain housing stability
4. Administrative Costs
 - Program management
 - Data collection and entry into NJ HMIS
 - Quality assurance activities

3. Emergency Shelter (Hotel) - Minimum Regional Program Funding: \$123,875.33

Description: The Emergency Shelter (Hotel) program within Bringing Veterans Home provides immediate, short-term accommodations for veterans experiencing homelessness who cannot be immediately placed in permanent housing. This program serves as a bridge to more stable housing options while providing a safe environment and access to supportive services.

Objectives:

- Provide immediate shelter to veterans experiencing unsheltered homelessness
- Facilitate quick transitions to permanent housing solutions

- Offer a platform for engagement with other supportive services

Approach: The program utilizes local hotels to provide temporary accommodations. A dedicated staff member coordinates placements, manages relationships with hotel partners, and provides basic case management to residents.

Eligible component costs:

1. Hotel Room Costs
2. Staffing (Part-time Hotel Liaison)
3. Operational Costs
 - Transportation assistance for veterans
 - Incidental expenses related to hotel stays
4. Basic Case Management
 - Coordination with other services and housing programs
 - Assistance with transition planning to permanent housing

Note: The program aims for short stays (1-2 weeks when possible) and coordinates closely with rapid rehousing and permanent housing programs for swift transitions.

4. Diversion - Minimum Regional Cost Center Funding: \$80,000.00

Description: The Diversion funding within Bringing Veterans Home aims to prevent homelessness among veterans by providing flexible, targeted assistance to help them identify immediate alternate housing arrangements or retain their current housing. This funding focuses on problem-solving and connecting veterans to community resources to avoid entry into the homeless system.

Objectives:

- Prevent veterans from entering the homeless system when possible
- Provide creative, flexible solutions to housing crises
- Leverage community resources and natural support systems

Approach: The Diversion program uses a problem-solving approach to help veterans explore all housing options before entering emergency shelter. This may include conflict resolution with landlords or family members, one-time financial assistance, or connections to community resources.

Eligible component costs:

1. Flex Funding

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- Direct financial assistance for rent arrears, utility payments, moving costs, security deposits, etc.
- 2. Staffing
 - No dedicated diversion staff; responsibilities shared by outreach and hotel liaison staff
- 3. Training
 - Staff training in diversion techniques and problem-solving approaches
- 4. Community Resource Coordination
 - Developing and maintaining partnerships with local organizations that can provide additional support services

Note: The program requires a quick approval process for the use of diversion funds. All grantees must have credit card/debit card access to facilitate rapid assistance when needed.

5. Housing Navigation and Landlord Engagement - Minimum Regional Program

Funding: \$291,666.67

Description: The Housing Navigation and Landlord Engagement program within Bringing Veterans Home aims to streamline the process of securing housing for veterans by providing dedicated support in housing search activities and developing a network of landlord partners willing to rent to program participants.

Objectives:

- Assist veterans in identifying and securing appropriate housing
- Build and maintain a network of landlord partners
- Reduce barriers to housing access for veterans
- Provide ongoing support to both veterans and landlords to ensure housing stability

Approach: The program combines housing navigation services for veterans with active landlord recruitment and engagement. Staff work directly with veterans to find suitable housing options and simultaneously cultivate relationships with local landlords to increase available housing stock.

Eligible component costs:

- 1. Staffing
 - Program Manager
 - Housing Navigators
 - Landlord Engagement Specialist

2. Operational Costs
 - Office space and utilities
 - Technology (computers, phones, software licenses)
 - Marketing and outreach materials
 - Travel expenses
3. Flex Funding
 - Application fees
 - Travel assistance for veterans
 - Other assistance as needed to facilitate housing placement
4. Landlord Incentives
 - Signing bonuses or other financial incentives for landlords (as allowed by funding guidelines)
5. Education and Events
 - Landlord appreciation events
 - Educational workshops for landlords and property managers

Note: This program should coordinate closely with other components such as Rapid Rehousing, Emergency Shelter, and DCA's Housing Authority to ensure a smooth transition for veterans into permanent housing.

6. Regional Coordination - Minimum Regional Program Funding: \$125,000.00

Description: The Regional Coordination program establishes a centralized management structure to oversee and coordinate all Bringing Veterans Home initiatives within a defined geographic area. This role ensures alignment of efforts, facilitates communication between stakeholders, downflow of information to CoCs, and drives progress towards ending veteran homelessness in the region.

Importantly, this entirety of this role's job is expected to be on the quarterbacking of the Bringing Veterans Home effort for their region. With the exception of chairing a CoC veteran or coordinated entry subcommittee, under no circumstances should the incumbent fulfill additional duties outside of the scope of this program.

Objectives:

- Coordinate implementation of all regional veteran homelessness initiatives
- Facilitate collaboration between various program components and stakeholders

- Oversee data management and reporting for the region
- Drive continuous improvement and resource optimization

Approach: A full-time Regional Coordinator serves as the central point of contact for all veteran homelessness efforts in the region. This role oversees program operations, facilitates regular case conferencing, engages with stakeholders, manages data and reporting, and coordinates resource development.

Eligible component costs:

1. Staffing
 - Full-time Regional Coordinator salary and benefits
2. Operational Costs
 - Office space and utilities
 - Technology (computer, phone, software licenses)
 - Travel expenses
3. Training and Professional Development
4. Meeting and Event Costs
 - Hosting case conferencing meetings
 - Stakeholder engagement events
5. Data Management Tools
 - Software licenses for data management and reporting tools
6. Marketing and Communications
 - Materials for stakeholder engagement and public awareness

Note: The Regional Coordinator plays a crucial role in ensuring the success of all other program components. They should have strong leadership, communication, and data analysis skills to effectively coordinate efforts across the region and the external skill sets to work collaboratively with state and federal partners.

X. Ineligible activities

Activities not specifically approved through this application or subsequently approved in writing by DCA.

XI. Grant term

January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025

XII. Application Process

The proposal must be submitted electronically via SAGE. All applicants must submit in SAGE a written narrative that describes the following:

1. Agency's mission, staff capacity, experience (to include outcomes) in homeless services, rental assistance/supportive services, and financial management/grant operations.
2. Identification of project type and service area.
3. Contact information for executive team and project personnel.
4. Data Collection and Management Processes
5. Identification and qualifications of staff that will participate in the project and in the administration of the grant.
6. Consultant listing (if applicable)
7. Proposed Project Budget.

Required Attachments

1. Certification regarding debarment and suspension (see DCA SAGE: Certification Sheets section for template).
2. Certification regarding lobbying (see DCA SAGE: Certification Sheets section for template).
3. Staff resumes, to include the applicant's executive team.
4. Job descriptions of positions created via project (if applicable).
5. Resolution from the applicant's Board of Trustees (see DCA SAGE).
6. Letter of Support from the County/Regional Continuum-of-Care (CoC):
 - a. This letter must include a description of the applicant's participation in CoC processes, subcommittees, and programs (to include Coordinated Entry [if applicable]).
 - b. This letter must also certify the applicant's participation in PIT Count activities.
7. Collateral and/or supporting materials responsive to requirements outlined in Section VII of this document:
 - a. Agency Experience with Collateral Data
 - b. Resources Listing
 - c. MOU/MOAs for Partnerships
 - d. Affirmation of Housing First
 - e. PWLEE Inclusion and Activities

8. Process map of project (from initial client contact through discharge/follow-up) that is inclusive of and aligned with Bringing Veterans Home processes, as outlined in Appendix A.
9. Marketing plan that will be used to socialize programs to community stakeholders.
 - a. Slide deck/PowerPoint
10. Executed application cover page.

XIII. Reporting and monitoring requirements

1. Daily By-Name-List Huddles (led by Regional Lead)
2. Daily NJ HMIS updates
3. Daily Civic Roundtable participation
4. Weekly BVH Team Syncs (led by OHP & DMAVA Leads)
5. Bi-weekly BVH Leadership Syncs
6. Monthly peer-to-peer region meetings (via Teams)
7. Quarterly in-person all state meetings (via Teams)
8. Monthly financial reporting via SAGE
9. Semi-annual site visitation/file review

XIV. Training requirements

Each grantee agrees that staff will participate in all mandatory training and meetings according to a schedule provided by the Office of Homelessness Prevention (see below). Training and meetings are to increase understanding of integrated services delivery and its interplay with other aspects of case management and as part of a larger housing problem-solving approach to preventing homelessness that is person-centered and affirming of Housing First principles.

Direct staff, Supervisors, and Leadership staff must agree to the following mandatory training participation as part of this program:

1. Bringing Veterans Home On-boarding and System Trainings
2. Harm reduction
3. Landlord collaborations
4. Housing First
5. Eviction Prevention & Housing Rights
6. Reporting, including the use of the Homelessness Management Information System database (HMIS), also known as AWARDS, report building, and uploading options through NJ HMFA.
7. Racial equity
8. Trauma-Informed Service Delivery
9. Project Service Delivery Coaching & Peer-to-Peers
10. Persons with Lived Experience and Expertise (PWLEE) feedback sessions

In addition, the entity must participate in and make presentations to various audiences during required training and meetings according to the schedule designated by the Office of Homelessness Prevention. The entity must also work in collaboration with other DCA grantees to achieve this initiative's objectives.

XVI. Grantee performance expectation & requirements

1. Project is operationalized and running no later than 30 days post award notification.
2. Project's corresponding CoC executive body is made aware of award and project no later than 24 hours after notice.
3. Presentation and referral process is socialized to CoC's general body at the first available meeting post operationalization of the project and at on-going CoC and public meetings regarding housing vulnerability and homelessness.
4. Attendance at all training and OHP and BVH peer-to-peer activities.
5. Project staff meaningfully participate in NJ Counts (PIT Count) through both surveying and planning activities.
6. Maintenance of 99% data quality in AWARDS (to include discharge destination/outcome capture).
7. Any changes in participant status or circumstances are updated in NJ HMIS no later than 24 hours of notice.
8. All service costs and payments made on behalf of or to participants are updated in NJ HMIS no later than 24 hours post-disbursement.
9. For all projects:
 - a. 99% of project participants have usable data to assist in statewide and regional performance indicator tracking
 - b. 80% of project households have defined pathways to permanent housing 20 days post first outreach contact.
 - c. 100% of project households have defined pathways to permanent housing 30 days post first outreach contact.
 - d. 80% of out of new system referrals result in successful 1st touch service connections (e.g., shelter, rapid rehousing, food assistance, employment assistance).

XVII. Scoring Rubric

Section	Max Point Value
1. Organizational Capacity and Experience: a. Mission alignment with RFP goals (5) b. Staff capacity and qualifications (5) c. Years of experience in homeless services (5) d. Experience with program principles and practices (5) e. Experience providing mobile case management and supportive services (5)	25 Points
2. Proposed Approach: a. Clearly defined project components and service area/region (5) b. Detailed project process map that is aligned with BVH processes (see Appendix A) (10) c. Qualifications of project staff (5) d. Data collection, management, and reporting processes (10) e. Partnerships with CoCs, VSOs, and other entities (5) f. Marketing and outreach plan (5)	40 Points
3. Best Practices: a. Embraces Housing First principles (10) b. Centers voice of lived experience (5) c. Organization pursues diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and access (5) d. Participates in NJ HMIS, PIT, and other CoC activities (5)	25 Points
4. Budget: a. Reasonable and within acceptable parameters (10)	10 Points
5. Threshold Requirements a. Meets all threshold criteria set forth in RFP	Pass/Fail
6. Overall Proposal Quality a. Well-written, easy to understand, thorough, and compelling overall proposal (10 bonus points)	10 Point Bonus (Max)
Total Points (Max) 110	



Bringing Veterans Home: System Enhancements

Appendix A

The Bringing Veterans Home (BVH) initiative represents New Jersey's commitment to achieving an effective end to veteran homelessness through systematic, coordinated, and person-centered interventions. This appendix provides comprehensive operational guidelines and assessment tools designed to ensure consistent, high-quality service delivery across all regions and programs and to assist prospective applicants scope their programs more effectively.

These guidelines and tools have been developed based on evidence-based practices and align with both federal standards and New Jersey's unique approach to veteran services. They are designed to support the initiative's core objectives of making veteran homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring while ensuring that all veterans experiencing homelessness have a dedicated pathway to permanent housing.

Purpose Statement

This appendix serves multiple critical functions:

1. Establishes standardized assessment and intervention protocols
2. Defines required operational procedures and timelines
3. Sets clear performance expectations and metrics
4. Provides comprehensive assessment tools and guidelines
5. Ensures consistency in service delivery across regions

System Inflow Map

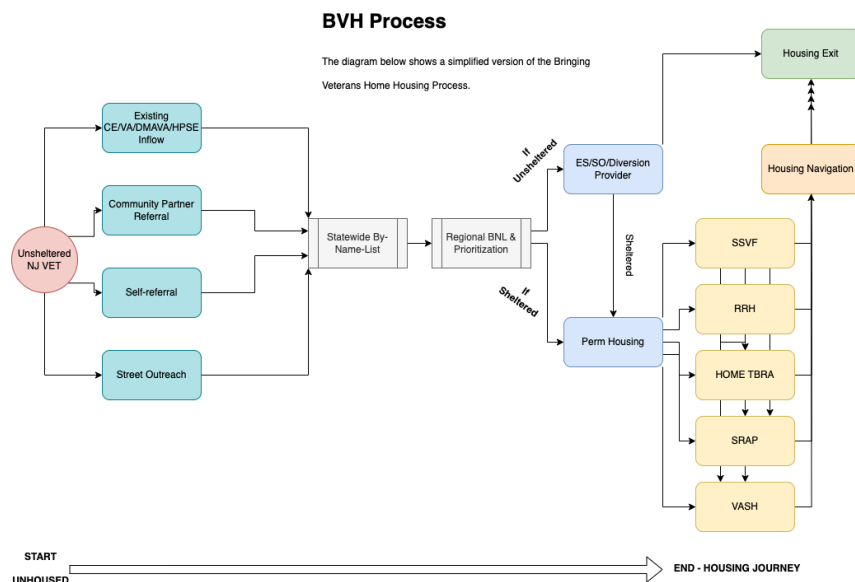


Figure 1: BVH System Inflow Map

I. Required Assessment Tools

The foundation of effective service delivery lies in accurate, timely, and comprehensive assessment. The following tools form the core of the BVH assessment framework, each serving a specific purpose in understanding and addressing veteran needs.

Importantly, these tools do not override or prevent assessment for complementary resources (e.g., the SSVF prioritization tool OR local CoC Coordinated Entry tool). They are intended only for use with and the prioritization of state funded Bringing Veterans Home resources.

A. BVH Prioritization Tool (BVHPT) - (See tool on page 8)

The BVHPT serves as the primary triage and program matching tool, ensuring appropriate resource allocation and service level determination based on validated criteria.

1. Purpose

- Standardized assessment across regions
- Program matching determination
- Resource prioritization
- Service level determination

2. Components

- Housing history (2 points)
- Health factors (6 points)
- Housing barriers (5 points)
- Special considerations (2 points)

3. Service Level Matrix

Level	Score	Program Recommendation
1	0-2	Diversion/Short-Term RRH
2	3-5	Medium-Term RRH
3	6-9	HOME-TBRA
4	10-12	HOME-TBRA/SRAP
5	13-15	HUD-VASH/SRAP

B. Housing Barriers Assessment (See tool on Page 11)

This comprehensive assessment tool identifies specific challenges that may impede housing stability, allowing for targeted intervention planning and resource allocation.

1. Required Elements

- Documentation status
- Financial barriers
- Housing history
- Support service needs

2. Documentation Review

- Military records (DD-214)
- Identification documents
- Income verification
- Medical documentation
- Legal documentation

3. Financial Assessment

- Current income
- Debt obligations
- Credit history
- Rental history
- Financial management capacity

4. Support Service Assessment

- Mental health needs
- Physical health needs
- Substance use needs
- Employment support needs
- Other service requirements

C. Initial Housing Stabilization Plan (See tool on Page 11)

The Housing Stabilization Plan transforms assessment findings into actionable steps, creating a clear pathway to permanent housing while addressing identified barriers.

1. Housing Preferences

- Location preferences
- Unit requirements
- Accessibility needs
- Budget constraints

2. Action Planning

- Documentation actions
- Financial actions
- Support service actions
- Housing search strategy

3. Timeline Requirements

- Initial completion: 72 hours
- Updates: Every 30 days
- Progress monitoring: Weekly
- NJ HMIS entry: 24 hours

II. Assessment Process Requirements

Successful implementation of the BVH initiative requires strict adherence to established timelines and procedures. These requirements ensure timely intervention and maintain system efficiency.

A. Timeline Standards

1. **Initial Contact Phase (24-48 hours)**
 - BVHPT completion
 - Preliminary barrier assessment
 - Immediate needs identification
2. **Assessment Phase (48-72 hours)**
 - Housing Barriers Assessment
 - Documentation review
 - Initial Housing Stabilization Plan
3. **Action Phase (72-96 hours)**
 - Service connections
 - Documentation requests
 - Housing search initiation

B. Required Staff Actions

1. **Assessment Staff**
 - Tool completion training
 - Score calibration
 - Quality assurance reviews
2. **Case Management Staff**
 - Action plan development
 - Progress monitoring
 - Plan updates
3. **Housing Navigation Staff**
 - Market assessment
 - Unit identification
 - Landlord engagement

III. Documentation Requirements

Proper documentation serves as the foundation for accountability, continuous improvement, and demonstration of program effectiveness. These requirements ensure comprehensive recording of all assessment and intervention activities.

A. Assessment Records

1. Required Forms

- Completed BVHPT
- Housing Barriers Assessment
- Initial Housing Stabilization Plan
- Signed consent forms (NJ HMIS Consent, DCA OHA Consent (if applicable), VA Consent & Release of Information (If applicable))

2. Supporting Documentation

- Verification documents
- Service referrals
- Progress notes
- Update records

B. NJ HMIS Requirements

Note: All BVH activities are REQUIRED to be entered into NJ HMIS, the Statewide HMIS instance. Bergen and Middlesex CoCs will weekly NJ HMIS upload for local ingestion of information entered into Statewide HMIS.

1. Data Entry Timeline

- Initial assessment: 24 hours
- Updates: 24 hours
- Service records: 24 hours
- Outcomes: 24 hours

2. Required Elements

- Assessment scores
- Action plans
- Service connections
- Progress updates

IV. Quality Assurance

Quality assurance measures protect program integrity and ensure consistent service delivery across all regions and providers. Regular monitoring and evaluation support continuous improvement efforts.

A. Tool Administration

1. Staff Requirements

- Initial training - OHP facilitated
- Monthly calibration - OHP/DHCR Data Center/DMAVA
- Quarterly reviews

2. Quality Checks

- Score validation
- Documentation review
- Plan appropriateness

- Update compliance

B. Monitoring Standards

1. Regular Reviews

- Weekly file audits
- Monthly outcome analysis
- Quarterly performance review

2. Compliance Measures

- Tool completion rates
- Timeline adherence
- Documentation quality
- Outcome alignment

V. Using Assessment Results

Assessment results drive intervention planning and resource allocation. Proper interpretation and application of assessment findings is critical for achieving optimal outcomes.

A. Program Matching

1. Primary Factors

- BVHPT score
- Barrier assessment
- Service needs
- Veteran preference

2. Additional Considerations

- Resource availability
- Geographic factors
- Support requirements
- Urgency level

B. Action Planning

1. Required Elements

- Clear objectives
- Assigned responsibilities
- Timeline requirements
- Progress measures

2. Update Requirements

- 30-day review minimum
- Progress documentation
- Barrier resolution tracking
- Outcome measurement

VI. Performance Metrics

Clear performance metrics enable objective evaluation of program effectiveness and support continuous quality improvement efforts. These metrics align with both process and outcome objectives.

A. Assessment Quality

1. Completion Rates

- 100% BVHPT completion
- 100% Barrier Assessment
- 100% Housing Plan
- 95% update compliance

2. Timeline Compliance

- 24-hour initial contact
- 72-hour assessment
- 96-hour action plan
- 30-day updates

B. Housing Outcomes

1. Placement Metrics

- 80% appropriate placement
- 90% barrier resolution
- 85% housing retention
- 95% service connection

2. Timeline Goals

- 60-day average (Year 1)
- 30-day average (Year 2)
- 14-day documentation
- 7-day service linkage

Implementation Notes

1. These guidelines and tools will be reviewed and updated annually to reflect emerging best practices and lessons learned.
2. Regional coordinators are responsible for ensuring all staff are trained in the proper use of these tools.
3. Questions regarding implementation should be directed to the Office of Homelessness Prevention.
4. Modifications to these tools or processes require prior approval from OHP leadership.

Technical Assistance

The Office of Homelessness Prevention provides ongoing technical assistance to support implementation:

- Regular training sessions on tool usage
- Monthly calibration meetings
- Quality assurance reviews
- Implementation coaching
- Performance monitoring support

Conclusion

Successful implementation of these guidelines and tools is critical to achieving the BVH initiative's objectives. All participating agencies must demonstrate commitment to these standards through consistent application and documentation of assessment processes.

Applicants to the BVH program are expected to incorporate all of the above into program design.

The complete assessment tools referenced in this appendix are provided as supplemental attachments. These tools should be used in their entirety and without modification unless explicitly approved by OHP leadership.

Bringing Veterans Home Prioritization Tool (BVHPT)

Assessment Date:

1. Identification Information

NJ HMIS Personal ID:

BVH BNL ID:

BVH Veteran Status (select one):

☐ Federal Veteran ☐ NJ National Guard ☐ Reservist

BVH Homelessness Status (select one):

☐ Category A: Literal Homelessness ☐ Category B: Otherwise Unhoused ☐ Category C: Fleeing Dangerous Situations

VA SQUARES/DMAVA Verified: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Age:

Months Homeless:

2. Vulnerability Assessment

Scoring Instructions:

- Check all boxes that apply to the veteran's current situation
- Each checked box equals one (1) point
- Sum all checked boxes for total vulnerability score
- Total possible score: 15 points

Housing History

☐ Homeless for a year or more continuously

☐

☐ 4+ episodes of homelessness in past 3 years

☐

Health Factors

- ☐ Chronic health conditions present
- ☐ Mental health issues present
- ☐ Substance use issues present
- ☐ 2+ ED/ER visits in past year
- ☐ Hospitalized in past year
- ☐ Experienced physical violence while homeless

Housing Barriers

- ☐ Disability affecting housing stability
- ☐ Currently unemployed OR not able to be employed
- ☐ Difficulty managing finances or paying bills
- ☐ Criminal record that makes housing difficult
- ☐ Poor credit or rental history

Special Considerations

- ☐ Currently fleeing domestic violence/unsafe situation
- ☐ Combat veteran

Total Vulnerability Score:

3. Service Level Determination

Level	Score Range	Program Recommendations
1	0-2	Diversion or Short Term BVH Rapid Rehousing
2	3-5	Medium Term BVH Rapid Rehousing
3	6-9	HOME-TBRA
4	10-12	HOME-TBRA or SRAP
5	13-15	HUD-VASH or SRAP

Final Determination

Service Level:

Recommended Program:

Assessor Name:

Organization:

Notes:

1. This tool should be used in conjunction with clinical judgment and case conferencing to determine final program placement.
2. Additional factors such as veteran preference, program availability, and specific eligibility criteria should be considered in the final determination.
3. Homelessness categories are based on BVH definitions and may differ from other program criteria.

BVH Housing Barriers Assessment & Initial Stabilization Plan

Assessment Date:

Part 1: Housing Barriers Assessment

Veteran Name:

BVH BNL ID:

Documentation Barriers

Missing Documentation (check all that apply):

- ☐ DD-214/Military Records
- ☐ Photo ID
- ☐ Social Security Card
- ☐ Birth Certificate
- ☐ Proof of Income
- ☐ Bank Statements
- ☐ Medical Records

Other:

Financial Barriers

Current Monthly Income:

Source(s):

Outstanding Debts:

Monthly Debt Payments:

Credit Score (if known):

Previous Evictions:

Housing History Barriers

Barrier Type	Present?	Details
Prior Evictions	Select ▼	
Rental Arrears	Select ▼	
Utility Arrears	Select ▼	
Criminal History	Select ▼	

Support Service Needs

Service Type	Need Level	Notes
Mental Health	Select ▼	
Substance Use	Select ▼	
Physical Health	Select ▼	
Employment	Select ▼	

Part 2: Initial Housing Stabilization Plan

Housing Preferences

Preferred Location(s):

Unit Type Needed:

Maximum Monthly Rent:

Accessibility Requirements:

Action Plan

Documentation Actions

Task	Responsible Party	Target Date	Status
		mm/dd/yyyy	Not Started ▼
		mm/dd/yyyy	Not Started ▼

Financial Actions

Task	Responsible Party	Target Date	Status
		mm/dd/yyyy	Not Started ▼
		mm/dd/yyyy	Not Started ▼

Support Service Actions

Task	Responsible Party	Target Date	Status
		mm/dd/yyyy	Not Started ▼
		mm/dd/yyyy	Not Started ▼

Housing Search Plan

Initial Housing Search Strategy:**Backup Plan/Alternative Options:****Agreement and Signatures**

By signing below, all parties agree to work collaboratively toward the goals outlined in this plan.

Veteran Signature:**Date:** **Case Manager Signature:****Date:** **Notes:**

1. This assessment and plan should be completed within 72 hours of program entry.
2. Update the plan every 30 days or when significant changes occur.
3. All action items should have clear ownership and timelines.
4. Copies should be provided to the veteran and uploaded to HMIS within 24 hours.



Example Housing First Resolution

Appendix B

[Name of Nonprofit Organization]
Resolution of the Board of Trustees
Adoption of Housing First Principles and Practices

Resolution #: [Enter Resolution Number]

Date: [Enter Date]

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees (the "Board") of [Name of Nonprofit Organization] (the "Organization"), a nonprofit organization duly organized and existing under the laws of the State of New Jersey, recognizes the importance of addressing homelessness in our community;

WHEREAS, the Organization is committed to the principles of dignity, respect, and compassion for all individuals, particularly those experiencing homelessness;

WHEREAS, Housing First is an evidence-based approach to homelessness, which prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness, thus ending their homelessness and serving as a platform from which they can pursue personal goals and improve their quality of life;

WHEREAS, Housing First principles include rapid access to permanent housing without preconditions, a harm reduction approach to addictions and community integration, and the belief that housing is a basic human right;

WHEREAS, the Board acknowledges that adopting Housing First practices is essential in effectively addressing the issue of homelessness in our community, and aligns with the mission and values of the Organization;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees hereby affirms and adopts Housing First principles and practices for its housing programs. Specifically, the Organization shall:

1. Prioritize rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing without preconditions of treatment acceptance or compliance;
2. Ensure that supportive services are voluntary and person-centered, focusing on individual strengths and needs;

3. Engage in ongoing advocacy for housing as a basic human right and actively work towards expanding access to affordable housing in our community;
4. Commit to the continuous evaluation and improvement of our housing programs to align with Housing First principles and best practices;
5. Allocate necessary resources, including training for staff, to effectively implement and sustain Housing First practices within our housing programs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Executive Director and staff of the Organization are authorized and directed to take all actions necessary and appropriate to implement the principles and practices of Housing First in the Organization's housing programs.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED by a vote of the Board of Trustees of [Name of Nonprofit Organization] on this [Enter Date].

Certification

I, [Secretary's Name], the undersigned, do hereby certify: (1) that I am the duly elected and acting Secretary of [Name of Nonprofit Organization]; and (2) that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution duly adopted at a meeting of the Board of Trustees of said Organization convened and held in accordance with law and the Bylaws of said Organization on [Enter Date], and such resolution is now in full force and effect.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this [Enter Date].

[Secretary's Name]
Secretary