

The Homeless Programs Office newsletter contains news and information about Veteran homelessness. Share this newsletter with others so they too can stay up-to-date.



## VHA Homeless Programs

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

**Executive Director's Message | Veterans' Stories | Resources**

**COVID-19 Response | Staff Spotlight | Fact of the Month**

**Veterans who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness** are strongly encouraged to contact the [National Call Center for Homeless Veterans](#) at (877) 4AID-VET (877-424-3838) for assistance. To minimize the risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19, only Veterans who do not have access to a phone are to visit their closest VA medical center without calling in advance.



### Message from Monica Diaz, Executive Director, VHA Homeless Programs Office

VHA's [Homeless Programs Office](#) (HPO) is proud to recognize two important observances this March: Women's History Month and Social Work Month.

Congress designated the month of March as [Women's History Month in 1987](#). The observance commemorates the vital role of women in American history, and HPO is especially focused now on the achievements of [women in the military](#). We honor women Veterans by providing

supportive services, programs, and resources that are tailored to their specific and unique circumstances and needs. Many women Veterans face challenges when they return to civilian life, such as raising a family as single parents, or posttraumatic stress from exposure to combat or sexual assault. VA is committed to meeting women Veterans' needs through the delivery of programs such as: the Women Veterans Health Care Program, VA Mental Health for Women Veterans, the Center for Women Veterans, Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program, and many more. Learn more about these resources [here](#).

In this newsletter, you'll find an interview with Eileen F. Devine, national coordinator for the [Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program](#), who discusses her role leading a critical HPO program. You'll also find an original story about Emma Miller, VHA's first woman employee. We hope you'll find the stories of these groundbreaking women as inspirational as we do. We're honored to serve women Veterans, and all Veterans, each and every day.

HPO also extends its deepest gratitude to social workers this month. The theme of this year's Social Work Month is "[Social Workers Are Essential](#)," and we could not agree more wholeheartedly. HPO's work to eliminate homelessness among Veterans would not be possible without social workers. VA is one of the [largest employers of social workers in America](#), and these valued employees are critical to HPO's work. [Social workers help with](#) outreach to Veterans experiencing homelessness, consult on housing and community living options, help Veterans and support networks with long-term planning, and assist with accessing financial benefits and resources. You can learn more about VA social workers [here](#). Thank you!

### Veteran Success Stories

#### Join VA's Center for Women Veterans and HPO for a special Facebook Live Event

In observance of Women's History Month, join VA's Center for Women Veterans and the Homeless Programs Office on March 31 at 2 p.m. ET for a Facebook Live event to learn about VA's specialized programs and their commitment to assisting women Veterans with housing stability and security, especially during the coronavirus pandemic.

Once you have a Facebook account, participating is easy.

- In the days leading up to the event, make a note of any questions you would like to ask the presenters and subject matter experts.
- On the day of the event — March 31 — go to the [Center for Women Veterans' Facebook page](#) a few minutes before 2 p.m. ET.
- At 2 p.m. ET, refresh your page.
- Click on the video to watch the live discussion. You can unmute and adjust the volume by using the volume control button at the bottom of the video.

[More information.](#)



#### How women Veterans can get help addressing their needs through VA programs

U.S. Army Veteran Loretta White didn't know she was eligible for VA benefits when she left the military in 1989 because of a domestic violence situation.

Believe it or not, many women Veterans do not self-identify as Veterans. According to Dr. Laura Miller, psychiatrist and medical director of reproductive mental health for VHA, this is due in part to the misconception that if you did not engage in combat, you are not considered a Veteran.

[Read more.](#)

#### Special Feature: Emma Miller – VHA's First Female Employee – Forged a Path for Today's Women Leading HPO Programs

For Women's History Month, the Homeless Programs Office remembers Emma Miller. When she became the first employee of the National Asylum for Disabled Veterans, the first iteration of the Veterans Health Administration, the precedent was set for commissioning women to perform the important work they had done as volunteers in times of war. Mrs. Miller's dedicated service to Veterans paved the way for the women across VHA and the Homeless Programs Office who are leading programs critical to VA's mission to prevent and end homelessness for Veterans and their families.



[Read more.](#)



#### Social Workers are Essential to Ending Veteran Homelessness

Social workers supporting VHA homeless programs and services are often Veterans' first connection point for help with exiting or avoiding homelessness. The 2021 National Social Work Theme is "Social workers are Essential." This theme was selected to inform the public about the past and present role of social workers in helping the most vulnerable people in society.

[Read more.](#)

### HPO Resource Quick Links

- [VA's Grant and Per Diem \(GPD\) Program](#) announced the availability of approximately \$15 million for three years in new Special Need grants to eligible entities facilitate housing stabilization for Veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and who are in one of the special need populations.
- [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing \(HUD-VASH\)](#) is a collaborative program between HUD and VA that combines HUD housing vouchers with VA supportive services to help Veterans who are homeless and their families find and sustain permanent housing.
- Interested [social workers](#) can find additional information about VA careers and [apply for jobs online](#). Select "Social Worker" from the category drop-down box.

### HPO COVID-19 Response and Updates

VA is committed to [helping all Veterans](#) stay well and avoid becoming sick from COVID-19:

**If you are enrolled in VA's Homeless Program**, contact your VA Homeless Program Case Manager for information about scheduling your COVID-19 vaccination.

**If you are not enrolled in VA's Homeless Program**, please

call 1-800-MyVA411 (800-698-2411) to find your local VA medical center for priority scheduling of your COVID-19 vaccination.



#### HPO Staff Spotlight: Eileen Devine

From conducting outreach on the street, to helping Veterans navigate the VHA's systems, to leading programs that provide Veterans with the services and resources they need, social workers play a vital role in helping Veterans exit homelessness. In this month's issue of the newsletter, we interview Health Care for Homeless Veterans' (HCHV) National Director Eileen Devine, a licensed clinical social worker who has worked for VA since 2003. In this Q&A, Eileen shares how social workers' training and skills help Veterans exit homelessness, how her background has helped her lead a national program dedicated to helping Veterans, and what led her to this work.

[Read the full interview.](#)

### HPO Fact of the Month

#### Did you know?

Social Workers have worked within VA since 1926.