

Request: Request for 20 Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Vouchers (HUD-VASH) for Qualified Chronic Homeless Veterans in Merced.

Description: According to 2022 Point in Time Counts of sheltered and unsheltered homeless in California, there were 145,854 people experiencing homelessness throughout the state. Of this number, 10,395 were veterans. The 2022 point-in-time survey in Merced County reported 855 sheltered and unsheltered individuals. Of this number, 555 lived in the City of Merced, and 29 were veterans.

Merced is affected by the nation's homelessness crisis. Unhoused individuals live in our parks, under our bridges, near highway exit ramps, in our Downtown, on our streets, in our creeks, and across from our schools. In a recent HUD point-in-time report, the top three of all populations homeless were the severely mentally ill, chronic substance abusers, and veterans.

Being homeless or at risk of homelessness is reported as one of the most challenging problems any veteran can face. Veterans who experience combat exposure, wartime trauma, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) have difficulty functioning and navigating life. Homeless veterans experiencing these situations have difficulty keeping up with their health needs while struggling for shelter, food, and clothing.

Necessity: One of the most fundamental ways to ensure we honor our veterans is to prevent and end their homelessness. The HUD-VASH program currently provides voucher rental assistance for 109 qualifying homeless and unsheltered veterans in our community. Additional help from this program will increase our ability to serve more veterans through long-term case management, supportive services, and permanent housing. Our request for 20 HUD-VASH vouchers will allow us to provide housing, long-term case management, and supportive services for veterans in need.



Ending veteran homelessness requires a collaborative and coordinated system. Assistance from Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing will aid us in providing homeless veterans with housing solutions, health care, job training, and other supportive resources to build a base for future independence.

Beneficiaries:

- Unhoused veterans and their families
- Merced County residents and businesses
- State of California

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