

MEMORANDUM

December 3, 2015

TO: Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee
Health and Human Services Committee

FROM: Linda McMillan, Senior Legislative Analyst 

SUBJECT: **Updates – Zero 2016 Campaign to End Veteran Homeless, Homeless Outreach Strategy, Winter Shelter System**

Expected for this session:

Uma Ahluwalia, Director, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
Nadim Khan, Chief, DHHS Special Needs Housing

Background – 2015 Point in Time Survey

At this session, the joint Committee will receive updates on three components of homeless services. As background, attached at ©1-7 is the Montgomery County section of the Council of Government's (COG) regional report on the 2015 Point-in-Time Survey. The information at ©5 shows that the total number of homeless increased from 891 in 2014 to 1,100 in 2015. Within that number, the count for homeless individuals has continued to decline. However, the number of families increased from 91 to 159 and the total people in those families from 366 to 502.

The COG report is a regional report and the Executive Summary says that there are several recurring themes:

1. The significant increase in the number of formerly homeless persons in permanent supportive housing;
2. The positive impact of shelter diversion and homeless prevention programs;
3. The lack of living wage jobs continues to prevent people experiencing homelessness from achieving housing stability; and
4. The need for additional resources to increase the supply of affordable housing available to the lowest-income households.

Zero: 2016 Ending Veteran Homelessness

Montgomery County is participating in the Zero:2016 Campaign to End Veteran Homelessness. As the joint Committee has previously discussed “ending” homelessness for Veterans does not mean that the County will never have a homeless Veteran but that number of homeless will be no greater than the monthly housing placement rate for Veterans. In the 2015 Point-in-Time Survey, there were 24 homeless people counted who were identified as Veterans. This was a 57% decrease from the 34 counted in 2014 (©6).

The Council added \$500,000 to the FY16 budget for this initiative. The Council required the Executive to send the Council a plan and that the plan leverage resources such as VASH Vouchers, Safe Havens, and donations. Support services are coordinated with Veterans Affairs. This plan was transmitted in June and is attached at ©8-15.

The team of people working to achieve this goal is constantly making progress and keeping everyone informed through regular updates. The update that was sent on November 23rd said that as of November 20:

- The number of Veterans housed in November (through Nov. 20) was 5;
- The number housed from October 1 through November 20 was 16;
- The number housed from January 1 through Nov 20 was 42; and
- There were 11 individual Veterans and 4 Veterans with families that were unhoused and on the list for housing placement.

The report also said that for the first time since Bethesda Cares has been in operation, there were zero homeless Veterans identified by their outreach teams on the streets of Bethesda (during the week of November 15th.) As the report said, this is the culmination of years of work and an incredible achievement.

Homeless Outreach Strategy

The joint Committee asked to have updates on Homeless Outreach and Winter Shelter (next section) in the late fall/early winter as weather is becoming cold. The joint Committee has previously discussed that People Encouraging People, Bethesda Cares, and the City of Gaithersburg provide specific outreach services and that many other organizations, such as Hope Restored and Community Vision also outreach to the homeless population as a part of their work. Outreach and day services are included in a short brochure of homeless services and information is attached at ©16.

Last spring, the Council endorsed the County’s new Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness. Council staff notes that some of the strategies in this plan involve enhanced outreach to special populations, facilities, and organizations. For example, one strategy is to improve discharge planning from foster care, juvenile justice, and other systems to connect youth to education, housing, and health care. An action step is to provide outreach for youth about organization that provide stable addresses. A second strategy is to promote targeted outreach strategies to

identify people experiencing homelessness who are most likely to end up in the emergency room, jail, hospital, or prison and connect them to housing and supports.

Winter Overflow Shelter

Last December and February the joint Committee discussed the protocols for shelter to understand better whether there are sufficient shelter beds and how someone can gain access to shelter. DHHS shared with the Committee that from April to November adults should meet the following criteria:

- Lost housing in Montgomery County or homeless on the street for at least one year. (HUD definition of chronic homelessness is homeless for at least one year or has experienced four episodes of homelessness in three years and has a disability.)
- Be a United States citizen or have legal immigration status.
- Be willing to work with a case manager to address their issues and barriers to obtaining permanent housing.

During hypothermia season from November 1 through March 31, emergency shelter expands to accommodate all who are in need due to safety issues. Information from the County website is at ©17-18.

The following table shows the number of types of beds in the County system. This information is from the Point-in-Time Survey.

	Beds for Households w/o Children	Beds/units for Households w/children	Total Year-Round Beds	Total Winter Beds
Hypothermia/Overflow/Other (Additional Winter Capacity)	260	221/73	0	481
Emergency Shelter Beds	150	132/41	282	0
Transitional/Safe Haven Beds	172	164/51	336	0
TOTAL	582	417/165	618	481

The COG Point-in-Time Survey narrative says that at the time of the count there were 73 households with children placed in motels and that this was four times the number of families in the 2014 enumeration. Attached at ©19 is an information sheet on family homelessness that was provided to the Interagency Commission on Homelessness.

Three emergency shelters open during the winter months. Previously one of the three had been at the East County Recreation Center. This overflow shelter has been moved to the County property in Shady Grove where equipment operations is housed. The Department can provide an update on operation of this new location.

Except from COG
Point-in-Time 2015

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD

Description of Homeless Services

The Montgomery County Homeless Continuum of Care (CoC) is a public-private partnership that includes state and local government agencies, non-profit service providers, landlords, and other stakeholders who have a role in preventing and ending homelessness. During FY14, the County Council approved Bill 34-13 creating the County's Interagency Commission on Homelessness, which now serves as the Montgomery County Continuum of Care (CoC) governing board.

The CoC continues to provide a full continuum of housing services to homeless persons including outreach and engagement, emergency and transitional shelter, safe havens, rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing and permanent housing with supports. Case management is provided at all levels of the continuum with an emphasis on removing housing barriers and connecting homeless persons with housing, employment, disability entitlements, and other behavioral health services. The continuum also utilizes a range of homelessness prevention initiatives including emergency financial assistance, shallow rent subsidies, and energy assistance designed to prevent the loss of permanent housing.

Montgomery County DHHS Special Needs Housing (SNH) serves as both the Collaborative Applicant and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead, and manages the CoC Coordinated Assessment system. During FY14/FY15 the CoC finalized its Governance Charter in compliance with the Federal Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009 and established committees to implement the work. The CoC also adopted an updated Ten Year Strategic Plan to End Homelessness that sets priorities for the CoC.

As part of its commitment to ending homelessness Montgomery County held its fourth annual "Homeless Resource Day" continuing to reach out to residents experiencing homelessness and connect them with needed community resources and supports. More than 462 households attended this highly successful event and were able to receive health screenings, registration for mainstream benefits, legal assistance, employment, haircuts and much more. The event was supported by 271 volunteers from the community and 71 Service Providers or vendors.

Continuing its commitment to ending homelessness, Montgomery County Council approved a FY14/15 special appropriation of over \$649,000 to create permanent housing with supportive services for 15 additional homeless individuals identified as the most vulnerable. Additionally, in FY15, County Council approved funding in the amount of \$437,120 to serve 16 vulnerable and / or chronically homeless individuals in permanent supportive housing for a total of 31 slots.

Other new initiatives to address homelessness include the following:

- The relocation of two single adult transitional shelters, Dorothy Day Place and Bethesda House, to a new site in Rockville that serves a total of 18 men and 19 women.
- Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services is working to renovate 3 – 4 homes located in downtown Rockville that will provide transitional housing for female headed households (transition aged young adults 18–25) with domestic violence issues and who need supportive services to stabilize.
- The scheduled 2016 relocation of Progress Place, which is comprised of two private partners, Interfaith Works Community Visions and Shepherds Table, to a new location in downtown Silver Spring. The site also includes a new single room occupancy program.

Partnering with the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless, the County's Veteran Collaborative, and Supportive Services for Veterans and Families, Montgomery County is participating in the Zero: 2016 campaign as part of its continued efforts to meet the needs of homeless veterans living in Montgomery County. Montgomery County has received a total of 80 veteran subsidies to serve individuals and veteran family households. In March 2014, Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless opened a Veteran Safe Haven (which serves the metropolitan area including Baltimore County and City) to provide shelter for 15 homeless veterans, which further increases options to serve this population.

The County continues to provide emergency shelter to households with children through three family shelters with the capacity to serve 27 families. An additional 14 families can be served through the County's domestic violence shelter. Due to increased demand in FY15, additional hotel beds were secured to expand overflow shelter capacity and a new non-profit partner agreed to provide overflow shelter located in a church. During this year's enumeration, 73 families were residing in hotels or overflow shelter which was over four times the number of families (16) in last year's enumeration. A review of those served found an increasing number of homeless families with the following characteristics:

- Headed by an adult between 18-24 years old who were put out by family and who had never lived independently, i.e. had never had a lease in their own name;
- Evicted from rental housing or had a property foreclosed upon, but had been living with family and/or friends temporarily just prior to entering homelessness;
- Relocated with other family members and then put out; and/or
- Legal immigrant who has not yet met the 5 year waiting period that makes them eligible for federal benefits. Of particular concern are those households where the sponsor, who had agreed to support them, does not fulfill their obligation and puts the household out.

Families in these categories are provided with temporary shelter and case management, but due to the variety of housing barriers, rapid re-housing and/or obtaining permanent housing is a challenge.

Emergency shelter capacity for adults without children expanded to 150 year-round beds including 15 additional year round beds for men, five designated for victims of domestic violence, three designated for Healthcare for the Homeless, and two designated for Aging and Disability. During hypothermia season from November to March, capacity further expands to 410 beds. On the day of the 2015 enumeration, there were 337 emergency shelter beds occupied, 194 of which were designated as seasonal or hypothermia beds.

Transitional shelter and Safe Havens programs provide 172 beds for households without children. On the day of the enumeration, there were 157 beds occupied. For households with children, The National Center for Children and Families (NCCF) developed a transitional program targeted toward families headed by transition-aged youth mothers between 18 – 24 years old. In addition, NCCF added two homes to serve undocumented families fleeing domestic violence who need additional time and supports to obtain permanent status or work permits for self-sufficiency. Therefore the number of transitional beds for household with children has increased.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY'S YEAR-ROUND AND WINTER INVENTORY OF BEDS				
	Beds for Households w/o Children	Beds\Units for Households w/children	Total Year-Round Beds	Total Winter Beds
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HOMELESS POINT-IN-TIME RESULTS

Montgomery County's homeless point in time survey was conducted on January 28, 2015. A total of 1,100 homeless persons were counted that day. This is a 23.5 percent increase since the 2014 count and a 9.6 percent increase since 2013. The overall increase in homelessness is attributed to the increase in households with children. In FY14 a total of 78 households with children headed by transition-aged youth (18–24 years old) were served; however in FY15 as of February 28, 2015 a total of 76 transition-aged youth households were served. This population has additional housing barriers that include limited education, little to no work experience, never lived independently, and minimal or no income. Montgomery County continues to experience high housing costs which make it difficult for households to obtain and maintain permanent housing. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, a family living in Montgomery County would need to earn a housing wage of \$28.25 per hour or \$58,760 annually to afford the fair market rent on a two-bedroom apartment of \$1,469 per month. In contrast, an extremely very low income household earning \$32,100 annually can afford to pay no more than \$803 monthly in rent. A household of four (mom and 3 children) receive \$762 in

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) per month and the maximum Supplemental Security Benefit for an individual is \$721 which illustrates the inability to secure housing without additional income or rental subsidy.

Households without children experienced a slight reduction in 2015 to 598 from 603 in 2014 (1 percent) compared to a 6 percent decrease in 2013. This decrease is attributed to the CoC's concerted effort to increase the supply of permanent supportive housing which included the Housing Initiative Program (HIP) Medical component, the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program (VASH), and the County Council appropriation of 31 units for chronically homeless and/or vulnerable adults.

This enumeration indicated a 36 percent increase in the overall number of homeless households with children from 117 households in 2014 to 159 households in 2015. As discussed above, this population increase is the primary reason for the overall increase in homelessness in Montgomery County. This increase can be attributed to several factors: 1) the reduction of federal funding to Public Housing Authorities affecting Housing Choice Vouchers and affordable housing to low-wage working families; 2) an increase in heads of households aged 18–24 with limited education and work experience; and 3) the exhaustion of family and or friends that could provide any financial resources or temporary housing.

The table on the following page provides a comparison of the past 3 years.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY'S HOMELESS COUNT BY CATEGORY					
Category	2015	2014	2013	Percent Change 2013 to 2015	Percent Change 2014 to 2015
Total Number Counted	1100	891	1004	10%	23.5%
Total Individuals	598	603	638	-6%	-1%
Total Number of Families	159	91	117	36%	75%
Total Persons in Families	502	288	366	37%	74%
Total Adults in Families	184	101	137	34%	82%
Total Children in Families	318	187	229	39%	70%

MONTHLY INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT

Among households without children including the unsheltered, veterans, and transition age youth, the number reporting monthly income was 327, a total of 55 percent. Of those reporting monthly income, 33 percent indicated the primary source of income was from employment. There has been a concerted effort to connect homeless persons with vocational and employment supportive services. Social Security and Veteran Disability income was the primary source of income (55 percent) reported by this population.

Among households with children including veterans and transition age youth, the number of adults reporting monthly income was 146 (79 percent). However 88 (48 percent) reported income from employment, a decrease from the 53 percent reported in 2014 and the same percent reported in 2013. Montgomery County recognizes the need to increase income given the high cost of living. Providers are partnering with employment specialists and job coaches to assist in obtaining and maintaining employment.

SUBPOPULATIONS

As in previous years, Montgomery County saw an increase in adults reporting serious mental illness from 165 in 2014 to 204 in 2015, a 24 percent change. In addition, there was a 17 percent increase in adults with co-occurring disorders despite an 18 percent decrease in chronic substance abuse only. Of concern is the 56 percent increase among adults reporting any history of domestic violence between 2015 and 2014. Adults experiencing domestic violence

also have additional barriers to obtaining housing as many are suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, have limited resources, and limited work experience.

There was an overall decrease in the number of persons experiencing chronic homelessness in this year’s enumeration, continuing a trend. Fifteen percent of the County’s total homeless population met the criteria for chronic homeless. There were two households with children (4 persons), 111 sheltered adults without children and 49 unsheltered adults without children. This is an overall decrease of 11 percent and can be directly attributed to the CoC’s collaboration to prioritize vacancies in permanent supportive housing for those experiencing chronic homelessness.

The veteran population also decreased 31 percent during this enumeration, from 35 in 2014 to 24 in 2015. This decrease could be attributed to an improved definition and coordination with the Veteran Collaboration, the “one stop” drop-in center created for veterans to improve access and coordination of services. Overall, the percentage of veterans in the total homeless population remains low, now at two percent.

	Households w/o Children FY14	Households with Children FY15	Percent Change 2014 – 2015
Substance Use Disorder (SUD)	93	76	-18%
Severe Mental Illness (SMI)	165	204	24%
Co-occurring Disorder (SUD & SMI)	123	144	17%
Chronic Health Problem	164	194	18%
Living with HIV/AIDS	5	15	200%
Physical Disability	99	80	-19%
Domestic Violence Victim History	187	291	56%
Limited English	85	73	-14%
U.S. Veterans	35	24	-31%
Chronically Homeless	181	162	-10.5%

Based on this year’s data and the continued lack of affordable housing, the trend of homeless families is likely to increase. The County is attempting to address this growth by increasing a variety of housing options.

RAPID RE-HOUSING AND PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PLACEMENTS

The Montgomery County Continuum of Care is committed to providing a variety of housing options to address the needs of households experiencing homelessness. The Rapid Re-housing program provides a time-limited, shallow rental subsidy (\$400 per month for singles, \$600 per month for families) and case management services for up to twelve months. This has been a



valuable resource for households who are not in need of permanent supportive housing but who cannot exit homelessness without assistance. Federal Emergency Solutions Grant funds support 22 subsidies – 15 for families and 7 for singles – while County funds support an additional 20 subsidies for families.

Additionally, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services has issued a Rapid Re-Housing proposal to serve an additional 20 young adult households with children. This model will provide a time limited housing subsidy, supportive services and case management strategies based on a multi-generational poverty strategy that addresses gaps in adult educational attainment and workforce preparedness. This is a longer term subsidy that will provide adequate time to address housing barriers while maintaining permanent housing.

Permanent Housing

In Montgomery County there has been little change in the availability of affordable housing for persons with low to extremely-low incomes. The CoC has been able to increase permanent supportive housing via County Council special appropriations and HUD funding.

As previously stated, the local public housing authority, Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC), continues to play a role in making housing affordable in Montgomery County. The housing authority waitlist has not opened in the past seven years; however, HOC has authorized 10 vouchers to be utilized for vulnerable homeless adults and this is a tremendous step forward.

The Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) operates a Moderately-Priced Dwelling Unit program which offers units at reduced rates. In collaboration with a private partner, ten units were provided for vulnerable adults. In addition, DHCA is collaborating to renovate a building and four units which will be set aside to house transition aged youth families.

The number of persons residing in permanent housing including RRH increased to 1,960 in 2015 from 1,771 in 2014, representing an 11 percent increase over 2014 and a 13.5 percent over 2013. This increase reflects the continued commitment of Montgomery County to increasing the supply of permanent housing. The Montgomery County CoC strategic plan to end homelessness continues to emphasize a variety of objectives including increased access to housing options, improved access to education and training, increased employment and community education, and strengthening the capacity of organizations by increasing knowledge about collaboration and homelessness.



Montgomery County

Zero: 2016 Plan

Presented by

Montgomery County Continuum of Care

June, 2015

Montgomery County Zero: 2016

Fiscal 2016 Plan - June, 2015

I. Background

Zero: 2016 is a national effort of 71 communities across the country who have committed to ending Veteran homelessness by December, 2015 and chronic homelessness by December, 2016. Led by Community Solutions, Zero: 2016 supports participating communities in optimizing local resources, tracking progress against monthly housing goals, and accelerating the spread of proven strategies. Zero: 2016 provides hands-on coaching, implementation of transparent data and performance management, and a shared learning environment to participating communities.

Montgomery County's Zero: 2016 Initiative, is a rigorous follow-on to its successful 100,000 Homes Campaign and will build upon these past efforts. Montgomery County will continue to use a Housing First model as the basis for its plan. Housing First is an approach that centers on providing homeless people with housing quickly and then providing support services as needed to help maintain housing stability. What differentiates a Housing First approach from traditional placement into emergency shelter or transitional housing is that it is not based on "housing readiness" but is "housing-based," with an immediate and primary focus on helping individuals and families quickly access and sustain permanent housing.

Montgomery County's Zero: 2016 Plan for Fiscal Year 2016 was developed with a primary focus on the rapid exit of Veterans from homelessness to permanent, sustainable housing. The following plan is the result of collaborative discussions between Department Health and Human Services (DHHS) and key stakeholders including family and single adult shelter providers, Veterans groups, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF) providers and others. This group reviewed the current homeless Continuum of Care to determine what resources – federal, state and local – as well as what strategies were needed to address Veterans homelessness. These strategies require the redeployment of existing resources and the addition of new resources to reduce the length of stay in homelessness for Veterans.

II. Getting to Zero for Veterans: Take Down Number

Montgomery County has committed to ending homelessness in Montgomery County by setting a goal to move 56 Veterans who are Montgomery County residents experiencing homelessness into permanent housing by December 31, 2015. This does not mean that there will never be a veteran experiencing homelessness but, rather, that the community has reached sustainable functional zero. Functional zero means that, at any point in time, the number of Veteran experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness will be no greater than the current monthly housing placement rate for the Veteran population.

Functional Zero = Homeless Veteran \leq Veteran Monthly Housing Placement Average

This goal or “take down number” is based on the current number of homeless Veterans who have been identified in the County’s Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), through the 2015 annual Point-in-Time Survey, and by Department of Veterans Affairs staff working at the Veterans One-Stop Center located in the Montgomery County Crisis Center. In addition to the number of homeless Veterans in the County who have previously been identified through these sources, a projection of the number of Veterans who will become homeless during the course of 2015 has been developed using both national trends as well as past experience specific to Montgomery County.

To get to the targeted total of 56 homeless Veterans from Montgomery County housed by December 31, 2015, projections of the types of housing necessary have been developed by Community Solutions and the Department of Veterans Affairs using national data.

National Guidelines for Projecting Housing Placements for Homeless Veterans				
Chronically Homeless – 33%		Episodic and Short Term Homeless – 67%		
Need Permanent Supportive Housing		Do Not Need Permanent Supportive Housing		
VA eligible - 85%	not VA eligible - 15%	Rapid Rehousing, VA Eligible – 37.5%	Rapid Rehousing and Other Housing, Not VA Eligible– 37.5 %	Self-Resolving – 25%
Montgomery County Targets Based on Available Data				
7 – VASH (VA)	12 – VPH	14 – SSVF (VA)	14 - VRRH	9 - No intervention necessary

III. Who is a Veteran?

As approved by the Montgomery County CoC, for this campaign, a Veteran is any individual experiencing homelessness who has served on active duty in the United States Military, regardless of discharge status. The active duty requirement is not time restricted, which means that it applies to any length of service beyond training/boot camp. This definition includes persons who are not eligible for some homelessness programs and services provided through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Using this definition, a master list of all persons identified as Veterans and are currently homeless in Montgomery County has been developed. This list was created

using data from the CoC Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), the January 2015 Point-in-Time (PIT) survey, input from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and their SSVF contractors, and from other providers in our community who work with veterans experiencing homelessness.

The list is updated regularly – in most cases, daily in order to ensure it has the most up-to-date information on veterans in our community. The Master List is not a waiting list; veterans on this list may already be accessing programs, waiting for a housing unit, or may self-resolve their homelessness. This list is meant to get the key partners involved in ending veteran homelessness in our community.

IV. Prioritization of Existing Housing Resources for Homeless Veterans

The Montgomery County CoC has committed to prioritizing housing resources to meet the needs of homeless veterans. When eligible, veterans are first connected to VA funded programs including the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program (VASH) and Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF) programs. However, for those persons who meet the CoC definition for Veteran but who are not eligible for VA services other housing resources will be utilized.

The Montgomery County CoC has developed a coordinated entry system and written standards for access to housing resources to assure transparent and uniform decision-making when assessing need and referring persons to housing. The Montgomery County CoC currently uses two different assessment tools to measure vulnerability and need for a housing intervention; one tool for individuals, and another tool for families.

The Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization and Decision Assessment Tool (VI-SPDAT) is used to assess individuals who are in need of housing intervention(s) and the locally-developed Housing Options Targeting Tool is used to assess families. Coordinated entry access points use the tools in order to initially prioritize the needs of each presenting household. The tools are short in nature and are used to collect the minimum amount of information necessary to initially assess individuals or families who enter the coordinated entry system and identify housing resources needed. Information about housing needs is compiled and prioritization for housing is tracked by the Housing Prioritization Committee.

Vacancies in housing programs are reported to the County Coordinator within five business days of unit/bed availability. The County Coordinator tracks vacancies and assures that appropriate referrals are made for vacancies based on prioritization as determined by the Housing Priority Committee. Veterans identified as needing a supportive housing option are referred to the Housing Priority Committee for prioritization and referral.

Montgomery County CoC has established priority populations for permanent housing options for individuals and families. The CoC will prioritize Veterans over non-veterans when referring individuals and families to permanent housing options.

Essentially, this means that if two households present for assistance and both fall under the same order of priority (e.g. both chronically homeless and fall under Priority 1), but one is a veteran household and the other is not, the veteran household will be prioritized first. In general, the CoC will prioritize veteran households that are not eligible for VA housing or services.

V. New Housing Resources

As part of Montgomery County's FY 2016 Budget, an appropriation in the amount of \$500,000 was approved to provide housing and supportive services to homeless Veterans in the County. This additional program funding will be made available as early as July 1, 2015.

The objective of this additional funding is to provide a range of permanent housing and supportive services opportunities to house Veterans who have been identified through the County's homeless services system. The expectation is that this new funding in combination with existing resources will be able to enable Montgomery County to meet its goal of ending homelessness for Veterans.

Two new programs will be developed using this additional funding:

1. Veterans Permanent Housing with Supports Program (VPH) targeted to Veterans, who may or may not have documented disabilities, but have significant behavioral health, medical, or other significant barriers that will require ongoing rental assistance and social services support. The intent of this new program is to provide permanent housing assistance to Veterans who may need a wide range of social service engagement in order to maintain housing stability. This program should be flexible enough to be able to respond to both a person who needs very limited service support as well as a person who needs ongoing and regular case management interaction.

The VPH will provide housing and supportive services for 20 Veterans. The anticipated funding for the program is \$ 300,000 and that should cover all costs, including rental subsidies at Fair Market Rent, social services support, and any administrative costs of the provider. The provider for the VPH will be expected to:

1. Identify housing units
2. Facilitate all elements lease-up process and on-going interactions with the landlord
3. After assessment and engagement with the client, provide all necessary case management services for the client, including whatever supports that may be needed by the client to maintain their housing and achieve other personal goals.
4. Ensure that all furnishings and household items are provided at no cost to each tenant.

2. Veterans Rapid Re-Housing Program (VRRH) targeted to Veterans who need assistance in obtaining housing, short or medium term assistance with rental payments, and some time-limited social services support. This program should be flexible enough to be able to respond to both a person who needs minimal service support as well as a person who needs more intensive case management interaction to gain self-sufficiency.

The VRRH will provide time-limited rental assistance and some social service support for 15 Veterans. The period of engagement between the clients and the VRRH will be case specific, based on individual need and circumstances. It is expected that some clients will need very short term assistance while others may require up to 12 months. The anticipated funding for the program is \$ 200,000 and that should cover all costs, including deposits, time limited rental subsidies at Fair Market Rent, housing navigation and social services support, and any administrative costs of the provider. The provider for the VRRH will be expected to:

1. Work with the potential client before housing placement to set timelines and expectations for both rental subsidy and social services assistance
2. Identify housing units
3. Facilitate all elements lease-up process and on-going interactions with the landlord
4. Provide all necessary case management services for the client, including whatever supports that may be needed by the client to maintain their housing and achieve other personal goals.
5. Ensure that all furnishings and household items are provided at no cost to each tenant.

The County plans to identify and contract with non-government agencies, Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless for Veterans Permanent Housing with Supports Program (VPH) and Bethesda Cares, Inc. for Veterans Rapid Re-Housing Program (VRRH). These agencies will provide all services and programming required for the implementation of these programs.

Programs must follow the Housing First model, which means that:

- Housing for all clients served is provided in a permanent setting
- Participants must be able to abide by a standard lease agreement
- Services are voluntary and will be designed to promote housing stability and well-being
- The type of services provided are to be based on individual need
- Housing is not contingent on compliance with services

These programs are intended to supplement existing mainstream benefit programs and existing Federal resources that are already being committed to Veterans homelessness in

the County, not to replace the existing resources. Program providers must incorporate services focused on improving client access to mainstream benefit programs, such as Social Security disability benefits and Veteran benefits.

These Federal resources include:

1. the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program (VASH), which is a Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) which provides long-term rental assistance vouchers and social services specifically targeted to homeless veterans, and
2. the Supportive Service for Veteran Families Program (SSVF) which provides time-limited financial and supportive services to individuals and families who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness to enable them to quickly regain stability in permanent housing after experiencing a housing crisis and/or homelessness.

Eligibility and Process for Referral

Veterans will be referred to these programs through the Montgomery County coordinated entry system. Montgomery County's Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS"), working through the Veterans Work Group of the Housing Prioritization Committee, will be responsible for maintaining a list of potential clients for the VPH and VRRH programs. For all persons on the list, the Veterans Work Group is expected to prioritize the use of Federal resources, including VASH vouchers and SSVF prevention funds and rental assistance, before any referral to the VPH, or VRRH are considered.

If a person on the list cannot access VASH or SSVF, whether because of eligibility criteria or lack of available funding, that person can then be considered for referral to VPH or VRRH as vacancies occur. Once referred, the provider(s) for the VPH, or VRRH programs will be required to accept clients in accordance with the CoC's written standards.

VI. Gaps

Montgomery County has many resources in place to prevent and address homelessness—yet gaps remain in some areas. The community has been working hard to coordinate and collaborate to fill gaps in the service delivery system for the homeless population. The primary gaps in providing a more sustainable services network for persons who are homeless include:

1. Lack of affordable and diversified housing stock in general, and particularly for seniors, especially those who may need some level of assisted living
2. Barriers for persons with limited or no income to access the affordable and supportive housing which is currently available.
3. Lack of ability to quickly access affordable housing for populations such as domestic violence victims

4. Resources for programs providing models to assist in ending intergenerational poverty.
5. Programming focused on long-term economic security.

VII. Sustainability

The following strategies will be used to sustain the efforts of ending Veteran homelessness:

1. Continuing to serve Veterans with the Housing First approach and provide individualized pathways to permanent housing.
2. Reducing the unsheltered status and minimize the time spent being homeless.
3. Improving access to mainstream benefit programs, such as Social Security disability benefits and Veteran benefits. By providing outreach to Veterans about SSA benefits and assisting eligible adults through the SSA application process using the SOAR model, we can increase income security and housing stability and help end Veteran homelessness.
4. Providing prevention assistance includes but is not limited to rental and utility assistance; down payment assistance; legal assistance; employment assistance; vocation assistance; mental health and substance abuse assistance; and housing counseling.

VIII. Conclusion

The Montgomery County Continuum of Care (CoC) is delighted to join the Zero: 2016 National Campaign. The CoC's goal is to end homelessness for all Veterans, not just those with honorable discharges. The strategy to achieve this vision is of making homelessness a rare, brief, and nonrecurring event for Veterans in Montgomery County.

Homeless Services for Single Adults

- Homeless Single Adults can access shelter through any of the **Day and Outreach Services**.
- In addition, information regarding the homeless system can be obtained 24 Hours | 7 days a week at the **Montgomery County Crisis Center**:
1301 Piccard Drive, 1st Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850
240-777-4000 (V) • 240-777-4815 (TTY)

Homeless Services for Families and Homelessness Prevention Services

- Homeless Families are assessed in the three **Regional Service Centers of DHHS/Emergency Services**. Once confirmed as homeless, the family is referred to one of three Assessment Shelters.
- Limited financial assistance to address housing emergencies in order to prevent homelessness including past due rent, past due utilities, security deposit, moving or storage expenses.
- Assistance is available also for burial expenses for those who meet the qualifications.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES REGIONAL SERVICE CENTERS

Rockville Office 1301 Piccard Drive, 2nd Floor	240-777-4550 (V) 240-777-4410 (TTY)
Silver Spring Office 8818 Georgia Avenue	240-777-3075 (V) 240-777-1478 (TTY)
Germantown Office 12900 Middlebrook Lane, 2nd Floor	240-777-4448 (V) 240-777-3071 (TTY)

Regional Service Centers Hours of Operation:
Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. on a first-come, first-serve basis or Tuesday evening from 5:00-7:00 p.m. by appointment only.

Day and Outreach Services

PEOPLE ENCOURAGING PEOPLE

251 North Stonestreet Avenue 301-637-6700
Rockville

BETHESDA CARES

7728 Woodmont Avenue 301-907-9244
Bethesda

CITY OF GAITHERSBURG Homeless Assistance Program

Homeless Advocate 301-258-6390
1 Wells Avenue, Gaithersburg

COMMUNITY VISION

8210 Dixon Avenue 301-585-4471
Silver Spring

HOPE RESTORED, INC.

"Community Intermediaries and Advocates"

1319 Apple Avenue 301-587-1490
Silver Spring

MONTGOMERY AVENUE WOMEN'S CENTER

12250 Wilkins Avenue, Rockville 301-984-7765
Daily 8:00a-6:00p
Saturday | Sunday 8:00a-2:00p

Neighborhood Opportunity Network Sites

Catholic Charities | 301-942-1790
12247 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring
Wednesdays only

Family Services, Inc. | 301-840-2000
610 Diamond Avenue, Gaithersburg
Thursdays only

Department of
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
 Building A Healthy, Safe and Strong Community -
 One Person at a Time



Shelter Services

Provides coordination of services to homeless individuals and families. Services include: outreach, emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing. Services are provided primarily through partnerships and contracts with community non-profit organizations. DHHS Housing Stabilization staff provide emergency assessment services to homeless families with children. Emergency shelter capacity for individuals expands during the winter months. Case management services are provided to all homeless clients to link clients to needed services, including housing referrals, treatment, employment and entitlements.

Service(s): Homeless Shelter

Target Population: Low Income

Information Number: 240-777-4448

Location(s): MidCounty DHHS Building
1301 Piccard Drive, Rockville, MD 20850
 DHHS Silver Spring Center
8818 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910
 UpCounty Regional Services Center
12900 Middlebrook Road, Germantown, MD 20874
 Neighborhood Service Center at Catholic Charities
12247 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20906
 Takoma East Silver Spring (TESS) Center
8513 Piney Branch Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901
 Neighborhood Service Center at Family Services, Inc.
610 E Diamond Ave, Gaithersburg

Important Information

[How to Apply](#)

[Documents To Bring](#)

[Eligibility Requirements](#)

[Fees and Payments](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ's\)](#)

[Additional Information](#)



Department of
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
 Building A Healthy, Safe and Strong Community -
 One Person at a Time



Shelter Services

How to Apply

Homeless families can walk-in to any of the regional offices listed above. Homeless single adults can walk into the Crisis Center to learn of current openings.

Documents To Bring

Homeless Families –

- Documentation of loss of permanent housing in Montgomery County, eviction notice or “put out” letter
- Photo identification (ID) of applicant
- Proof of any household’s gross monthly income for the last 30 days

Eligibility Requirements

- Loss of permanent housing in Montgomery County, eviction notice or “put out” letter
- Photo identification (ID) of applicant

Fees and Payments

Fees are assessed at each shelter or housing program

FAQ's

No frequently asked questions at this time.

Additional Information

No additional information at this time.

P744

Family Homelessness in Montgomery County

March 18, 2015

Presentation to Interagency Commission on Homelessness

Family homelessness is caused by the combined effects of lack of affordable housing, unemployment, limited access to resources and supports, health and mental health challenges, the challenges of raising children as a single parent, and experiences of violence. As the gap between housing costs and income continues to widen, more and more families are at risk of homelessness. Even a seemingly minor event can trigger a catastrophic outcome and catapult a family onto the streets.

Families experiencing homelessness are under considerable stress. Homelessness is a devastating experience that significantly impacts the health and wellbeing of adults and children. Often, members of homeless families have experienced trauma. These experiences affect how children and adults think, feel, behave, relate, and cope.

Family Shelters	Year Round Capacity	Total Beds Available
Greentree Shelter	13 Families	42
Helping Hands	8 Families	23
Stepping Stones	6 Families	29
Total Year Rounds Capacity	27 Families	94 Beds
Motels	60 Households	150 Beds

Montgomery County continues to provide emergency shelter to households with children through three family shelters with the capacity to serve 27 families. An additional 15 families can be served through the County's domestic violence shelter. Local motels are utilized as Family Shelter overflow and have the capacity to house 60 additional families.

- During the month of January 2015, 88 households were served in motel overflow shelters as compared to January 2014, there were only 55 households served (60% increase).
- The average length of stay in family shelters was 86 days during January 2015 as compared to 72 days in January 2014.
- The family shelter waitlist remained high at 45 during January. Families continued to have multiple housing barriers, including previous evictions, poor credit, large utility debt, medical complications, and no to low income.
- Number of young adults households (18-24 year old) served has increased during recent years:

FY13	FY14	FY15 as of January
62	78	72

County Services added to help families included:

- FY14—Federal Emergency Solution Grant provided Rapid Re-Housing for 15 family households.
- FY14—Housing Initiative Program served 5 additional families.
- FY15—County Rapid Re-Housing Program served an additional 20 family households.
- FY15—Rapid Re-Housing Request for Proposal was out and proposals are being reviewed to serve an additional 20 Young Adults households.
- Special Needs Housing initiated Intensive Team Meetings with participation from Child Welfare Services, Behavioral Health, and other vendors to staff families in hotel over 90 days. There were 8 meetings in January.