

ORANGE COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE

VETERANS COMMITTEE

Thursday, May 18, 2023

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Location:

**Tierney Center for Veteran Services
1231 Warner Ave,
Tustin, CA 92780**

Committee Chair: Eric Richardson, Volunteers of America

Committee Members:

Melanie Martins, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Jeffery Pagano, Orange County Veterans and Military Families Collaborative
Audel Gonzalez, Individual
Michael Ruiz, Volunteers of America
Becks Heyhoe, Orange County United Way
Sarah Nance, CalOptima Health
Jade Smith, Tierney Center for Veteran Services

MINUTES

Welcome and Introductions – Eric Richardson, Chair

Public Comments – Members of the public may address the Veterans Committee on items listed within this agenda or matters not appearing on the agenda so long as the subject matter is within the jurisdiction of the Veterans Committee. Members of the public may address the Veterans Committee with public comments on agenda items after the Veterans Committee member discussion. Comments will be limited to three minutes. If there are more than five public speakers, this time will be reduced to two minutes. To address the Veterans Committee, members of the public are to complete a Speaker Request Form prior to the beginning of each agenda item. Staff will call your name in the order received.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Approve the Veteran Committee Meeting Minutes from March 16, 2023.

Melanie Martins motioned to approve the item on the Consent Calendar. Sarah Nance seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

BUSINESS CALENDAR

2. Orange County Coordinated Entry System (CES) Veteran Registry Data Review – Sarah Jones, Continuum of Care (CoC) Manager, Office of Care Coordination

a. Review of current data reflected in Orange County CES Veteran Registry.

Sarah Jones presented the following CES data:

- There are currently 260 veterans on the Veteran Registry. In the last 12 months, 212 veterans have been housed in permanent, stable housing.
- Of the 260 veterans on the Veteran Registry, 157 (60.4%) veterans are experiencing unsheltered homelessness, 97 (37.3%) veterans are experiencing sheltered homelessness, and 6 (2.3%) veterans are listed as “other”.
- The greatest number of veterans experiencing homelessness are in the Central Service Planning Area (SPA) (55%).
- At this time, there are four cities that have a range of 20 to 60 veterans experiencing homelessness within their city boundaries, as reported by the veterans. These cities are Santa Ana with 60 veterans, Anaheim with 46 veterans, Huntington Beach with 22 veterans, and Costa Mesa with 20 veterans.
- The average age of veterans on the Veteran Registry is 52 years old.
- 53% of the veterans in Orange County are experiencing chronic homelessness.

Committee Discussion:

- Chair Eric Richardson noted and questioned as to why there has been a 19% increase in the number of veterans experiencing homelessness in Orange County. Chair Eric Richardson also stated that it was interesting to see the City of Costa Mesa have higher numbers of veterans experiencing homelessness.
- Becks Heyhoe requested clarification on the Veteran Registry Dashboard, specific to “Outflow exceeded Inflow” measure included. Becks Heyhoe inquired how many of the veterans are sheltered in various cities. Becks Heyhoe asked about the household composition for the veteran groups of ages 55+ and 62+ and clarification regarding the “Identified Housing Needs” bar graph.
- Audel Gonzalez inquired if the data included repeated HMIS intakes and Homelessness Prevention (HP) programs.

Public Comments:

- Richard Owens provided additional details regarding the “Outflow exceeded Inflow” measure. Richard Owens expressed interest in exit destination data for the other 200 veterans. Richard Owens also shared Jamboree Housing Corporation is working with the Office on Aging to provide services to seniors and offered to coordinate a presentation to this group regarding their program and what services they can offer. Richard Owens noted further analysis is needed to see if there is a trend of people getting priced out of their homes.
- Robert “Santa Bob” Morse provided context as to why veterans may be located in some cities and not in others. Robert “Santa Bob” Morse also shared that the City of Costa Mesa

is converting the Studio 6 site into Permanent Supportive Housing which will provide 30 Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) units for veterans.

- A member of the public inquired on clarification on the disabling condition term.

b. Determine action plan and next steps for further analysis.

Committee Discussion:

- Chair Eric Richardson noted that there is an opportunity to provide emergency housing assistance, therefore, it would be a good idea to partner with outreach groups to tangibly offer a service to a veteran experiencing homelessness. Also noting the need for an needs assessments. Chair Eric Richardson shared that goal of doing a presentation at the Veteran Registry meeting to coordinate outreach efforts and placement in emergency housing assistance.
- Becks Heyhoe shared that the focused client groups are a great concern and there is a need to conduct a deep dive of the data to better understand each household.

Public Comments:

- Richard Owens inquired about Homekey Round 3 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) to obtain funding for veterans. Richard Owens explained that the Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Program is not functional because it does not support full operations. Richard Owens stated the need for community outreach and an outreach flyer.
- Griffin Dooley wanted to know about resources and to ensure that veterans are referred to additional resources.
- The member of the public inquired if anyone had veteran specific presentations and shared that Project Food Box will be presenting next week.

3. Training Ideas for Veteran Engagement – Eric Richardson, Chair

a. Possible training related to outreach strategies and service provision for veterans.

Committee Discussion:

- Jeffery Pagano shared Ask The Questions campaign was identified as vital when conducting intakes. Jeffery Pagano established public and private partnerships to change their intake questions to include the revised language on how to identify veteran family households.
- Audel Gonzalez inquired on the terminology for identifying veterans and disagreement with some of the phrases.

Public Comments:

- Larissa Owens provided background on the Ask The Questions campaign and emphasized that intake language matters in regards to identifying veterans. Larissa shared concerns on family data and clarified their comments on the term veteran.

- A member of the public provided context on the phrase “have you served in the military” and opportunities miscommunication. The member of the public also noted that GI Bill housing stipend is limited.
- A member of the public shared that many veterans identify as single due to broken families and inquired if veterans are facing homelessness right after military discharge.

b. Determine action plan and next steps related to training design and facilitation.

Committee Discussion:

- Jeffery Pagano stated that Orange County Veterans & Military Family Collaborative (OCVMFC) has developed materials which can be revised to make it more collaborative.
- Jade Smith offered to share a calendar invitation for an outreach meeting.
- Becks Heyhoe provided input on the CoC Committees.

Public Comments:

- A member of the public provided background on a former Outreach Committee that also did targeted outreach and noted that CES referrals do not have participant’s contact information or current location.
- Richard Owens explained that the GPD NOFA was released and that the funding does not cover all funding to have staff or facilities. Richard Owens encouraged the option of trying to utilize Homekey to create interim housing to fill a gap in the system because there is no interim housing for veterans.
- Monica Garcia suggested reaching out to council members of the cities because the Congressman would be able to set up meetings and rally support for projects.

4. Meeting Schedule – Eric Richardson, Chair

a. Consider extending the length of meeting time to 90 minutes for future Veterans Committee meetings.

Chair Eric Richard discussed the idea of extending the length of the meeting to 90 minutes for future Veterans Committee meetings. The group agreed.

Committee Discussion:

- Michael Ruiz shared information on an upcoming resource fair for veterans which will assist in getting connected with experts regarding screening for housing assistance, peer support, Social Services benefits enrollment and other community resources.
- Jeffery Pagano shared that on October 31st, in collaboration with OC Families and VA Health Care, University of California Irvine (UCI) Medical will have the 2023 Health Wellness Summit with the event title of “Underserved Veterans Populations” which will be a full day at UCI and will be geared towards clinicians and physicians.
- Jade Smith shared that the Stand Down is scheduled for September 13th, 2023, which will be hosted at the Tierney Center and will provide information on veteran resources.

- Sarah Nance announced that CalOptima Health is having a Developer Round Table and information shared will be used for the next NOFA. Sarah provided details on the location and date.

Public Comment:

- A member of the public shared that Working Wardrobes has a tour of the facility every fourth Wednesday of the month. The next Working Wardrobes tour is on June 15, 2023.

Next Meeting: Thursday, July 20, 2023, from 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.