

**ORANGE COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE  
VETERANS COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL MEETING**

Monday, June 16, 2025  
3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**Location:**

**Orange County United Way  
18012 Mitchell South,  
Irvine, CA 92614**

**[Click here](#) for parking instructions.**

**Virtual Meeting Option\*:**

**Zoom Meeting Link: [Click here for meeting link](#)**

**Join by phone: +1 669 444 9171**

**Webinar ID: 984 1140 4002**

***\*Listen-in option only***

**Committee Chair:** Becks Heyhoe-Khalil, Orange County United Way

**Committee Vice Chair:** Eric Richardson, Volunteers of America Los Angeles

**Committee Members:**

Ruby Lara, Santa Ana Housing Authority

Melanie Martins, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Jeffery Pagano, Orange County Veterans and Military Families Collaborative

Larry “Smitty” Smith, Individual

**MINUTES**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and County Language Access Policy, those requiring accommodation and/or interpreter services for this meeting should notify the Office of Care Coordination 72 Hours prior to the meeting at (714) 834 – 5000 or email [CareCoordination@ocgov.com](mailto:CareCoordination@ocgov.com). Request received less than 72 Hours prior to the meeting will still receive every effort to reasonably fulfill within the time provided.

**Welcome and Introductions** – Becks Heyhoe-Khalil, Chair

Chair Becks Heyhoe-Khalil called the meeting to order at 3:13 p.m.

Present: Becks Heyhoe-Khalil, Melanie Martins, Jeffery Pagano, Eric Richardson, Larry” Smitty” Smith

Absent Excused: Ruby Lara

**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 agenda item presentation. Comments will be limited to three minutes. If there are more than five public speakers, this time will be reduced to two minutes. Members of the public utilizing interpreter services will be given double the amount of time provided public comment.

To address the Veterans Committee during the Public Comment period, 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. Members of the public may also submit public comment by emailing [CareCoordination@ocgov.com](mailto:CareCoordination@ocgov.com). All comments submitted via email or at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting will be distributed to the Veterans Committee members and all comments will be added to the administrative records of the meeting. Please include “Veterans Committee Meeting Comment” in the email subject line.

### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

1. Approve the Veterans Committee Meeting Minutes from March 20, 2025.

Eric Richardson motioned to approve Consent Calendar Item 1. Melanie Martins seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

### **BUSINESS CALENDAR**

1. **Coordinated Entry System (CES) Veteran Registry Data Update** – Daniel Garcia, CES Administrator, Office of Care Coordination

Daniel Garcia provided an update on the CES Veteran Registry Dashboard. As of April 30, 2025, there are 235 veterans experiencing homelessness on the Veteran Registry. In the previous 12 months, 138 veterans have been housed in permanent, stable housing. Over 30 agencies, including the VA Community Resource and Referral Center, outreach providers, and shelter providers, continue to meet weekly to coordinate housing and services for veterans experiencing homelessness in Orange County. In the past 12 months, there has been a 12% decrease in the number of veterans experiencing homelessness in Orange County.

### **Committee Discussion:**

- Chair Becks Heyhoe-Khalil asked clarifying questions related to the Community Queue Status chart.
- Vice Chair Eric Richardson inquired about next steps in utilizing the data shared. Vice Chair Eric Richardson highlighted the upcoming Veteran Surge event and how a deeper dive into this data will support the work in preparing for the event.

- Melanie Martins shared having recently communicated with the Office of Care Coordination's CES team regarding veterans on the Community Queue.

## **2. Veterans Committee Transition** – Becks Heyhoe-Khalil, Chair and Felicia Boehringer, CoC Administrator, Office of Care Coordination

Chair Becks Heyhoe-Khalil shared an overview of the creation and background of the Veterans Committee. Chair Becks Heyhoe-Khalil and Felicia Boehringer highlighted the CoC's collaboration with Orange County Veteran and Military Family Collaborative (OCVMFC) and Veterans Affairs (VA) One Team to address Veteran homelessness in Orange County. Thoughtful consideration and discussion took place with the Office of Care Coordination team and CoC Board Officers, to ensure continued dedicated efforts to addressing Veteran Homelessness should the Veterans Committee sunset. A proposal was shared to sunset the Veterans Committee, ensure continued CoC involvement in other veteran-specific efforts through existing collaborative spaces, and transition to a Veterans Ad Hoc that can meet on an as-needed basis.

### Committee Discussion:

- Vice Chair Eric Richardson noted that while the committee does have a broader focus than the OCVMFC Housing Working Group, there is still a lot of connection between the work of both groups. Vice Chair Eric Richardson supported the consolidation efforts, emphasizing that both OCVMFC and One Team are now clearly linked to the CoC. Vice Chair Eric Richardson added that maintaining a sense of unity and shared goals has been helpful, and that there is no need for additional meetings as long as objectives are being met. Vice Chair Eric Richardson shared an update on the Veterans Surge, noting that collaborators will be utilizing any available avenues to help find housing for as many veterans as possible within three days of the event.
- A member of the public shared support of sunsetting the Veterans Committee in order to lighten the scheduling load of regular meetings.
- Melanie Martins pointed out that too many meetings can actually take away from time to do meaningful work, and noted that Larry "Smitty" Smith will be an important connection to keep as an individual with lived experience of homelessness.
- Jeffery Pagano noted that there have been duplicative efforts between the different groups, but shared praise for the encouraging improvements in presenting of Veteran data and confirmed with Vice Chair Eric Richardson whether it makes sense to consolidate and sunset the CoC's Veterans Committee.
- Daniel Garcia confirmed that James Bacon, representing the Office of Care Coordination as the CES Lead for the CoC, will continue participating in One Team meetings.
- Larry "Smitty" Smith confirmed agreement with the idea to transition to a Veterans Ad Hoc as needed, and asked for clarification regarding structure and funding oversight for each group. Larry "Smitty" Smith expressed appreciation that the VA has been able to utilize their funding to support Veterans in a more streamlined process.

- Chair Becks Heyhoe-Khalil shared that there will be a presentation on the Veterans Surge at the June 23, 2025, CoC Board meeting.

**Next meeting:** To be determined.

*All are invited to attend the OCVMFC Housing Working Group meeting from 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m., prior to the Veterans Committee.*