

HEALTH CARE FOR HOMELESS VETERANS



**WHITE RIVER JUNCTION, VT
VA MEDICAL CENTER**

2011-2012

Mission

The Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) mission is to help homeless veterans access a full range of medical, mental health, and substance abuse treatment at VA Medical Centers and Clinics and to provide homeless veterans with assistance in accessing community resources, transitional housing, and permanent housing in order to facilitate opportunity for Veterans to improve their well-being.

Welcome & Introduction

This Handbook was developed by the HCHV team based at the White River Junction VT VA Medical Center (HCHV WRJ).

Members of HCHV WRJ know that the VA system can be overwhelming and confusing at times. Policies, programs, and projects often change. You can rely on the team members to assist you in getting connected with the right programs and services and in offering you continuing support as you improve your living situation.

The programs offered by HCHV WRJ are:

- Community Outreach & Shelter Per Diem (SPD) Programs
- Grant and Per Diem (GPD) transitional housing Program
- Community Residential Treatment (CRT) Program
- the VA Supportive Housing (VASH) Program.

Use of This Handbook

This Handbook was developed with homeless Veterans in mind. It is meant to be a helpful guide in navigating both VA and non-VA services and programs, but it is not all-inclusive. Outside of what is listed in these pages, there are many other services and resources that you might find helpful in meeting your needs. HCHV WRJ encourages researching services through other assistance directories or methods as well. As appropriate, HCHV WRJ staff may inform you of possibly beneficial services or supports that are not listed in this Handbook.

This Handbook also includes information that may have changed since the most recent edition. HCHV WRJ suggests verifying dates, times, availability, and contact information for certain items listed. If you are experiencing difficulty with accessing information on a service or resource listed in this Handbook, please contact an HCHV WRJ team member.

The HCHV Team

All team members can be reached by dialing toll free **1-866-687-8387**.

Please keep in mind that the HCHV WRJ team conducts outreach, meaning that team members are out in the community and not necessarily available for walk-in, same-day appointments at their offices. You should contact the team member who is situated closest to you geographically; however, if you are already working with a particular team member, continue to contact that team member with any concerns or questions until otherwise directed.

The following table displays the names, locations, contact information, roles, and responsibilities for each member. Keep in mind that each team member not only acts as a VA liaison and case manager, but also carries out administrative duties as part of their role.

| Name/Location | Contact Information | Geographical Area & Programs of Coverage |
|---|--|---|
| Jason Brill Fort Ethan Allen Clinic Colchester, VT | 802-295-9363 Due to start in October | -provides case management and VA liaison services in northwestern and central VT |
| Michelle Lague Brattleboro Clinic Brattleboro, VT | 802-295-9363 x2222 | - provides case management and VA liaison services in southeastern VT & southwestern NH |
| Chris Husmann VA Medical Center White River Junction, VT | 802-295-9363 x5763 | - Grant and Per Diem Liaison, providing case management to several of the transitional housing programs |
| Leigh Smith Bennington CBOC Bennington, VT | 802-295-9363 | - provides case management and VA liaison services in southwestern Vermont |
| <i>Vacancy</i> VA Medical Center White River Junction, VT | 802-295-9363 | - provides case management and VA liaison services in the immediate hospital and Upper Valley area |
| <i>Vacacy</i> Littleton CBOC Littleton, NH | 802-295-9363 | - provides case management and VA liaison services in the Northeast Kingdom of VT and North Country of NH |

At the time of or soon after you begin involvement in a program or service HCHV WRJ offers you will be expected to collaborate with a case manager on creating goals and objectives to address your needs. This "Individual Treatment Plan" is a dynamic, fluid document that can help you with organizing tasks required to improve your living situation and self-sufficiency. You are expected to participate in its development and inform your case manager if you believe it needs updating based upon changes in your circumstances. Your case manager will follow up about the Plan on a regular basis during case management meetings.

Outreach to Homeless Veterans

If you are a precariously housed Veteran, a Veteran facing imminent eviction, a Veteran staying in a shelter, or are otherwise homeless, we are interested in meeting with you to discuss your circumstances and assist you in identifying community and VA sources of assistance. At any time, you may decline offers or options that we suggest and turn down consideration for any of the HCHV programs listed in this Handbook.

Not only are we interested in helping homeless Veterans, but we want to prevent homelessness as well. We may refer you to agencies listed in this Handbook to prevent you from becoming homeless if you are facing eviction. We may also ask that you consider utilizing financial assistance resources and your social support system.

HCHV team members can work with Veterans on a limited "humanitarian" basis. If you are a homeless Veteran not eligible for Veterans Health Administration (VHA) services, it may still be of interest and worthwhile to connect with an HCHV team member to review your individual circumstances and for referral purposes to non-VA housing and community resources.

Oftentimes, we are able to offer military surplus supplies (i.e. clothes, camping gear) to homeless Veterans who are in need of such items and/or opting to decline offers for shelter. These supplies are limited and therefore the HCHV WRJ team uses discretion with providing such amenities. If you are in need of such items, please do not hesitate to inquire about availability.

Shelter Per Diem Program

The Health Care for Homeless Veterans Team works closely with emergency shelters throughout the states of Vermont and New Hampshire. The HCHV team often refers homeless Veterans to emergency shelters that have availability and can assist in figuring out how to get a temporary stay while other housing arrangements are under consideration. This further enables you to begin or increase your involvement with VA programs and services.

There are a number of emergency shelters throughout the states of New Hampshire and Vermont where HCHV Staff provide outreach and case management services on a regular basis. Each emergency shelter is very unique in its policies and procedures and eligibility for continued lodging.

Shelters "contracted" with the VA where HCHV WRJ team members frequent are part of the Shelter Per Diem Program. The VA Medical Center funds Veterans' contracted shelter stays up to 90 days during which time, a Veteran, a HCHV WRJ team member, and shelter staff work collaboratively on determining a Veteran's next living situation.

If you are at a contracted shelter, you will be required to complete a 1010EZ or 101EZR form (see VHA Health Eligibility Enrollment above) if you are at a contracted shelter for purposes of enrolling at the VA, even if you do not intend to utilize VHA services or are otherwise not eligible for VHA services. This is per contract policy as HCHV team members will be working with you to complete an action plan to either help you with increasing your involvement (1) non-VA housing services or (2) in the VHA or Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) system.

HCHV WRJ team members determine if extensions beyond the 90 day stay for the Veteran are appropriate or necessary prior to the 90 days being up and will inform the shelter staff and Veteran within reasonable time. In some cases, a Veteran can remain a shelter patron beyond 90 days per individual shelter policy or by the Veteran providing a monthly contribution out of their own income to the shelter. The shelters that are part of the Shelter Per Diem program include:

Morningside Shelter

81 Royal Road
Brattleboro, VT 05301
802-257-0066

Upper Valley Haven

713 Hartford Avenue
White River Junction, VT 05001
802-295-6500

Open Door Mission

31 Park Street
Rutland, VT
802-775-5661

Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS)

PO Box 1616
Burlington, VT 05402
(802) 864-7402

See a team member or contact 2-1-1 NH or 2-1-1 VT for additional shelter locations.

Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Transitional Housing Programs

Depending upon your individual needs and on bed availability at particular locations, you may be eligible for one of the HCHV Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Programs. The GPD programs are transitional, supportive housing in which homeless Veterans may potentially stay for up to two years with the goal of working toward permanent housing during this period. GPD Programs involve a range of structured activities, such as group and house meeting attendance and participation, opportunities to meet with non-VA human service providers, and offerings for volunteer, social, and civic opportunities. Veterans are allowed 3 admissions to a GPD program in their lifetime. There are circumstances where this limit may be waived. This determination is made between the GPD program site staff, the HCHV liaison assigned to the GPD program site, and the national GPD program headquarters.

Veterans with an honorable or other than honorable discharge may be eligible for the GPD program. The Veteran's period of service must include a period of active military duty not for the purpose of training. Therefore you may be eligible for HCHV services while you are in the GPD program even when you may not be eligible for VA health care. Veterans are provided lodging at the GPD sites and case management. The VA pays for services and case management and veterans may pay a residential fee.

As a general rule, in order to be admitted to any one of the GPD Programs, Veterans need to have a 30 day sobriety from illicit substances and alcohol; GPD Programs have a zero tolerance policy for illicit substance and alcohol consumption and/or possession. Veterans are required to have had a physical and mental health evaluation 30 days prior to entering a GPD Program. You will be asked to complete Releases of Information and/or fill out applications for GPD Programs of interest. HCHV team members can assist with the completion and dissemination of applications to GPD Programs.

Some individual GPD Programs encourage or require face-to-face interviews and/or tours of the facility prior to admission. The HCHV team members are only able to accommodate one visit per Veteran to a GPD Program so if you are interested in visiting more than one prior to committing to an admission, you should consider coordinating transportation arrangements independently for additional visits.

Each site develops their own specific criteria for admission due to the different offerings provided at each program. Some sites have limited space available for families and/or couples on a case-by-case basis. Program Manuals for each of the following are available for your review from HCHV WRJ. These programs include:

Victory Farm (Part of Veterans' Homestead)

Brenda Broussau, Admissions Director
Martha Gauvin, Program Manager
85 Pierce Road
Fitzwilliam, NH 03477
603-585-9427

Phoenix Houses of New England, Inc. RISE Program

Louise Dwinell, Intake Coordinator
11 Underhill Avenue
Bellows Falls, Vermont 05101
802-463-9851

The Veterans Place, Inc.

220 Vine Street
Northfield, VT 05663
802-485-8874

COTS Canal Street Housing for Veterans

Zpora Perry, Program Director
120 W. Canal St.
Suite 115
Winooski, VT 05404
802-655-1617

Veterans, Inc.

Larry Seavey, Program Director
378 North Main Street
Bradford, VT 05033
802-222-9087

Community Residential Treatment (CRT) Programs

Currently, the VA is contracted with one community residential treatment program to provide homeless Veterans with psychiatric and substance abuse problems approximately ninety (90) day stays at Spring Lake Ranch in Cuttingsville, VT. Spring Lake Ranch operates an organic farm and provides work-centered therapy. Spring Lake Ranch has on-site residential managers, nurses, and other clinicians, opportunities for socialization on and off the Ranch, and structured activities, including AA meetings, to assist individuals with their recovery. Requirements include a referral from and screening by an HCHV team member. A Veteran has to have had a physical and mental health evaluation, be willing to engage in case management with the VA liaison to the CRT Program in developing after-care plans, and be willing to receive VA primary and mental health care services out of the Rutland CBOC.

Dental Care for Homeless Veterans

Homeless veterans who have been enrolled in a GPD program for 60 days or more may be eligible for a one-time course of dental care. Please contact the HCHV program staff regarding eligibility for this program.

VA Supportive Housing Program

Homeless Veterans may qualify for the Supportive Housing Program (VASH). VASH provides Veterans with long-term, ongoing case management in the community and a Section 8 Housing Choice voucher. Veterans must demonstrate a willingness to engage in goal-oriented activity, meet routinely with a case manager, comply with lease and occupancy agreements, and live within an hour of either the VA Medical Center or a Community-Based Outreach Clinic. You should notify your case manager if you are interested in understanding more about the eligibility criteria, policies, and procedures associated with being a VASH enrollee and wish to be

considered for VASH by the HCHV WRJ team. Those approved for VASH receive notification and a copy of the VASH Handbook from an HCHV team member.

Additional Veteran Housing Options

Applications for these transitional housing programs are available through your case manager. Availability fluctuates. Homeless Veterans wanting to be considered for admission to the Dodge House must be interested in gaining employment and be employable and homeless Veterans who wish to be considered for admission to the Harbor Homes' single-room occupancy residence must be over the age of 62 or disabled.

Dodge House
95 Crescent Street
Rutland, VT 05701
(802) 775-6772

*Dodge House recently added a housing program for female Veterans

Harbor Homes, Inc. (**opening date not yet scheduled**)
10 Trinity Street
Claremont, NH
(603) 882-3616

Permanent Housing Options

If you are interested in applying for affordable housing, there are several avenues to explore. Your case manager may be able to assist you in understanding, receiving, and submitting rental applications for property management firms, housing trusts, public housing programs, housing authorities, and other housing organizations. It is often worthwhile to consider several locales of interest as many housing organizations have waiting lists.

NeighborWorks of
Western Vermont
110 Marble Street
West Rutland, VT 05777
www.nwwvt.org
802-438-2303
Provides education, training,
counseling, intervention and
financial assistance related to home
ownership and foreclosure, housing
for the homeless, and home repair in
Rutland, Addison, and Bennington
Counties

Affordable Housing Education &
Development (AHEAD)
161 Main Street
Littleton, NH 03561
www.homesahead.org
603-444-1377
Provides education, training,
counseling, intervention and financial
assistance related to home ownership
and purchases and operates affordable
housing units in Coos & Grafton
Counties

Community Action Agencies/Programs

Community Action Agencies or Programs (CAA/Ps) are nonprofit private and public organizations established under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 whose mission is to help people help themselves in obtaining self-sufficiency. CAA/Ps offer emergency and housing-related financial assistance, information and referral, coordination of community services, and education.

Vermont

BROC-Community Action in Southwestern Vermont

60 Center Street

Rutland, VT 05701

(802) 775-0878

<http://www.broc.org>

Counties Served: Rutland, Bennington

Central Vermont Community Action Council, Inc.

195 US Rt. 302-Berlin

Barre, VT 05641-2267

(802) 479-1053

<http://www.cvcac.org>

Counties Served: Washington, Lamoille and Orange

Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity

P.O. Box 1603

Burlington, VT 05401-1603

(802) 862-2771

<http://www.cvoeo.org>

Counties Served: Addison, Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle; Statewide

Northeast Kingdom Community Action, Inc.

P.O. Box 346

70 Main Street

Newport, VT 05855

(802) 334-7316

<http://www.nekca.org>

Counties Served: Orleans, Essex, Caledonia

Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA)

91 Buck Drive

Westminster, VT 05158

(802) 722-4575

<http://www.sevca.org>

Counties Served: Windham, Windsor

New Hampshire

Southwestern Community Services, Inc.

63 Community Way

Keene, NH 03431-0603

(603) 352-7512

<http://www.scshelps.org>

Counties Served: Cheshire, Sullivan

96-102 Main St.

Claremont, NH 03743

(800) 529-0005

Tri-County Community Action Program, Inc.*

30 Exchange Street

Berlin, NH 03570-1911

(603) 752-7001

57 Mechanic St., Ste. 5

Lebanon, NH

(603) 443-6150

448 White Mountain Highway (Route 16)
Tamworth, NH
(888) 842-3835

<http://www.tccap.org>

Counties Served: Coos, Carroll, Grafton

*see website for additional locations in Coos and Grafton Counties

Meals and Food Services

Free daily meals are available throughout the region. In addition to meals, there are several community food shelves. Listings of meals are available upon request. The HCHV WRJ team suggests utilizing 2-1-1 VT or 2-1-1 NH when locating up-to-date information regarding meals and food services. Other sources to find out about food shelves and pantries by location include:

Vermont Food Bank
800-585-2265
www.vtfoodbank.org

New Hampshire Food Bank
603-669-9725
www.nhfoodbank.org

Transportation Resources

Disabled American Veterans Volunteer Drivers Program

DAV provides transportation for Veterans to and from the VA Medical Center. Veterans should provide the office with 24-48 hours notice when they need a ride to an appointment. The DAV Program Coordinators and Volunteers can be reached in the office on the ground floor of Building 31 on the VA campus or by calling 802-295-9363 x5394.

WRJ Shuttle Service

WRJ TO BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER SHUTTLE SCHEDULE

Veterans have a priority over seats

- No smoking, eating or drinking allowed on shuttle vehicles.
- Seat belt use is required
- No Beneficiary travel reimbursement for travel on a shuttle
- Veterans/Staff should Schedule appointments with shuttle schedule in mind
- Veterans need to schedule shuttle transportation with travel as far in advance as possible

MONDAY – FRIDAY (Excluding Federal Holidays)

Shuttle leaves WRJ at 7:00A arrives in Manchester 8:15-8:30A.

Arrives Jamaica Plain 10:00A, then proceeds to West Roxbury arriving 10:30A.

Shuttle arrives in West Roxbury for pick ups at 1:00P then proceeds to Jamaica Plain arriving 1:30P.

Leaves Jamaica Plain at 3:00P, arriving Manchester at 4:30P for pickup.

Arrives WRJ at 5:00P

* ALL TIMES ARE APPROXIMATE. TIMES VARY DUE TO APPOINTMENT SCHEDULE OF VETERANS.

** IF THERE ARE NO APPOINTMENTS FOR MANCHESTER OR WEST ROXBURY, THE SHUTTLE WILL NOT BE DROPPING OFF OR PICKING UP.

*** IF YOU ARE BEING DISCHARGED, MAKE SURE THAT SOMEONE FROM THE VA WHERE YOU ARE A VETERAN HAS CALLED THE TRAVEL OFFICE AND RESERVED YOU A SEAT ON THE WRJ SHUTTLE.

**** IF YOU NEED THE WRJ SHUTTLE FROM WEST ROXBURY AND WE ARE NOT DROPPING OFF ANYONE, YOU NEED TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO CATCH THE WEST ROXBURY SHUTTLE TO JAMAICA PLAIN.

**** THERE ARE TWO STOPS AT THE HOOKSETT REST AREA; ONE ON THE DEPARTURE TRIP AND ONE ON THE RETURN TRIP.

HCHV team members may be able to provide you with brochures regarding schedules of public transportation in Vermont and New Hampshire communities. You can also contact public transportation agencies directly or go online to get schedules and ride information.

Vermont

Addison County Transit Resources (ACTR)
Middlebury, VT 05753
Phone: (802) 388-1946
www.actr-vt.org

Advance Transit, Inc.
Wilder, VT 05088
Phone: (802) 295-1824
www.advancetransit.com

Chittenden County Transportation Authority (CCTA)
Burlington, VT 05401
Phone: (802) 864-0211
www.cctaride.org

Connecticut River Transit, Inc. (CRTI)
Rockingham, VT 05101
Phone: (802) 460-RIDE
Toll Free: (888) 869-6287
www.crtransit.org

Deerfield Valley Transit Association (DVTA; Moover)
West Dover, VT 05356
Phone: (802) 464-8487
www.moover.com

Green Mountain Community Network (GMCN)
Bennington, VT 05201
Phone: (802) 447-0477
www.greenmtncn.org

Green Mountain Transit Agency – Montpelier/Franklin Grand Isle (GMTA)
Berlin, VT 05602
Phone: (802) 223-7287
www.gmtaride.org

Marble Valley Regional Transit District (MVRTD; The Bus)
Rutland, VT 05701
Phone: (802) 773-3244

Rural Community Transportation, Inc. (RCTI)
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
Phone: (802) 748-8170

Stagecoach Transportation Services, Inc. (STSI)
Randolph, VT 05060
Phone: (802) 728-3773 / Fax: (802) 728-6232
www.stagecoach-rides.org

New Hampshire
Advance Transit, Inc.
Wilder, VT 05088
Phone: (802) 295-1824
www.advancetransit.com

CityExpress
Ph: 603-352-8494
The CityExpress offers easy-to-use public transportation in Keene. The CityExpress transportation system also offers the Friendly Bus, a door-to-door service for elderly and disabled residents of Keene and the Medical Express for people needing transportation to medical appointments. All services are accessible to people with disabilities.

Community Transportation Services
Ph: 603-542-0048
An easy-to-use public transportation service for the towns of Claremont and Newport.

North Country Transportation
Ph: 603-752-1741
Toll Free: 888-997-2020
Offering a fixed route service in the Berlin-Gorham area as well as door-to-door, senior and disabled citizens transportation throughout The Great North Woods of Coos Country.

VBA Regional Office & Benefits

If you are interested in applying for a Home Loan, Education Benefits, VA Insurance, Non Service Connected Disability Pension or Service Connected Disability Compensation, or other VA benefit the Veteran Service Center operates 9AM-4PM Monday through Friday on the first floor of the Administrative Building (Building 28) at the White River Junction Medical Center.

Jeff Neily, Homeless Outreach Benefits Coordinator, Veteran Service Center
1-800-827-1000 or 1-802-296-5177

If you are planning on filing a claim for VA benefits and wish to receive assistance from a Veteran Service Organization, the following are located across from the Veteran Service Center in Building 28 (on the WRJ Campus):

American Legion
Disabled American Veterans (DAV)
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
1-802-295-9363

Legal Assistance Resources

VT Communication Support Project
Providing specialized communication accommodations for people with disabilities to assure equal access to our system of justice and state services
802-247-5135

Legal Services Law Line of Vermont
274 North Winooski Avenue
Burlington, VT 05402
802-863-7153
www.lawlinevt.org

Vermont Legal Aid
1-800-889-2047
www.vtlegalaid.org
Offices are located in Springfield, Montpelier, Burlington, St. Johnsbury, and Rutland.

New Hampshire Legal Assistance
www.nhla.org
Offices are located in
Claremont 800-562-3994,
Littleton 800-548-1886,
Berlin 800-698-8969, and
Portsmouth 800-334-3135
Monday through Friday 8:30AM-5PM.

Other Assistance Resources

Economic Service Division
Agency of Human Services, State of Vermont
(800) 479-6151
www.mybenefits.vt.gov
www.screendoor.vermont.gov

Division of Family Assistance
Department of Health and Human Services, State of NH

| | |
|---|--|
| 650 Main Street, Suite 200 Berlin, NH 03570 (603) 752-7800; (800) 972-6111 73 Hobbs Street Conway, NH 03818 (603) 447-3841; (800) 552-4628 | 17 Water Street, Suite 301 Claremont, NH 03743 (603) 542-9544; (800) 982-1001 809 Court Street Keene, NH 03431 (603) 357-3510; (800) 624-9700 |
|---|--|

Receive help paying for food, heating fuel/oil, health care and phone service. Apply for Nutrition Programs, Medicaid Programs, and Fuel Assistance. Eligible applicants will be required to provide written documentation of their living situation, financial, employment, and disability status, and contact information.

Needy Veterans Fund
Department of Veteran Affairs, State of VT
802-828-3379

Veterans who have lived in Vermont for at least one year may be eligible for one-time-only financial assistance. Veteran must conduct a phone interview and provide a copy of their DD214.

Friends of Veterans
<http://www.friendsofveteransvtnh.org/>
222 Holiday Drive, Suite 4
White River Junction, VT 05001
802-296-8363

Friends of Veterans (FOV) is a 100% volunteer-run, non-profit organization that assists Veterans with improving their self-sufficiency through classes, case management, and financial assistance for those who qualify. Veterans who are looking for assistance with back rent, a security deposit, or overdue utility bills will need to present their DD214 and documentation regarding their financial circumstances such as eviction notice, outstanding balance on an invoice, and a completed expense and income form. Veterans should contact FOV for an intake meeting.

Veteran Service Organizations

Your local American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, or other non-VA Veteran organizations may have financial and non-financial assistance available.

Family Assistance Centers (FAC) and Military Family Community Network (MFCN)
www.vtguard.com www.vtmfcn.org
789 Vermont National Guard Road
Colchester, VT 05446-3099
1-888-607-8773

If you are recently returning from military service, Family Assistance Centers and the Military Family and Community Network are information and referral "one stop shopping" organizations that can assist Veterans and their families in becoming connected to resources and services of assistance.

Easter Seals Veterans Count & the Deployment Cycle Support Programs
www.nh.easterseals.org
12 Kinsbury Street
Keene, NH 03431
603-355-1067

54 Pleasant Street
Claremont, NH 03743
603-543-3795

The Veterans Count and the Deployment Cycle Support Programs provide Veterans with "one stop shopping" as well for information, referral, support, guidance, resources, etc. Each family is provided with case management from a Post Deployment Care Coordinator.

| | |
|---|----------------|
| New Hampshire Domestic Violence 24-Hour Hotline | 1-866-644-3574 |
| New Hampshire Sexual Assault 24-Hour Hotline | 1-800-277-5570 |
| Vermont Domestic Violence 24-Hour Hotline | 1-800-228-7395 |
| Vermont Sexual Assault 24-Hour Hotline | 1-800-489-7273 |