

Information Brief

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Using the success of Kansas City as a blueprint, Veterans Community Project (VCP) has the long-term goal of preventing and ending Veteran homelessness across the nation.

The St. Louis Community

How many unhoused Veterans live in the St. Louis metro area?

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, approximately 10% of the homeless population once served our country. Because VCP uses an inclusive definition of Veteran and a broader definition of homelessness outside of what government entities use, VCP estimates this percentage could be considerably higher.

How will VCP impact the surrounding neighborhood?

VCP's campus will not only provide critical housing resources but will:

- Beautify a once blighted area, increasing property values of surrounding homes and businesses
- Provide ongoing opportunities for community volunteerism
- Strengthen St. Louis' social services sector
- Become as a source of civic pride
- Improve the safety of the surrounding neighborhood

Is VCP part of the VA?

VCP is not affiliated with the VA; however we have a “partner, not compete” mentality and work hard to build relationships with other programs and organizations also committed to meeting the needs of Veterans.



VETERANS
COMMUNITY PROJECT
ST. LOUIS

How many Veterans will VCP serve?

The VCP Outreach Center will provide walk-in services for any Veteran in the St. Louis metro area, regardless of discharge status or type of service. VCP Village will include 50 tiny homes for Veterans; 10 of which will serve Veterans and their families. Combined, the Outreach Center and Village will service thousands of Veterans each year.

The Tiny Homes & Campus

How are the homes constructed?

The tiny homes are stick-built and comply with current building codes (ICC IBC-2021). They are built on concrete foundations and connect to city utilities. Approximately 70% of the construction will be performed by community volunteers.

How big are the homes?

Single homes are 240 sq. ft. Family homes are 320 sq. ft. and sleep up to 5 individuals.

Do the residents have their own kitchens and bathrooms?

Yes. Each home has a fully functional kitchen and bath.

The houses are built with past trauma at the forefront of the design process. VCP is intentional about building communities that are mindful of homeless and military post-traumatic stress; creating a sense of privacy and safety is key.

Do the residents own their home? What do they pay?

The Veterans do not own their home; however, the tiny house furniture and household items become their personal property and go with the Veteran when they are ready to transition to permanent housing. Veterans do not pay rent or utilities while living in VCP Village; their investment in the program is their investment in themselves.

Veteran Support Services

Can VCP serve Veterans who do not qualify for VA benefits?

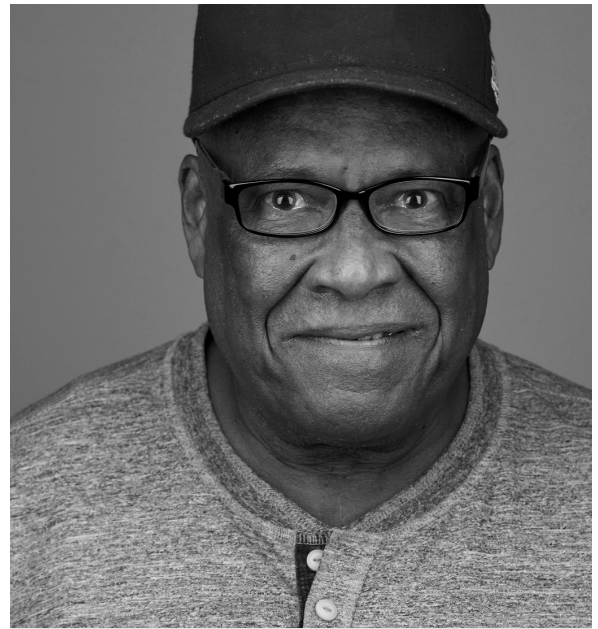
Yes. VCP supports all individuals who took an oath to serve this country. Many Veterans have been historically excluded from VA services because of discharge status, type, or length of service. VCP remains dedicated to serving all Veterans, regardless of VA qualifications for benefits.

How does VCP define homelessness?

VCP follows the government definition of homeless (individual who is without a roof over their head for 60-90 days). We also recognize others who could be seen as homeless, but do not fall under the government definition, such as those who couch surf or live in their car, for example.

How do Veterans get into the program?

Veterans are identified through progressive engagement, referrals from community partners, street outreach, as well as intake through our Outreach Center. Veterans are assessed and prioritized based



"I can't say how much I'm thankful. **This is gonna change my life.**"



Bruce
Veteran, U.S. Navy

on their vulnerability and need.

Do you keep a waiting list?

No. We have found that keeping a list often leads to Veterans turning down other forms of housing and remaining homeless while waiting for a vacancy at VCP. Also, and most importantly, an individual's circumstances can change quickly, and those who are in crisis today may have stabilized by the time there is a vacancy.

What support services are available to Village residents?

VCP maintains a 1:10 case manager to Veteran ratio which allows more time to be spent with each Veteran. The Village offers sanctuary and the emotional space needed for each Veteran and VCP's specially-trained team to thoroughly address the underlying causes of his or her homelessness. With the support of their case managers and battle buddies, Veterans work to achieve incremental, lasting results in the areas of health and wellness, income stability, education and training, fiscal understanding, and the development of a personal support network. Once the Veteran's individual goals are met, VCP assists him or her in securing a permanent housing solution and transitioning to a new life.

How long can a Veteran stay at a VCP Village and what is the average length of stay?

Case managers and Veterans design a plan together that moves at the Veteran's pace, and Veterans can stay as long as they make progress toward their goals. VCP's goal length-of-stay is 24 months, but average length-of-stay is 14-16 months.

How do you address a participant who is not progressing in the program?

Case managers work with the Veteran to understand why they are not making progress, address the identified issues, and design a plan to move forward. If they do not progress, staff and leadership will decide on the next steps.

How does VCP address substance abuse?

VCP follows a harm-reduction model, and it is relative to each Veteran and their case manager what that program looks like. Hard drugs like meth, crack and cocaine are not tolerated.





"I never would have gone to school if it weren't for the support I received here. I will ever be homeless again. "



Chris
VCP Alumni (KC)

Is VCP housing available to non-veterans?

VCP houses Veterans and their families exclusively.

Are pets allowed?

Yes. Pets have a necessary and needed role in the recovery of many homeless Veterans. Homelessness is a process that leads to isolation. Oftentimes pets are the first form of support for these individuals.

Funding and Support

How is VCP funded?

The organization is largely privately funded; government funding is only accepted if it does not restrict our mission and programming.

What types of volunteer opportunities are available?

VCP offers a variety of volunteer opportunities throughout construction and once the Village is complete. Individuals and groups can register online at VCP.org to receive notifications of upcoming events or needs.

What is the Honor Corps?

The Honor Corps is a group of over action-minded people who are committed to support VCP on a monthly basis. More information can be found online at VCP.org.



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