

Testimony
Homeless Veterans Issues
Joint Public Hearing to the
Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness
&
Urban Affairs and Housing
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Good morning Chairman Vulakovich, Chairman Costa, and members of the Senate Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee. I am Steve Culbertson, the Director of Veterans and Housing Programs at Impact Services Corporation and I am co-chair of the efforts to end Veteran homelessness in Philadelphia. Thank you for inviting us to be here.

We are about to declare functional zero homeless Veterans in Philadelphia. Functional Zero is a concept whereby the number of homeless Veterans in our system is no greater than one hundred fifty (150) at any given point in time. This is the average number of homeless Veterans that we can serve in any ninety (90) day period of time. This includes unsheltered Veterans who want permanent housing, Veterans in shelters and emergency housing and Veterans in short-term Transitional Housing.

In order to attain this goal of a system that houses homeless Veterans as quickly as they become homeless, Philadelphia has...

- Permanently housed over 1,300 Veterans in 2.4 years, many in permanent supportive housing.
- Developed a "By-name" list of homeless Veterans that identifies where homeless Veterans are at presently and who is working with them to secure permanent housing
- Developed a coordinated system of outreach workers and navigators that is laser-focused on offering permanent housing to all homeless Veterans on a regular (and not less than every two week) basis
- Developed a coordinated assessment and intake process to assure that Veterans are being matched with housing according to their specific needs
- Met either weekly or bi-weekly to coordinate services and support to house homeless Veterans
- Collaborated in an unprecedented way among the Veteran-serving agencies in order to achieve these goals

I could spend an hour describing how we achieved each of the above points, but I would prefer to interact with the committee in a question and answer format. If you have further questions, I am open to discussing these topics with you here or via email at sculbertson@impactservices.org

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify this morning.