



VETERANS ADVOCATES ARE HOUSING ADVOCATES

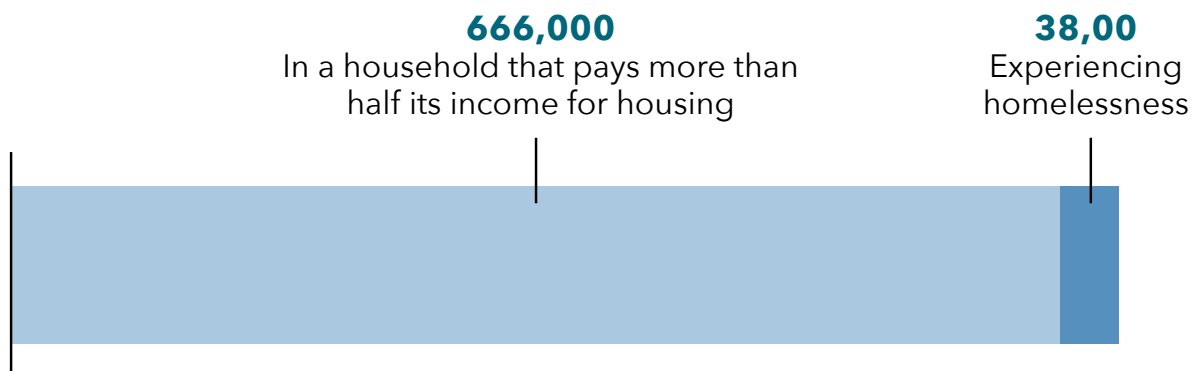
After bravely serving our country, veterans need access to safe, stable, and affordable housing that allows them to thrive in the communities they defended.

- In 2023, 35,574 veterans were experiencing homelessness, an increase of 7% between 2022 and 2023. And 20,076 veterans were sheltered, while 15,507 veterans were unsheltered ([HUD](#), 2023).

Low-income veterans struggle with severe housing cost burdens, spending over half their income on rent and utilities.

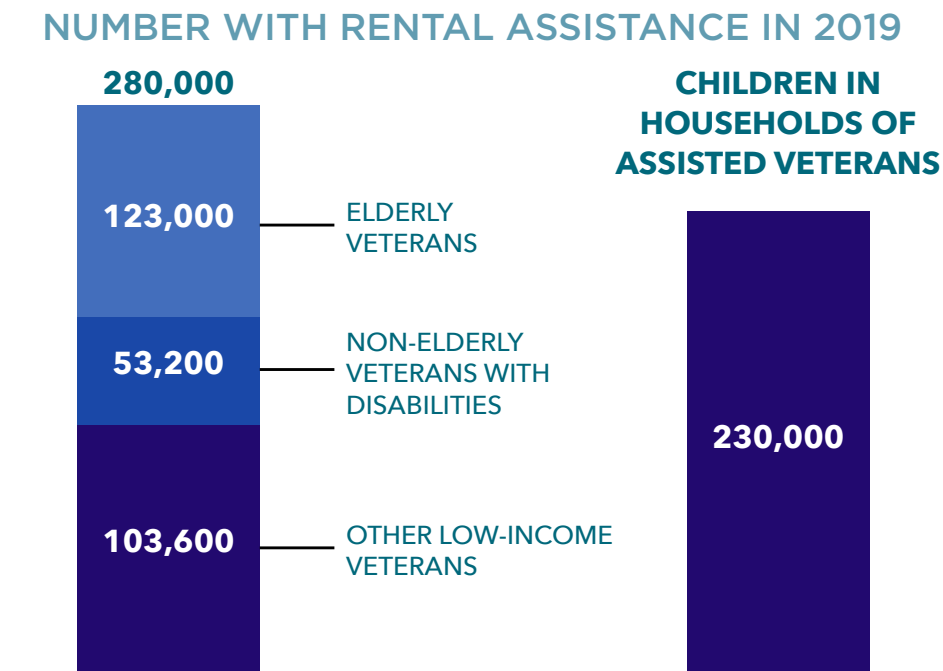
- 666,000 veterans lived in low-income households that paid more than half of their income for rent and utilities in 2017. Veterans facing severe housing cost burdens are often forced to sacrifice essentials such as food, clothing, or medical care to cover their housing expenses. These financial strains increase the likelihood of utility cutoffs, eviction, and eventual homelessness ([Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#), 2019).

OVER 700,000 LOW-INCOME VETERANS ARE HOMELESS OR HAVE SEVERE HOUSING COST BURDENS



Source: CBPP analysis of the 2017 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample and 2017 Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) area median income limits and HUD's 2018 Annual Homeless Assessment Report

Rental assistance helps more than 280,00 veterans and their families afford housing.



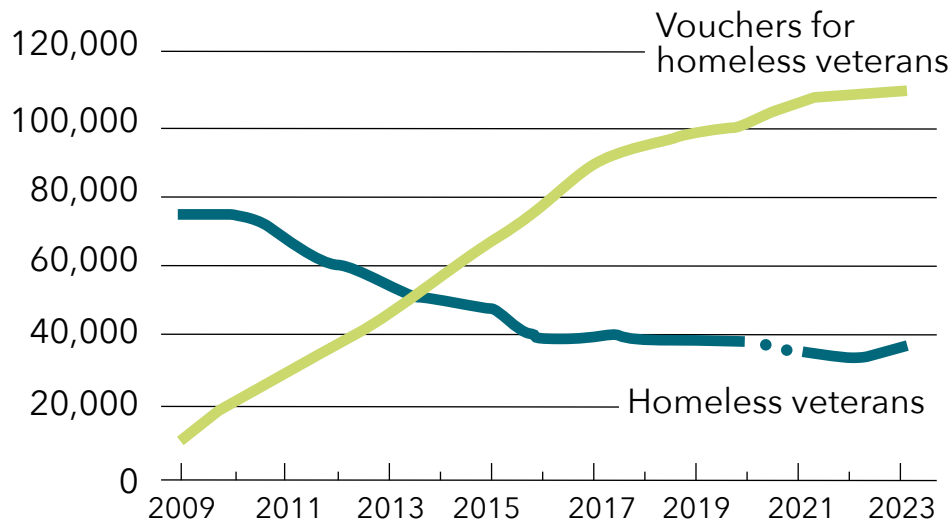
- “Veterans in households that pay over half their income for rent and utilities are a diverse group, ranging from elderly veterans of World War II and Korea to young men and women who recently left military service. Some 44 percent are 62 or older (including 15 percent who are over 80), and another 19 percent are non-elderly veterans with disabilities. Over 230,000 children live in severely cost-burdened low-income households that include veterans.” Quoted from [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#), 2019

Rental assistance reduces homelessness among veterans, yet significant gaps persist.

- Rental assistance plays a crucial role in reducing homelessness among veterans. “The nation has cut homelessness among veterans nearly in half since 2009, in part by providing more housing vouchers for homeless veterans through the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program.” Quoted from ([Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#), 2019).
- Over 280,000 veterans and their families receive rental assistance, helping them maintain stable housing ([Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#), 2019).
- While some veterans with chronic behavioral or physical health issues require supportive services like those provided by HUD-VASH, rental assistance alone can help many veterans stabilize their housing and meet their financial needs ([Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#), 2019).
- “Of the 110,000 HUD-VASH vouchers available nationwide, the share being used to rent apartments last year fell to 74 percent, from 85 percent in 2017. That leaves about 28,000 unused vouchers — enough to house most of the 35,000 remaining homeless veterans if the program placed more participants.” Quoted from the [New York Times](#), 2023

- “Rental assistance has been central to efforts to reduce homelessness among veterans, which have made considerable progress in recent years. Studies have found that rental assistance sharply reduces homelessness, which suggests that a significant share of the 343,000 assisted veterans may have been homeless without assistance (Mills et al., 2006).” Quoted from the [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#), 2014

HOMELESSNESS AMONG VETERANS FELL AS TARGETED VOUCHER PROGRAM EXPANDED



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Mental health challenges deepen homelessness crisis among veterans, driven by service-related trauma.

- “One in ten U.S. veterans have experienced homelessness, and these veterans represent a subpopulation at substantially heightened risk for poor mental health and suicide.” Quoted from [NIH](#), 2023
- Studies find that the relationship between housing instability and mental health can be bidirectional, with declining mental health increasing the risk of homelessness, and homelessness, in turn, worsening mental health ([Tsai & Cao](#), 2019).
- “Veterans with psychiatric or substance abuse disorders who received supportive housing vouchers spent less time homeless than similar veterans who received other forms of treatment but did not get these vouchers.” Quoted from [Rosenheck et al.](#), 2003
- Exposure to trauma increases the risk of homelessness for veterans by impacting their finances, physical health, and mental well-being. To effectively reduce homelessness, veterans need holistic support that includes housing, healthcare, and mental health services. ([NIH](#), 2023).

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