

# Ending and Preventing Veteran Homelessness in Oregon

## **Oregon Housing and Community Services**

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## **Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs**

*Director Kelly Fitzpatrick*



# Oregon's Veterans

1,439 Veterans are experiencing homelessness

- 5<sup>th</sup> highest number of Veterans experiencing homelessness nationally in 2017
- 3<sup>rd</sup> highest rate of unsheltered Veterans nationally in 2017

303,689 Oregonians identify as Veterans

- 1 in 13 Oregonians are Veterans
- 25,000 women Veterans live in Oregon
- 53% of Veterans are over the age of 65
- 25<sup>th</sup> highest Veteran population nationally



[Veterans Resource Map](#)

# Call to Action



## Gov. Brown calls for increased investment in state's veteran services



Oregon Governor Kate Brown visited the Oregon Veterans' Home in Lebanon (OVHL) on March 21 to tour the facility and hold a listening session with Oregon veteran community leaders.

After the meeting with veteran leadership, she held a press conference at the OVHL in which she called on the Legislature to support additional investments in veteran services and to provide a home for every veteran in Oregon.

"In a difficult budget environment, I am proud that we were able to almost double funding for veterans efforts in my proposed budget," Brown said, speaking to residents, staff, and veterans' advocates at the OVHL. "This has always been the starting point and over the last few months, I have heard from veterans across the state about how we can best support veterans and their families. Thanks to their input, I am proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with our veterans to support general fund resources for current services and an even greater level of investment with Measure 50 Lottery funds."

With a better than expected revenue forecast by the Office of Economic Analysis, an additional \$200 million in state revenue decreases the previously projected budget gap in the next biennium from \$1.8 billion to \$1.6 billion.

With that increase in revenue and veterans' community strong advocacy, Brown said she supports using state general

fund dollars to support the current level of veteran services, allowing that new Measure 50 Lottery funds be fully focused on expanding services for Oregon veterans for their health, education and economic opportunity.

"With these additional resources, I am calling for further investments in veteran services and a focused initiative to end veterans' homelessness in Oregon," Brown said. "Together with a broad group of public and private partners, we must continue to fund affordable housing and homeless prevention efforts to ensure every Oregon veteran has a roof over his or her head."

Brown also directed the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs and Oregon Housing and Community Services to continue to work with front line partners to marshal state, federal, and local resources with nonprofit, faith-based organizations, and others to expand veterans' housing.

Several regional communities including the city of Eugene, Lane County, the city of Portland and Multnomah County have shown a pathway with focused innovation and collaboration to ensure a home for every veteran.

Brown called on state leaders to invest in similar, proven local initiatives to expand homeless prevention resources and permanent affordable housing options for veterans and their families throughout Oregon.

- 2016 – The Oregon Legislature refers Measure 96 to voters, dedicating 1.5% of lottery bonds to veteran services
- 2016 – Oregonians support Measure 96 an 83% "YES" vote
- 2017 – \$1.5M in one-time Measure 96 funds allocated to OHCS to house veterans

Photo from [ODVA May 2017 Veterans News Magazine](#)

# Call to Action

ODVA and OHCS work in partnership on all veterans' housing and homelessness issue and programs, including Operation Welcome Home, the Veteran Convening Project, evaluating and selecting affordable housing projects, and more.

- ODVA leverages its partnerships with veteran organizations, the counties, the federal VA and other agencies to enhance our joint efforts and shared goals.
- The [Statewide Housing Plan](#) prioritizes ending Veteran homelessness in Oregon. OHCS also funds veteran housing, both affordable homes and homeownership opportunities.



# Call to Action

**OHCS and ODVA launched Operation Welcome Home on November 15, 2018 with an end date of July 31, 2019.**



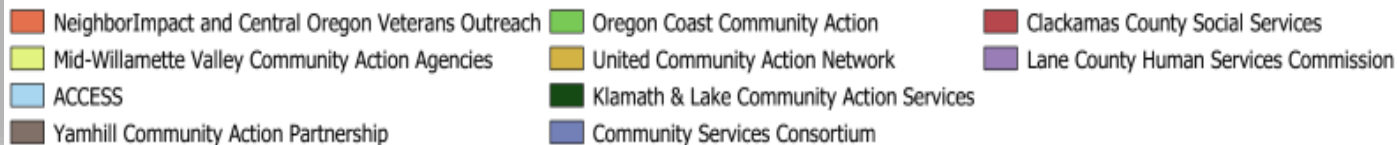
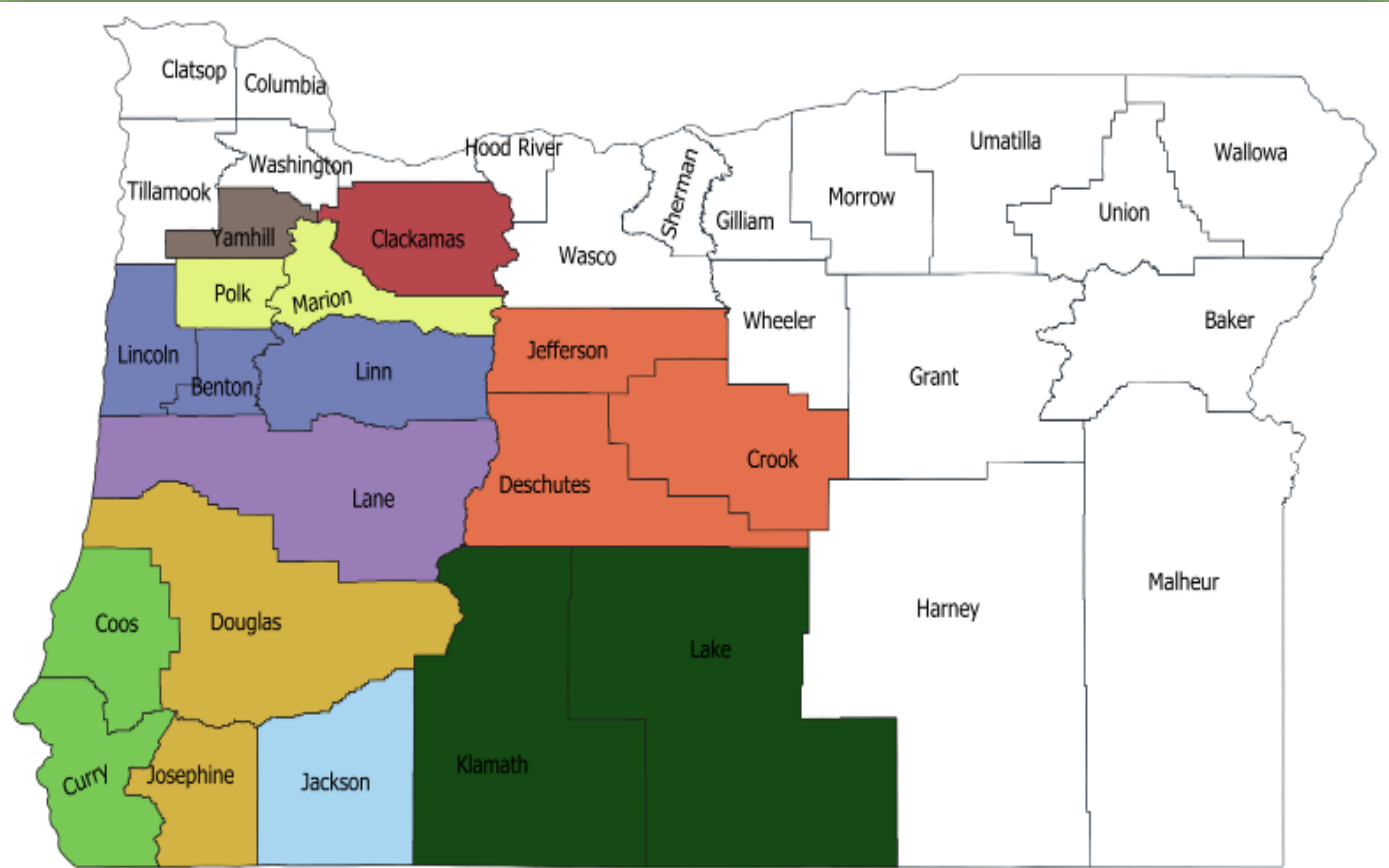
# Operation Welcome Home

- A nine-month campaign to help ten communities in Oregon establish the infrastructure to end Veteran homelessness
- Operation Welcome Home had three goals:
  - House 500 veterans across the ten communities
  - Develop and implement a Veterans By Name List
  - Convene and deploy a Veterans Leadership Team to prioritize Veterans for services in the community





# Operation Welcome Home



The [Operation Welcome Home Dashboard](#) displays statistics and progress in each participating community.

# Operation Welcome Home

- Goals based on U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness Federal Benchmarks and Criteria for Ending Veteran homelessness
  - Create partnerships throughout services structures
- Remote and in-person technical assistance individualized to each community
- Veteran convening brought together service providers across communities





# Operation Welcome Home



## Successful Outcomes:

- **587 Veterans successfully housed during the campaign**
- Five communities developed a Veteran By Name List
- All the communities developed a Veteran Leadership Team
- Increased collaboration among service providers, creating a lasting infrastructure



Director Margaret Salazar, Gus Bedwell, Polk CDC's Executive Director Rita Grady, and Director Kelly Fitzpatrick pictured at the Operation Welcome Home celebration and the Ash Creek Commons Grand Opening on July 31<sup>st</sup>.

# Operation Welcome Home

## Successful Outcomes – Person Centered Approach:

- “Mary” is a veteran that recently escaped domestic violence
- She and her two children experienced homelessness
- Central Oregon Veterans Outreach connected her with housing and mental health resources



[Director Salazar and Director Fitzpatrick editorial](#)

# Operation Welcome Home

## Learning Opportunities:

- Utilizing Data
- HMIS access and expertise, race/ethnicity data limited, tracking outcomes of participants
- Increase collaboration with community partners
- Engage existing local and elected leaders
- Develop local leaders



# Ongoing Work

- Increase in Emergency Housing Assistance funds going to Community Action Agencies to assist more Veterans
- Increase in Document Recording Fee continues to benefit veterans through homeless services, affordable housing development, and homeownership support
- Leveraging all OHCS funds to encourage developers to include Veterans as part of their projects.
- Leveraging Federal VA Programs



# Ongoing Work – Upcoming Awards

- OHCS recently closed a funding opportunity for veteran housing
  - \$1 million for large projects
  - \$3 million for small projects
  - OHCS received 14 applications
  - Oregon Housing Stability Council will approve of awards in January or February





# Veterans Housing Developments



Victory Place,  
Medford



Seavey Meadows, Corvallis

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# Next Steps – Document Recording Fee

- 2018 Legislative Session tripled the state Document Recording Fee, of which 25% is dedicated to serving veterans across the housing spectrum
- Expanded use of the **Homeownership Assistance Program** to serve veteran homeowners in addressing health and safety issues within their homes
- Increased funding to the **Emergency Housing Account** so communities can serve veterans experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- Funding to build affordable homes through the **General Housing Account**



# Next Steps

- Continued collaboration between ODVA and OHCS
- Intentional engagement with Veteran Service Organizations, elected officials, VA partners with goal of inspiring more collaboration and support for Veteran Advocacy work
- Work with Community Action Agencies on leveraging increased Emergency Housing Assistance Funds
- Leverage VA partners to look at ways to increase utilization rates of the HUD-VASH program



# Thank you

## Questions?

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OREGON DEPARTMENT  
of VETERANS' AFFAIRS