

DEPARTMENT OF NEW JERSEY,
RECIPIENT OF THE NATIONAL MICHAEL GUTY HOMELESS VETERAN
OUTREACH AWARD

Employment & Education Bulletin
HOMELESS VETERANS

March 9, 2017

The American Legion New Jersey Family Members:

As you should know, the Department of NJ's Family has been combatting veteran homelessness in earnest since at least 2010. This includes close to \$800,000 in furniture, vehicles, bedding, tables, TV's BBQ's and parties donated at several NJ facilities. But we can do more, not costing us any more money, but just a little time. Both of the following battle tactics involve our municipalities and all levels of our membership.

Mayor's Challenge –

The Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness is a way to solidify partnerships and secure commitments to end Veteran homelessness from mayors across the country. This is probably the most effective way to identify our homeless, because it's the town leaders that have the most eyes on the streets, including the police, sanitation, maintenance, etc. Once identified, they or we as Legion Family members can contact our extensive network of public and private homeless service providers across the State, e.g. the VA, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, Community Hope, the various Dioceses' Catholic Charities, etc. We first learned of this program in 2014 from Atlantic City Don Guardian when we conducted our Job & Resource Fair in his City. At the time he was one of the first to sign-on to this possible final end to this tragedy. The other tragedy is that only 37 of NJ's 565 municipalities have signed-up! Moreover, possibly some of those 37 haven't executed the program! Please see the following links for many more details -

[https://www.usich.gov/solutions/collaborative-leadership/mayors-challenge;](https://www.usich.gov/solutions/collaborative-leadership/mayors-challenge)

[https://www.va.gov/homeless/mayors_challenge.asp;](https://www.va.gov/homeless/mayors_challenge.asp)

[http://nlc.org/mayors-challenge.](http://nlc.org/mayors-challenge)

Therefore, please inspire our members to contact their town officials to strongly encourage them to become our partners to end veteran homelessness!

COAH (affordable housing) Preferences For Veterans –

This is another existing resource to assist our homeless and low to moderate income veterans. This also will not cost us any money, but just a little time, again to contact our local officials. In summary, a municipality may enter into an agreement with a developer or residential development owner to provide a preference for affordable housing to low to moderate income veterans who served in time of war or other

emergency, of up to 50 percent of the affordable units in a particular project. See Section 11 of P.L.1985, c.222 (C.52:27D-311) for further details.

Admittedly both of these initiatives are voluntary on the part of our towns. They may not even know of these important resources for our veterans. So it's up to us, The American Legion Family members at all levels, to help "educate through effective communications" to all of our members, fellow citizens and town leaders!

If you have any questions or assistance, please contact you Post or County Employment & Education Chairperson.

For God and Country,

*Bob Looby, Chairman,
Employment & Education Committee
The American Legion, Department of New Jersey
boblooby@embargmail.com or 908-894-0746 (cell)*

"Say YES, Because You Never Know What An Opportunity It Might Bring"

RWL 7/8/16
3/9/17