

# A Look at Veterans + Housing

*Home in the  
Homeland.*

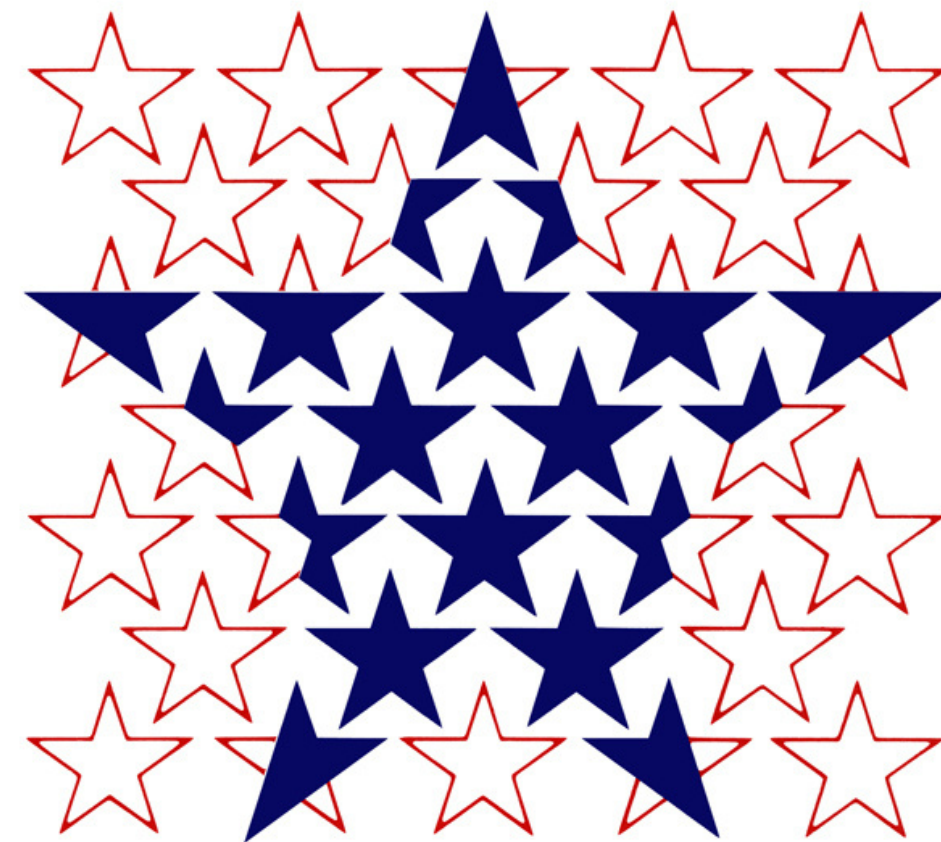


# Veterans Day Background

Veterans Day is  
celebrated  
November 11th in  
commemoration  
of the end of  
World War 1.

**Veterans Day** Arlington  
National  
Cemetery

November 11, 1979



*...a grateful Nation  
remembers...*



# Veterans Build Background

Veterans Build empowers military veterans through homeownership, home repairs, and camaraderie building events.



Since the start of Veterans Build in 2013, over 9,097 veterans and their families have gained access to affordable housing.



# Recap of this year's Veterans Build

Over the span of three days, DuPage and Chicago South Suburbs had four different groups join Veterans Build 2023!



Home in the Homeland.



Home in the Homeland.



Home in the Homeland.



Home in the Homeland.

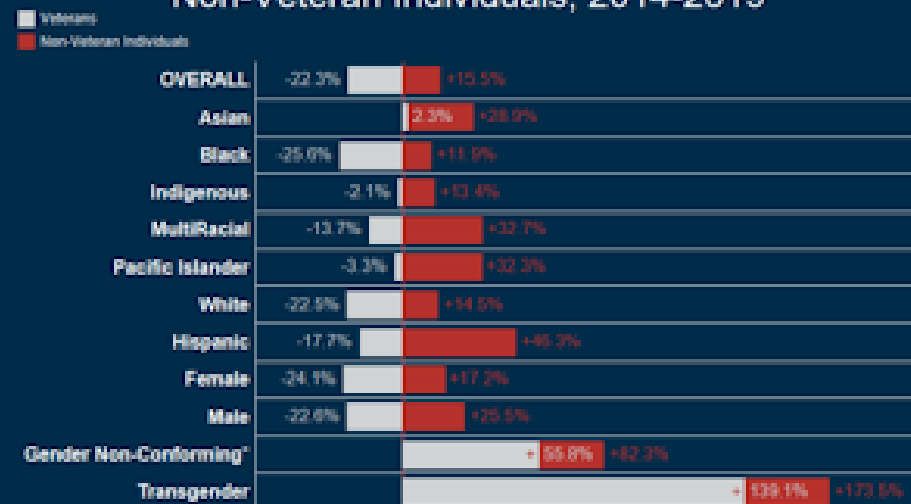


# Why Veterans Build?

In 2016, veterans made up 9.2% of all homeless adults despite making up 6.9% of the total US population.

## Homelessness Has Declined for Most Veteran Subpopulations While Increasing for NonVeterans

5 Year Changes in Homelessness for Veteran and Non-Veteran Individuals, 2014-2019



\*Gender Non-Conforming Data for 3 Years as data collection began in 2017 for this group.



Data Source: US Department of Housing and Urban Development 2019 Annual Homeless Assessment Report, 2020

In 2022, ~37,000 veterans experiencing homelessness on any given night. Most veteran homelessness is very brief, meaning that far more veterans experience homelessness over a full year.

# What is Housing First method?

This method is based on stable housing coming first, before other concerns or conditions are addressed (unemployment, substance abuse, mental illness). This is different from what most programs require, which can leave veterans homeless or in transitional housing for long periods of time.

Within the veteran community, the Housing First method removes the large stressor of housing instability, allowing for better planning and decision-making. Along with this, it minimizes effects of homelessness (job loss, poor school performance, loss of access to medical care, substance abuse, risk of disease, etc.), creating an all-around more sustainable environment.



# What are the Result of the Housing First method?

Through many studies, it has been found that months or years in transitional housing programs didn't lead to more stable housing, fewer psychiatric hospitalizations or less substance abuse than Housing First programs.

Removes the large stressor of housing instability, allowing for better planning and decision-making. Overall, Housing First method minimizes effects of homelessness (job loss, poor school performance, loss of access to medical care, substance abuse, risk of disease, etc.)





# Factors driving housing insecurity:

Post 9/11 veteran households were more likely than non-veteran households to be cost-burdened (someone who is paying more than 30% of their income on housing), even while considering demographics like race, income, and location. This makes other necessities (food/water, sleep, resources) nearly impossible to obtain when housing isn't achievable.

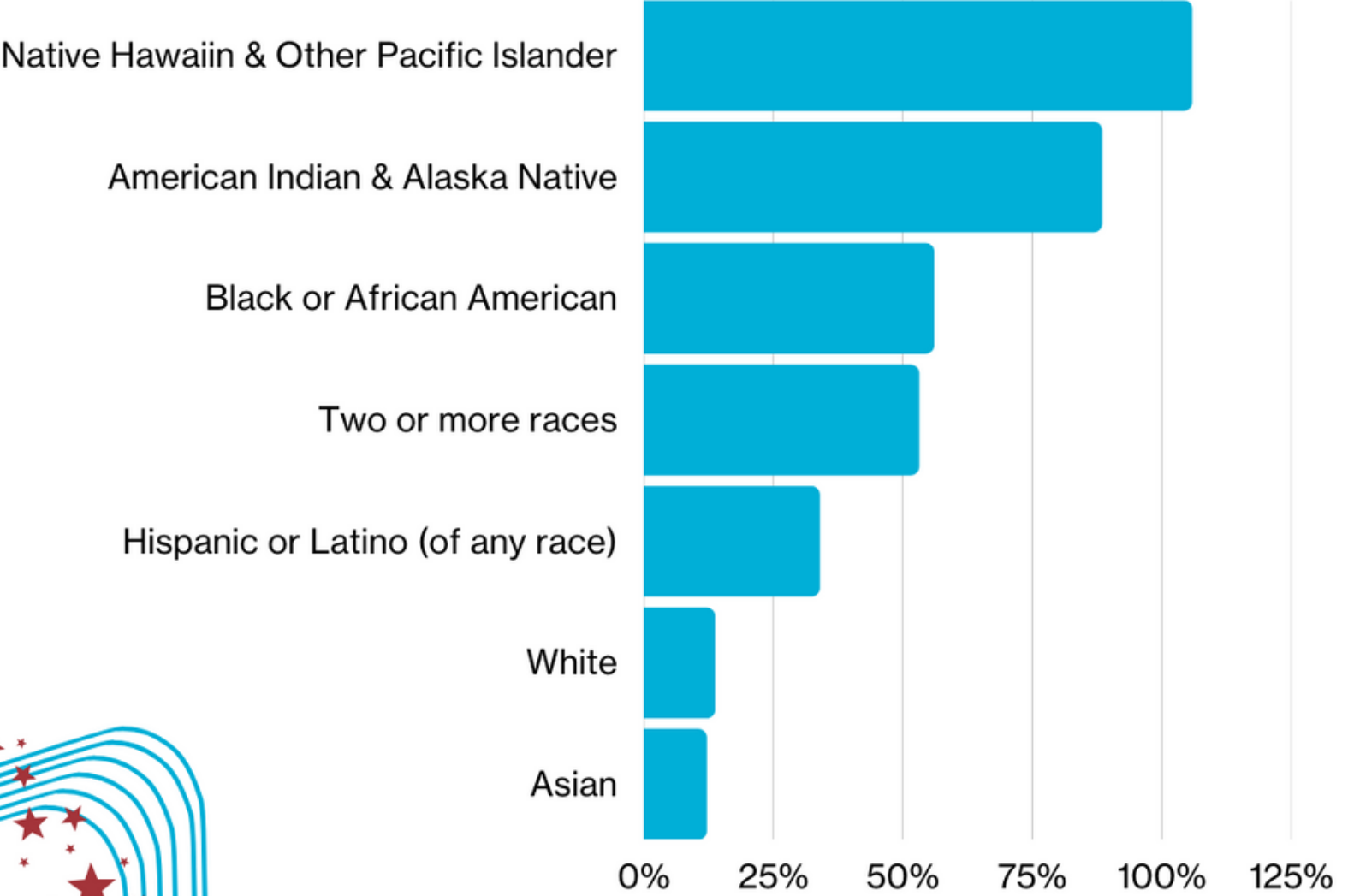
Veterans experience housing insecurity for many different reasons. These reasons consist of: lack of affordable housing, lack of access to mental health/addiction services, unemployment rates, economic state of an area, and lack of investment in public services.





# Most affected intersections:

## Rate of Veteran Homelessness Per 10,000 People



Moses, Joy. "5 Key Facts About Homeless Veterans."

*Home in the Homeland.*

Veteran homelessness varies greatly based on race (see graph)

Transgender veterans are 3x more likely to have housing instability than other veterans

In 2019, female veterans were the fastest growing segment of the U.S. homeless population

# What is the GI Bill of Rights?

Signed by FDR in 1944 and extended multiple times since, the GI Bill of Rights offered federal aid to help veterans buy homes, get jobs, pursue an education, and in general helped them adjust to civilian life again.



This Bill gave veterans access to education, healthcare, and loans/mortgages. Within the GI Bill this promised to guarantee loans from banks and other loan agencies which increased loan availability, affordability, and interest rates. After WW2, veterans were responsible for buying 20% of all new homes built! Having this bill in place meant security and stability for many veterans coming out of war, unsure of what is next.



# Who did the GI Bill leave out?

Although the GI Bill itself contained no restrictions on race and gender, there were other factors at play that affected who received assistance through this bill.

State and local VA organizations were often all-white groups, which led to benefit claims for People of Color (POC) getting denied or delayed to the point of denial. Some of these branches worked hard to steer Black and brown veterans towards menial jobs rather than college or higher-paying occupations.

Furthermore, POC and female veterans struggled to receive loans for homes or businesses from banks, putting them further behind in investing and beginning their homeownership journeys. The average Black WW2 veteran household owned 23 cents for every dollar owned by white WW2 veteran households.

# LGBTQ+ Exclusion

- Being a part of the LGBTQ+ community has been a dismissible offense since the Revolutionary War (first recorded case of man dishonorably discharged for "sodomy" in 1778)
- Officially listed as policy for entire military in 1916 Articles of War
  - Applied to both men and women
  - Many were met with not only dishonorable discharge but prison time. Beginning in the 80s, discharge was still happening although dishonorable discharge started to lessen

- 1993: Don't Ask, Don't Tell enacted by Clinton
- Prohibited discrimination against closeted LGBTQ+ service members but reinforced ban on openly LGBTQ+ people in the military
  - Though this meant people were not supposed to try and identify members of the LGBTQ+ but investigations could be opened based on any "credible information"
  - Those found to be LGBTQ+ (or perceived to be so) discharged (often dishonorably or undesirably) without any VA benefits

- 1980-2010: 35,801 service members discharged for real or perceived homosexuality
- 81% denied honorable discharges

-2011: Obama repeals DADT

- 2021: Biden announces program to provide VA/GI benefits to those who received "other than honorable" discharges due to sexual orientation
- Also increased resources for discharge status appeals program

- March 2023: only 1,375 veterans have had benefits reinstated
- Estimated 100,000 veterans left or discharged for sexual orientation since WW2



# How can Veterans find resources?



National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at  
(877) 4AID-VET (877-424-3838) (VA line)

<https://www.va.gov/homeless/>



# How is Habitat a Resource?

Since the start of Veterans Build in 2013, over 9,097 veterans and their families have gained access to affordable housing.

We focus on five main areas for veterans:

Volunteer Engagement

Education

Honor

Employment

Building



# A Look at Veterans + Housing

*Thank you for  
the support!*

