

# News and Noteworthy Details

Monday, July 27, 2015

## Durham Seeks Property Managers Willing to Help Homeless Veterans

180 Veterans Housed Thus Far; Partners Needed to House 80 More

DURHAM, N.C. – More property managers and landlords with rental units are needed to help end veteran homelessness if Durham is to meet a national challenge.

In June 2014, the Obama Administration issued the [Mayor's Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness](#) by the end of 2015. City of Durham Mayor William V. "Bill" Bell was among hundreds of mayors who signed the Challenge, with the ambitious goal requiring system-level coordination of housing and service resources from all sectors of a community.

At the federal level, an unprecedented allocation of housing resources were distributed to ensure local communities have the resources needed to house veterans experiencing homelessness. Since Durham's effort began, some success has been achieved through strategic collaboration and coordination between the [Durham Housing Authority](#), [Durham VA Medical Center Homeless Program](#), City of Durham [Community Development Department](#), and local homeless housing providers.

Since signing the challenge, Durham has housed 180 formerly homeless veterans through collaboration facilitated by the [Durham Homeless Services Advisory Committee](#). To support these local efforts, Durham can access up to \$2 million per year to provide [HUD-VASH rental assistance](#) vouchers to property managers and landlords who are willing to house the community's remaining 80 chronically homeless veterans.

A major part of the success so far is partnerships with local property management firms and landlords who are willing to accept rental vouchers for homeless veterans. According to Director Reginald J. Johnson with the City's Community Development Department, Durham is positioned to provide housing for the remaining 80 veterans if more property managers and landlords are willing to partner in this effort.

"We have both the financial and human resources available in Durham to house the remaining 80 chronically homeless veterans. We need more property managers and landlords who are willing to accept rental vouchers for veterans experiencing homelessness. Their participation is critical since Durham won't receive this federal support unless our landlords come to the table and partner with us," Johnson said. "If we can house these remaining 80 homeless veterans, then Durham will join the list of other cities that met the challenge, and more importantly, helped the men and women who served our country to find homes."

According to Johnson, landlords receive benefits beyond a chance to honor those who served. Participating landlords will have guaranteed income through reliable monthly rental payments and fair market rent on their property; a say in security deposits; annual property recertification by third-party inspections to help maintain quality; and the benefit of VA services, which provide ongoing case management for tenants and lowers default risks.

Property managers and landlords who wish to partner in this effort, or with questions about the HUD-VASH rental assistance voucher program and those receiving assistance from Supportive Services for Veteran Families programs, should contact the Durham VA Medical Center Homeless Program at (919) 286-0411, ext. 7065 or visit the [VA website](#). For information about Durham's collaborative efforts to end chronic homelessness for veterans, contact Project Manager [Matthew Schnars](#) with the City's Community Development Department at (919) 560-4570, ext. 22249 or by email.

**About the Community Development Department**

The City of Durham [Community Development Department](#) is responsible for coordinating the City's housing resources and various housing assistance programs as well as promoting affordable housing by working with investors and community housing development organizations. The department also provides assistance with the abatement of lead in older homes and administers the City's entitlement programs from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development. Guided by the City's [Strategic Plan](#), the department helps to ensure that the City has thriving, livable neighborhoods by enhancing housing quality and affordability for Durham residents.

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