

CURRENT TRENDS IN VETERAN HOMELESSNESS; A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH



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Texas Veterans Commission

Veterans Mental Health Department

Amber Batha

INTRODUCTIONS

Amber Batha has over 20 years of experience in the social services and mental health arena advocating for and arranging services to traditionally underserved populations. In both community and residential treatment facilities, Amber has extensive experience working with families experiencing homelessness and those at-risk of homelessness.

In her prior roles as a Social Services Program Administrator, Casework Manager, and Probation Officer she has supervised and provided direct services to justice involved individuals, at-risk youth and families, and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse. She has ample experience in program development, generating policy and procedures, and overseeing grant programs. Amber also played a key role in the establishment of a Drug Court and a Reentry Court as well working across agencies to develop a Regionalized Offender Program. Amber has a degree in Sociology and Women's Studies.



INTRODUCTIONS

AB Bustos, MPH

AB Bustos, MPH is a proud U.S. Army Veteran, having served eight years as a Combat Medic with two deployments to Iraq (2004-2005, 2009-2010). While in the military he had the unique opportunity to serve as a subject-matter expert for ABC World News in the realm of Servicemember Policy and Equality. AB then went on to obtain his graduate degree in Public Health with a specialization in Epidemiology.

AB is passionate about serving fellow veterans and prior to joining TVC was a Case Manager and Healthcare Navigator in Caritas of Austin's Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program as well as the Secretary of the Staff Advisory Council. AB is passionate about providing advocacy and training on veteran-specific needs to various stakeholders including the VA on topics including cultural competency and inclusive healthcare services. He has additional public service experience as an AmeriCorps VISTA for the City of Austin's HIV Prevention Program and as the City's Ebola Task Force Coordinator during the 2015 Ebola Outbreak.



GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Please raise your hand if
you work (or have worked)
with military veterans.



GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Please keep your hand raised if you work (or have worked) with military veterans experiencing homelessness.



AGENDA

Statistics

Sleeper Effect

Collaborative Outcomes

- Presentation Q & A Time

Panel Discussion

- Panel Q & A Time



RISK FACTORS

Substance Use Disorders

Mental Illness

Low Income/Income-related factors be;

- Affordable Housing
- Maintaining Employment

Social Isolation

Past Incarceration

Identifying in Minority Population

- LGBTQ+
- BIPOC

Compared to their non-veteran counterparts, veterans tend to

- older
- better educated
- have some form of health insurance coverage.

Unique to Veterans

- Moral Injury
- PTSD resulting from Combat
- Military Sexual Trauma
- Navigating disability process

Source: Tsai, J., & Rosenheck, R. A. (2015). Risk factors for homelessness among US veterans. *Epidemiologic reviews*, 37(1), 177-195.



THE NUMBERS

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021*	2022*
674 Veteran households	297 Veteran households	264 Veteran households	555 Veteran households	162 Veteran households	465 Veteran households

Source: Texas Homeless Network. (2022, January 27). Point-In-Time Count (PIT) Reports. Retrieved August 31, 2022, from <https://www.thn.org/texas-balance-state-continuum-care/data/pit-count-and-hic/>

- **10.2** percent of Veterans report experiencing homelessness sometime in their adult life; of that
 - **43.2** percent are people of color
 - **33.1** percent are Black
 - **3** percent Native American or Alaska Native
 - **4.8** percent are multiracial

Source: National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2018, October 22). People of Color Make Up a Disproportionate Share of the Homeless Veteran Population. Retrieved August 31, 2022, from <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/people-color-make-much-larger-share-homeless-veteran-population-general-veteran-population/>



SLEEPER EFFECT FOR VETERAN HOMELESSNESS

Unique to Veterans

Average of 21.8 months total lifetime homelessness.

Average homeless veterans leaves military at 29 years old

Average of 5.5-9.9 years from military discharge to homelessness

Makes it more difficult to pinpoint the exact cause(s) of a specific episode of homelessness

VA Study

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) released a report in 2012 from a study on the 'sleeper effect' of veteran homelessness.

Source: Tsai, J., Szymkowiak, D., & Pietrzak, R. H. (2020). *Delayed Homelessness After Military Discharge: Examination of a Sleeper Effect*. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 59(1), 109-117.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2020.03.001>



Sleeper Effect Shortening Among Combat Veterans

2000-2008 _____ Discharged from service.

10+ years _____ Combat veterans experiencing homelessness reached 10 percent.

2009-2014 _____ Discharged from service.

7 years _____ Combat veterans experiencing homelessness reached 10 percent.

TIMELINE

Source: Tsai, J., Szymkowiak, D., & Pietrzak, R. H. (2020). Delayed Homelessness After Military Discharge: Examination of a Sleeper Effect. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 59(1), 109-117. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2020.03.001>



COLLABORATIVE OUTCOMES

Supportive to
Goal

Goal

Number 1 Goal:
Sustain housing



- ☐ Physical Wellness
- ☐ Gainful Employment
- ☐ Food Security
- ☐ Disability Compensation
- ☐ Mental Health Services
- ☐ Substance Use Programs
- ☐ Peer Support
- ☐ Community Engagement
- ☐ Services/Resources for Justice Involvement



FRAGMENTATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

Coordination of Efforts

- Identify & Eliminate Gaps
- Progressive Engagement/Progressive Assistance
- Ensure Timeline of Services is Appropriate

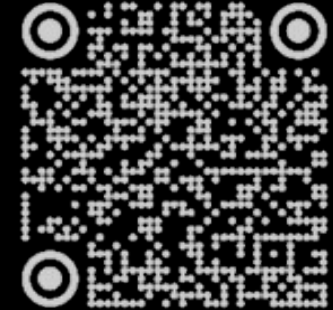


THANK YOU

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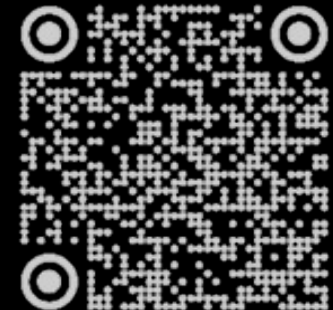
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- **Texas Veterans Commission (TVC)** -
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- **TVC Veterans Mental Health Department**
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PANELISTS



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Peer Service
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Terri Williams, LPC

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Manager



Jessica Del Rio, LPC

Suicide Prevention
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