

## NEWS YOU CAN USE: INFLUENCERS

### Upcoming Events

- **Until DEC 6<sup>th</sup>:** Accepting donations of new, unwrapped toys for the 2nd annual Pizza Studio Compton Community Toy Drive (VOALA-SD2). To donate or have a donation box placed at your location please email [sbent@lacounty.gov](mailto:sbent@lacounty.gov) or [vpan@voala.org](mailto:vpan@voala.org)
- **DEC 13, 9A-3P:** In-person Veteran Cultural Competency Training at Patriotic Hall. This VA-administered training satisfies a key requirement for Expiration Term-of-Service (ETS) sponsors. For more info, please email Registration: [bit.ly/3EvvlE5](http://bit.ly/3EvvlE5)
- **DEC 14:** Los Angeles Veterans Collaborative in-person mtg at Bob Hope Patriotic Hall. Lunch will be served. RSVP: [bit.ly/3yMqIIX](http://bit.ly/3yMqIIX)
- **DEC 14:** Expiration Term-of-Service sponsor recruitment forum at BHPH. All are welcome & lunch will be served. For more info, email [wwilson@dmh.lacounty.gov](mailto:wwilson@dmh.lacounty.gov)
- **DEC 14-15:** Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) (JVS-SD5). RSVP: [bit.ly/3xB0fbm](http://bit.ly/3xB0fbm)
- **DEC 15, 9A-3P:** In-person training at Patriotic Hall. This training satisfies a key requirement for ETS sponsors. Register: [bit.ly/3EIX61G](http://bit.ly/3EIX61G)
- **Weds @ 7:30P:** AA Meeting @ USS Iowa-SD4. RSVP: [VPAN@veteranswest.org](mailto:VPAN@veteranswest.org)
- **Thursdays @ 6p:** "Do Tell" – LGBTQ Vets (SD4). RSVP [VPAN@veteranswest.org](mailto:VPAN@veteranswest.org)
- **Thursdays @ 11A:** Veteran Support Group, Patriotic Hall, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor. No RSVP required.
- **1<sup>st</sup> Wed/Month:** Vet Benefit Workshop (JVS-SD5). RSVP: [VPAN@jvs-social.org](mailto:VPAN@jvs-social.org)
- **Every Other Wednesday, 11A-12P:** UniteUs Info Session. Register: [bit.ly/3Lpt404](http://bit.ly/3Lpt404)
- **3rd Fri/Mo:** East LA Vets Ctr hosts a monthly fishing excursion for clients at Whittier-Narrows Lake (JVS-SD1). For more info, clients should contact their counselor.  
[Click Here](#) for a list of VA GLA annual events.

### Opportunities to Serve

- VPAN is looking for social media interns! Any vet, spouse or military dependent currently enrolled in a VA educational benefits program is eligible. Candidates will be paid up to \$1600/mo tax-free through the VA Work-Study program for PT virtual work. Limited positions, so apply now! Please contact Adam Castillo at [acastillo@dmh.lacounty.gov](mailto:acastillo@dmh.lacounty.gov)
- **Volunteer @ Habitat for Humanity LA!** Offering homeownership opportunities as well as homeownership classes for vets & MilFam, in addition to free home repairs for those living in Whittier, Watts, Inglewood, etc. Contact [veteranscoordinator@habitatla.org](mailto:veteranscoordinator@habitatla.org) or go to [habitatla.org/how-to-apply/home-repair-program/](http://habitatla.org/how-to-apply/home-repair-program/) for more info
- **VPAN is hiring!** To apply to be a Peer Support Specialist, please send your resume to Cristina Barraza at [cristina@socialgrantmakers.org](mailto:cristina@socialgrantmakers.org)
- **MVA is hiring!** Seeking Veteran Service Officers (VSO). To apply, please send your resume to Todd Tortorici at [TTortorici@mva.lacounty.gov](mailto:TTortorici@mva.lacounty.gov)
- **For hire:** Veteran case manager w/ 6 years in providing mental health and substance abuse services to veterans. Contact David Uyematsu at [david.uyematsu@edd.ca.gov](mailto:david.uyematsu@edd.ca.gov)
- **Women's Ambassador Program:** Female volunteers sought for part-time assistance assisting other female vets in accessing VA health care. Must undergo background check and half-day training at VA. Ambassadors provide appt. escorts, safe way home, battle buddies services. For more info, contact Cristina at [cristina@socialgrantmakers.org](mailto:cristina@socialgrantmakers.org)
- **Expiration Term of Service (ETS):** Looking for volunteers to sponsor service members making the transition to civilian life. For more info, contact William Wilson at [wwilson@dmh.lacounty.gov](mailto:wwilson@dmh.lacounty.gov)

### Community Updates

- According to the LA Homeless Services Auth. (LAHSA), the number of homeless vets nationwide have been dropping and this year's "By Name" list of LA's homeless vets is the most comprehensive yet, with 2,314 out of 2,616 homeless vets IDed thus far
- The annual LAHSA Point-in-Time (PIT) homeless count volunteer form will be made available by the end of this month for the January 2023 PIT
- Vet Suicide Review Team (VRST) holding first review of vet suicide in LA County in January.
- VPAN initial three-year pilot program concludes in June. LA County Board of Supervisors (BOS) is currently considering a possible five-year extension.
- Skillbridge, an internship program for servicemembers transitioning to the civilian sector, is collaborating with public and private partners across the board to put the focus on job placement in the workforce: [DOD\\_SkillBridge \(osd.mil\)](http://DOD_SkillBridge(osd.mil))

### Supervisorial District Activities

[New SD Map](#)

- **SD1:** Top 3 services: Income Support, Individual/Family, Housing/Shelter
- **SD2:** Top 3 services: Individual/Family, Housing/Shelter, Benefits Navigation
- **SD3:** Top 3 services: Individual/Family, Benefits Navigation, Housing/Shelter
- **SD4:** Top 3 services: Benefits/Navigation, Individual/Family, Housing/Shelter
- **SD5:** Top 3 services: Income Support, Benefits Navigation, Housing/Shelter.

For additional info regarding current legislation, contact Richard by emailing: [richarddav12@aol.com](mailto:richarddav12@aol.com)



### Government Updates

- **NOV 1:** LAC Board of Supervisors (BOS) approved a motion establishing Regional Veterans Resources for those veterans located far from the West LA VA hospital. The motion also repurposes the Santa Clarita Community Center into a Veterans Center.
- BOS is having the Dept. of Military and Veterans Affairs look for additional funding for training LAC First Responders in regards to military culture.
- 2nd Board motion revamped how LAC hires vets. The following groups now receive vets' preference in the hiring process: Reserve/Guard, military & vet dependents, as well as those receiving an Other-than-Honorable discharge due to LGBTQ status or because of complications from PTSD
- LAVC supports the Commitment to Veteran Support and Outreach (CVSO) Act (SB 2405/HR4601) which would provide timely resources to county veterans service officers. This bill authorizes the VA to provide grants to states to implement programs that improve outreach and assistance to veterans and their families to ensure that such individuals are fully informed about veterans' benefits & programs: [bit.ly/3UWmsdk](http://bit.ly/3UWmsdk).

## NEWS YOU CAN USE: PEERS

### October: By the Numbers

- Referred cases: 551
- Managed referred cases: 479
- New clients: 604
- Housing cases managed: 152
- Employment cases managed: 113
- Mental/behavioral health cases managed: 69
- #1 org for referrals sent: VOALA-SD2
- #1 org for referrals rec'd: MVA
- Average wait time for referral acceptance: 1 day
- Top 5 service requests: Benefits Navigation, Individual/Family Support, Housing & Shelter, Income Support, Employment
- Branch most served: ARMY
- Female veteran engagement has grown to 26%
- Age groups most served: 18-44

### Barriers

1. Limited options for senior vets when it comes to interim housing and the limited resources available for it
2. Some landlords don't want to lease to vets if they're homeless or using HUD VASH
3. Even when vets obtain housing, they sometimes aren't able to afford the first month's rent when included with all their other expenses
4. Increasing number of female vets in rental arrears who don't meet LAHSA or SSVF eligibility.

### Solutions

1. Work with MVA and Department of Aging and Disabilities
2. Try explaining the process for how landlords are paid rather than relying on terminology like HUD VASH. Advise Public Housing Authorities and VA Community Reintegration Services of the situation.
3. Service providers like Village for Vets and Change Reaction might be able to assist
4. Reach out to Housing and Homeless Working Group asking to advocate to LAHSA

### New & Existing Services

- On 16 Dec the VA is starting a new support line for vets & their families experiencing homeless or at risk of it. The line will be staffed during the day for referrals and will roll over to 211 after hours, with a targeted response time of less than 3 hrs. Support line # (310) 268-3350 ext. 53350. More info, contact Transitional Housing Section Chief Paula Boutte at [paula.boutte@va.gov](mailto:paula.boutte@va.gov)
- LAHSA Winter Shelters are opening. Call 211 to locate the nearest shelter
- Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) offers Veterans Employment Services including vocational training, job readiness and locating employment. Janitorial services are currently hiring at three VA hospitals in the area: 40 hr/wk at \$19.71/hr. Contact Kevin Lewandowski at [KevinLe@ePath.org](mailto:KevinLe@ePath.org) or (213) 271-7470
- Akua Mind Body offers treatment for mental health and substance abuse disorders that are in network with Tricare/Triwest and most other insurance. They have all levels of care: IOP, PHP, RTC, DTX and an excellent aftercare/alumni program. Additionally, they offer VA benefits assistance and training for any Veteran or organization as well as community event coordination and support. Contact Nathan Sutton at (425) 309-2833
- Veterans Justice Center at the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles provides free legal services to all veterans regardless of discharge status. Assistance includes most civil legal issues such as housing, discharge upgrades, benefits appeal, citations and criminal record expungement. They accept direct referrals or clients can visit one of their clinics at the West LA or Long Beach VA, or USVets/SSVF in Inglewood. Contact Tyler Nicole Smith at [tnsmith@lafla.org](mailto:tnsmith@lafla.org)
- Professional/casual clothing for male & female veterans available through Your Image 20/20, also coaching on interview techniques w/ completion certificate. Contact Patrice Springer at (213) 220-8287
- Cohen Veterans Network is a resource for veterans & their families seeking mental health assistance. They recently opened a Torrance location & are currently accepting Telehealth clients. To learn more or set up an appointment email [Stollberg@cohenvvds.org](mailto:Stollberg@cohenvvds.org) or visit [bit.ly/3D8BUwP](http://bit.ly/3D8BUwP)
- Vets Federal Employment Collaborative is a community that focuses on connecting federal agencies & their vacancies with qualified vets and transitioning service members. The LinkedIn group can be found at [linkedin.com/groups/14059632/](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/14059632/)
- UCLA Veteran Family Wellbeing Center provides a variety of services free of charge regardless of discharge status: [vfwc.ucla.edu](http://vfwc.ucla.edu)

To sign up or to access the Online Learning Community, click here: [Wellbeing for LA Learning Community](#)