

SANTA MARIA/SANTA BARBARA COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE

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Veterans Affairs Announces Local Funding for Veteran Homelessness
*New investments aim to end Veteran homelessness
in Santa Maria/Santa Barbara County Continuum of Care*

(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.) – On August 28, the US Department of Veterans Affairs awarded \$799 million in grants to 256 non-profit organizations across the nation to help homeless and at-risk Veterans and their families. The funds, which are being awarded through Veterans Affairs' Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program, enable community organizations to provide rental assistance and services to Veterans and their families. The following groups have been awarded this critical funding to support local Veterans, New Beginnings (\$2,297,371), Good Samaritan Shelter (\$1,447,182, also serving San Luis Obispo County Continuum of Care) and The Salvation Army (\$7,567,374, also serving Los Angeles City and County Continuum of Care and Oxnard, San Buenaventura/Ventura County Continuum of Care).

Congressman Salud Carbajal (CA-24) responded to the award announcement with these words, "I'm proud to see my work in Congress supporting increased funding for Veterans homelessness programs has yielded these awards of more than \$13 million to help veterans up and down the Central Coast." Representative Carbajal continued, "As a veteran and a former Santa Barbara County Supervisor, I know that this funding is nothing without these awardees who work on the ground with our veterans every single day. I'm grateful for their work and know this federal support will enable them to continue their important work."

The Santa Maria/Santa Barbara County Continuum of Care (CoC) is a community planning body that provides oversight for the countywide response to homelessness. In Santa Barbara County, one of the most expensive places to live in the U.S., Veteran homelessness has dropped 60% over the last three years. According to the most recent Point-in-Time (PIT) count, which counts persons living both sheltered and unsheltered on a single night in January, 82 Veterans were experiencing homelessness across Santa Barbara County. In 2020, that number was 210. The CoC regularly shares that this progress is the result of community collaboration including the Veterans Administration staff, county and city employees, local housing authorities and numerous partners working together to find homes for Veterans in need. Having both housing and supportive services available to serve our local Veterans has been a key part of the reduction in Veterans experiencing homelessness.

"The Veterans Affairs' substantial investment in addressing Veteran homelessness has significantly increased our Veteran service providers' capacity and resources. Coupled with critical and expanded

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housing partnerships with landlords and property managers countywide, Santa Barbara County is poised to end Veteran homelessness," stated Kristine Schwarz, Executive Director of New Beginnings.

In 2021, the Santa Maria/Santa Barbara County Continuum of Care and local stakeholders launched a 100-Day Challenge to reduce homelessness among Veterans in the county. That effort established momentum for the continued progress.

View the [list of grantees and learn more about Supportive Services for Veterans and Families](#).

To learn more about the efforts of the Santa Maria/Santa Barbara County Continuum of Care to address homelessness, <https://www.countyofsb.org/331/Homeless-Assistance>

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