Baby it’s COLD OUTSIDE!!!!

Do you know what to do if you run into a Veteran who is homeless?

Winter might not officially be here until December 20, but the winter weather is here now. The cold, wind, rain, snow, and ice are here to stay for the next few months. That means hundreds of veterans around the state could be living in this winter weather. As much as we would like to eliminate veteran homelessness, the truth is that as veterans find housing and employment, other veterans are returning home from service, or going through difficulties and just starting the cycle of homelessness.

As veterans, we want to help our fellow veterans, but we don’t always know how. When it comes to helping a veteran who is homeless we can sometimes feel helpless. The good news is, as veteran advocates, we don’t need to know the answers, but we want to know who to call.

In 2010, the Veterans Administration took a more active role in dealing with Veteran Homelessness. With the help of funding from Congress, many support programs were created to help these veterans. One resource created included a hotline for you, or the veteran who is homeless may call for help.

That phone number is (877) 424-3838.

Michigan VA Medical Centers have Homeless Coordinators that are ready to serve. If you are near one of these centers, you may want to connect with them to see how you and your post can help.

Ann Arbor, MI Coordinator, is Shawn Dowling  
Battle Creek, MI Coordinator, is Daleth Jean-Jules  
Detroit, MI Coordinator, is Dr. Gerald Curley  
Saginaw, MI Coordinator, is Carly Huffman  
Iron Mountain, MI Coordinator, is Richard Holmstrom, (906) 774-3300 ext. 32756

Learn your local resources, try to prevent homelessness from happening.

Sometimes veterans are too proud to ask for help until it is too late. They fall into a financial situation.
and need a little hand up to make through a rough patch. There is help for this; there are many resources available that a veteran might qualify for financial assistance or other assistance.

In this case, here are a few numbers to call for information and assistance.

The **Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency** – (800) MICH-VET
They could direct the veteran to help with utility bills, the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund, or local resources near the veteran.


Call **Michigan 211** service – On your phone dial 2-1-1, or visit www.mi211.org/get-help/housing-shelter, they maintain a database of service providers in Michigan who can help with certain requests.

**Salvation Army** - Do you have a local office in your area? Some offices have more resources than others.

**Goodwill** – Has resources to help the veteran with employment training and placement. Services vary from location but find your local provider for more information.

NOTE: If you feel the need to help a homeless veteran, don’t give them cash directly. Buy a store gift card, or give them material items, or bring them food, but the best advice is to call the VA and let the VA Homeless Coordinators connect with the veteran.

**Quick connections using your mobile device**

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- Watch the VA video on How to Help a Homeless Veteran.
- MI 211 Homeless Resources web page
- Feeding America Website, find a food bank near you.
- Salvation Army in Michigan with Emergency Shelter assistance.

**Quick connections using your mobile device**

You will need a QR Code scanner on your phone to access link to these sites.

Go to the Google Play store or Apple Apps store to find a QR Code Scanner or Reader. I personally use one by Kaspersky Labs.

Information brought to you by The American Legion Department of Michigan. Editor Mark Sutton, Public Relations Director.
Important dates for 2020 American Legion Programs

January 2020

January 1st - Baseball registration opens on https://baseball.legion.org
January 10th - Law Officer of the Year submission deadline
January 10th - Firefighter of the Year submission deadline
January 13th - Brewer Scholarship Application submission deadline
January 13th - Wilson Scholarship Application submission deadline

February 2020

February 10th - All Zone Oratorical Contests must be completed before this date.

March 2020

March 2nd - Eagle Scout of the Year Award submission deadline (applications available from National Oct. 2019)
March 7th - Oratorical State Contest at Gerald R. Ford Museum in Grand Rapids.

April 2020

April 3rd - Teacher of the Year Submission deadline
April 17th-19th - National Oratorical Contest, Indianapolis, Indiana

May 2020

May 15th - Baseball insurance purchase deadline
May 18th - Student Trooper Application Submission deadline
May 26th - Boys State Application Submission deadline

June 2020

June 1st - Final day for Baseball teams to register
June 14-20th - Boys State Program at Grand Valley University- Allendale Campus

July 2020

July 3rd - Robert Turner Baseball Scholarship Submission deadline
July 12-17th - Student Trooper Program, Michigan State Police Academy, Lansing
July 22nd – July 26th - Class AA Baseball State Tournament in Midland.
July 26th - August 2nd - Class A Baseball State Tournament in Marquette.