

# CAA offers housing services for veterans

## BY TED CROCKETT

Community Action Agency

In 2010, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the president announced a federal government goal to end veteran homelessness.

In response to the announcement, the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program began providing a veteran-focused approach to housing assistance and services in October 2011. Through the SSVF Program, the VA aims to improve veteran families' housing stability. Since inception until 2016, SSVF and other key resources for veteran housing were able to reduce the number of veterans experiencing homelessness by 47%.

Community Action Agency (CAA) began providing SSVF program services in 2014. The goal of the SSVF program is to promote housing stability for veterans and their families. SSVF is a Housing First program that recognizes that stable housing is a critical necessity and only by obtaining safe and stable housing are individuals able to then focus on other barriers.

Community Action



Agency will work with the client and property owners as necessary to finding housing that is affordable, providing limited financial assistance to help with housing stability. Once stable housing is attained, Community Action Agency provides case management support to help clients eliminate any additional barriers they may face.

Addressing those barriers includes working with clients to create individualized, achievable goals and the actions needed to reach them. The goals are created for the client to be able to maintain self-sufficiency upon completion of the SSVF program. CAA provides referrals connecting clients to appropriate supports such as VA services, employment services, housing stability classes and any other appropriate resources. While supportive services are provided, participation is not required but available

if chosen.

In addition, SSVF can offer limited financial assistance to help with barriers to housing stability such as child care and transportation. We work with clients on their budget and any other concerns they may have about living self-sufficiently.

Even with such a huge success, the Annual Homeless Assessment Report of 2016 states that 8% of the U.S. adult population is comprised of veterans, yet they account for 9% of the U.S. homeless adult population. There are still many veterans struggling and experiencing homelessness. Even if you are not a veteran, you may know one and be able to share the information that may house them.

Eligibility for SSVF services include:

- Be a veteran or a member of a family in which the head of household, or the spouse of the head of household, is a veteran.
- Have a household income not exceeding 50% of area median income.
- Be homeless or at imminent risk of

homelessness.

If you are interested in SSVF and have any questions, or if you are a landlord that is interested in working with SSVF, please contact Ted Crockett at Community Action Agency, 517-263-7861 ext. 2232 or cellphone at 517-759-0118, and by email at [tcrockett@caajlh.org](mailto:tcrockett@caajlh.org).

Are you a veteran in crisis or concerned about one? Connect with the Veterans Crisis Line to reach caring, qualified responders with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Many of them are veterans themselves. The Veterans Crisis Line is at 800-273-8255, Press 1.

*Ted Crockett is the veteran housing advocate at the Community Action Agency.*

*For more information or to become involved in the Lenawee County Continuum of Care or contact chairwoman Elizabeth Salerno at Housing Help of Lenawee, [esalerno@h2lenawee.org](mailto:esalerno@h2lenawee.org), or vice-chairman Clint Brugger at Community Action Agency, [cbrugger@caajlh.org](mailto:cbrugger@caajlh.org).*

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