



# Veteran and Military Affairs Update

Paul Albright, Chief Military Officer  
Veteran and Military Affairs

Goal 1 – Cultivate an Environment Conducive to Strong, Sustainable  
Economic Development

Goal 5 – Promote Transparent and Consistent Communication  
Amongst all Members of the Community

Goal 8- Nurture and Promote a Healthy, Sustainable Community



# The City of El Paso Veteran and Military Affairs



El Paso is ranked 7th Nationwide in Best Cities for Veterans Homebuyers

## Veteran Employment

- “We Hire Vets” 13.8% employment rate
- Updated Eligible Lists
- Military Occupational Specialties on all City Job postings.
- HR4VETS - provides veterans resources for employment
- The Bridge Fellowship Program
- Tax Incentives for businesses that hire Veterans
- EPIA / ED / Community partners, Grow the Workforce with Veterans and Military Spouses

## Veteran Homelessness

- Funded \$369,000 to the Veterans Tenant-Based Rental Assistance plus Case Management Program.
- Further Funding allocated thru DCHD for the following homeless programs:

CASFV

Shelter for Survivors of Sexual and Domestic Violence

Emergence Health Network

Street Outreach

Opportunity Center for the Homeless

Outreach Initiative

Opportunity Center for the Homeless

Willie Sanchez Rosales Family Center

Reynold’s Home

Moving Forward Program

The Salvation Army

Red Shield Family Center



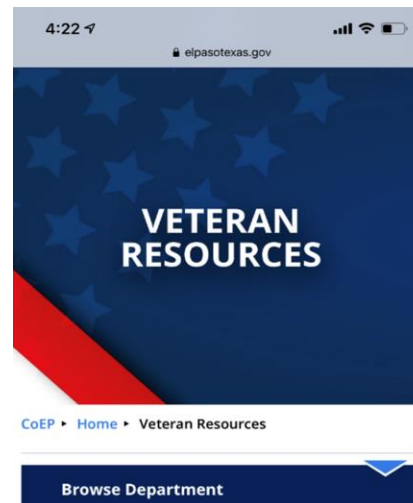
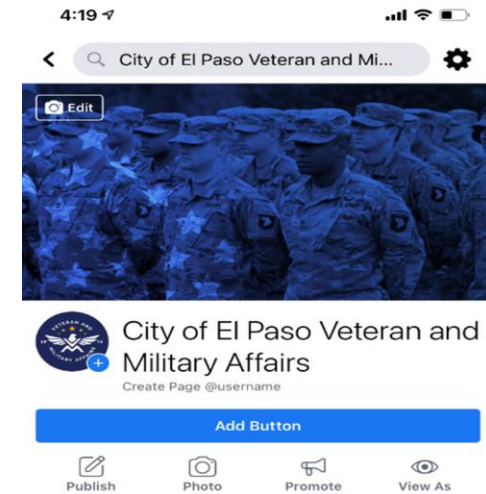
# The City of El Paso Veteran and Military Affairs



Endeavors to invest in a \$15 million Veteran Wellness center in El Paso  
In response to the El Paso Veterans Needs Assessment conducted in 2019

## Veteran Marketing and Communication

- \$25,000 in allocated funding for marketing and communication
- Upgraded Veteran and Military Affairs website
- Sun City Bliss: Highlights Veteran and Military affairs topics across El Paso.
- Visit El Paso mobile App. Dedicated military link
- Fort Bliss Welcome Video: For military soldiers and families PCS'ing into Fort Bliss.
- Social Media presence. Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- City video programming: Your City in Five and Fact Friday.





# Sun City Bliss: Welcome Home





# Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee

Brief to City Council 24 October 2022



# The Veteran Affairs Advisory Committee



❖ Mayor Appt	Lance Lehr (Chair)	Term Expires	6/15/2023
❖ District 1	Brian Kanoff	Term Expires	10/11/2026
❖ District 2	Ron Jackson	Term Expires	7/20/2023
❖ District 3	Rodney Washington	Term Expires	9/5/2023
❖ District 4	Jonathan Bohannon	Term Expires	6/29/2025
❖ District 5	Laura Butler (Secretary)	Term Expires	5/4/2023
❖ District 6	Bruce Biegel (Vice-Chair)	Term Expires	7/1/2023
❖ District 7	Justin Rotti	Term Expires	10/19/2023
❖ District 8	Melissa Harcrow	Term Expires	10/03/2023



# Employment

- **Key Concerns**

Hiring Veterans, Transitioning Service Members and Military Spouses into meaningful employment.

- **Lines of Effort**

Providing Information to and participation with local businesses.

Grow the workforce of El Paso with transitioning Servicemembers, Military Spouses and Veterans.

Participation in Veterans, Transitioning Service Members, and Military Spouse focused Hiring Fairs.

- **Recommendations**

Continue the support and implementation of the Veteran Employment Program into the HR administrative policies and procedures.

Use available City resources and leverage the city's relationships with local business, Fort Bliss and beyond to advocate for hiring veterans and military spouses



# Employment (Cont.)

As we strive to become the best city for Veterans to live and work, we must all build upon the successes of our cities HR Department and the Council's and Administrations support.

We should be proud of earning the “We Hire Vets” award we have received every year since it's inception. Our goal of 15% of city workforce by 2025 is well within our grasp.

The next step is to use our knowledge and platform to encourage the employers in El Paso to do likewise.

El Paso is the best place for Veterans to live and work.



**The ‘We Hire Vets’ program recognizes Texas employers for their commitment to hiring veterans.**



# Veterans experiencing homelessness in the El Paso area

*Stats are based on all adults & children*

On any given day, there are **84** Homeless Veterans whose average age is **56.4** years old

**76.1%** reported their top 2 needs as

1. Help finding a job
2. Help finding a place to live

**50.0%** reported having a mental health problem

**28.3%** reported being homeless 4 or more times in the past 3 years

**21.7%** reported having an issue with substance abuse

**13.0%** are experiencing homelessness due to COVID

**12.3%** of those experiencing homelessness are veterans

**91.3%** Are men

**8.7%** Are women

**71.7%** Sheltered

**28.3%** Unsheltered



[www.ehomeless.org](http://www.ehomeless.org)

2022 Point In Time Data



# Homelessness



- **Key Concerns:**

Impacts of decreased abortion access to at-risk military families especially women Veterans

Supporting our repatriated Veterans with prioritized and expedited access to resources

Transparent access to accurate and available data from all organizations in the homeless community

- **Lines of Effort**

Identifying gaps in services, legislation, and aligning funding sources for at-risk and homeless Veterans

Continue to strengthen relationships with organizations with Community and Human Development in the lead

Participating in the multiple community events that support homeless Veterans

Continue to synchronize resources available from different organizations that support homeless Veterans

# Homelessness (Cont.)



- **Recommendations**

Support state and federal legislation that reduces homelessness in the Veteran community

Encourage organizations to share transparent, accurate, and timely data city, state, and nationwide

Survey data to align resources effectively across the homeless Veteran environment. Utilize data and effectiveness of programs to drive city policy

# Marketing & Communication

- **Key Concerns:**

Reaching out to the 18-20% of our El Paso population that includes Veterans, active-duty, transitioning service-members, and their families.

- **Critical Gaps**

As the City of El Paso strives to become the #1 City in America for Veterans to live, we **must** continue working to provide resourceful information to the large military population. Seek to feature Veteran presence/resources, on web pages, and social media sites and build a comprehensive strategy to connect with past/present Service Members and families

# Marketing & Communication (Cont.)

## Recommendations

- **Use available city resources to expand the strategic communications plan** that reaches our target population. Continue working on marketing resources to be used to reach out to Veterans and their spouses and families.
- **More help from TV/radio, sporting events-** PSAs, and Job and Resource Fairs (billboards aren't enough).
- **City Wide Text Message** options about Veteran events for those interested.
- **Great opportunity to highlight small Veteran businesses**, employer hires, resources availability, and local VSOs. Build partnerships with organizations that are effectively operating within the veteran /military family landscape as well as with those that do not exclusively provide services to this population.

# Additional VAAC Recommendations

- **Increase the Department of Veteran and Military Affairs staff** to better support the Chief Military Officer. As of October 1<sup>st</sup>, one individual was hired in support, extras are requested (County has 5 person team). More staff assistance could help with social media (marketing and outreach) and general assistant grants.
- **Utilize the VA Work-Study Program.** Open to college students to Get paid and get experience. See if the city can offer part-time employment through this or a similar program.
- **Support for Texas State Army National Guard (Gunslingers) and positioned National Guard units.** Recommend more hiring/resource fairs geared towards the military community to include, spouses and dependents.
- **Council Reps should chat with VAAC reps more frequently.** Meet with your VAAC representatives and attend their monthly meetings. -- If the City Council rep can't attend at times, can someone from their staff? Promotes teamwork and expedites solutions to ideas/tasks.
- **Take advantage of El Paso weather,** more city events/block off streets for car/bike shows, concerts (Lt. Dan Band), etc.



# Questions