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## **News Release**

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### **Federal Government Holds Forum on Homeless Veterans** *Goal of Eliminating Homelessness among Veterans*

WASHINGTON – More than 400 participants from across the country are expected to take part in a two-day national forum on ending homelessness among Veterans by strengthening preventative measures and collaboration among government and private-sector organizations.

“For twenty years, we have provided a wide array of services to homeless Veterans,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “Today, we are intervening earlier in the problems that can lead to homelessness, such as mental illness, substance abuse, unemployment and financial problems.”

The forum, held Dec. 7-8 in Arlington, Va., will include health care providers, outreach coordinators, homeless specialists and service providers from various federal agencies, plus representatives from the private sector and Veterans service organizations.

Participants will work together in planning how to increase access to stable and affordable housing; expand economic security; improve health care; and change the nation’s system for dealing with homelessness.

VA and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, working in partnership with other federal agencies, are steadily decreasing homelessness among Veterans. Last year, the Department spent nearly \$535 million on homeless programs, not counting health care associated with homelessness.

“With our partners at the Department of Labor and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, we have marshaled considerable expertise and resources to help our Veterans leave the road to homelessness,” Shinseki added.

**-More**

## **Homelessness 2/2/2/2**

Among many programs, VA has also created a national hotline for homeless Veterans – 1-877-424-3838 –which is staffed around the clock, seven days a week. Responders can help callers find food, shelter, clothing and other assistance for homeless Veterans.

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