

ANNUAL OUTCOMES REPORT Fiscal Year Ending 2023













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Helping Heroes Vision Statement:

Helping Heroes is a community based, non-profit facility founded and administered by Veterans and Veteran supporters working together to make our community one in which Veterans are welcomed home, supported in their reintegration and valued as productive members of society.

Helping Heroes Mission Statement:

The Mission of Helping Heroes is to provide the highest quality of support services and resources to homeless and near homeless Veterans in order to transition them to, or maintain self-sufficiency. The goal is reintegration into society as men and women who currently feel excluded from the benefits of productivity and self-sufficiency as a result of the physical and emotional wounds they carry.

We Value:

- Each Veteran's right to be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect.
- Each Veteran's unique culture, personal values, beliefs, and preferences.
- Each Veteran's right to privacy and confidentiality of their records and information shared.
- Each Veteran's right to express themselves and their full participation in decisions affecting their lives.
- Each Veteran's right to be safe from harm and to be housed in safe, permanent housing.

Personnel:

- Chief Executive Officer- Raymond Konkoleski, BA
- Chief Financial Officer- Susan Harrison, MSW, MPA, LGSW
- Co-founder- Jeremy Harrison, MSW, LICSW, Army Veteran
- Program Director- Marci Clyburn, MA Counseling
- SSVF Case Manager- Darren Cofer, BSW, Army Veteran
- SSVF Health Care Navigator & Transitional Housing Case Manager- Taylor Adams, BSW
- SSVF Intake & Housing Specialist- KC Colley, BSW

Programs:

- Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF)
- Transitional Housing
- Emergency Shelter for Veterans
- Food Pantry
- Information and Referral

Operations & Logistics:

Helping Heroes is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 till 4:00. The office is located at:

A Center for Veteran Resources Center Wheeling Fellowship Building 41 22nd Street Wheeling, West Virginia 26003

Phone: 304-232-0114 Fax: 304-232-0115

Website: www.helpingheroesinc.org

We meet our Veterans wherever they are. Appointments can take place in the office, or in the community at a location that best meets the Veteran's needs.

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)

Program Description:

Helping Heroes is a CARF accredited, rapid rehousing and homelessness prevention program. It is intended to support homeless Veterans or Veterans struggling to maintain housing stability, improve their quality of life, and progress towards permanent housing. The program is designed to give a 'hand up' by determining individual strengths, abilities, needs, and preferences. That information is then used to create a housing stability plan and financial assistance with meeting their individualized plan goals. This program is funded through the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) grant from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

Program Goals:

The goal of the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program is to promote housing stability among very low-income veteran families who reside in or are transitioning to permanent housing by:

- Placing families into emergency, transitional, or permanent housing
- Preventing eviction
- Providing intensive case management to help participants increase their ability to sustain permanent housing and reach their greatest potential.

Additional Support Provided:

Helping Heroes provides eligible veteran families with outreach, case management, and assistance in obtaining VA and other benefits, which may include:

Health care services	Daily living services
Personal financial planning services	Transportation services
Legal services	Childcare services
Shallow subsidy	Employability services
Housing counseling services	Rental & utility assistance

Population Served:

To be eligible for SSVF, a Veteran is defined as "a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, regardless of length of service, and who was discharged or released there from, excluding anyone who received a dishonorable discharge or was discharged or dismissed by reason of a general court martial." Prevention assistance is intended for eligible Veteran families who are imminently at risk of becoming literally homeless <u>but for</u> SSVF assistance. These individuals are screened for VA eligibility and targeting thresholds. Income must meet the 'at or below 80% AMI' criteria.

Transitional Housing

Program Description:

Helping Heroes operates a Service Intensive Transitional Housing Program. This program assists homeless veterans who choose a supportive transitional housing environment that will provide services prior to entering permanent housing. This program is funded via foundation grants, fundraising efforts, and corporate and individual donations.

Program Goals:

This program facilitates individual stabilization and movement to permanent housing as rapidly as clinically appropriate.

- Increase the veteran's income through employment and/or access to benefits.
- Address barriers to permanent housing. (This may include addressing mental health, substance abuse, and trauma.)
- Provide the essential services these individuals need to obtain and maintain permanent housing.

Additional Support Provided:

Helping Heroes provides eligible veteran families with outreach, case management, and assistance in obtaining VA and other benefits, which may include:

Health care services	Daily living services
Personal financial planning services	Transportation services
Legal services referral	Childcare services
Housing counseling services	Employability and computer training

<u>Services not provided</u>: <u>Helping Heroes does not provide any type of pharmacotherapy or medication monitoring as part of its programming.</u>

Population Served:

Helping Heroes Service Intensive Transitional Housing Applicant must be:

- A veteran with a discharge other than Dishonorable.
- Meet the definition of homeless and in need of housing.
- Be exiting a drug free environment, such as incarceration or a treatment facility
- Willing and desiring to participate in the Transitional Housing Programming and meet with a case manager on a mutually determined schedule;
- Willing to create an individualized treatment plan, with the assistance of the case manager;
- Able to safely live independently, without access to staff or support 24-hours per day, 7 days per week.

Emergency Shelter

Program Description:

Helping Heroes operates an Emergency Shelter for Veterans. Located in the heart of downtown Wheeling, West Virginia, the shelter serves Veterans in Hancock, Brooke, Ohio, Marshall, and Wetzel counties. The ability to house veterans in our own emergency shelter allows us to make quick contacts and reduce barriers for communication with the Veterans as we assist them with finding and maintaining permanent housing. It creates a continuum of care in which a Veteran can progress from the shelter bed, through assessment into our Service Intensive Transitional Housing (GPD) or SSVF program. We can quickly provide intensive case management and provide the maximum level of support to the Veteran.

Program Goals:

This program facilitates individual stabilization and movement to permanent housing as rapidly as clinically appropriate.

- Provide safe, secure emergency shelter.
- Create a housing plan that addresses barriers to permanent housing. (This may include addressing mental health, substance abuse, and trauma.)
- Provide the essential services these individuals need to obtain and maintain permanent housing.

Additional Support Provided:

Helping Heroes provides eligible veteran families with outreach, case management, and assistance in obtaining VA and other benefits, which may include:

Health care services	Daily living services
Personal financial planning services	Transportation services
Legal services referral	Childcare services
Housing counseling services	Employability and computer training

<u>Services not provided</u>: <u>Helping Heroes does not provide any type of pharmacotherapy or medication</u> monitoring as part of its programming.

Population Served:

Helping Heroes Emergency Shelter guests must be:

• A veteran in need of emergency overnight shelter.

Food Pantry

Program Description:

Helping Heroes operates a Food Pantry for Veterans. Non-perishable food and personal care items are available to local Veterans in need at no cost on the third Tuesday of every month. Veteran status will be verified. There is no financial or geographic residency qualification, any Veteran in need is welcomed. This program is funded via foundation grants, fundraising efforts, and corporate and individual donations.

Program Goals:

This program facilitates individual housing stabilization through food assistance.

- Provide essential food and personal care items.
- Provide referral services these individuals need to obtain and maintain permanent housing and other Veteran-related programs and benefits.

Additional Support Provided:

Helping Heroes provides eligible veteran families with outreach, case management, and assistance in obtaining VA and other benefits, which may include:

Health care services	Daily living services
Personal financial planning services	Transportation services
Legal services referral	Childcare services
Housing counseling services	Employability services

Services not provided: Helping Heroes does not provide any type of pharmacotherapy or medication monitoring as part of its programming.

Population Served:

Helping Heroes Food Pantry Applicant must be:

A veteran with a stated need for assistance obtaining food.

Information and Referral

Program Description:

Helping Heroes operates as a Veteran Resource Center and provides Information and Referral Services to all veterans regardless of income, residency, or housing status. This program assists veterans or veteran family members who are looking for local, state and/or national resources to assist in any veteran-related matters. This program is funded via foundation grants, fundraising efforts, and corporate and individual donations.

Program Goals:

- Link veterans and their families with services available to veterans on a local, state, and national level.
- Help veterans and their families navigate the complex VA health care system.
- Provide support in times of crisis and make the connection to appropriate therapy services.

Additional Support Provided:

Helping Heroes provides veteran families with information regarding:

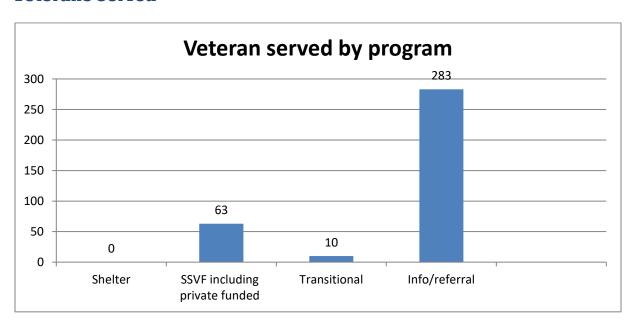
- Veteran benefits
- Local veteran transportation services
- Legal services
- Housing counseling services
- Employability and computer training
- · Death benefits, funeral planning
- Therapy and suicide intervention programs
- At times of great need, Helping Heroes may collect funds for special projects like flood relief efforts and disperse them to those in need both inside and outside of the Northern Panhandle of West Virginia.

Population Served:

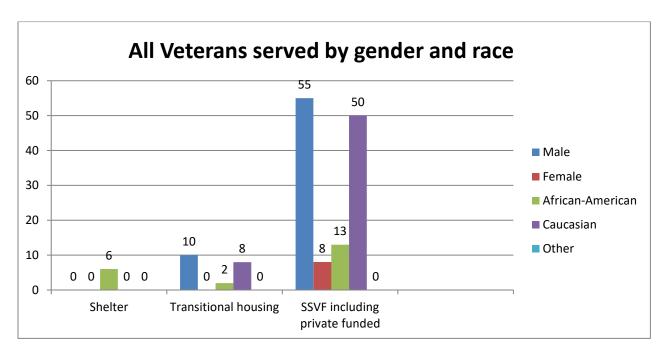
Helping Heroes will assist all veterans regardless of income, residency, or housing status.

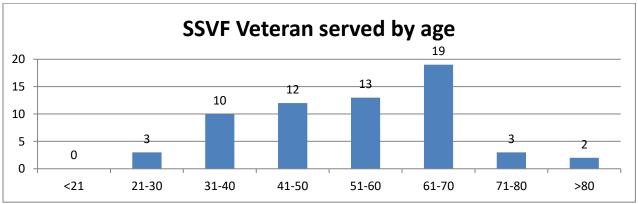
Demographic Data

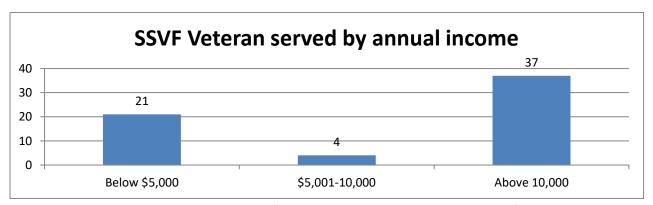
Veterans Served



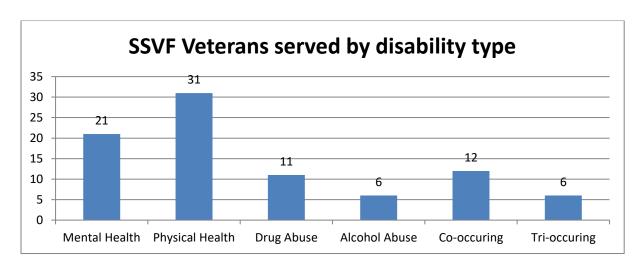
Veterans are served by SSVF in 5 counties (Hancock, Brooke, Ohio, Marshall, and Wetzel). Information and referral services and Transitional Housing services are **not** restricted to the Northern Panhandle of West Virginia. Helping Heroes belongs to the WV-500 Northern Panhandle Continuum of Care and falls under VISN-4 Pittsburgh VAMC. We surpassed our SSVF grant application goal of serving 60 veterans. Five transitional beds are available in our facility.

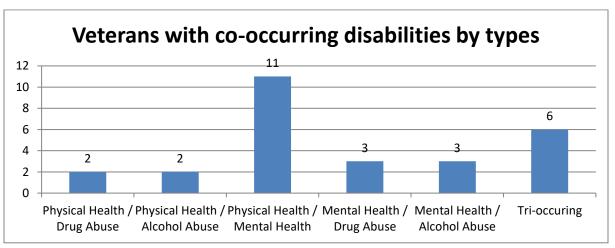






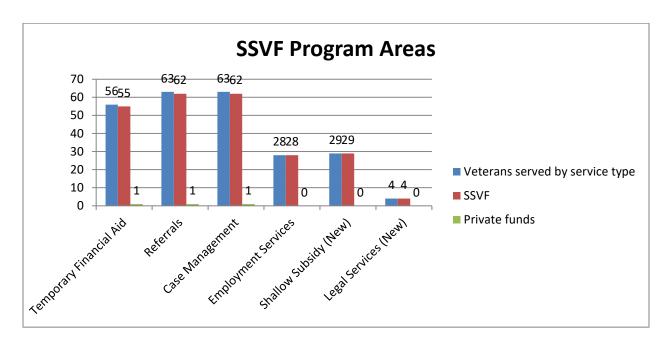
The population in the Northern Panhandle of WV includes 91% Caucasian and 23% of the total population is over the age of 65. Roughly 9% of the population are veterans. The counties served have a median area income of \$47,416 and have a 15.3% poverty rate according to the information provided in the 2020 census found on census.gov.



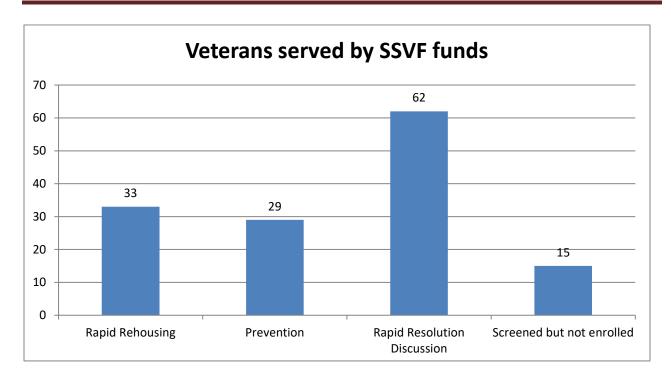


Our program continuously seeks to expand disability categories to get a better sense of the population we are serving in order to help us in making decisions regarding training. We also have implemented a measure of co-occurring and tri-occurring conditions among persons served, as data has shown that the majority of veterans served are managing multiple conditions. Of note: Veterans self-report for these categories, our staff believes these are under-reported. Results displayed are based on self-reported data as well as staff observations.

SSVF Services Provided Data



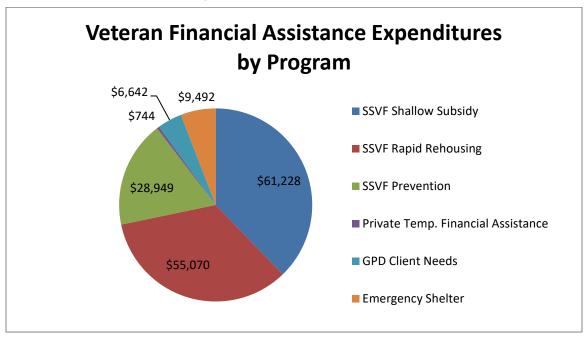
Many clients receive more than one type of service. For example, all veterans receiving temporary financial aid are also receiving case management services. Some veterans receive no temporary financial aid, but through case management are referred to other community agencies or receive employment services. Because of expanded eligibility for SSVF funding because of temporary rules changes in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic and related federal legislation, more veterans could be served for a longer period under SSVF funding. As a result, the demand on private funds was lower. Additional programs through the VA include Legal Services and Shallow Subsidy rental assistance. All Veterans are screened for shallow subsidy at intake. All Veterans are evaluated for appropriateness for shallow subsidy as part of ongoing SSVF Case Management.

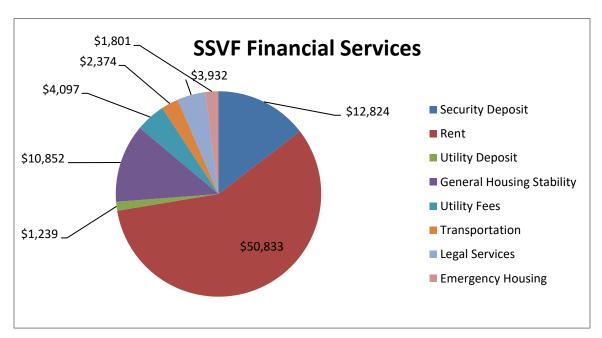


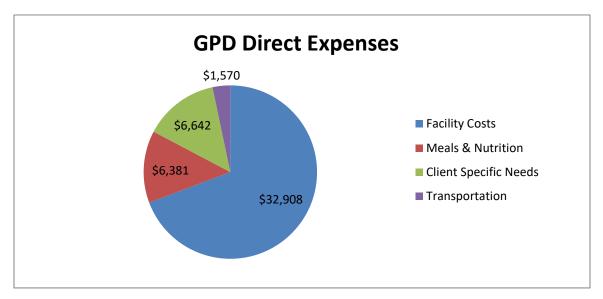
SSVF funds are allocated by grant agreement. Normally by rule no more than 40% of funds may be designated for prevention clients. This rule was suspended due to the pandemic. "Screened but not enrolled" includes those who were over income limit, were unable to be contacted, have previously exhausted SSVF services with other agencies, or do not meet the veteran definition. Rapid Resolution Discussion occurs upon intake with each new client.

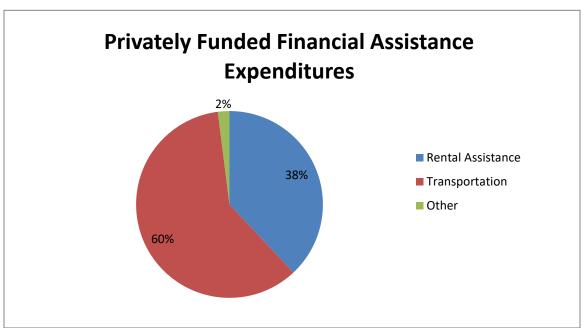
Fiscal Data

Expenditures by program









Efficiency Measures

Objective	Measures	Applies to	Goal	FYE 23	FYE 22	FYE 21	FYE 20	FYE 19
Maximize	Number of	All	60	283	150	143	126	149
the	clients	Clients						
number of	served							
clients	during							
served	fiscal year							
Increase	Amount of	All	\$90,000	\$152,632	\$103,600	\$61,364	\$56,931	\$52,326
amount of	Temporary	Clients						
financial	Financial	Served						
assistance	Assistance							
available	secured							
	from							
	funders							

Helping Heroes continues to seek additional private funds to use to assist veterans who do not meet the SSVF guidelines to receive financial assistance. Our staff continually works to stay current regarding availability and utilization of community resources. In order to best utilize funding, staff make referrals to these community-based programs as appropriate. SSVF expenditures are monitored both monthly and quarterly to ensure efficiency.

Effectiveness Measures

Objective	Measure	Applies to	Goal	FYE 23	FYE 22	FYE 21	FYE 20
Reduce	Homeless	SSVF RRH	75%	26/33	15/22**	7/12*	17/21
veteran	Veterans	clients		79%	68%	58%	81%
homelessness	will be						
	housed						
	within 60						
	days						
Housing	6 months	SSVF RRH	75%	23/39	12/13	10/20*	18/21
stability is	post	and		54%	85%	50%	86%
achieved	discharge	Transitional					
	Veteran is	clients					
	still						
	housed						
Maintain or	Intake	All SSVF	75%	23/62 have an	31/51 have an	15/57 have an	17/43 have an
increase	financial	veteran		improvement	improvement	improvement	improvement
financial	status	head of		in financial	in financial	in financial	in financial
security of	compared	households		security. 37%	security. 61%	security. 26%	security. 40%
Veteran	to						
	discharge			34/62	20/51	42/57	26/43
	financial			veteran's	veteran's	veteran's	veteran's
	status			income stayed	income stayed	income stayed	income stayed
	remains			the same.	the same.	the same.	the same.
	stable or						
	improved			5/62 veterans	0 veterans	0 veterans	0 veterans
				decreased	decreased	decreased	decreased
				their financial	their financial	their financial	their financial
				security.	security.	security.	security.

^{*}Four Veterans exited program to other housing options or residential treatment programs.

The barriers to housing within 60 days include: Housing market, rent reasonableness and veteran preference of placement play a role in the time frame. Housing authority application, background check and wait list add to the length of time waiting for permanent housing. Communication with Veterans can be a barrier.

Many veterans' income stays the same due to disability income; however, with case management we work on budgeting skills and accessing affordable housing (public housing) to maintain housing stability on their income.

^{**}Two Veterans exited program to other housing options or residential treatment programs.

Satisfaction Measures

Objective	Measures	Applies to	Goal	FYE 23	FYE 22*	FYE 20	FYE19
Maximize the number of clients reporting satisfaction with services	Percentage of clients reporting above average or excellent quality of services via SSVF survey	SSVF Clients Number satisfied/ number surveys returned	75%	Total 12/12 100%	Total 3/3 100%	Total 7/8 88%	Total 6/6 100%
Maximize the number of stakeholders satisfied with services	Percentage of referral sources reporting they will continue to make referrals to us.	All referral sources	75%	No stakeholders returned surveys.	No stakeholders returned surveys.	No stakeholders returned surveys.	No stakeholders returned surveys.
Increase participation of exiting veterans in taking satisfaction surveys	Percentage of exiting veterans compared to returned satisfaction surveys	SSVF clients	20%	Total 12/57 21.0%	Total 3/25 12.0%	Total 7/18 38.8%	Total 6/16 37.5%

Helping Heroes' SSVF staff enrolls exiting SSVF clients in the VA satisfaction survey. Helping Heroes staff also conducts client satisfaction surveys when a client exits the program. Helping Heroes administration endeavors to survey client, referral source, and community satisfaction. Unfortunately, we are not having success with getting stakeholder surveys returned. Once the data is collected Helping Heroes conducts a quality assurance review to analyze the results and make program recommendations.

^{*} In 2020, the VA paused client satisfaction surveys to implement a new model. As a result, no data was collected in FYE 2021.

Service Access Measures

Objective	Measures	Applies to	Goal	FYE 23	FYE 22	FYE 21	FYE 20
All veterans	Percentage	SSVF	90%	62/62	53/53	57/57	43/43
will receive	of veterans	clients		100%	100%	100%	100%
case	contacted	served					
management	within 24						
within 24	business						
business	hours						
hours.							

Written Analysis of Critical Incident Reports

Helping Heroes has policies in place for reporting critical incidents. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the timely response to unusual and critical incidents per Helping Heroes standards and VA requirements. The following types of incidents are considered critical and must be reported to the SSVF program:

- Death (including suicide and overdose)
- Suicide Attempts
- Sexual Assault
- Act of violence or abusive behavior by a program veteran against personnel
- Act of violence or abusive behavior by personnel against a program veteran
- Occurrence in daily operations or on the premises which involves a potential for serious injury to personnel, consumer, veterans, and/or property
- Unsafe housing or health concerns that result in the notification of local authorities
- Allegations of impropriety
- Newsworthy incidents as defined by an incident which has attracted media interest, is of local or national interest, involves criminal charges, and/or involves well known or publicly discussed persons.

During the past fiscal year, no critical incident reports were filed.

External and internal health and safety inspections (including accessibility)

In March of 2023, the Roxby provided documentation on inspection of our fire suppression system. Also, in September of 2023, Comunale inspected and tested our fire alarm system. In April of 2023, First Choice inspected all of our fire extinguishers. Each month at a staff meeting an internal inspection is completed for general safety and electrical issues, fire and disaster equipment is checked, and exit paths are evaluated. Issues that need resolved are noted and the CEO is responsible for making repairs or arranging for repairs to be made. In January, the staff responsible for transporting clients underwent a review of driving records and no concerns were noted.

Progress and Planning

Facility Plan

Helping Heroes facility plan is to create a permanent home for all of our programs including our offices and transitional housing all under one roof. The renovation of 44 16th Street in downtown Wheeling will expand services to local Veterans and restore a vacant, historic property in downtown Wheeling.

Data analysis showed that greater than 75% of our clients overall come from the Wheeling area. A large homeless population and homeless encampments exist in Wheeling. The chosen location is a walkable distance from those camps, providing easy access for Veterans who may "walk-in" to find services and providing our agency opportunities to do outreach directly to Veterans who are living on the streets or in the camps, effectively meeting the Veterans where they are.

The plan includes non-congregate transitional housing apartments, education and training facilities, and administrative and program office space. The facility will be ADA compliant, including an exterior wheelchair access ramp, and an interior elevator. All rooms, including bathrooms and common areas, will have state of the art fire suppression. Three of the transitional apartments will be wheelchair accessible. In addition, this location offers the benefit of easy walking access for our Veterans to other services, such as healthcare, education, employment, public transportation, courts, food stability programs, the public library, parks and recreational areas, and other community-based services.

Technology and System Plan Review

Helping Heroes has in place a technology policy. Computers, software, Internet access, electronic mail (email), voice mail and other technological tools are provided to employees to assist them in the performance of their job functions. Downloading of software is prohibited, unless approved by the CEO. Any difficulties or malfunctions with a computer or software, or the need for assistance with any feature or program, should be reported to the CEO. We had no reported issues with Employees following the use of technology policies. We have assessed the need for laptop computers to allow management staff to work remotely and flexibly. Options were evaluated and Dell laptops were chosen through a process of cost/benefit analysis. In the past year we have transitioned all employees from desktop machines to laptops.

Improvement Analysis: Progress

Helping Heroes has addressed the key strategic needs identified and previously outlined in the FYE 2022 Annual Outcomes Report.

- 1. In order to complete our renovation of 44 16th Street, Helping Heroes must raise \$3 million in capital funds from gifts, grants, and other sources. A comprehensive, multi-year fundraising strategy was created and deployed. To date, nearly a million dollars has been raised towards achieving this goal.
- 2. In the third quarter of FYE2022, Helping Heroes underwent the CARF reaccreditation process and maintained our three-year accreditation status through 2026.
- 3. Demand for and success in the Transitional Housing Program indicates the need to increase the number of beds available to house Veterans who are not yet ready for permanent, community-based housing. Helping Heroes GPD grant was approved to increase capacity from five beds to ten beds.
- 4. Steadily increasing requests for assistance through the SSVF program has resulted in a greater demand for services than our current grant allocation can cover. In an effort to serve every Veteran who is eligible for services, some needs are met through private funds. However, the amount of grant funding through SSVF needed to be increased to meet the demand for services from Northern Panhandle Veterans. Helping Heroes SSVF grant was approved to increase by \$100,000.
- 5. An immense need for greater communication and collaboration among local organizations serving the homeless and near homeless in our region was identified through community meetings, agency interaction, and guidance from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. To best serve local Veterans and to access interagency services to help stabilize housing for the Veterans we serve, Helping Heroes has committed to being a part of the solution by taking a more active role in the Northern Panhandle Continuum of Care (NPCoC). Helping Heroes CEO serves as the Chairman of the NPCoC Board of Directors and Helping Heroes Staff attend and actively participate in all monthly Provider Committee meetings and quarterly General Membership Committee meetings. All staff assisted with the annual HUD Point in Time Count.
- 6. A review of the organizational structure and position descriptions identified the need to consider structural changes and staffing ratios. As a result, a revised organizational chart was created and approved by the Helping Heroes Board of Directors. Additionally, all employee position descriptions were reviewed for accuracy and updated to ensure consistency of content and format.
- 7. Helping Heroes has formed a foundation to be the recipient of charitable gifts to benefit the organization. The foundation is a separate, private non-profit entity. The foundation will receive all private donations and any unrelated business income, thus keeping those revenues and expenses outside of the operational program budgets and financial statements. It provides a structure that helps in our fundraising efforts, offers more options for investments, and allows for more predictability and consistency in funding agency needs beyond program operations.

Performance Improvement Analysis: Planning

During FYE 2023, Helping Heroes again saw a significant amount of positive service expansion as an organization. We maintained our CARF accreditation. The following key strategic needs have been identified for immediate focus:

- 1. In order to complete our renovation of 44 16th Street, Helping Heroes must continue to raise funds in the public and private sector with an overall goal that has increased to \$4 million because of increasing project costs. Helping Heroes will solicit capital funds from donations, grants, and other sources.
- In April of 2022 Helping Heroes purchased the former Columbia Gas Building located at 44 16th Street in Wheeling. A professional team has developed a plan to execute a major renovation of the building which will include office and retail space, as well as 15 non-congregated Transitional Housing apartments. Construction needs to begin in 2024 and to be completed in 2025.
- 3. In order to maintain compliance with our own organizational policies and procedures, CARF accreditation, and best practices in our non-profit sector, the Strategic Plan requires updating.
- 4. The Policy & Procedures Manual, which serves as our employee handbook, is due to be reviewed to ensure that practices align with policies and that certain new policy requirement for grant programs, employee benefits, and financial practices are updated and compliant.
- 5. To form a seamless continuum of care for local Veterans who are experiencing homelessness from literally unsheltered to housing stability, Helping Heroes has identified the need reestablish our Emergency Shelter for Veterans. In order to do so, funding must be secured, and a temporary location must be found to utilize as a shelter until our building renovation project is completed.
- 6. In order to serve all Veterans in need of the services Helping Heroes offers, the organization recognizes the need to return community engagement and outreach to the levels that were obtained before the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 7. To provide strong governance and to comply with the established organizational bylaws, Helping Heroes sees the need to recruit more Veterans to serve on the organization's Board of Directors.

Acronyms

The following is a list of terms, abbreviations, and acronyms associated with Helping Heroes programs.

AHAR - Annual Homeless Assessment Report

AMI - Area Median Income

CARF - Council for Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities

CBOC – Community Based Outpatient Clinic

CHAMPVA - Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs

COC - Continuum of Care

CTAD - Center for the Treatment of Addictive Disorders

DD214 - Department of Defense form 214 - veteran discharge form

Dom. - Domiciliary Program

GPD – Grant Per Diem Program

HHS - US Department of Health and Human Services

HIC – Housing Inventory Chart

HIPAA - Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996

HMIS – Homeless Management and Information System

HOMES – Homeless Operations Management Evaluation System

HOPWA - Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS

HUD – US Department of Housing and Urban Development

HUD - VASH – US Department of Housing and Urban Development – Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing

LS – Legal Services

NPCOC - Northern Panhandle Continuum of Care

OIF/OEF/OND – Operation Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom, and New Dawn

PIT - Point in Time

PRRTP - Psychological Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program

RRH - Rapid re-housing

SGLI – Service members' Group Life Insurance

SHP - Supportive Housing Program

SITH – Service Intensive Transitional Housing

SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

SS - Shallow Subsidy

SSVF - Supportive Services for Veteran Families

TA – Technical Assistance

TANF – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

TH – Transitional Housing

TSGLI – Service members' Group Life Insurance Traumatic Injury Protection

UDE - Universal Data Element

VAMC - Veterans Affairs Medical Center

VCL – Veterans Crisis Line

VCP - Veterans Choice Program

VGLI - Veteran's Group Life Insurance

VISN – Veterans Integrated Service Network

VRC - Veteran Recovery Services