

# Improving veteran mental health

Request for Application deadline:  
Thursday, September 5, 2024, 11:59 pm ET

## Our commitment

The Cigna Group Foundation is committing \$9 million over three years to improve the mental health of veterans through addressing the significant impact that social determinants of health have on mental health. **In the first year of this commitment the focus is on improving housing stability among veterans.**

## Our why

The rate of post-traumatic stress among veterans is up to 15 times higher than among civilians.<sup>1</sup> Deployment raises the likelihood that veterans experience trauma and carry visible and invisible scars.<sup>2</sup> During time of transition to civilian life as well as beyond that, veterans often face significant challenges such as, finding work to earn an income and pay for basic needs, including food, clothing and housing.

- Veterans experiencing housing instability have increased odds of frequent mental distress and suicidal ideation.<sup>3</sup>
- Veterans face an elevated risk of homelessness relative to the general population. On any given night, an estimated 40,000 veterans go without shelter in the United States. Additionally, about 1.5 million veterans are considered at risk of homelessness.<sup>4</sup>
- Among individuals transitioning from shelters to homes, 88% of individuals who received wraparound services remained housed, as opposed to only 47% among those who did not.<sup>5</sup>

## Our call for action

We seek to collaborate with and support nonprofit organizations that leverage evidence-informed programs and services to help local veterans feel stable where they live and ultimately create positive impact for their mental health. This includes underserved populations, such as women, Hispanic and Black veterans. **For the first year, we are focused on investing in approaches including but not limited to the Housing First model. Our grant program goals are:**

**Increase permanent housing available for veterans.**

**Improve affordability for housing for veterans through rental or mortgage assistance.**

**Enhance the offering of wraparound services for veterans transitioning from shelters.**



# Together, we can improve the lives of our country's veterans.

Request for Application (RFA) deadline:  
Thursday, September 5, 11:59 PM ET

## Grant program process, eligibility and requirements

- The RFA and full application are two distinct steps. First step: the RFA link available on our website will present a form featuring eligibility and program questions. Second step: If eligible and invited to submit a full application, an email will be sent to you with a link to the full application. Please note the dates in timeline for these respective steps. The application link will be unique to your organization and cannot be shared.
- The organization is a registered 501(c)(3) charitable organization and within one of the specific subsections of the Internal Revenue Code (see [FAQ](#)).
- The budget narrative should reflect eligible expenses required for the specific grant request only. Salaries for staff members are allowable for related program implementation. Non-eligible expenses include fringe benefits, payroll taxes, general operating expenses, and administrative and indirect costs.
- Progress and impact measurement, including activity-tracking practices and evaluation methodology, as well as alignment to the ability to address health disparities, should be clearly articulated in the application.
- The measurement approach should include connecting how program outputs and short-term outcomes related to housing stability drive to long-term, sustainable improved mental health among veterans. For example, for the grant program goal to enhance the offering of wraparound services for veterans transitioning from shelters, we'll seek to understand an aligned measure, such as number of veterans served by a program that delivers mental health treatment (or other wrap around services).
- Grantees awarded funding will be expected to complete a progress report (at six months) and final report (at twelve months/end of term).

## Grant range and term

\$100,000 – \$150,000

One-year (12 months) active programming

## Grant program delivery: *must be in one of the following states\**

Arizona	Missouri
Connecticut	New Jersey
Florida	Pennsylvania
Georgia	Tennessee
Illinois	Texas

## Grant program timeline

8/12/2024	RFA opens
9/05/2024 11:59 pm ET	RFA closes
9/10/2024	Invite to submit full application (if eligible)
9/30/2024 11:59 pm ET	Full application due
11/14/2024	Decision notification
1/1/2025	Grant term begins

Additional details, including the link for RFA are on The Cigna Group Foundation [website](#).

*\*National organizations may be eligible with existing partnership/program delivery model for states listed.*

1. Nichter B, Tsai J & Pietrzak RH. "Prevalence, correlates, and mental health burden associated with homelessness in U.S. military veterans." *Psycho Med*. 2023 Jul; 53 (9): 3952–39 62. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0278364323000612>  
2. Bossarte RM, Bloenich JR, Piegari RI, Hill LL & Kane V. "Housing instability and mental distress among US veterans." *Am J Public Health*. 2013 Dec; 103 (Suppl 2):S213–6. <https://doi.org/10.2195/ajph.2013.303227>  
3. Thurston A. "Why Veterans Remain at Greater Risk of Homelessness." Boston University: The Brink. November 9, 2022. <https://www.bu.edu/articles/2022/why-veterans-remain-at-greater-risk-of-homelessness/>  
4. Green Doors. "Veteran Homelessness Facts." Last accessed June 5, 2024. <https://greendoors.org/facts/veteran-homelessness-a-brief-research-on-housing-first-in-the-nep/>  
5.

