

Homeless veterans in Minnesota 2006

*Statewide survey of veterans
without permanent shelter*

N O V E M B E R 2 0 0 7

Homeless Veterans in Minnesota 2006

*Statewide survey of veterans without permanent
shelter*

November 2007

Wilder Research Center
1295 Bandana Boulevard North, Suite 210
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55108
651-647-4600
www.wilder.org/research

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Project staff

Greg Owen, *Project Director*

Greg is a Consulting Scientist at Wilder Research Center and directed the Center's first study of Saint Paul's homeless population in 1984. He was responsible for overall project design and oversight.

June Heineman, *Research Associate*

June coordinated Wilder's work with the volunteer interviewers and the shelters that serve adults and children. June was responsible for the data preparation, data analysis, table preparation, and report writing.

Ellen Shelton, *Policy Analyst*

Ellen contributed to the study design, analysis, report writing, and was responsible for examining the policy implications of study findings.

Michelle Gerrard, *Research Scientist*

Michelle coordinated the efforts of outreach workers and volunteers who interviewed youth and adults in non-shelter locations. Michelle was responsible for data analysis and report writing of the youth report.

Mark Anton, *Research Analyst*

Mark conducted data analysis for the study, including table preparation, statistical summaries, and sample weighting.

Nancy Hartzler, *Communications Manager*

Nancy assisted in preparing and disseminating study materials, including reports and web site content.

Marilyn Conrad, *Administrative Services Manager*

Marilyn supervised report production and coordinated mailings, survey distribution, and honoraria to participants. She also developed the web-based data tables of survey results.

Karen Ulstad, *Survey Research Coordinator*

Karen coordinated the recruitment and site assignments of the volunteer interviewers. Karen also was involved in preparing the surveys for data entry.

Ron Mortenson, *Research Assistant*

Ron conducted interviews with shelter providers. Ron also was involved in collecting the shelter counts from the providers, preparing the surveys for data entry, and editing this report.

Brian Pittman, *Research Associate*

Brain assisted in the data analysis and report writing.

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This report would not have been possible without the cooperation of more than 3,700 study respondents (624 veterans) who answered questions and described their personal experiences in shelters, in transitional programs, in drop-in centers, on the streets, and in other locations. Our report is dedicated to them.

Volunteers

Roxanne Ahsenmacher
Debbie Allen
Kathleen Allen
Jim Anderson
Diane Anderson
Tanya Andres
Laura Anton
Jeanine Antony
Tyler Arvig
Judith Aubrecht
Sally Auger
Arsalan Azam
Nus Azam
Sue Bair Braam
Aishe Barnard
Therese Barnett
Patricia Barrett
David Beldenbaugh
Beverly Betzold
Kate Bitney
Shery Block
Chris Block
Randy Bockoven
Paula Boehrs
Julie Borgerding
Carmella Boyce
Jenna Bray
Jerine Brendt
Roger Bromander
Kathy Brophy
Tikki Brown
Marilyn Bruin
Arthur T. Bryant
Susan Jordan Bubacz
Jamey Burden
David Burdick
Bret Byfield
Jacque Cameron
Jackie Campeau
Julie Caraway
Jonathan Carlson
David Carroll
Kevin Cassidy-Maloney
Rachel Chafee
Jimmy Collier
Joseph Collins
Shania Connolly
Thalia Cooper

Elizabeth Cowan
Matt Dahl
Kishore Dasararaju
Mike Davey
Sandy Delos
Ousmane Diallo
Stanley Dow
Kim Duenow
Courtney Duffy
Ed Eide
Kate Ellefson
Erin Englebert
Saleha Erdmann
Dawn Fikis
Carmen Finn
Linda Fjellman
Liz Flinn
Carrie Forslund
Janet Fossen
Therese Frech
Anne Fredrickson
Nissa French
Rhonda Gautschi
Brad George
Michelle Gerrard
Christina Giese
Heidi Gilles
Jennifer Goff
Warren Goggleye
Ana Maria Gomez
Eltina Gonzalez
Lori Graham
Dianne Grammond
Joseph Green
Connie Greer
Gary Groberg
Heather Gruenhagen
Karen Hagstrom
Becky Hague
Chip Halbach
Judy Hall
Susan Halvorson
Scott Harpin
Bernadette Harrell
Harriet Harrington
John Hase
Rachel Hatch
Jamillia Hatton

Shirlesia Hawkins
Karen Hayes
Dana Hays
Vicky Helland
Michael Hensley
Lisa Heuer-Andrews
Allysen Hoberg
Deb Holman
Greg Horan
Ronnie Howell
Dani Hudec
Cassie Huesman
Leona Humphrey
Jeffrey Hunsberger
Pam Illg
James Ingersoll
Daniel Ittner
Charmaine Jackson
Deric Jackson
Meranda Jacobsen-Garcia
Mary Kay Jacobson
Ann Jalonen
James January
Marcy Jensen
William Johnson
Julie Johnson
Catherine Johnson
Nick Johnston
Bill Johnston
Laura Kadwell
Kira Kallberg
Joan Kaluza
Gina Kautz
Patrick Kelly
Renae Kiser
Sharon Kleeman
Marcus Klimenko
Katherine Knopff
Michelle Kompelien
Jana Kooren
Tom Kortkamp
Daniel Kralovec
Mary Krammer
Teresa Krueger
Jill Kuntz
Michele Lammi
Tim Lanz
Wayne Larson

Nikki LaSorella
Julie LaSota
Jane Lawrenz
Diane Leaders
Pat Leary
Dara Lee
Richard Lee
Bonnie LeVang
Xin Li
Kathy Lindgren
Leah Lindstrom
John Lochner
Susan Lundell
Shariene Mader-Brown
Mike Manherd
Dolores Martin
Richard W. Martin
Jennifer Martin
Sarah Mattes
Lori Mattison
Eric Mattson
Charles McJilton
Kalee McKusky
Carrie McNeil
Terri McNeil
Sarah Meisinger
Laura Melnick
Mike Menherd
Sandra Michael
Marsha Milgrom
Patty Miller
Molly Miller
Josh Miller
Gerri Mills
Alice Mogeni
Carol Monfroe
Ron Mortenson
Steve Moser
Denise Mueller
Justine Nelson
Cris Nelson
Harrison Nelson
Rebekah Nelson
Rachel Newman
Katherine Newman
Cindy Norgaard
Elizabeth Oas

Sheila Oberg
Shola Olaleye
Diane Olson
Jill O'Malley
Becca Orrick
Rachael Oswald
Mary Kay Palmer
Judy Parr
Cal Pederson
Kathleen Pengelly
Charles Person
Gayle Peterson
Kathy Peterson
Terry Peterson
Daniel Peterson
John Petroskas
Karen Phelps
Paula Phillips
Brian Pittman
Rick Podvin
Regina Poindexter
Angela Poirier
Scott Propson
Kelly Ralston
Megan Randeau
Brian Reichert
Janell Repp
Beth Rickards
Shannon Riteney
Charlie Rogers
Patricia Rohloff
Nathaniel Saltz
Sarah Sandland
Sarah Savengseukas
Laura Schauben
Judy Scheider
Carl Scheider
Ann Schellack
Jennifer Lee Schultz
Estelle Senopole
Heidi Shabaek
Allison Sharkey
Tina Shenk
Jennifer Sheridan
Cherie Shoquist
Annette Shtivelband
Vicki Sibbet

Miriam Sikora
Paul A. Sinclair
Yael Sivan
Deb Sjostrom
Emily Sjostrom
Maryellen Skan
Erin Slaikeu
Christy Snow-Kaster
Joy Sorensen Navarre
Bob St. Martin
Theresa Starkman
Amber Stevenson
Marion Stewart
Phil Sturlaugson
Bryan Svendby
Dan Swanson
Beth Thompson
Darlene Thompson
Peggy Traux
Amanda Troge
Janet Vacek
Gungching Vah
Adam Venne
Elizabeth Viktora
Beth Volden
Dolores Voorhees
Dianne Walker
Jennifer Weckman
Maureen Wells
Isaac Wengerd
Joel Wenzel
Matthew Wieland
Ora Williams
Edwin Williams
Sister Amanda Wolf
Patrick Wood
Diane Wray Williams
Mary Beth Young

Preface

Homeless veterans continue to occupy a significant place in the overall population of homeless adults in Minnesota. The October 2006 survey found that approximately one-quarter of all homeless adults men had served in the military. And while the total number of homeless veterans is down compared to Wilder's last two studies, the level of distress in this population is up. One recent report by the Iraq Veteran Project indicates that veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan are not only at significant risk for homelessness but are actually more likely to become homeless sooner than their predecessors following the Vietnam War.

Wilder's 2006 study of homelessness identified 17 veterans who had recently returned from Iraq or Afghanistan. This group, all men, was three times more likely than those in the general homeless population to report that they had been told by a doctor or nurse that they have post traumatic stress disorder. The report by the Iraq Veteran Project also suggests that risk factors for these veterans are exacerbated by repeated deployments, urban combat and the deployment of geographically diverse reserve troops that have less access to support networks and services upon return to the United States. One grave concern is the nature of combat during these deployments and the increasing likelihood of traumatic brain injury resulting from the use of improvised explosive devices. In fact, in our sample of homeless veterans one-third report symptoms of traumatic brain injury.

While homeless veterans face many of the same problems faced by other homeless adults in that they are turned away from shelters when beds are in short supply and face the same scarcity of affordable housing, they also represent a special concern because of their military service to the country and because of the implicit contract that Americans have with them to treat them with respect and dignity when their service is complete.

As we look toward the next wave of returning veterans we can now ask what they are likely to find upon their return. Will the support and encouragement from the community be adequate? Will shelter and jobs be available? Will treatment for illness and trauma be accessible or will they find themselves marginalized and out of place and swelling the ranks of America's homeless?

The profile presented here suggests that homelessness in Minnesota is as likely to touch veterans as any other state residents. This report describes the characteristics of Minnesota's homeless veterans and the unique circumstances they face.

Summary

This study gives a snapshot of U.S. military veterans experiencing homelessness in Minnesota on a single day in 2006. The findings reported here are based on interviews with 459 male veterans and 26 female veterans conducted on Thursday, October 26, 2006. As part of the overall statewide survey of homeless adults and youth conducted across the state of Minnesota on that date, results were weighted to represent the known population of homeless adults who were residing in emergency shelters, battered women's shelters, and transitional housing programs on October 26, 2006. Interviews with people in non-sheltered locations were not weighted, because there is no way to determine the total population in such settings. More information on sample weighting can be found on page 31.

Key findings

Numbers of homeless

The information in this report about the characteristics of homeless veterans is based on the results of the statewide survey of persons without permanent shelter conducted on October 26, 2006. Based on weighted results, 624 veterans were represented in the study. The overall study included interviews with 1,174 men and 1,270 women age 18 or older in emergency shelters, battered women's shelters, and transitional housing programs, as well as another 1,138 interviews with adults in non-shelter locations. According to the interviews, adult respondents had a total of 1,948 children with them.

Veterans make up 13 percent of all homeless adults and 24 percent of all homeless men. These proportions are very similar to the proportion of veterans found in the general adult population. In 2006, military veterans made up slightly less than 11 percent of all adults in Minnesota, and 21 percent of adult men in Minnesota.¹

When looking at the total adult population experiencing homelessness, the percent who were U.S. military veterans decreased from 22 percent in 1991 to 13 percent in 2006. As a percentage of men experiencing homelessness, the percentage also declined, (34% in 1991 and 24% in 2006). The next table shows the weighted number and percentage of homeless veterans described over the six study periods.

¹ 2006 *American Community Survey*. Minnesota S2101.Veteran Status. [Statistics from Data file]
Retrieved October 10, 2007 from <http://www.factfinder.census.gov/servlet>

Number and percent of homeless persons who are US military veterans

	Men		Women		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
October 1991	417	33.7%	21	2.7%	438	21.8%
October 1994	322	25.4%	32	2.6%	354	14.3%
October 1997	350	26.3%	24	1.6%	374	13.2%
October 2000	686	30.7%	50	2.4%	686	16.4%
October 2003	652	26.1%	50	2.2%	702	14.7%
October 2006	595	23.9%	29	1.3%	624	13.2%

Who is homeless?

- The vast majority of homeless veterans were males (95%). The average age of homeless male veterans was 47.5, and the average age of homeless female veterans was 39.3. The percent of homeless veterans who had never married was lower than that of the general homeless population surveyed in 2006 (37% vs. 57%). Over half of homeless veterans reported that they were divorced or separated (42% and 11%, respectively).
- Less than one-quarter of veterans (23%) who were homeless on the night of the survey had lived in Minnesota for two years or less. Close to three-quarters (70%) of the veterans surveyed had lived in Minnesota for more than five years, including 46 percent who had lived in Minnesota for more than 20 years.
- Homeless veterans were disproportionately people of color. Particularly over-represented were African Americans in the Twin Cities metro area (37%) and both African Americans (10%) and American Indians (10%) in greater Minnesota.² While less than 11 percent of the state's overall population is made up of persons of color, over two-fifths (42%) of Minnesota's homeless veterans were persons of color.
- Veterans interviewed in informal and unsheltered locations were predominantly male (95%), and over half (55%) had been homeless for a year or longer. American Indians made up 18 percent of veterans interviewed in informal and unsheltered locations.
- Nearly half (48%) of veterans interviewed had served in the U.S. Army, 18 percent served in the U.S. Navy, 17 percent served in the U.S. Marines, 7 percent served in the U.S. Air Force, 7 percent served in the National Guard, 3 percent served in the Reserves, and less than 1 percent served in the Coast Guard.

² Throughout this report, the "Twin Cities metro area" refers to the seven counties of Hennepin, Ramsey, Anoka, Carver, Scott, Dakota, and Washington.

- Sixty-four percent of homeless veterans had served for more than two years, 21 percent for 181 days to two years, 7 percent for 90 days to 180 days, and 8 percent for less than 90 days.
- Five percent of the homeless veterans began their military service prior to August 1964, 32 percent between August 1964 and May 1975, 30 percent between June 1975 and September 1980, and 33 percent after September 1980.
- Nearly one-third (31%) of homeless veterans reported having served in a combat zone. Nineteen percent of homeless veterans reported they had served in a combat zone in Vietnam, 6 percent in the first Gulf War, 3 percent in Iraq or Afghanistan, and less than 1 percent each in Korea, El Salvador, Granada, Panama, Libya, Serbia/Bosnia, Lebanon, and Iran.

Children of homeless veterans

- Although 34 percent of homeless veterans reported having children under the age of 18, only 13 percent (26) of those parents had any children with them on the night of the survey. Those 26 parents represented 6 percent of all homeless veterans surveyed.
- Of the 26 homeless veterans who had children with them, 24 percent reported they had been unable to obtain needed child care in the previous 12 months, 13 percent had been unable to obtain needed dental care, and 6 percent had been unable to obtain needed health care for at least one of their children. Seven percent of the homeless parents reported that their children had to skip meals in the last month.
- Six homeless veterans (23%) who had children with them, reported having at least one child who had an emotional or behavioral problem that interfered with their daily activities. One homeless parent (3%) reported having at least one child who had a physical health problem that interfered with their daily activities.
- All 26 homeless parents had a least one school-age child. Just over one-quarter (27%) reported that at least one of their school-age children had some type of learning or school-related problem, and nearly one-fifth (19%) reported having a child who had repeated a grade in school. All 26 parents reported that their children attended school on the day of the survey, and only one parent reported there were problems going to school because of their housing situation.

Education, employment, and income

- The percentage of homeless veterans who had completed high school was much higher than that of the general homeless population surveyed in 2006 (92% for homeless veterans and 72% for the general homeless population). The percentage who had attended at least some college was also higher than for the general homeless population (42% vs. 27%).

- Twenty-eight percent of homeless veterans were employed, with 15 percent employed full-time. Two-thirds (67%) of homeless veterans earned less than \$10 per hour. Over half (57%) of homeless veterans who were employed had been at their current job for three months or more.
- Those who were not working reported that their main barriers to employment were physical health (35%), transportation (33%), mental health problems (32%), lack of housing (25%), age (15%), criminal background (14%), and lack of job history (13%).
- Homeless veterans surveyed reported their main sources of income in the month of October had been from the following sources: steady employment (25%), General Assistance (19%), day labor (15%), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) (13%), and asking for money on the streets (6%).
- When asked about their total income for the month of October, 10 percent reported some income, but less than \$100, 21 percent reported incomes of \$101-\$300; 8 percent reported incomes of \$301-\$500, 21 percent reported incomes of \$501-\$800, and 25 percent reported incomes over \$800. Ninety-two (16%) homeless veterans reported having had no income in October.

History of homelessness

- Almost three-quarters (70%) of homeless veterans had been homeless more than once. Just over one-quarter (26%) reported they had been homeless two to three times in their lives, 23 percent had been homeless four to seven times, and 22 percent had been homeless eight or more times. The average age at which they became homeless was at age 33.8, and the median age was 35.
- The proportion of homeless veterans that fit HUD's definition of chronic homeless was 47 percent. Likewise, the proportion of homeless veterans that fit Minnesota's definition of long-term homeless was 58 percent.
- One-sixth (16%) of homeless veterans reported having been unable to obtain shelter in the previous three months because of a lack of available beds. Of those, most ended up sleeping outdoors (43%), with friends or family (14%), in cars or other enclosed places not meant for habitation (12%), or in another shelter (11%). Others ended up in a church (5%), with a voucher for a motel (3%), in a safe home (1%), in a hospital (1%), in a motel (no voucher) (1%), or in detox (1%).
- More than one-third (37%) of homeless veterans spent at least one night outdoors during the month of October. The average number of nights spent outdoors was 4.8. Over one-quarter (29%) of homeless veterans spent at least one night during October "doubled-up" with friends or family. The average number of nights spent "doubled-up" was 2.6.

Residential placements

- Close to three-quarters (71%) of homeless veterans had lived in at least one kind of institution or residential program in their lives, most commonly a drug or alcohol treatment facility (55%), halfway house (33%), mental health treatment facility (26%), group home (15%), or foster home (14%).
- Nearly two-thirds (63%) of homeless veterans had been held in a correctional facility in their lives, including in a county jail or workhouse (60%), a state or federal prison (26%), or a juvenile detention center (14%).

Housing

- The four most common reasons homeless veterans cited for having left their last regular housing were: inability to afford the rent (41%), loss of a job (40%), eviction (31%), a drinking or drug problem (30%), or a break-up with a spouse or partner (24%). The most commonly cited current barriers to regaining housing were: lack of a job or income (39%), no housing they could afford (25%), credit problems (18%), or a criminal background (13%).
- The average amount that homeless veterans reported they could pay for rent, including utilities, was \$275 a month. The median amount was \$240. More than one-third (35%) of homeless veterans could pay something but \$300 or less for rent. Just over one-quarter (26%) reported they could not pay anything for rent. More than two-thirds (68%) only needed an efficiency or studio apartment.

Public assistance and service use

- Seven percent of homeless veterans (5% of men and 31% of women) had received MFIP (welfare assistance) in the previous 12 months. Of those who had received MFIP benefits, one-third (34%) had been sanctioned, and 21 percent had exited MFIP in the previous 12 months.
- One-fifth (20%) of homeless veterans reported the loss of one or more services or public assistance benefits during the previous 12 months. Those who had lost benefits most frequently reported losing Food Stamps (60%), medical benefits (49%), General Assistance (10%), and unemployment benefits (8%). More than one-quarter (29%) of all homeless veterans said they needed help to apply or re-apply for services.
- Nearly two-thirds (65%) of homeless veterans reported having had some type of medical coverage in October, and more than one-third (35%) reported having used Food Stamps in October. Other services homeless veterans reported using included hot meal programs (47%), free clothing shelves (40%), drop-in centers (32%), transportation assistance (27%), free medical clinic (23%), food shelves (22%), and outreach services (18%).

- Nearly half of homeless veterans (48%) reported having had contact with their County Veterans Service Officer during the previous 12 months.

Health and well-being

- Two-fifths (40%) of homeless veterans reported having had a service-related health problem. Of those veterans, 44 percent reported having had a mental health problem.
- Nearly half (48%) of homeless veterans had at least one chronic medical condition (asthma, other chronic lung or respiratory problems, high blood pressure, diabetes, tuberculosis, hepatitis, or HIV/AIDS). Of those, 65 percent reported they had received care for each such condition in the previous year.
- Nearly three-fifths (59%) of homeless veterans said they currently needed to see a dentist, 49 percent needed to see a doctor for a physical health problem, 38 percent needed to see a professional for a mental health problem, and 20 percent needed to see a professional for a chemical dependency problem. Nearly one-third (32%) reported problems getting needed medical care.

Mental and chemical health

- Mental illness was a significant problem among those who were homeless veterans in Minnesota. Over half of homeless veterans (55%) had been told by a doctor or nurse within the previous two years that they had at least one of the following serious mental health disorders: schizophrenia, manic-depression, some type of delusional disorder, major depression, anti-social personality disorder, or post-traumatic stress disorder. Adding those who had received inpatient or outpatient mental health treatment in the previous two years, 60 percent of homeless veterans had a serious mental health problem.
- The specific mental health disorders reported by homeless veterans included major depression (42%), post-traumatic stress disorder (28%), manic-depression (19%), anti-social personality disorder or another serious emotional disorder (17%), schizophrenia (8%), and some other type of delusional disorder (8%).
- More than half of homeless veterans (54%) considered themselves to be alcoholic or chemically dependent. More than two-fifths of homeless veterans (42%) reported they had been told by a doctor or nurse within the previous two years that they have a drug disorder or an alcohol disorder. More than one-quarter (29%) of homeless veterans reported having received inpatient alcohol or drug treatment within the previous two years. Just over one-fourth of homeless veterans (26%) reported having received outpatient alcohol or drug treatment in the previous two years.

- Nearly one-third (31%) of homeless veterans reported having both a mental illness and a chemical dependency problem. This is based on the percent of persons who reported being told by a doctor or nurse within the previous two years that they have a major mental illness (schizophrenia, paranoia, manic-depression, major depression, anti-social personality or post-traumatic stress disorder) and alcohol or drug abuse disorder. By comparison, nearly one-fifth (19%) of the statewide homeless population surveyed in 2006 reported both mental health and chemical dependency problems.

Serious or chronic disability

- Over half (52%) of homeless veterans reported that a physical, mental, or other health condition limited the amount or type of work they could do. Nearly one-fifth (19%) reported that a health condition limited their daily activities, and one-third (33%) reported problems with memory, concentration, or decision-making.
- Pooling these disabilities with chronic medical conditions, mental illness, and substance abuse, 85 percent of homeless veterans had at least one serious or chronic disability.
- One-third (33%) of homeless veterans had a history that suggests likely traumatic brain injury.

Abuse and victimization

- More than one-third (35%) percent of homeless veterans reported physical mistreatment as a child (35% of men and 44% of women), and 14 percent reported they were sexually mistreated as children (13% of men and 41% of women).
- Just over one-quarter (26%) of homeless veterans reported they had stayed in an abusive situation for lack of other housing options (26% of men and 38% of women), and 34 percent of homeless female veterans either had left their previous housing or had come to Minnesota in order to flee domestic violence.
- Fourteen percent had been physically or sexually attacked at some time while they were homeless (14% of men, 19% of women), and 8 percent had sought health care for injuries due to violence in the previous year (7% of men and 20% of women).

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide a current snapshot of U.S. military veterans experiencing homelessness in Minnesota. The information is intended as a resource for planners, policy-makers, service providers, and others who are interested in addressing the problems associated with homelessness among veterans.

The information presented in this report comes from three main sources:

1. A statewide population count, or census, of all persons who were residing in emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities on the night of Thursday, October 26, 2006.
2. A statewide survey of a sample of military veterans (N=337) who were living in emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities on October 26, 2006.
3. A survey of 148 homeless veterans found in informal or non-shelter locations around the state on October 26, 2006.

The report also references U.S. Census information and other data about the general adult population.

Other reports and data tables on homeless adults and their children, homeless youth and young adults, and Minnesota's Continuum of Care Regions are also available at www.wilderresearch.org.

Background

This study of homeless veterans was commissioned as part of the Minnesota statewide survey of persons without permanent shelter by the Minnesota Interagency Task Force on Homelessness, in order to provide information for statewide planning efforts to reduce homelessness. State funding was provided by Minnesota Housing; the Minnesota Department of Corrections; the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development; the Minnesota Department of Human Services; the Minnesota Department of Public Safety; the Minnesota Department of Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs; Hennepin County; Metropolitan Council; and the Veterans Home Board.

Additional financial support came from the Family Housing Fund, the Greater Minnesota Housing Fund, and the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation. This private-agency funding enabled researchers to conduct volunteer training, reimburse study respondents for their participation, and publish this report.

Members of the Interagency Task Force on Homelessness, Wilder Research, the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless, and other nonprofit groups met during the spring and summer of 2006 to finalize survey instruments and research methods. Survey dates were set by the planning group, and temporary housing program sites were identified.

Methods

In October 2006, more than 950 volunteer interviewers conducted face-to-face interviews with over 3,700 people experiencing homelessness. Interviews took place throughout Minnesota in more than 80 cities, in about 250 emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, and battered women's shelters, as well as among homeless people not in shelters. Additionally, homeless people were interviewed in non-sheltered locations, including at food programs and drop-in centers, as well as under bridges, in encampments, and in other places where those not using shelter programs spend time.

Agency and community volunteers were trained in social science research interview methods through a professionally produced DVD. The DVD also provided detailed instruction in how to conduct the approximately 30-minute, face-to-face interview with individuals who were experiencing homelessness.

In 2006, Wilder received unprecedented help from partners across the state to reach this population. As a result, we were able to substantially increase the number of interviews conducted among homeless people not in shelters. As part of this effort, interviewers conducted 485 surveys with veterans who were experiencing homelessness in Minnesota.

One of the biggest changes since 2003 has been the development of housing and services targeted to the long-term homeless, much of which has been in the form of permanent supportive housing. Because this kind of housing is not time-limited, people previously homeless, being served through permanent supportive housing, are not considered homeless and, therefore, were not included in the statewide survey.

While the survey was nearly comprehensive in sampling from emergency shelters, battered women's shelters, youth shelters, and transitional housing facilities throughout Minnesota, it was not feasible to cover the entire state for homeless persons in non-shelter locations. Therefore, a purposive sample of persons in street locations around Minnesota was surveyed with the assistance of persons experienced in outreach to the homeless. This was not an exhaustive effort and cannot be considered a comprehensive count or a representative sample of non-sheltered homeless persons. It does, however, provide the basis for preliminary descriptive information on this population.

In both greater Minnesota and the Twin Cities metro area, site leaders were instructed to interview homeless adults and youth available at each site at the time of the survey team's visit. Respondents received cash compensation (\$5.00) for the half-hour interview.

Supporting information for this study was obtained from shelter providers at all emergency shelters, battered women's shelters, youth shelters, and transitional housing facilities. These sites provided a complete count of all men, women, and children, as well as unaccompanied youth, in residence on the night of October 26, 2006. No comparable counts were available for unsheltered youth or adults.

Finally, in order to avoid bias associated with over- or under-representing individuals in any of the shelters, a weighting technique was applied to the sample. Weightings were possible only for locations where complete population counts were available (adult emergency shelters, battered women's shelters, and transitional housing facilities). The weighting techniques (described on page 31) allow us to estimate the characteristics of nearly the entire population counted in each type of facility on October 26, 2006.³

This report is based on the subset of interviews conducted with persons who identified themselves as having served in the U.S. military.

This study defines homelessness with the same criteria used by the United States Congress in allocating resources through the McKinney Act (P.L. 100-77, sec 103(2)(1), 101 stat. 485 [1987]).

The term “homeless” or “homeless individual” includes an individual who (1) lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and (2) has a primary nighttime residence that is (a) a supervised, publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill), (b) an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or (c) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

The table below shows that 476 homeless veterans were residing in temporary shelter in the Twin Cities metro area and greater Minnesota on October 26, 2006. An additional 67 veterans (47 males and 20 females) in the Twin Cities metro area and 81 veterans (74 males and 7 females) in greater Minnesota were interviewed in non-shelter locations.

Number of veterans residing in shelter locations

	Males	Females	Total
Overnight shelters			
Twin Cities metro area	207	2	209
Greater Minnesota	60	2	62
Transitional housing			
Twin Cities metro area	122	14	136
Greater Minnesota	66	3	69
Total (sheltered veterans)	455	21	476

³ Weightings were calculated using a sample-balancing program available in the Princeton Statistical Program. This technique uses an iterative approximation to the least squares adjustment. Additional detail on this procedure can be found on page 31. Deming, W. E. (1943). *Statistical adjustment of data*. New York: Wiley.

Interviews conducted

On Thursday, October 26, 2006, as part of the Minnesota statewide survey of people without permanent shelter, 337 interviews were conducted with veterans in temporary housing programs. In order to reflect the characteristics of the overall sheltered homeless population, interviews statewide were weighted to represent the known population of homeless adults residing in temporary housing programs. These 337 interviews with veterans, when thus weighted, represent an estimated total of 476 homeless veterans residing in temporary housing programs on that night. In addition, 148 interviews were conducted with veterans in non-shelter locations. The survey results presented in this report describe the 624 veterans without permanent housing in Minnesota on October 26, 2006.

Number of veterans interviewed in temporary housing programs

	Actual number of interviews			Weighted number of interviews		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Twin Cities metro area						
Emergency shelters		154	2	207	2	209
Transitional housing		77	11	122	14	136
Greater Minnesota						
Emergency shelters		40	2	60	2	62
Transitional housing		48	3	66	3	69
Total		319	18	455	21	476

Number of veterans interviewed in non-sheltered locations

	Men	Women	Total
Twin Cities metro area	66	1	67
Greater Minnesota	74	7	81
Total	140	8	148

Introduction to survey results

This report presents study results in three ways:

1. A comparison of homeless male veterans to non-veteran homeless men.
2. Descriptive overview of homeless veterans surveyed on Thursday, October 26, 2006.
3. Detailed data tables that allow readers to examine specific survey questions broken down by locale (Twin Cities metro area vs. greater Minnesota), gender, and shelter type.

In addition, project staff are prepared to conduct specific analyses on an “at cost” basis.

Comparison of homeless male veterans to non-veteran homeless men

The 2006 study identified 624 homeless veterans, including 595 men and 29 women. Overall, 1 in 8 homeless adults (13%), and 1 in 4 homeless men (24%), served in the military at some time. One-third (32%) of homeless veterans had served in a combat zone. By comparison, 21% of Minnesota men overall have ever served in the military.

Almost all (95%) homeless veterans interviewed were men. While this group includes 24 percent of homeless men, only 1 percent of homeless women had served in the military. Unless otherwise stated, the descriptions given below apply only to the male veterans.

Veterans were older than non-veteran homeless men. Homeless veterans reported childhood experiences that were less traumatic, on average, than those of non-veterans who were homeless. More veterans had at least a high school diploma or equivalent. More veterans than any other group had at least some college education. Compared to other homeless adults, fewer veterans had ever lived in an out-of-home placement or institution as a child.

Physical and mental health

Homeless male veterans were more likely than other homeless males to have considered or attempted suicide. They were also more likely to have a mental illness and/or chemical dependency problem, or have a chronic health condition. Homeless veterans (especially combat veterans) were more likely to experience Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Forty-seven percent of male combat veterans have been told by a doctor or nurse that they have PTSD, compared to 27 percent of male veterans, and 13 percent of other homeless men. The 2006 study identified 17 homeless veterans of the current Iraq and Afghanistan conflict. Among this group, 58 percent had PTSD.

Barriers to housing and employment

Homeless male veterans perceive very similar housing barriers as other homeless men. They were somewhat more likely to cite credit problems, bad rental history (including eviction), and mental illness as current barriers to housing.

Other possible housing barriers that were evident from the interviews include lack of a job, previous homelessness, mental illness, current homelessness that has lasted a year or longer, substance abuse, and a prior history of incarceration.

Compared to other homeless men, veterans were equally likely to be employed, and about the same proportion was working full-time (35 hours or more a week). The barriers to employment that unemployed veterans most often identify were generally similar to those identified by other homeless men (physical health problems, lack of transportation, mental

health problems, and lack of housing), though veterans more often mention age. From other information in the interviews we can identify other potential job barriers that they did not themselves mention, including long-term unemployment of a year or longer.

Some of these differences may be attributable to the fact that homeless male veterans were nine years older than other homeless men, on average.

HOMELESS MALE VETERANS COMPARED TO OTHER HOMELESS MEN

	Male veterans N=595	Other homeless men N=1,895
Average (mean) age	48	39
Age 34 or younger	8%	31%
High school education or more	92%	71%
At least some college education	41%	23%
Ever institutionalized as a child	27%	39%
Ever considered suicide	41%	31%
Ever attempted suicide	23%	17%
Serious mental illness	60%	45%
Alcohol abuse disorder	37%	25%
Drug abuse disorder	26%	22%
Dual diagnosis (mental health and substance abuse disorder)	31%	20%
Chronic health condition	52%	41%
Service-related health problem (% of combat vets)	40% (54%)	(n.a.)
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (% of combat vets)	27% (46%)	13% (n.a.)
Major depression	42%	31%
Cites credit problems as a current housing barrier	29%	22%
Cites bad rental history as a current housing barrier	14%	9%
Cites mental health as a current housing barrier	10%	6%
Ever incarcerated	64%	63%
Ever homeless before	71%	72%
Homeless a year or longer now	56%	51%
Employed	27%	27%
Working full-time (35+ hr/wk)	15%	13%
Cites physical health as job barrier*	34%	27%
Cites transportation as job barrier*	30%	34%
Cites mental health as job barrier*	30%	21%
Cites lack of housing as job barrier*	23%	27%
Cites age as a job barrier*	15%	7%
Cites criminal history as job barrier*	13%	21%
Mental illness as <i>potential</i> job barrier*	65%	51%
Long-term unemployment as <i>potential</i> job barrier*	62%	55%
Alcohol or drug problem as <i>potential</i> job barrier*	40%	35%

* Indicates numbers shown as percent of the unemployed.

General descriptive profile

Background characteristics

Interviews conducted on October 26, 2006, as part of the statewide survey of people without permanent shelter in Minnesota, were weighted to represent the known population count of adults residing in emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities. The known number of veterans was 476 veterans (455 men and 21 women) in Minnesota's temporary housing programs. An additional 148 veterans (140 men and 8 women) were interviewed in non-shelter locations. These homeless veterans were accompanied by 49 children.

Men made up 95 percent of the adult homeless veteran population. The average age for men was 47.5 years and for women, 39.3 years.

More than two-fifths (42%) of homeless veterans in Minnesota were people of color. Survey results indicate that 55 percent of homeless veterans were Caucasian, 28 percent were African American, 8 percent were American Indian, 5 percent were of mixed racial background, 1 percent were Asian, and less than 1 percent were Native African. Four percent of homeless veterans said they were of Hispanic origin.

Almost three-quarters (70%) of homeless veterans had lived in Minnesota for more than five years. By comparison, about 90 percent of the general population has lived in Minnesota for five years or more. Almost three-fifths (57%) if homeless veterans grew up in another state or country, compared to about 31 percent of the general Minnesota population.⁴

Almost two-fifths (37%) of surveyed homeless veterans had never been married. More than two-fifths (42%) were divorced, 11 percent were separated, 7 percent were currently married, and 4 percent were widowed.

Ninety-two percent of homeless veterans had graduated from high school or completed a GED, and 42 percent had some type of post-secondary education. For comparison, approximately 91 percent of adults in the general population have completed high school.⁵

Veteran status

As of Thursday, October 26, 2006, approximately 413 homeless adults in the Twin Cities metro area and 212 homeless adults in greater Minnesota had served in the U.S. military. This represented approximately 13 percent of the total homeless population (24% of homeless men.)

⁴ 2006 American Community Survey. Minnesota Selected Social Characteristics in United States. [Statistics from Data file] Retrieved October 10, 2007 from <http://www.factfinder.census.gov/servlet>

⁵ 2006 American Community Survey. Minnesota Selected Social Characteristics in United States. [Statistics from Data file] Retrieved October 10, 2007 from <http://www.factfinder.census.gov/servlet>

Nearly half (48%) of the U.S. military veterans had served in the Army, 18 percent had served in the Navy, 17 percent in the Marines, 7 percent in the Air Force, 7 percent in the National Guard, 3 percent in the Reserves, and less than 1 percent in the Coast Guard. Nearly one-third (32%) of the military veterans began their service between August 1964 and May 1975. Five percent began their service before August 1964, 30 percent began their service between June 1975 and September 1980, and 33 percent began their service after September 1980. Sixty-four percent of the homeless veterans reported that the length of their military service was over two years, and close to another quarter (21%) served between a half year and two years.

Nearly one-third (31%) of homeless veterans reported serving in a combat zone. Nineteen percent of the homeless military veterans served in a combat zone in Vietnam, 6 percent in the first Gulf War, and 3 percent in the current Iraq War or Afghanistan. Nearly three-quarters (74%) received an honorable discharge. Two-fifths (40%) of homeless veterans reported service-related health problems, primarily mental health problems.

Nearly half (48%) of military veterans reported they had contact with a County Veterans Service Officer during the previous 12 months. One-third (33%) of the military veterans had used veterans' benefits in the previous 12 months. Of those who had used veterans' benefits, the most frequent services used were Veterans Administration Medical services (31%) and service-related compensation (11%).

Eighty-two homeless individuals (13 men and 69 women) were the spouses or widows/widowers of military veterans. Of those, 61 individuals were in the Twin Cities metro area and 21 individuals were in greater Minnesota. Six percent of those homeless individuals (3% in the metro area and 14% in greater Minnesota) reported they had contact with a County Veterans Service Officer in the previous 12 months. At the time of the survey, two of those individuals were currently receiving Veterans Administration Medical services and one was receiving Service Connected Compensation. Data tables based on responses from spouses, widows, or widowers can be found in the appendix of this report.

Public assistance and service use

The services most commonly used by homeless veterans in the month preceding the survey were hot meal programs (47%), free clothing shelves (40%), Food Stamps (35%), drop-in centers (32%), transportation assistance (27%), free medical clinic (23%), and food shelves (22%).

One-fifth (20%) of homeless veterans reported having lost public benefits during the 12 months preceding the study. Of those who lost benefits, the benefits most frequently lost were Food Stamps (60%), medical benefits (49%), and General Assistance (10%).

Seven percent of homeless veterans (5% of men and 31% of women) received MFIP in the previous 12 months. One-third (34%) of those receiving MFIP reported that they had been sanctioned, and just over one-fifth (21%) exited MFIP in the previous 12 months.

Nine percent of homeless veterans reported that they were receiving Supplemental Security Insurance (SSI), and 13 percent reported that they had submitted an application for SSI that was still pending.

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of homeless veterans had medical coverage of some kind. In the previous six months, more than one-third of homeless veterans (36%) reported having used an emergency room.

More than one-quarter (29%) of homeless veterans reported needing help applying or reapplying for services, particularly for medical benefits (37% of those who said they needed help with applications), Food Stamps (33%), and housing assistance (25%).

Employment

More than one-quarter (28%) of homeless veterans were employed, and 15 percent had full-time jobs. Nearly three-fifths (57%) of employed homeless veterans reported that their job had lasted at least three months. Two-thirds (67%) of the jobs paid less than \$10 per hour.

Just over one-quarter (26%) of unemployed homeless veterans reported that it had been less than six months since they had last held a steady job. Sixteen percent of veterans had last had a job between six months and one year prior, 10 percent had a job one to two years prior, 10 percent had last been employed two to three years prior, 7 percent had last been employed three to four years prior, and 30 percent reported that their last job had been more than four years prior. One percent had never held a job.

Nearly two-fifths (39%) of unemployed homeless veterans were looking for work. The most frequently mentioned barriers to employment included: physical health (35%), transportation (33%), mental health problems (32%), and housing (25%).

Income

Homeless veterans surveyed reported their main source of income for the month of October had been from: steady employment (25%), General Assistance (19%), day labor (15%), and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) (13%).

When asked about their total income for the month of October, 10 percent reported some income but less than \$100, 21 percent reported incomes of \$101-\$300, 8 percent reported incomes of \$301-\$500, 21 percent reported incomes of \$501-\$800, and 25 percent reported incomes over \$800. Sixteen percent of respondents reported no incomes in the month of October.

Homeless male veterans had lower median incomes than did homeless female veterans (\$384 vs. \$700). The median income for homeless male veterans in greater Minnesota was \$370 vs. \$650 for homeless female veterans. The median income for homeless male veterans in the Metro area was \$400 vs. \$800 for homeless female veterans.

Shelter use

This was the first time being homeless for close to one-third (30%) of homeless veterans interviewed. More than one-quarter (26%) reported they had been homeless two or three times in their lives, less than one-quarter (23%) had been homeless four to seven times (23%), and less than one-quarter (22%) had been homeless eight or more times.

Nearly three-fifths (58%) of homeless veterans met the Minnesota definition of long-term homeless (they had been homeless for a year or longer, or four or more times in the previous four years). Almost half (47%) of homeless veterans met the federal definition of chronic homelessness, which, in addition to the long-term criteria in the Minnesota definition, also includes single status and at least one serious or chronic disability.

Just over three-quarters (76%) of homeless veterans reported having lived in an emergency shelter (3% as a child and 67% in the previous two years). Two percent of homeless veterans reported having lived in a battered women's shelter (less than 1% as a child and 2% in the previous two years). Nearly half (48%) of homeless veterans reported having lived in a transitional housing program (1% as a child and 39% in the previous two years). Nine percent of homeless veterans reported having ever lived in permanent supportive housing (1% as a child and 4% in the previous two years.) Overall, 92 percent of all homeless veterans surveyed had lived in a temporary or supportive shelter facility (emergency shelter, battered women's shelter, transitional housing, or permanent housing with supportive services), of whom 86 percent had done so in the previous two years.

Nearly half (48%) of the homeless veterans had been in their current temporary housing arrangements for less than one month. Nearly two-fifths (39%) had been in their current temporary arrangement for more than one month, but less than one year. Thirteen percent had been in their current temporary arrangement for more than one year.

Sixteen percent of homeless veterans had been unable to obtain shelter at least once in the previous three months. The last time that happened, they reported having slept outdoors (43%); with family or a friend (14%); in cars, abandoned buildings, or other enclosed spaces (12%); at another shelter (11%); in a church (5%); in a motel or other shelter with a voucher (3%); or in a safe home(1%), motel (no voucher) (1%), hospital (1%), or detox (1%).

Nearly two-fifths (37%) of homeless veterans reported having stayed outdoors at least one night during the month of October. Twelve percent had spent one to four nights

outdoors, and one-quarter (25%) had spent five or more nights outdoors. The average number of nights spent outdoors was 4.8.

Residential placements

With respect to prior residential placements, almost three-quarters (71%) of homeless veterans surveyed had lived in at least one type of residential facility or program. If correctional facilities are included, the percentage would increase to 85 percent. Women were slightly more likely than men to have lived in some type of residential setting (74% vs. 71%). Homeless veterans most often had lived in: correctional facilities (63%), drug or alcohol treatment facilities (55%), halfway houses (33%), mental health facilities (26%), foster care (14%), or group homes (15%). Homeless men and women differed in the type of placements. Men were more likely than women to have been in a correctional facility (64% vs. 28%) or in a drug or alcohol treatment facility (56% vs. 38%). Women were more likely than men to have been in a mental health facility (43% vs. 25%), in a group home (25% vs. 15%), or in foster care (19% vs. 14%).

Small proportions of homeless veterans surveyed had lived in an adoptive home (6%), a residence for persons with physical disabilities (5%), an orphanage (3%), or an Indian School (3%). The following table shows the residential service history of homeless veterans.

Have you ever lived in any of the following types of facilities or programs?

	Percentage responding "yes"		
	Men	Women	Total
Foster care	13.9%	18.5%	14.1%
Drug or alcohol treatment	55.9%	38.3%	55.1%
Residence for persons with physical disabilities	4.4%	6.8%	4.5%
Halfway house	33.2%	32.4%	33.2%
Mental health facility	25.3%	43.0%	26.1%
Orphanage	2.9%	-	2.8%
Group home	14.5%	25.2%	15.0%
Indian school	2.7%	3.4%	2.7%
Adoptive home	6.2%	8.3%	6.3%
Any of the above placements	70.8%	73.9%	70.9%
Juvenile detention or facility	14.8%	-	14.1%
County jail or workhouse	61.6%	27.5%	60.0%
State or federal prison	26.9%	3.7%	25.8%
Any correction facility or detention center	64.4%	27.5%	62.6%
Any of the above, including correction facility or detention center	85.6%	77.6%	85.3%

Migration to Minnesota

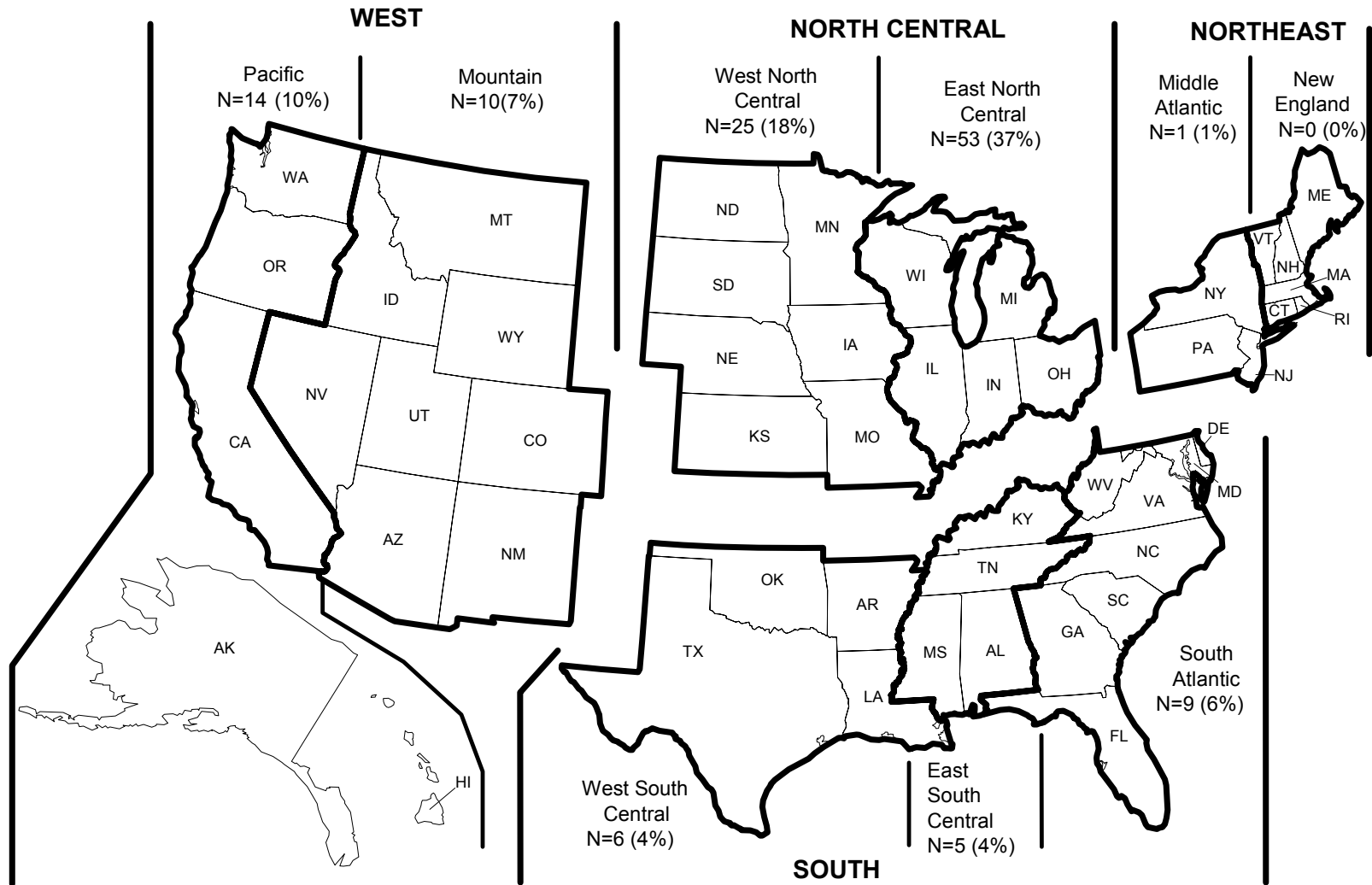
Homeless male and female veterans were similar in the length of time they had lived in Minnesota. Eighteen percent of homeless veterans had been in Minnesota for less than one year, 5 percent for one to two years, and 77 percent for longer than two years. More than two-fifths (43%) of recent residents (two years or less) had previously lived in Minnesota.

Of those who had lived in Minnesota two years or less (N=142), the majority came from either East North Central states (37%) or West North Central States (18%). Ten percent came from Pacific states, 7 percent from Mountain states, 6 percent from South Atlantic states, 4 percent from West South Central states, 4 percent from East South Central States, and 1 percent from Middle Atlantic States. Three percent of recent residents came from countries outside of the United States. (See maps on the next three pages.) Data were missing for 11 percent of homeless veterans.

The main reasons recent residents gave for having moved to Minnesota included: to improve their quality of life or opportunities (70%); for interpersonal reasons (e.g., to be with family or friends) (41%); and for personal reasons (e.g., needed a new start) (22%).

All homeless veterans living in Minnesota two years or less
 "Where did you live before coming to Minnesota?" N=142

US Census Bureau geographic regions

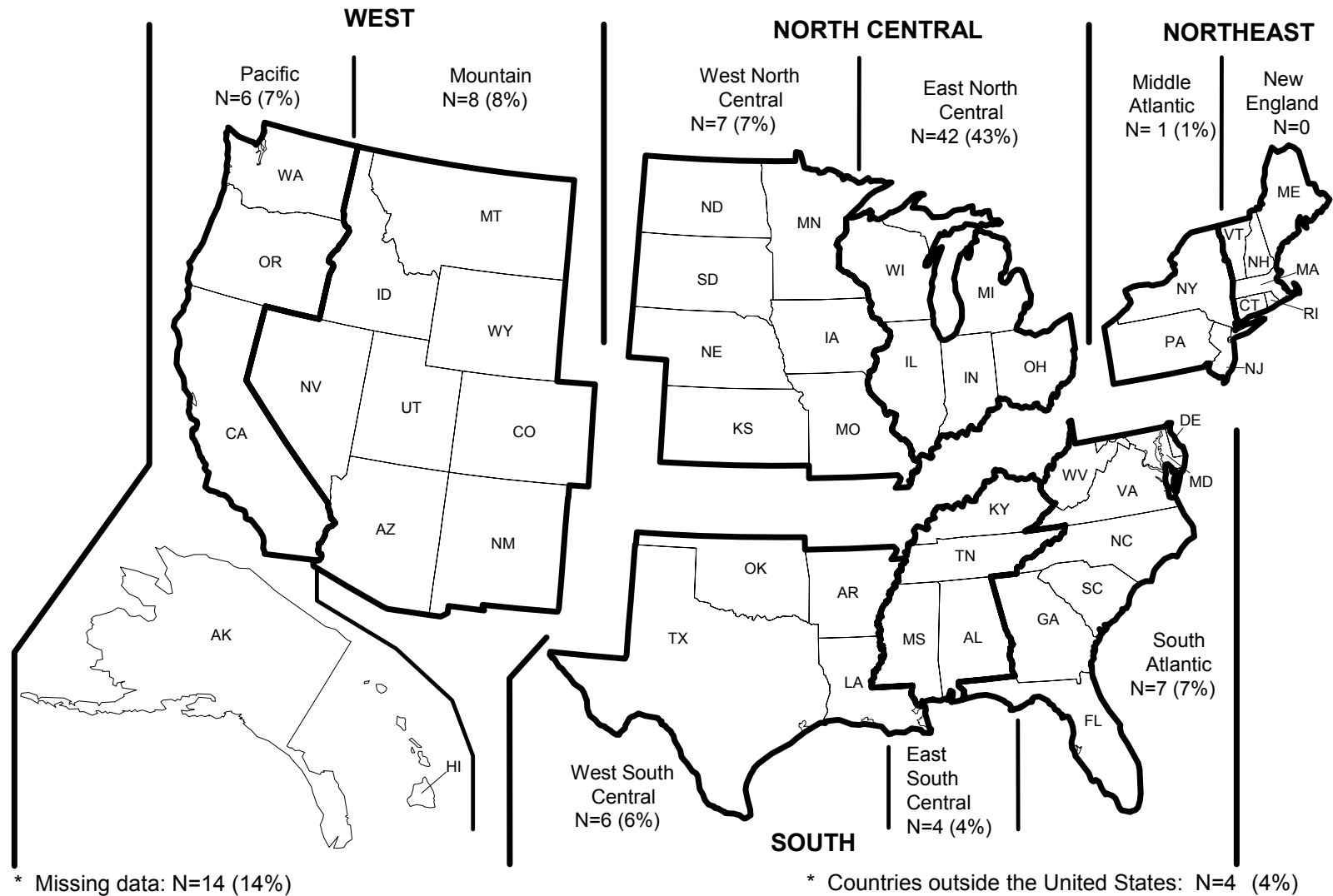


* Missing data: N=15 (11%)

* Countries outside the United States: N=4 (3%)

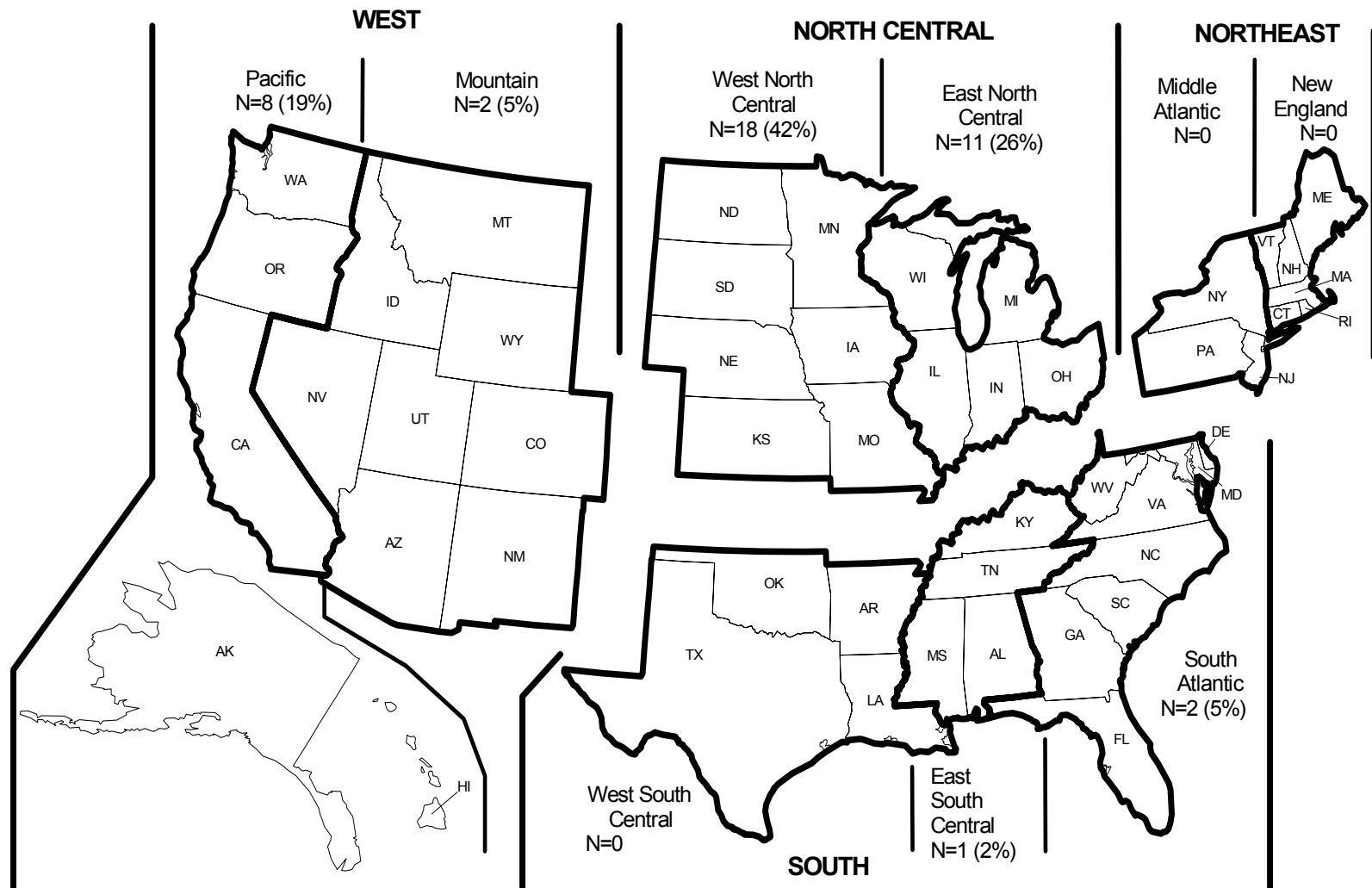
Twin Cities area homeless veterans living in Minnesota two years or less
 "Where did you live before coming to Minnesota?" N=98

US Census Bureau geographic regions



Greater Minnesota homeless veterans living in the state two years or less
 "Where did you live before coming to Minnesota?" N=44

US Census Bureau geographic regions



* Missing data: N=1 (2%)

* Countries outside the United States: N=0

Housing

More than half (55%) of homeless veterans surveyed reported having been without permanent housing for more than a year. Nearly one-fifth (19%) of homeless veterans were on a waiting list for Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) or other housing that offers some type of financial assistance, and 15 percent of those veterans had been waiting for over a year. Eleven percent of homeless veterans were unable to get on a waiting list because the list was closed. Five percent of homeless veterans said they had received a housing voucher that they lost or could not use.

More than four-fifths (84%) of the homeless veterans stated that they needed only an efficiency or one-bedroom apartment. More than one-quarter (26%) of homeless veterans indicated they were not able to pay any amount for rent. Eleven percent indicated they could pay \$1-\$100 per month for rent, 11 percent indicated \$101-\$200, 13 percent indicated \$201-\$300, 13 percent indicated \$301-\$400, 11 percent indicated \$401-\$500, and 16 percent indicated over \$500 per month.

Almost three-quarters (70%) of homeless veterans indicated that their last regular or permanent housing had been in Minnesota, and 30 percent reported that their last regular or permanent housing had been in another state or country.

Respondents were asked about the reasons that they had left their last housing. The main reasons homeless veterans cited included: loss of a job or reduction in work hours (40%), inability to afford the rent (41%), eviction (31%), or their own drinking or drug problem (30%). One-third (34%) of women cited domestic violence as a reason. Men were more likely than women to cite the loss of a job (40% vs. 26%) or violence in the neighborhood (9% vs. 3%). Women were more likely to cite inability to afford rent (47% vs. 36%), another household member's drinking or drug problem (23% vs. 11%), or substandard or unsafe housing (16% vs. 9%).

The main reasons homeless veterans said they could not get housing, at that time, included: lack of job or income (39%), no housing they could afford (25%), credit problems (18%), or a criminal background (13%).

Children of homeless veterans

Although more than three-fifths (61%) of homeless female veterans and one-third (33%) of homeless male veterans reported that they *did have* children under the age of 18, the proportion caring for their children while homeless was lower, especially among the men. Forty-four percent of homeless female veterans and 3 percent of male veterans were accompanied by children on the night of the survey. Those 26 parents who were accompanied by their children represented only 6 percent of all homeless veterans surveyed. The average number of children with those parents was 1.9, with an average age of 7.8 years.

Of homeless veterans who had children with them, 24 percent reported being unable to obtain needed child care in the previous 12 months, 6 percent reported being unable to obtain needed physical health care for at least one of their children, and 13 percent were unable to obtain needed dental care for at least one of their children. Seven percent of the homeless veterans who had children with them reported that their children had to skip meals in the previous month. Fifteen percent of homeless veterans who had children with them reported their children had emotional problems and 2 percent reported that their children had physical health problems that interfere with their daily life.

All 26 parents had school-age children with them. Twenty-seven percent of those parents reported they had a least one child with learning or school problems, 19 percent reported that at least one of their children repeated a grade in school, and 4 percent had children who had trouble going to school because of housing problems.

Chemical dependency

Over half (55%) of homeless male veterans and two-fifths (40%) of homeless female veterans reported that they consider themselves to be alcoholic or chemically dependent. Just over one-fifth (21%) of men, and 4 percent of women, reported a need to see a health professional about alcohol or drug problems. Nearly half (49%) of homeless male veterans and nearly one-third (32%) of homeless female veterans had been admitted to a detox center at least once. More than half (55%) of homeless male veterans and nearly two-fifths (38%) of homeless female veterans reported that, at some time in their lives, they had lived in an alcohol or drug treatment facility. Twenty-nine percent of homeless male veterans and just over one-quarter (26%) of homeless female veterans had been in residential drug treatment programs in the previous two years. More than half (53%) of homeless male veterans and 29 percent of homeless female veterans had received outpatient drug or alcohol treatment some time in their lives. Just over one-quarter (26%) of homeless male veterans and 17 percent of homeless female veterans had received outpatient drug or alcohol treatment in the previous two years.

Physical health

Nearly half (48%) of homeless veterans had a chronic medical condition (high blood pressure, asthma, other chronic lung or respiratory problems, diabetes, hepatitis, HIV/AIDS, and/or tuberculosis). Of those, 65 percent reported receiving care for each reported problem in the previous 12 months.

Nearly three-fifths (59%) of homeless veterans said they needed to see a dentist about tooth or gum problems, and nearly half (49%) said they needed to see a doctor for a physical health problem. Nearly one-fifth (19%) of homeless veterans reported they were not taking prescribed medication. Over one-third (36%) of homeless veterans had used emergency room services during the previous six months.

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of homeless veterans reported that they had medical coverage in October. Nearly one-third (32%) of homeless veterans reported they had problems getting needed medical care, primarily because of a lack of money or insurance.

Mental health

A recent analysis of post-deployment health assessments conducted with veterans returning from Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom shows a significantly higher incidence of mental health problems for these soldiers than among those returning from all other locations.⁶ Veterans who had witnesses persons being wounded or killed or engaging in direct combat were significantly more likely than others to report symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder.

In the Wilder study, mental illness was a significant problem for three-fifths (60%) of the homeless veterans in the survey. Fifty-five percent of homeless veterans had been told by a doctor or nurse (within the previous two years) that they had schizophrenia, manic-depression, some other type of delusional disorder, major depression, anti-social personality disorder, or post-traumatic stress disorder. In the previous two years, 38 percent of homeless veterans surveyed had received outpatient mental health services, and 15 percent had lived in a facility for persons with mental health problems. Nearly two-fifths of homeless veterans (38%) said they needed to see a doctor about a mental or emotional health problem.

Mental health characteristics of homeless adults

	Percentage with characteristics		
	Men (N=595)	Women (N=29)	Total (N=624)
Schizophrenia	8.1%	6.5%	8.0%
Paranoid or delusional disorder, other than schizophrenia	8.3%	6.5%	8.3%
Manic episodes or manic depression, also called bipolar disorder	18.9%	23.6%	19.2%
Major depression	41.7%	45.9%	41.9%
Anti-social personality, obsessive-compulsive personality, or another severe emotional disorder	17.4%	6.5%	16.9%
Post-traumatic stress disorder	27.2%	34.3%	27.5%
Any of the above	55.2%	58.8%	55.4%
Alcohol abuse disorder	36.7%	31.7%	36.5%
Drug abuse disorder	25.7%	10.1%	24.9%
Dual diagnosis (chemical dependency and mental illness)	31.5%	21.1%	31.0%

⁶ Hoge, Charles, Auchterlonie, Jennifer, Milliken, Charles. 2006. Mental Health Problems, Use of mental Health Services, and Attrition from Military Service after Returning from Deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan. *JAMA*. 295-(9), page 1023-1032. retrieved from www.jama.com on October 17, 2007

Effect of combat experience

A recent article in the Journal of the American Medical Association (cited on previous page) reported the prevalence of reported mental health problems was 19.1 percent among service members returning from Iraq, compared with 11.3 percent from those returning Afghanistan, and 8.5 percent after returning from other places ($p < .001$). Mental health problems reported on the post deployment assessment were significantly associated with combat experiences, mental health care referral and utilization, and attrition from military service. Thirty-five percent of Iraq veterans reported accessing mental health services in the year after returning home; 12 percent per year were diagnosed with a mental health problem.

Combat duty in Iraq was associated with high utilization of mental health services and attrition from military service after deployment. The high rate of using mental health services among Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans after deployment highlights the challenges in ensuring that there are adequate resources to meet the mental health needs of returning veterans.

Serious or chronic disability

As described previously, three-fifths (60%) of homeless veterans had serious mental health problems (indicated by recent diagnosis or treatment), 42 percent had a diagnosed alcohol or drug abuse disorder, and nearly half (48%) had a chronic physical health condition.

According to many homeless veterans interviewed, physical, mental, or other health conditions limited the amount or kind of work they could do (52%), limited their daily activities (19%), or interfered with memory or daily decision-making (33%).

Pooling all of the above, over four-fifths (85%) of homeless veterans reported having at least one serious or chronic disability (mental illness, substance abuse disorder, chronic medical condition, cognitive impairment, or other condition that limits work or activities of daily living).

Another concern is the fact that traumatic brain injury, which is reported by more than one in five veterans, is sometimes difficult to detect and the symptoms may mimic those of post-traumatic stress disorder. While survivors may appear normal, they often have diminished memory, act in irrational ways, display episodes of rage, have difficulty concentrating, and generally have diminished capacity to maintain family relationships. All of these elements, left untreated, can increase the likelihood of homelessness for new veterans.

One-third (33%) of homeless veterans in the Wilder study had a history that suggests likely traumatic brain injury. That is, they received a serious head injury, followed by the

development of problems with headaches, concentration or memory, understanding, excessive worry, sleeping, or getting along with people. These risk factors, more concentrated among veterans, especially those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, are the same set of risk factors that increase the likelihood of homelessness among those in the general adult population.

Abuse and victimization

A history of childhood mistreatment was not uncommon for respondents in the survey. More than one-third (35%) of homeless male veterans and 44 percent of homeless female veterans indicated that they were physically mistreated as children, 13 percent of men and 41 percent of women reported sexual mistreatment as children, and 14 percent of men and 30 percent of women indicated that, as children, their parents neglected to provide food, shelter, or medical care, or left them unsupervised for long periods of time. Overall, more than one-third (36%) of men and more than half (56%) of women veterans were either physically or sexually mistreated as children. If individuals reporting neglect as children were added, 39 percent of men and 59 percent of women reported mistreatment as children.

Fourteen percent of homeless veterans interviewed (14% of men and 13% of women) reported being sexual with someone only for the purpose of getting shelter, clothing, food, and other things. More than one-quarter (26%) of men and 38 percent of women reported staying in an abusive situation in the previous two years, because they did not have other housing options. Fourteen percent of men and almost one-third (30%) of women reported being in a personal relationship in the previous year with someone who hit them, slapped them, pushed them around, or threatened to do so. One-third (34%) of the women veterans reported they were homeless, at least in part, because they were fleeing abuse.

The overall experience of homelessness can be a risky one, especially for women. Fourteen percent (14% of men and 19% of women) of homeless veterans reported having been physically or sexually attacked or beaten since becoming homeless. Eight percent of homeless veterans (7% of men and 20% of women) reported having sought health care because of an injury or illness caused by violence.

Background and notes on the 2006 tables

These tables provide detailed survey results for all military veterans interviewed as part of the 2006 Minnesota statewide survey of people without permanent shelter. The data are provided to help planners and service providers develop summary information about the characteristics of homeless veterans, their experiences and needs, and the barriers that prevent them from obtaining housing.

The statewide data tables are based on interviews with 319 male veterans and 16 female veterans in emergency shelters, battered women's shelters, and transitional housing programs, plus another 140 interviews with male veterans and 8 interviews with female veterans in non-shelter locations.

In the data tables, survey results have been weighted. As part of this overall weighting, the 337 veterans interviewed in shelter locations were weighted to represent an estimated 476 homeless veterans in temporary housing programs. Therefore, the total estimate, including the 148 interviews in informal or non-shelter settings, is 624.

Notes for interpreting the data tables

The tables contain weighted estimates. This means that the survey results have been statistically adjusted to reflect the actual populations residing in emergency shelters, battered women's shelters, and transitional housing programs on the day of the survey. (We interviewed a sample, not every person in each shelter.)

For non-shelter locations, the data are not weighted. We do not adjust the numbers to reflect the actual population, because we do not know the actual numbers of men, women, and children who were on the streets or in non-shelter locations on the day of the survey.

You should use the percentages, not the frequencies, when interpreting these tables. Sample weighting, such as we have performed with these data, uses calculations that can result in "fractional" persons. When we use computer rounding to adjust for this, the numbers do not always add up exactly to the total for each category.

The total number of responses is different for each question, based on the number of valid responses to that question. Missing data (cases when a respondent did not answer a question) are not reported or included in the percentages.

The percentages apply only to the respondents who were qualified to answer that question. Some tables report data that were collected only from those who answered a previous question in a certain way. For example, many questions about children are asked only of those adults who have children with them, so the percentages apply only to that group.

Weighting techniques

The 2006 survey data were weighted to reflect the actual number of homeless persons as indicated by specific site counts of people in shelters throughout the state on Thursday, October 26, 2006. Only sites from which there were completed interviews were used in the weighting. The actual number of homeless persons in informal and non-sheltered locations cannot be accurately estimated, so these cases were given a weight of 1.0.

The weightings were calculated by a sample-balancing program available in the Princeton Statistical Program (P-Stat). This technique uses an iterative approximation to the least square adjustment of W.E. Deming (*Statistical Adjustment of Data*, New York: Wiley, 1943). This weighting procedure uses marginals (totals of control variables) to compute individual case weights. In order to obtain the highest possible accuracy, 5 sets of marginals were used.

These were:

- Individual sites.
- Gender (male, female).
- Region (northwest, northeast, central, west central, southwest, southeast, Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Scott/Carver, Washington, Ramsey, St. Louis County).
- Shelter type (emergency, transitional, battered women's shelter).
- Shelter type within region by gender (all combinations of items 2, 3, and 4 above).

Weightings were used to estimate the characteristics of all homeless persons in Minnesota's temporary housing programs on the night of the survey, based on the sample of 2,444 interviews with adults. Statistical weightings could not be computed if interviews were not completed in a specific weighting category (e.g., region, shelter type, and gender). The actual number of adults in temporary housing programs on the night of the survey was 3,593. When this is combined with the results of the 1,138 interviews completed with adults in non-shelter locations, the total sample for which estimates are available is 4,731.

As part of this overall weighting, the 337 veterans interviewed in shelter locations were weighted to represent an estimated total of 476 homeless veterans in temporary housing programs. We do not know the exact number of homeless veterans in Minnesota on the night of the survey. The best estimate available is the weighted total of interviews with homeless adults who identify themselves as veterans. This number is 624, which includes 476 in overnight shelters and transitional housing programs and 148 in unsheltered locations.



Appendix

Spouse, widow, or widower of military veteran data tables

Interview sites

Spouse, widow, or widower of military veteran data tables

The following tables are based on interviews conducted on October 26, 2006 as a part of the Minnesota statewide survey of persons without a permanent shelter. Interviews were conducted with 61 individuals in the Metro area and the 21 in greater Minnesota who identified themselves as a spouse, widow or widower of a military veteran.

A1. If served in the military, or are a spouse, widow or widower of a military veteran, have you had contact with a County Veterans' Services Officer during the past 12 months?

	Emergency shelter				Battered women's shelter		Transitional housing				Informal shelter				Unsheltered			
	Male		Female		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	-	-	1	7.1%	1	10.0%	-	-	1	4.0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	20.0%
No	5	100.0%	19	92.9%	9	90.0%	4	100.0%	26	96.0%	2	100.0%	5	100.0%	2	100.0%	4	80.0%
Total	5	100.0%	20	100.0	10	100.0%	4	100.0%	27	100.0%	2	100.0%	5	100.0%	2	100.0%	5	100.0%

	Greater Minnesota						Metro						Statewide					
	Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	-	-	3	16.8%	3	14.4%	-	-	1	3.0%	1	2.4%	-	-	5	6.7%	5	5.6%
No	3	100.0%	15	85.6%	18	85.6%	10	100.0%	48	97.0%	58	97.6%	13	100.0%	63	93.3%	76	94.4%
Total	3	100.0%	18	100.0%	21	100.0%	10	100.0%	49	100.0%	59	100.0%	13	100.0%	67	100.0%	81	100.0%

A2. If served in the military, or are a spouse, widow or widower of a military veteran, are you currently receiving any of the following benefits?

	Emergency shelter				Battered women's shelter		Transitional housing				Informal shelter				Unsheltered			
	Male (N=4)		Female (N=19)		Female (N=8)		Male (N=4)		Female (N=26)		Male (N=2)		Female (N=4)		Male (N=2)		Female (N=5)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No veterans' benefits	4	100.0%	18	92.5%	8	100.0%	4	100.0%	26	100.0%	2	100.0%	4	100.0%	2	100.0%	4	80.0%
Veterans Administration Medical services (VAMC)	-	-	1	7.5%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	20.0%
Service connected compensation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	20.0%
Non-service Connected (NSC) Veteran's pension	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other federal veterans' benefits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
State Veterans Home benefits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other state veterans' benefits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

A2. If served in the military, or are a spouse, widow or widower of a military veteran, are you currently receiving any of the following benefits?
(continued)

Totals

	Greater Minnesota						Metro						Statewide					
	Male (N=3)		Female (N=14)		Total (N=17)		Male (N=9)		Female (N=48)		Total (N=57)		Male (N=12)		Female (N=62)		Total (N=74)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No veterans' benefits	3	100.0%	13	92.8%	16	94.1%	9	100.0%	46	97.0%	56	97.5%	12	100.0%	59	96.0%	72	96.7%
Veterans Administration Medical services (VAMC)	-	-	1	7.2%	1	5.9%	-	-	1	3.0%	1	2.5%	-	-	2	4.0%	2	3.3%
Service connected compensation	-	-	1	7.2%	1	5.9%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1.6%	1	1.3%
Non-service Connected (NSC) Veteran's pension	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other federal veterans' benefits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
State Veterans Home benefits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other state veterans' benefits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

A3. If served in the military, or are a spouse, widow or widower of a military veteran, have you used or received any veterans' benefits in the last 12 months?

	Emergency shelter				Battered women's shelter		Transitional housing				Informal shelter				Unsheltered			
	Male		Female		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4.0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	20.0%
No	5	100.0%	20	100.0%	10	100.0	4	100.0%	26	96.0%	2	100.0%	5	100.0%	2	100.0%	4	80.0%
Total	5	100.0%	20	100.0	10	100.0%	4	100.0%	27	100.0%	2	100.0%	5	100.0%	2	100.0%	5	100.0%

	Greater Minnesota						Metro						Statewide					
	Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	-	-	2	11.4%	2	9.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3.0%	2	2.5%
No	3	100.0%	18	88.6	21	90.2	10	100.0%	50	100.0%	61	100.0%	13	100.0%	67	97.0%	80	97.5%
Total	3	100.0%	20	100.0%	23	100.0%	10	100.0%	50	100.0%	61	100.0%	13	100.0%	69	100.0%	81	100.0%

A4. For those who have received veterans' benefits in the last 12 months, have you used or received state or federal veterans' benefits in October?

	Emergency shelter				Battered women's shelter		Transitional housing				Informal shelter				Unsheltered			
	Male		Female		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	-	-	1	7.1%	-	-	-	-	1	4.0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
No	5	100.0%	19	92.9%	10	100.0%	4	100.0%	26	96.0%	2	100.0%	5	100.0%	2	100.0%	5	100.0%
Total	5	100.0%	20	100.0	10	100.0%	4	100.0%	27	100.0%	2	100.0%	5	100.0%	2	100.0%	5	100.0%

	Greater Minnesota						Metro						Statewide					
	Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	-	-	1	47.9%	1	47.9%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	47.9%	1	47.9%
No	-	-	1	52.1%	1	52.1%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	52.1%	1	52.1%
Total	-	-	2	100.0%	2	100.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	100.0%	2	100.0%

Interview sites

Metro

Agency	Actual number of interviews			Weighted number of interviews		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Overnight shelter						
Catholic Charities – Dorothy Day Evening Shelter	29	-	29	39	-	39
Catholic Charities – Mary Hall	7	-	7	7	-	7
Catholic Charities – Pay for Stay	14	-	14	26	-	26
Catholic Charities Secure Waiting Space	19	-	19	24	-	24
Dakota County Motel vouchers	2	-	2	3	-	3
Doris and Stan hill Home	-	1	1	-	1	1
Ferry Street Shelter	1	-	1	2	-	2
Harbor Lights	26	-	26	32	-	32
Harbor Lights – Safe Bay	11	-	11	16	-	16
Lewis House	-	1	1	-	1	1
Our Savior's Housing	3	-	3	5	-	5
People Serving People	1	-	1	2	-	2
Simpson Housing Services – Men's Shelter	10	-	10	11	-	11
St. Stephens	9	-	9	11	-	11
Union Gospel Mission	22	-	22	28	-	28
Total Overnight shelter	154	2	156	207	2	209
Transitional housing						
A. H. Wilder ROOF Project	2	-	2	5	-	5
Ascension Place	-	1	1	-	1	1
Cabrini House	5	-	5	8	-	8
Catholic Charities – Exodus Hotel	6	1	7	8	1	9
Catholic Charities – Mary Hall Supportive Housing	6	-	6	12	-	12
Cochran	1	-	1	2	-	2
Dakota County Transitional Housing	-	1	1	-	2	2
Families in Transition	-	1	1	-	1	1
Harbor Lights Transitional Housing	4	-	4	14	-	14
Hart House	-	1	1	-	2	2
Hope Street Transitional Housing Program	1	-	1	1	-	1
House of Charity Transitional Housing	2	-	2	3	-	3
Kateri Residence	-	1	1	-	1	1
Mary's Place – Sharing and Caring Hands	1	-	1	3	-	3
Minnesota AIDS Project	2	1	3	3	1	4
Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans Transitional Housing	25	-	25	32	-	32

Metro (continued)

Agency	Actual number of interviews			Weighted number of interviews		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Transitional housing (continued)						
Minnesota Veterans Home Transitional Housing	13	-	13	14	-	14
Our Savior's Transitional Housing	4	-	4	7	-	7
R.S. Eden – Alliance Apartments	1	1	2	2	2	4
Sabathini Transitional Housing	-	1	1	-	1	1
Sacred Fire Lodge	1	-	1	1	-	1
Simpson Housing Services	1	-	1	2	-	2
Smith Lodge	2	-	2	5	-	5
St. Paul YWCA	-	1	1	-	1	1
The Dwelling Place	-	1	1	-	1	1
Total Transitional housing	77	11	88	122	12	136
Total sheltered	231	11	242	329	12	342
Informal arrangements						
Caring and Sharing Hands Drop-in Center	3	-	3	3	-	3
Scott-Carver Counties Outreach	1	-	1	1	-	1
Hennepin County Outreach	6	1	7	6	1	7
Listening house	3	-	3	3	-	3
Ramsey County Outreach	6	-	6	6	-	6
Non-sheltered						
Caring and Sharing Hands Drop-in Center	5	-	5	5	-	5
Dakota County non-sheltered	2	-	2	2	-	2
Washington County non-sheltered	1	-	1	1	-	1
Hennepin County non-sheltered	15	-	15	15	-	15
Listening House	6	-	6	6	-	6
Ramsey county non-sheltered	18	-	18	18	-	18
Total Informal or non-sheltered	66	1	67	66	1	67
Total – Metro	297	12	309	395	17	412

Greater Minnesota

Agency	Actual number of interviews			Weighted number of interviews		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Overnight shelter						
Care and Share – Crookston	5	-	5	8	0	8
Central Hillside United Ministry – Duluth	4	-	4	7	-	7
Central MN Receiving and Referral Center – St. Cloud	1	-	1	1	-	1
Chamomile Emergency Shelter	-	-	1	-	1	1
Churches United for the Homeless – Moorhead	8	-	8	14	-	14
Dorothy Day (Loaves and Fishes) – Duluth	2	-	2	3	-	3
Dorothy Day Hospitality House – Rochester	3	1	4	3	1	4
Dorothy Day House of Hospitality – Moorhead	2	-	2	3	-	3
Grace House	1	-	1	1	-	1
Place of Hope Living Center – St. Cloud	2	-	2	3	-	3
Salvation Army Emergency Shelter- St. Cloud	11	-	11	15	-	15
Welcome Inn	1	-	1	2	0	2
Total Overnight shelter	40	2	42	60	2	62
Transitional housing						
Churches United for the Homeless Transitional- Moorhead	1	-	1	1	-	1
The Dream Center of St. Cloud	3	-	3	4	-	4
Hospitality House	2	-	2	2	-	2
Homeless Program for Veterans Families with Disabilities	4	1	5	8	1	9
Northwest Community Action – Badger	1	-	1	1	-	1
Place of Hope Ministries Transitional Housing – St. Cloud	1	-	1	5	-	5
Salvation Army Transitional Housing – Duluth	-	1	1	-	1	1
St. Cloud Veterans Administration Medical Center – St. Cloud	27	1	28	28	1	29
Southwestern Minnesota Opportunity Council	1	-	1	2	-	2
Veterans Transitional Housing Program - Duluth	6	-	6	7	-	7
Welcome Home	1	-	1	4	-	4
Virginia Transitional Housing Program	1	-	1	4	-	4
Total Transitional housing	48	3	51	66	3	69
Total sheltered	88	5	93	126	5	131
Informal arrangements						
Blue Earth County – Outreach	1	-	1	1	-	1
Carlton County Human Services - Outreach				2	-	2
Freeborn County - Outreach	2	-	2	2	-	2
Grace House – Outreach				2	-	2
Heartland Community Action- Outreach				3	-	3
Inter-County Community Council – Outreach	-	1	1	-	1	1
Kootasca Itasca - Outreach				1	-	1
Lakes & Pines – Chisago Outreach				1	-	1
Lakes & Pines –Kanabec Outreach				-	1	1
Moorhead – Outreach				7	-	7

Greater Minnesota (continued)

Agency	Actual number of interviews			Weighted number of interviews		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Northern St. Louis County - Outreach				1	-	1
Olmsted County – Outreach	2	-	2	2	-	2
Southern St. Louis County – Outreach				6	3	9
Steele County – Outreach	1	-	1	1	-	1
Stearns County – Outreach	2	-	2	2	-	2
West Central Minnesota Community Action – Outreach				2	-	2
Total informal arrangements	33	5	38	33	5	38
Non-sheltered						
Bemidji – non-sheltered	1	-	1	1	-	1
Aitkin County – non-sheltered	1	-	1	1	-	1
Kootasca Itasca – non-sheltered	1	-	1	1	-	1
Grace House – non-sheltered	1	-	1	1	-	1
Southern St. Louis County	15	1	16	15	1	16
Northern St. Louis County	9	1	10	9	1	10
Moorhead – non-sheltered	4	-	4	4	-	4
Lakes & Pines – Mille Lacs County non-sheltered	1	-	1	1	-	1
Heartland Community Action – non-sheltered	3	-	3	3	-	3
Goodhue County – non-sheltered	1	-	1	1	-	1
Olmstead County – non-sheltered	2	-	2	2	-	2
Tri-Valley Opportunity Council – non-sheltered	1	-	1	1	-	1
Stearns County – non-sheltered	1	-	1	1	-	1
Total Non-sheltered	41	2	43	41	2	43
Total – Greater Minnesota	162	12	174	200	12	212