



VETS HELPING VETS SINCE 1974

# WE ARE SWORDS TO PLOWSHARES

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Presented by Tramecia Garner, Executive Director

SF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES COMMISSION MEETING  
NOVEMBER 2024



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# WHO WE ARE

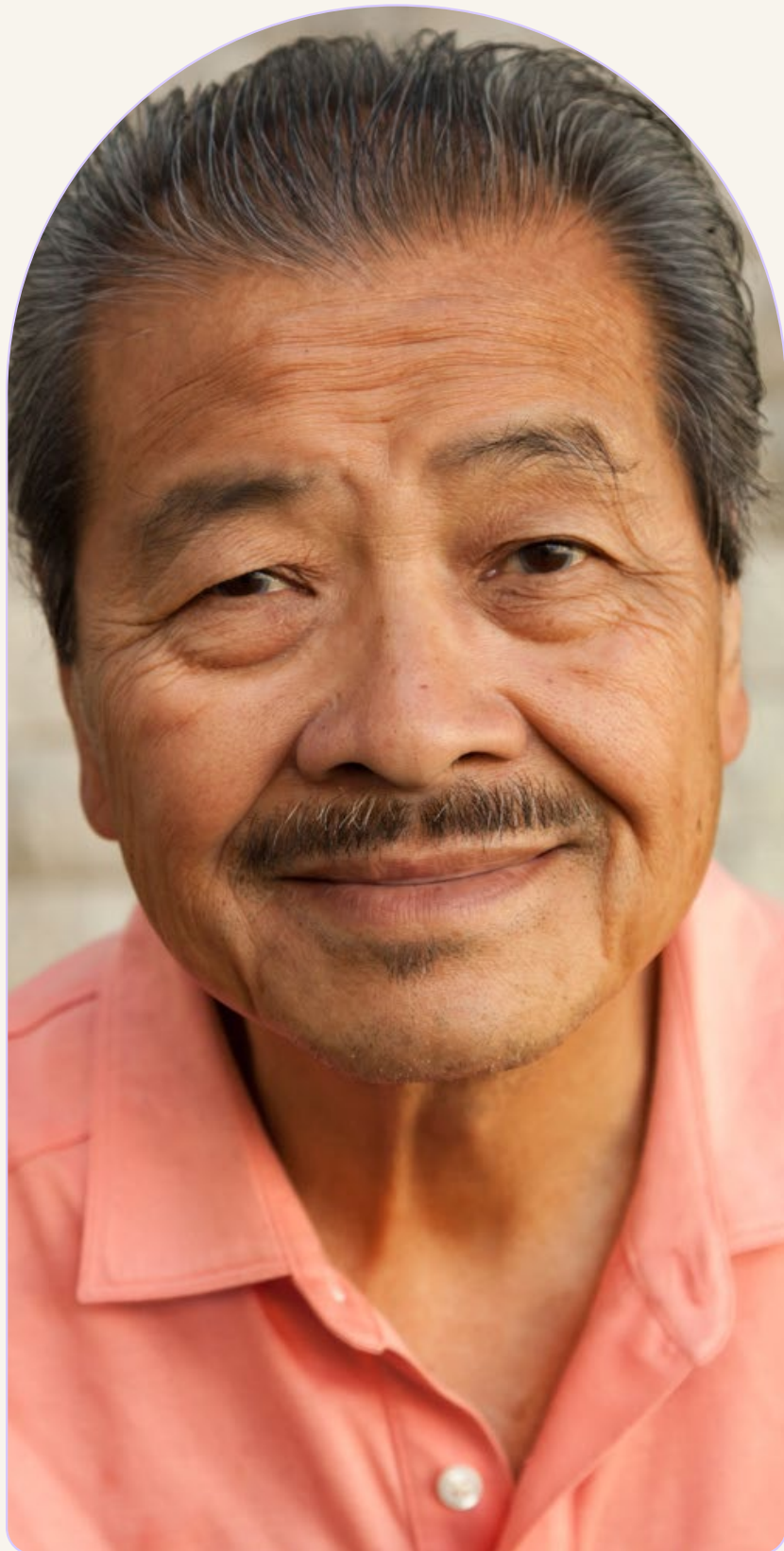
WAR CAUSES WOUNDS AND SUFFERING THAT  
BEYOND THE BATTLEFIELD.

SWORDS TO PLOWSHARES' MISSION IS TO SUPPORT VETERANS AS THEY NAVIGATE THE CHALLENGES OF POST-MILITARY LIFE, AND TO PREVENT AND END VETERAN HOMELESSNESS THROUGH WRAP-AROUND CARE AND INFORMED ADVOCACY.



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# WHO WE SERVE



We serve **3,000+** veterans in the San Francisco Bay Area every year. The majority are experiencing homelessness, extremely low-income, older than 55, and/or have a disability.

**91%**

are low - income

based on HUD guidelines.

**44%**

experienced homelessness

averaging **3.2 years** before seeking services.

**56%**

are veterans of color

with **41%** identifying as Black.

**62%**

are diagnosed with disabling conditions

like PTSD and TBI.

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# OUR WRAP AROUND SERVICES



**Legal services** for connection to VA care & benefits



**Drop-in** case management, mental health, and peer services + **Outreach** services



**COVER**  
Community of Veterans Engaged in Restoration



**Permanent supportive housing** and transitional housing beds + **Homelessness prevention** and housing placement services



**Employment** and job training services



**Financial literacy** and empowerment services



**Veterans Community Center** and community-building services

# OUR COMMITMENT IS VISIBLE

We operate a Drop -in Center, Veterans Community Center, and Access Point in San Francisco . These serve as the primary entry points for new veteran clients seeking services.



Homeless veteran outreach  
and services connection

Emergency housing & referrals  
to shelter beds and transitional  
housing

Mental health & substance use  
counseling (individual and  
group therapy)

Nutrition and food security

Suicide prevention care

Healthcare navigation and  
hygiene resources

Social connection and peer  
support

Problem solving and housing  
services

# ARRIERSO CARE OR VETERANS

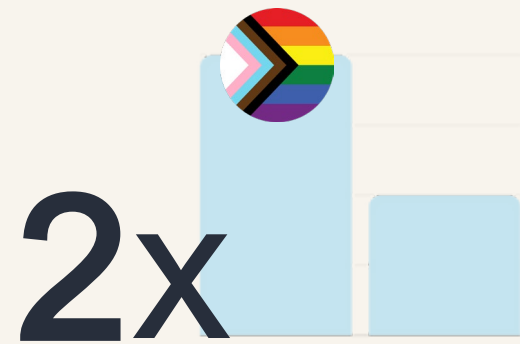
Some vets are not taken care of by the VA or federal programs.

Cultural and bureaucratic barriers prevent many veterans from accessing VA healthcare and benefits.

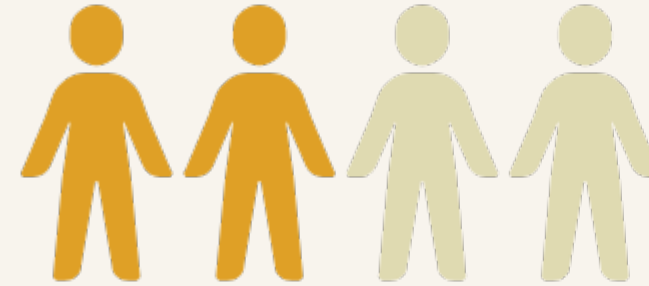
Mental health issues -- often with co-occurring substance use -- are the primary cause cited for homelessness among unsheltered veterans.

PTSD and depression rates are higher for underserved veterans: LGBTQ, women, senior, and Black veterans.

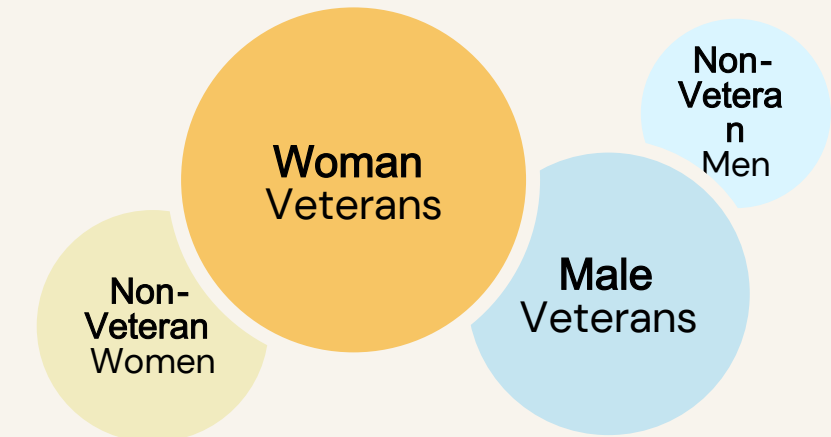




**LGBTQ+ Veterans**  
2x more likely to experience depression than non-LGBTQ veterans.



**Senior Veterans (65+)**  
2x as likely to have major depressive disorder compared to non-veteran seniors.



**Women Veterans**  
Higher PTSD rates than both male veterans and non-veteran men and women.

# MENTAL HEALTH DISPARITIES AMONG VETERANS



**11x**  
**Veterans Who Experienced Homelessness**  
11x more likely to report lifetime suicide attempts than other veterans.



**Black Veterans**  
Military-related PTSD rates are 2x higher than in white veterans.

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# OUR VISION FOR IMPACT

1

## LEADING WITH EQUITY

Addressing racial inequity and accessibility needs to ensure all veterans have equal access to services and resources.

2

## TRANSFORMING CARE FOR UNEMPLOYED VETERANS

Focusing on preventing and ending veteran homelessness, addressing urgent needs of senior veterans, and ensuring access to community-based mental health services.

3

## RESTORING JUSTICE FOR VETERANS

Securing policy changes and fostering an equitable system of care that genuinely honors and supports those who have served.







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# THANK YOU

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