



2020-21
Commander's
Special Project
Chairman's
Guide



2020-21

Thank you for accepting the responsibility as the Commander's Special Project Chairman for 2020-21.

You are expected to perform your duties to the best of your ability and to become familiar with the background and history related to my special project, ***Homeless Veterans***. The attached Chairman's Guide will provide you some of the necessary guidelines in performing your duties. There may be additional references you may need to review either on line or secure other resources related to the Homeless Veterans initiative.

It is important that you learn as much as you can about your position and ask questions if you are not sure of what you will be required to do. I and my staff are available to assist you in this endeavor to ensure you are successful in your efforts.

Of particular significance is ensuring that the Districts, Councils and Posts are informed of the benefits of supporting the Commander Homeless Veterans Special Project.

As part of your responsibilities as Chairman, you will be expected to prepare a short written report of your activities in promoting the Special Project Program and a financial update of donations to be submitted two weeks prior to the Spring and Fall Department Conferences and State Convention. A report of donation receipts will be provided to you by the Department Bookkeeper prior to any conference or convention for your report.

If called upon to make an oral report, you will be invited by letter and will receive a per diem voucher to cover some of your hotel and travel expenses.

In advertising this special project ensure all donations made to the program are made directly to Department Headquarters, 69 Sand Creek Road, Albany, NY 12205.

The Department of New York publishes its on-line newspaper, ***The Overseas Veteran*** quarterly and it is highly recommended that a short article encouraging our members to support the Commander's Special Project when the announcement goes out for articles.

The State Commander is confident of your ability to manage the Commander's Special Project and am sure you will be extremely successful in your endeavors.

Thank you for stepping up and accepting this challenging position.



STATE COMMANDER'S SPECIAL PROJECT

HOMELESS VETERANS

THIS YEAR STATE Commander Tom Howard has chosen Homeless Veterans as his Special Project. Since Past State Commander Dennis Sullivan and Michael Burke's effort to help reduce the Veteran homeless population, our veterans continue to experience homelessness in record numbers.

Since the project of our two past Commanders, the Veteran homeless population has risen from 17% to 50% and continues to grow. Although flawless counts are impossible to come by – the transient nature of homeless populations presents a major difficulty – the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) estimates that 40,056 veterans are homeless on any given night. Affairs estimated that there were 76,000 veterans sleeping in the streets and increasing . In 2011, there were 1,700 homeless female veterans and also on the rise. Veterans spend an average of six years homeless. Research shows that the greatest risk factors for homelessness are lack of support and social isolation after discharge.

Homeless veterans include having served in World War II, Korea, Cold War, Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Iraq and other locations around the world.

Monetary Donation Support:

- **All monetary donations to the Special Project will be divided evenly throughout the 9 Districts for them to donate to a Homeless Veterans Facility**

Take Action

- **Veterans who are homeless or risk of becoming homeless can call or visit their local VA Medical Center or Community Resource and Referral Center**
- **Veterans and their families can call 1-877-4AID-VET (1-877-424-3838)**
- **Web site va.gov/homeless to learn more**

Donations can be made to the program through the Department of New York by mailing all donations to: Department of New York Commander's Special Project:

**69 Sand Creek Road
Albany, NY 12205**