



## New program to aid homeless, at risk veterans in Jackson, Hillsdale, Lenawee counties

By Benjamin Raven on February 12, 2014

JACKSON, MI — Reducing homelessness among veterans has been a popular nationwide issue as President Barack Obama announced a goal of ending it altogether by 2015. In a 2013 report, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development estimated there were 57,849 homeless veterans on any single night in the United States.



(MLive File Photo)

The ripple effect from combating this issue has reached the state and local level in recent months. In November, a **new state law exempted totally disabled veterans** from paying property taxes. Now, a program for Jackson, Hillsdale and Lenawee county veterans and families will aim to keep a roof over their heads.

Community Action Agency and Housing Help of Lenawee is offering the Supportive Services for Veteran Families program through the United States Department of Veteran Affairs. The program will promote housing stability for low-income veteran families who reside in, or are transitioning to permanent housing in Jackson, Lenawee and Hillsdale counties. “Our first goal is housing stabilization for veterans and their families to secure safe and affordable housing,” Tami Farnum, program operations manager at Community Action Agency, said in a release. The **Community Action Agency** asks any local agencies, businesses or individuals who are aware of a veteran who is homeless or at risk of it to contact their local CAA.

### Local agencies:

**Jackson County CAA:** 517-784-4800

**Hillsdale County CAA:** 517-437-3346

**Housing Help of Lenawee County:** 517-264-0782

To be eligible, the veteran applying must have been honorably discharged, have a median household income less than 50 percent of the **area median income** and be a veteran or member of a family in which the head of the household is one.

The Supportive Services for Veteran Families will aid veterans in networking with landlords to find affordable solutions and will offer a limited amount of financial assistance when it comes to ensuring housing stability. According to the release, funding for the program is made possible through the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs.

In January, the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs **announced that it would make \$600 million available** for 2014 and 2015 to help serve homeless or at risk veterans.