

# Orange County Stand Down & Veterans Resource Expo



## MISSION STATEMENT

(5-26-2015)

Our Mission is to help United States Veterans who are homeless, displaced, disabled or otherwise in transition become integrated into our community by providing them a continuum of opportunities through the Stand Down for Homeless Veterans and Veterans Resource Expo.

## PURPOSE STATEMENT

### What is the Orange County Stand Down and Veterans Resource Expo

Many homeless veterans have suffered years of chronic or recurring readjustment issues since ending their military service, issues often inadequately addressed by traditional services to assist veterans. This is due in part to a lack of structured and effective collaboration among agencies, forcing veterans to go from one agency to another in efforts to access the various resources they need. This lack of efficient support from traditional veteran services has led to homeless veterans' mistrust of the very government agencies and large institutions created to help them. The Stand Down brings together various agencies and service providers to provide a comprehensive system that encourages and assists homeless veterans to overcome their distrust and feelings of isolation with the knowledge that this event promises to address multiple problems at one time and place. It provides a safe environment in which they can connect with people who have shared experiences and cultivate hope that they can rebuild their lives.

### Guiding Principles:

- It is our primary goal of the Orange County Stand Down and Veterans Resource Event to provide that safe place for homeless veterans to receive the comprehensive services that they need. It is our secondary goal to provide for all veterans in need with access to the continuum of care for transitional veterans, veterans at risk, and veterans with special needs. In addition, we will educate veterans and those that want to support veterans with opportunities to volunteer and to become part of the continuum.
- Provide each homeless or high risk veteran with an escort that will act as their buddy during the time that they are participating in the stand down.
- Provide homeless veterans immediate relief from the trauma and isolation of hopelessness. Create an environment where basic necessities are provided and participants can come together in a safe and relaxed atmosphere to learn about their options for care.
- Provide homeless veterans access to short-term resources. Ensure that the veterans have easy access to basic needs during the event.

- Provide veterans access to long-term resources. Give participants the opportunity to begin drug and alcohol recovery, get medical and dental treatment, receive employment counseling and referrals, spiritual support, access to social services, and deal with legal matters.
- Raise community awareness about homelessness veterans. Encourage participation of elected officials in Stand Down. Increase media coverage and dialogue on homeless veteran issues. Involve as many service providers and volunteers in your Stand Down event as possible, and use that collaboration to develop an assistance network in your community.

## **History of the Veterans Stand Down**

“Stand Down” is a military term referring to an opportunity to achieve a brief respite from combat. Troops assemble in a base camp to receive new clothing, hot food, and a relative degree of safety before returning to the front. Today more than 160 organizations across the country partner with local businesses, government agencies, tribal governments, community, and faith-based service providers to hold Stand Down events in local communities for homeless veterans and their families. They are collaborative events, coordinated between local VA Medical Centers, other government agencies and community-based homeless service providers.

Typically, services available at these events include temporary shelter, showers, haircuts, meals, clothing, hygiene care kits, medical examinations, immunizations, legal advice, state identification cards, veteran benefit information, training program information, employment services, and referral to other supportive services.

The Stand Down in Orange County was founded by Mrs. Deanne Tate, President of Veterans First. The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual OC Stand Down was held on September 26<sup>th</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at the Army Reserve Center in Tustin, CA. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual OC Stand Down was held on September 27<sup>th</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013 at the Army Reserve Center in Tustin, CA. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual OC Stand Down was held on August 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at the Army Reserve Center in Costa Mesa, CA. The 1<sup>st</sup> Annual OC Stand Down was held in September, 2011 at Santa Ana College.

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Veterans Village of San Diego: <http://www.vvvd.net/standdown.htm>

National Coalition for Homeless Veterans: [http://nchv.org/index.php/service/service/stand\\_down](http://nchv.org/index.php/service/service/stand_down)