

## BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE

### Homeless Veterans Stand-Downs Held Twice a Year in Tacoma

#### What is a Stand-Down?

Stand-Down events bring temporary relief to homeless veterans. They provide the veteran and his or her family members with services, resources, and ideas that enable a veteran to begin the resolution of their problems and a return into society. Pacific Northwest Stand-Down has been holding the events in the greater King - Pierce County area since 1991, bringing together representatives from City, County, State and Federal governments, and local service providers to assist the veteran. They are held in "safe" areas that can be adequately monitored. No weapons, drugs or alcohol are allowed on the complex.



#### When are they held? And Where?

Stand-Down events are held twice a year in Tacoma, on the last Thursday in March and September. On those dates, join us at the People's Community Center located in Tacoma at 1604 Martin Luther King Jr. Way.

#### Why are these Service Events called "Stand-downs?"

The term "stand-down" emanates from a long used military practice of withdrawing combat troops from battle into rear areas where they are revitalized physically, psychologically, and spiritually. While the practice is centuries old, it is widely held that the term "stand-down" comes primarily from its use by ground troops in the Vietnam conflict where this regenerative process was in widespread use. Homeless veterans in Washington State have experiences similar to soldiers in combat. . . some living in the woods, or at best out of their cars. . . still surviving by their wits, with limited food and extreme conditions. Life "on the streets" is both dangerous and debilitating. Always sleeping with one eye open. . . never able to truly rest. . . ever on guard. Every day on the streets is another day of combat for the veteran.

## How to Help



All veterans, no matter where or when they served, share a common bond. It is this bond, this fellowship, that provides the base upon which outreach can begin. Stand-Down's philosophy is to treat each veteran as an individual. Reestablishing the cohesiveness of the veteran into society can be a very difficult task. It is only when the volunteer and/or the service provider can show the veteran those barriers can be overcome that readjustment can begin. Stand-Down cannot end

homelessness, but it can be a beginning, and you can help. Pacific Northwest Stand-Down is a 501. (c) (3) non- profit organization.

### **Want to know more about participating in a Stand-Down event?**

Contact the Pierce County Veterans Bureau at 253-798-7449