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As Veterans Day approaches, MPHA seeks landlords for nearly 100 homeless veterans

MINNEAPOLIS – Through the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program, the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority (MPHA) has been able to award rental housing vouchers to more than 300 military veterans in our community. Unfortunately, nearly one-third of these veterans remain homeless because they cannot find apartments or rental houses where they can use their vouchers.

MPHA works with partners and caseworkers to help veterans find housing, but the low vacancy rate in the Twin Cities is challenging. “The tight rental market is hard on all low-income people, and there is not nearly enough housing support to meet the need,” says Kyle Hanson, MPHA Director of Housing Choice Vouchers. “That makes it especially difficult for us to see veterans—with a voucher in-hand, ready to go—still unable to find a place to live. We believe potential homes for these deserving veterans are out there.”

Property owners in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area who want to learn more about renting to one of MPHA’s unhoused veterans should contact the VASH program coordinator at 612-342-1231 or email kamend@mplspha.org.

The VASH program is a joint effort of the U.S. Departments of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Locally, MPHA partners with the Minneapolis Veterans Medical Center to provide permanent housing and supportive services to homeless veterans. VASH is a rare type of federal housing support that is expanding. In 2018, MPHA applied for and was awarded 56 new VASH vouchers, which were quickly awarded to veterans in our community. However, more than 30 percent of all MPHA VASH vouchers (98 out of 317) are unused because the recipients have been unable to find a place to use them.

A veteran using a VASH voucher pays 30 percent of his or her income toward rent, while MPHA pays the remainder of the rent directly to the landlord. Rental units must pass inspection and meet a certain level of affordability. # # #

The Minneapolis Public Housing Authority manages 6,000 units of public housing and 5,000 Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, serving more than 26,000 people in Minneapolis. Our mission is to promote and deliver quality, well-managed homes to a diverse low-income population and, with partners, contribute to the well-being of the individuals, families, and community we serve.

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