



OPERATION EXPEDIENT SHELTER

“PUT A ROOF OVER A HOMELESS VETERAN’S HEAD”

Middlesex County Veterans Advisory Council (MCVAC) is in the process of planning a project to assist homeless veterans in Middlesex County to obtain short term shelter until they are able to enter into more stable circumstances. The project, dubbed “Operation Expedient Shelter” would entail MCVAC working closely with Middlesex County’s Homeless Hotline, to provide a room for a homeless veteran in an area hotel/motel for a short period of time until that veteran is able to secure permanent housing either through the VA or some other social services entity.

This project had its genesis in the recent increase of inquires to the Middlesex County Veteran’s Service Coordinator, Doug Breen, from veterans undergoing severe financial stress in their lives. Many times these veterans are working individuals who are finding it increasingly difficult to cope in today’s harsh economic times. Sometimes they are veterans returning from recent deployments overseas who for one reason or another are finding it difficult to transition back to civilian life. Still others are the hardcore unemployed and homeless who have been drifting from situation to situation for a number of years. All of them, no matter what their story deserve our help.

We believe that for this project to become a reality, it will be necessary to obtain a “buy in” from the County’s many veterans’ organizations. We know they have long and durable connections with stakeholders throughout the County, and they have a well developed fundraising infrastructure. At their discretion, they could either provide funding directly to the Homeless Hotline from already existing programs in their organization or they could organize special fundraising drives with funds earmarked specifically for “Operation Expedient Shelter”. The County’s Homeless Hotline will set up an account specifically for this endeavor that can act as a repository for donated funds. MCVAC, in conjunction with the Veterans Service Coordinator will outline the criteria needed for use of these funds. Veterans will have to show proof of service and a legitimate need for this service.