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**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES ELKS NATIONAL SERVICE COMMISSION GRANT TO SUPPORT CHICAGO IN ADDRESSING VETERANS HOMELESSNESS**

*Chicago Awarded \$100,000 Emergency Fund Grant to Support 50 Veterans in Securing Housing*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced the City's Ending Veterans Homelessness Initiative (EVHI) is receiving a \$100,000 grant from the Elks National Veterans Service Commission that will be used to launch a Veterans Emergency Fund. The \$100,000 in private funding, provided by the Elks, will help support at least 50 veterans in securing stable housing, and is another step in the City's commitment to ending veteran homelessness in Chicago.

"No veteran who fights for our homeland should ever be without a home of their own. Housing veterans has been more than just my administration's priority, it has been a true community effort between the city, federal partners, homelessness advocates and organizations and private landlords," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "While the city has made tremendous progress in housing our Veterans impacted by homelessness, we will not rest until we provide each of our men and women who served in uniform a future worthy of their sacrifice."

The fund fills a critical need for resources to help Veterans overcome common barriers to housing, such as challenging rental or credit histories and to prevent homelessness when possible through short-term financial assistance grants. Evidence of emergency funds in stabilizing formerly homeless Veterans in housing has been noted by Notre Dame's Wilson Sheehan Lab for Economic Opportunities, which found that households which have received supportive funding were between 65-85 percent less likely to become homeless again than did households that did not receive funding.

"The success the City has seen in housing Veterans is no small accomplishment and we are grateful for the efforts," said The Elks National Veterans Service Commission Director Mary Morgan. "We look forward to having an ongoing partnership with the City of Chicago to continue to house and stabilize our Veterans."

"As a Veteran and a resident of Chicago, I'm proud of how Chicagoans are increasing the resources available to Veterans," said City of Chicago Veterans' Affairs Director Victor Lagroon. "The Elks are

one of many partners who are stepping up to make sure every Veteran in the City of Chicago has a place to call home.”

The City of Chicago has housed over 2,190 homeless veterans through the national Ending Veterans Homelessness initiative since 2015. The effort has been a partnership between the city, federal partners, homelessness advocates and organizations. Private landlords, specifically, have been instrumental in supporting EVHI by renting units to veterans. Mayor Emanuel has corresponded with landlords encouraging and thanking them for their support. To participate in the program and support Chicago’s veterans, landlords can visit [www.cityofchicago.org/veterans](http://www.cityofchicago.org/veterans) to learn more on how they can help.

Since taking office, Mayor Emanuel has made key investments to support continued education and employment for Veterans. To ensure that all Veterans and military Service Members are able to secure housing and to prevent discrimination in the housing application process, the City’s Council on Human Relations approved the Mayor’s ordinance making Veterans, active military personnel, reservists and National Guard members a protected class.

Additionally, this year Mayor Emanuel launched a new [resource website](#) designed to improve coordination of citywide resources to better meet the needs of Chicago’s military Veterans. By directing the City’s 311 service call center operators to ask callers up front if they are Veterans, operators are able to identify the most appropriate resources and programs that are available. Ultimately, this information helps the city tailor, target, and allocate the right resources for future programs and services to better serve Veterans.

This announcement comes a week after the Mayor and Alderman launched [Operation Help A Hero](#), a drive to collect household goods for homeless veterans as they move into permanent Housing. For more information on the City’s Ending Veterans Homelessness Initiative or on Operation Help A Hero, visit [www.cityofchicago.org/veterans](http://www.cityofchicago.org/veterans).

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