

DVASH: A Housing Model for Domestic Violence Survivors

Apply the proven HUD-VASH playbook to end homelessness for survivors

Domestic violence and homelessness are inseparable: survivors often cannot escape their abuser without access to safe, permanent housing, and the national shortage of housing leaves many with nowhere to go. According to the latest national data, 58% of unmet service requests from domestic violence survivors are housing related.¹

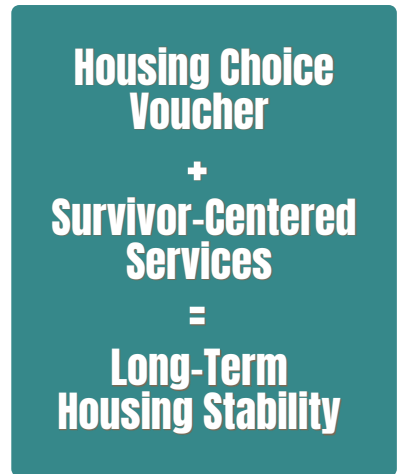
The federal government has solved a crisis like this before. Facing veteran homelessness, it created HUD-VASH, which pairs housing vouchers with dedicated services, and cut veteran homelessness in more than half. **New Destiny proposes the same proven structure for survivors: DVASH.**



WHAT IS HUD-VASH?

HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing combines Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers with case management and clinical services through the VA. The voucher pays the rent; the services keep people stably housed. It works because the two are permanently paired — neither piece is left to chance.

It is one of the few federal programs with rigorous evidence that it works as intended, at scale.² Since 2010, veteran homelessness has declined by more than half nationally, with HUD-VASH a driving force, with over 250,000 veterans obtaining stable housing through the program.³



DVASH: Domestic Violence Assisted Supportive Housing replicates the HUD-VASH structure with three partners, each mirroring a proven role:

- **HUD** issues dedicated Housing Choice Vouchers for survivors — as it does for veterans.
- **The Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)** funds the paired services through a new dedicated appropriation and competitive grant — the role the VA plays for veterans.
- **Local domestic violence housing providers** deliver housing navigation, trauma-informed case management, and aftercare — the role VA Medical Centers play for veterans.

WHY PERMANENT, AND WHY NOW?

The effects of abuse and homelessness are intergenerational. A boy who witnesses his mother abused is 10 times more likely to abuse a partner as an adult,⁴ and among families with minors in NYC shelters, more than 16% of the parents were themselves in shelter as children.⁵ And the violence is not receding — about 1 in 5 homicide victims are killed by an intimate partner.⁶ Permanent assistance succeeds where time-limited aid falls short: HUD's randomized Family Options Study found permanent vouchers cut families' return to shelter by about 75% and reduced intimate partner violence.⁷

Breaking this cycle takes lasting housing, not temporary aid. New Destiny has seen both sides: when NYC paired Emergency Housing Vouchers for survivors with 9 months of aftercare, survivors made real gains — but 9 months proved too short, and those vouchers are now expiring, putting thousands at risk of returning to shelters or their abusers.⁸ Time-limited help leaves survivors on a cliff. DVASH replaces it with a stable foundation.

RECOMMENDATION

Create DVASH: a dedicated allocation of permanent HUD vouchers for domestic violence survivors, paired with a dedicated OVW appropriation for survivor-centered services — following the same appropriations model that built HUD-VASH.

SOURCES

- ¹ National Network to End Domestic Violence, "20th Annual Domestic Violence Counts Report," 2026.
- ² William N. Evans et al., "Housing and Urban Development–Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Vouchers and Veterans' Homelessness, 2007–2017," *American Journal of Public Health* 109, no. 10 (2019).
- ³ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "HUD and VA Announce Funding to Support Over 2,500 Homeless Veterans," HUD No. 26-052, June 26, 2026.
- ⁴ Vargas, Cataldo, and Dickson, "Domestic Violence and Children," *VISTAS: Compelling Perspectives on Counseling*, 2005 (American Counseling Association, 2005).
- ⁵ New Destiny Housing, *A Crisis Compounded: The Dual Crises of Domestic Violence and Homelessness*, 2024.
- ⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "About Intimate Partner Violence," 2026.
- ⁷ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "Family Options Study," 2016.
- ⁸ Kristie A. Thomas, "Evaluation of New Destiny Housing's Emergency Housing Voucher Aftercare Program: Activities, Outputs, and Preliminary Effectiveness," 2025.



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