

Veteran Dorm Kitchen & Dining Project

By American GI Forum National Veterans Outreach Program Inc



Mission: To provide ongoing housing, employment, and wellness services to veterans and the underserved from static and virtual platforms to stabilize their living conditions and support them in becoming productive members of their communities.

Critical Need in our Community and Population to Be Served by the Project:

National Veterans Outreach Program (NVOP) seeks funding to establish a multipurpose communal space with a commercial kitchen to provide nutritious meals for Veterans in transitional housing and to create a safe, functional space for group mental health counseling. Veterans in NVOP housing currently lack access to kitchen facilities, forcing them to rely on fast food or convenience stores. With a food insecurity rate of 18.6% in Bexar County—higher than the Texas average—access to healthy meals is critical. This project will improve nutrition and support wellness for vulnerable Veterans working to rebuild their lives. Additionally, the space will support mental health services for both Veterans and non-Veterans. With over 193,000 Veterans residing in Bexar County—who are more than 50% more likely to die by suicide—access to group counseling and a supportive environment is essential. This project addresses urgent needs in both physical and mental health for a highly underserved population.

NVOP serves homeless, unemployed, and low-income individuals across Texas, with a focus on Veterans and their families. This project will primarily benefit previously homeless Veterans and individuals facing mental health challenges. Of NVOP's clients, 69% are male, 74% are aged 25–64, and 76% are of minority descent. Nearly all participants will be Bexar County residents with incomes at or below the poverty level. Without support from Impact San Antonio, NVOP will be forced to limit vital counseling services due to space constraints and will have to absorb transportation costs to deliver meals to Veteran Dorm residents (who lack kitchen access as the transitional housing facility was previously a motel and therefore has no kitchen or dining room).

Description of Project and Proposed Use of Impact SA Funds:

NVOP plans a full renovation of the former LuLu's commercial kitchen, which is currently non-compliant with code and inoperable. The project will include repairing the kitchen flooring, repairing walls, restoring electrical wiring, upgrading plumbing, installing commercial-grade kitchen equipment, and conducting a professional deep clean to ensure safety and sanitation standards are met. The adjacent dining area will also be restored and furnished to serve as both a communal dining space and a flexible venue for community events, meetings, and wellness activities (furnishings have already been acquired through donations). NVOP will leverage its experienced in-house staff to manage and complete as much of the renovation work as possible, while engaging licensed contractors for specialized tasks. In coordination with the City of San Antonio, NVOP will secure all necessary permits and inspections (in conjunction with the contractors) to ensure full code compliance throughout the project.

If awarded, the funds will be used to renovate the kitchen and bathrooms of a former local restaurant (LuLu's Bakery & Café) that is adjacent to NVOP's Veteran Dorms, which is a former motel that NVOP purchased to use as transitional housing for homeless veterans (individuals and families). The Veterans Dorms does not have a dining facility, so meals are currently being transported from NVOP's Residential Center for Veterans to the Dorms on a daily basis (three meals a day, seven days a week). The requested funds will be used for the remodeling of the kitchen (repairing the kitchen flooring, repairing walls, restoring electrical wiring, replacing the roof, repairing the fire suppression system, upgrading plumbing, upgrading bathroom fixtures, purchasing and installing commercial-grade kitchen equipment, repairing the walk-in cooler, acquiring permits, and conducting inspections).

Impact on People to Be Served - Measurable Outcomes (Described in "S.M.A.R.T." terms):

Specific: 1. Dorm residents will have access to 3 meals daily.

2. Dorm residents will participate in group sessions led by licensed counselors or peer support specialists.

3. Dorm residents will be given the opportunity to engage in monthly social activities

4. Dorm residents will be given the opportunity to be trained in topics that will assist them in job search & placement, money management, and maintaining their health and hygiene.

Note: As a Housing First provider, NVOP provides services without placing conditions on clients to receive housing (we cannot require them to participate in services).

Measurable: 1. Daily meals: Measured by number of meals provided each week

2. Group sessions: Measured by number of sessions provided each month

3. Social activities: Measured by number activities provided each month

4. Classes: Measured by number of classes provided each month

Achievable: Since 1972, NVOP has been addressing the needs of veterans with housing assistance, employment services, and, most recently, mental health services. For decades, NVOP has been achieving grant-based outcomes and successfully meeting performance goals, including number of veterans and other clients assisted, financial assistance provided to clients, numbers of job placements, number of individuals housed (transitional & permanent housing), number of referrals, average wage per hour, number of counseling sessions (individual & group), and number of clients who have completed counseling treatment.

Relevant: As per our 2023-2027 strategic plan, NVOP's core functions are 1) the delivery of direct services in three major categories: housing, employment, and wellness (to include outreach, assessment, case management, support services, community education, peer services, food/nutrition, life skills, and referral services) and 2) the administrative activities in support of direct service. These outcomes directly help NVOP provide holistic services to its clients and equip them with necessary tools to regain stability and control over their lives and become productive members of their communities.

Time-Bound: Outcomes will be achieved on an ongoing basis but can be tracked at the following frequencies:

1. Daily meals: Weekly (measured by number of meals provided each week)

2. Group sessions: Monthly (measured by number of sessions provided each month)

3. Social activities: Monthly (measured by number activities provided each month)

4. Classes: Monthly (measured by number of classes provided each month)

Project Budget:

Expense Category	ISA Exp	ISA Narrative	Other Exp	Other Exp Narrative
Indirect Costs	\$10,000.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
Construction Costs	\$62,300.00	- Floor repair (\$2,200) – Repair existing kitchen floor - Electrical upgrades (\$30,000) – Electrical repairs & upgrades for entire building - Plumbing & gas lines (\$2,500) – Repair/replacement - Bathroom remodel (\$2,500) – Repair/replacement of fixtures, paint, ADA compliance elements - Drywall repair (\$600) – Patching, taping, sanding, painting, etc.	\$0.00	NA

		• Duct cleaning (\$1,500) – Includes industrial exhaust fan cleaning • Roof replacement (\$18,500) – Main roof \$15,000; walk-in cooler roof \$3,500 • Permits & inspections (\$1,000) – Includes Certificate of Occupancy/Health Inspection • Repair fire suppression system (\$3,500)		
Vehicle, Equipment, Furnishings & Related	\$27,700.00	• Commercial kitchen appliances (\$20,200) – Refrigerator, dishwasher, gas range, grill, ovens, fryer, food warmer/holding station, sinks, eye wash station • Kitchen tables & shelving (\$5,000) – Stainless steel tables, shelving & racks • Water heater (\$2,500)	\$0.00	NA
Total Expenses	\$100,000.00		0	