



AMES IN ACTION

DECEMBER 2023



UNDERSTANDING TRENDS IN VETERANS' RENT BURDEN



WHAT DID AMES DO?

Using a representative panel survey of U.S. households that spans over 50 years, Dr. Chris Hess investigated trends among rent burden. He found that, although veterans have been historically insulated from rent burden, they now experience rent burden at similar levels to the general population. He also found that groups who are common among veteran renters and who also experience higher rates of housing insecurity are driving this trend, including retired and disabled veterans, female veterans, and veterans of color.

HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO THE MILITARY, VETERANS, EMERGENCY SERVICES, AND/OR THE COMMUNITY?

This research highlights how veterans and their families may be unable to secure safe and stable housing in an increasingly precarious economic condition. This can worsen stress and well-being. Since the “rent eats first” in the household budget, people often have to make budgetary trade-offs in how they take care of their needs. These trends are particularly problematic because unmet basic needs may exacerbate mental health challenges that

veterans and their families may face.

HOW CAN YOU APPLY THIS INFORMATION?



SUPPORT COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Individuals can support community organizations who coordinate resources for housing-insecure veterans. For example, individuals can donate to emergency relief funds or veterans housing relief organizations. Veterans who are experiencing housing insecurity can utilize these resources.



ADVOCATE IN PUBLIC POLICY

Individuals can also advocate for policy makers to provide assistance to those who are experiencing rent burden and in need of short-term assistance. This will help provide a voice for additional supports to reduce the strain of unaffordable housing for veterans and their families.