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HUD and the VA provide more than \$800,000 for the Inland Empire.

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By MARK MUCKENFUSS / STAFF WRITER

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STAN LIM, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Both Riverside and San Bernardino will be able to provide more assistance to homeless veterans, thanks to an influx of additional federal funding announced last week.

The departments of Housing and Urban Development and Veterans Affairs teamed up to provide \$38 million in funding to housing agencies across the country.

Riverside and San Bernardino counties each got just over \$400,000 each, allowing both counties to provide

help to 50 additional veterans.

"It's the perfect news to get at this time," said Heidi Marshall, director of Riverside County's Housing Authority.

Her agency works with a coalition of private and public partners to address veteran homelessness. VA vouchers help those who are identified through the VA Medical Center in Loma Linda

"We continue to get referrals from Loma Linda," Marshall said.

The additional 50 vouchers will help with those individuals and families.

Ana Gamiz, spokeswoman for the Housing Authority County of San Bernardino, said local officials have done a good job competing for such funds.

"Any time there is a chance for us to apply for additional vouchers through HUD, we

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pursue the additional funding," Gamiz said, adding that once such funds are obtained, they tend to be sustained. "It normally becomes renewal funding."

Gamiz said that efforts in recent years have brought homelessness in the county from 2,600 down to 140. That number will drop further with the new support, she said.

The homeless veteran count in Riverside is at 136, Marshall said.

Contact the writer: mmuckenfuss@pe.com or 951-368-9595



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