

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

M. JODI RELL  
GOVERNOR

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## **Governor Rell Announces ‘Stand Down 2010’ for Veterans Will Be Held September 10**

Governor M. Jodi Rell today announced that Connecticut veterans in need will have access to dozens of vital social outreach services during “Stand Down 2010” on Friday, September 10, at the State Veterans Home campus on West Street in Rocky Hill.

“Like the nation and the world, our state is only now beginning to recover from the recent recession – and that can pose especially difficult challenges for veterans and their families struggling to live independently,” Governor Rell said. “The practical and easily accessible assistance available at ‘Stand Down’ offers an effective way for veterans to regain their independence and dignity.

“These men and women have served their nation in one of the most valorous ways possible and we owe them a tremendous debt,” the Governor said. “More than 50 government and private agencies will be there – all in one location – to provide medical screenings, social service assistance, legal help with misdemeanors, job counseling and referrals, VA benefits information and new clothing and personal supplies.

“It is especially important that we continue to fight the problem of veteran homelessness,” Governor Rell said. “Veterans’ organizations, social service advocates and health professionals around the state can help by reaching out to veterans who could benefit from the program and helping get them to Rocky Hill on September 10. You can make a difference by registering and following up with just one veteran in need.”

This is the fifteenth year that Connecticut has sponsored Stand Down for its veterans in need. Last year a record 1,200 needy veterans participated in Stand Down at the Rocky Hill campus.

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The number of homeless veterans in the United States is estimated at more than 200,000, representing about 25 to 30 percent of the nation's total homeless population. The Connecticut Department of Veterans' Affairs is the largest provider of direct services to homeless veterans in the state, providing residency to a daily average of almost 375 veterans.

"As unemployment remains steady, more and more veterans of all ages are struggling to maintain an acceptable quality of life," said state Veterans' Affairs Commissioner Linda S. Schwartz. "Stand Down offers a safe haven for any veteran in need to gain valuable information and assistance."

Needy veterans or their advocates can pre-register and receive more information by calling (860) 616-3602 or (860) 616-3603 or by visiting [www.ct.gov/ctva](http://www.ct.gov/ctva). However, pre-registration is *not* required to attend Stand Down.

Free transportation for veterans is available from pick-up locations around the state. Key urban areas to be served include Bridgeport, Danbury, Hartford, Meriden, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Norwich, Stamford, Torrington and Waterbury.

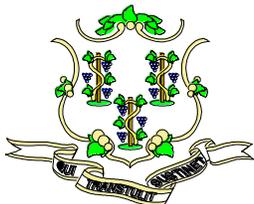
Organizations and individuals interested in contributing resources or services to Stand Down 2010 are asked to contact the Department of Veterans' Affairs at (860) 616-3605.

The Connecticut Department of Veterans' Affairs, in conjunction with state, federal and private agencies, is the lead sponsor of Stand Down. Supporting state agencies include the Connecticut Departments of Banking, Labor, Higher Education, Mental Health and Addiction Services, Motor Vehicles, Public Health, Social Services and Transportation; the Office of the Chief Public Defender; and the Judicial Branch. Participating Federal agencies include the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, U.S. Department of Labor and U.S. Social Security Administration.

"People often ask, 'What can we do to help support our veterans?'" said Governor Rell. "Getting involved in Stand Down is one important way you can help. Too many veterans are homeless and out of work across this country."

"Stand Down" is a term used during the Vietnam War referring to a safe area behind the lines that afforded battle-weary soldiers a place to relax and attend to personal needs such as showers, haircuts, and hot meals. Connecticut began its annual Stand Down program in 1992.

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**-30-**