



REAL HOUSE RECOVERY, INC.
 127 Pine Street
 Montclair, NJ 07402
 1.256.VAST NOW (1.246.877.8669)
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PROTOCOL TITLE:

Veterans Achieving Stability through Training (VAST) Research Initiative

INVESTIGATOR:

Croix-Ronald Coppáge, ABD, MBA, CIS

Jerrod Nelms, PhD, EYES INC

SPONSOR:

U.S. Department of Labor—Veterans’ Employment and Training Service

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT:

This study will receive funding from the U.S. Department of Labor—Veterans’ Employment and Training Service for costs related to conducting the study. The Principal Investigator and/or other study personnel do not have a financial interest in the research. All key personnel are employed by Real House Recovery, Inc.

PARTICIPANT SAFEGUARDS:

- Background checks on all mentors/volunteers
- Best Practice Sessions
- Initial Mentor Training
- Advanced Mentor Training
- Qualified/Trained Personnel
- Culturally appropriate services
- Effective Communication—English and Spanish



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RESEARCH PARTICIPANT'S BILL OF RIGHTS

People who volunteer to participate in an experiment (also called a research study or clinical trial) need to understand what is expected of them and why the research is being done. As you think about whether or not to volunteer, it is important that you know you have rights in place to help protect you. These rights, listed below, will be further explained as you read this informed consent document.

If you are asked to participate in a research study, you have the right to:

- be told the purpose and details of the research study,
- have the devices (tools or pieces of equipment) used in the research study described,
- have the procedures of the research study and what is expected of you explained,
- have the risks, dangers and discomforts of the research study described,
- have the benefits and advantages of the research study described,
- be told of other devices or procedures (and their risks and benefits) that may be helpful to you,
- be told of medical treatment available to you should you be injured because of the research study,
- have a chance to ask questions about the research study,
- quit the research study at any time without it affecting your future treatment,
- have enough time to decide whether or not to take part in this research study, and to make that decision without feeling forced or required to participate, and
- be given a copy of this signed and dated informed consent form.

SUBJECT SELECTION:

You were selected as a possible study subject because you are a female veteran, who is homeless, or at-risk of being homeless; and resident in the targeted demographic area of Essex County, New Jersey.

STUDY PURPOSE:

The purpose of the study is to answer the question, if provided with comprehensive services, including career training and temporary housing, will female veterans who are homeless or at-risk of being homeless, be able to secure employment and become stable as it relates to employment and housing?

VAST has been designed to target homelessness, employment training, and job placement for a special population of **80 veterans**—female veterans with and without families; and chronically homeless female



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Veterans. Our target age range is 21 – 55, and participation in **Veterans Achieving Stability through Training (VAST)** is voluntary. Each participant will be engaged in 5-6 months of intervention services, during which time, each will be engaged in job readiness training leading to rapid job placement; or vocational training leading to a high-demand, industry-recognized credential, as well as immediate job placement in their relevant field of training.

VAST will provide centralized access to provide a strong supportive network of comprehensive wrap-around services to our target population, including *emergency housing assistance, permanent housing through HUD-VASH, case management, behavioral healthcare (individual/group/families), domestic violence, financial literacy, healthcare, health and wellness activities; paid OJT and Apprenticeships opportunities; career placement, supported employment (Job Retention), transportation, legal services, access to childcare and development; linkage to VA Benefits, and follow-up services.*

SIZE OF STUDY:

A minimum of 80 female veterans will be enrolled in the study. 80 students will receive services.

STUDY PROCEDURES AND DURATION:

If you agree to participate in this program, you will be asked to participate in a host of activities and/or projects; as well as be required to complete various surveys and assessments for the purpose of research. Additionally, participants must have regular attendance, conduct themselves in a respectful and courteous manner and observe and adhere to the rules and regulations of all VAST activities. Program activities include:

- Seeking Safety sessions
- Group Mentoring
- Life Skills Development
- Job Readiness Skills Training
- Job Training
- Job Placement
- Recovery Sessions
- Family Health Workshops
- Recreational Activities
- Primary healthcare services



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RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS:

There may be some potential physical risks related to the fitness activities of the project, and your participation in non-contact sports; however, these risks are expected to be minimal, and can be equated to the level of risk incurred during general recreation activities.

Some participants may experience some emotional discomfort or distress when asked to complete some surveys relating to healthy lifestyle choices and general health workshops. The discomfort and/or emotional distress may be presented in following ways:

1. Where participants may have already experimented with or been exposed to risky behaviors (alcohol, tobacco, sex, or technology dangers) and may experience feelings of guilt and shame; and
2. Where participants may already have an STD and may be experiencing depressive states.

This project will address these issues by providing assurances participants can choose to answer or not answer such questions, and are free to withdraw from the research component of the project, without prejudice. Participants also will be assured information provided in the survey will be treated with the strictest confidence, and will not violate their personal privacy. No information that is reported will identify them by name.

Additionally, the project will ensure that educational information, referral for psychological/health counseling, if needed, and other options to promote healthy lifestyles through its mentoring and counseling components will be provided to each student/participant. In the event serious and unexpected issues arise, a professional mental health counselor will be available onsite for those participants who may require emotional support, or referral for psychological counseling.

BENEFITS OF STUDY PARTICIPATION:

Possible benefits participants may experience include:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Increased tacit knowledge in... | • Increased job training skills |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|



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✓ Financial Literacy	• Increased work opportunities/job placement
✓ Career Choices	• Increased academic performance
✓ Conflict Resolution	• Increased self-esteem
✓ Health and Nutrition	• Increased college enrollment
✓ Communication	• Reduction in smoking, alcohol and drug usage
✓ Relationship Building	• Reduction in unsafe sex practices
✓ Critical Thinking	• Reduction in homelessness
✓ Job readiness	• Increased primary care services

ALTERNATIVES TO STUDY PARTICIPATION:

Participants can elect not to volunteer for this program.

COSTS:

There is no cost to you to participate in this project.

COMPENSATION:

You will not be paid for participating in this project/study.

COMPENSATION FOR RESEARCH-RELATED INJURY:

If your participation in this project/study results in an injury, treatment will be available, including first aid, emergency treatment, and follow-up care, as needed. Care for such injuries will be billed in the ordinary manner to you or your insurance company.

No funds have been set aside to pay for care for injuries resulting from your participation in this project/study. If you believe you have suffered a project-related injury, notify staff immediately.



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CONFIDENTIALITY:

Every effort will be made to be sure that your participation in this project/study and all records of your participation will remain confidential. However, confidentiality cannot be absolutely guaranteed. Due to the nature of clinical trial oversight, some funding and regulatory agencies may have the right to review the records of this study, including the U.S. Department of Labor.

No information that could identify you, such as names or addresses, will be used when the results of this project/study are published or presented.

Participant data transmitted over the Internet will be encrypted. (This means that it is very difficult for an unauthorized person to see this information.) The utmost care will be taken to make sure all participant data contained in the project/study is secure.

MANDATORY REPORTING:

Please be advised, the VAST Project by law, is a Mandating Reporting entity. As such, we are required by law to report any suspicion of any type of physical abuse as it relates to you or any of your child participating in the project. The Mandate Reporting Agents for the VAST Project are Ginay Granda, Project Counselor; and Karen Sarraga, Case Manager.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision to participate or not participate in this study will not affect your current or future endeavors at Real House Recovery, Inc.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW:

You may withdraw from the project/study at any time. Your decision not to take part in or to withdraw from this project/study will not involve any penalty.

If you do decide to withdraw, we ask that you contact Ginay Granda, Project Coordinator, or Karen Sarraga, Case Manager, to let either of them know that you are withdrawing from the project/study.



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TERMINATION:

The Principal Investigator, Research Project Director or Research Project Coordinator may discontinue your participation in the project/study without your consent if they feel that it is in your best interest or if you fail to comply with the project/study procedures or experience a project-related injury or unacceptable side effects. They may also remove you for administrative reasons.

NEW FINDINGS:

If we find out new information during the course of the study that may change your willingness to continue (for example, a new, serious side-effect), we will contact you.

CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS:

The staff conducting this project/study are Mr. Croix-Ronald Coppáge, ABD, MBA, CIS; Jerrod Nelms, PhD (Evaluator), Ms. Ginay Granda, and Mrs. Karen Sarraga, MSW, CSW. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you can contact any of the key personnel at the telephone numbers listed below:

256.877.8669	Croix-Ronald Coppáge, Project Administrator
256.877.8669	Ginay Granda, Project Coordinator/Counselor/Mandatory Reporting Agent
256.877.8669	Karen Sarraga, Case Manager/Counselor/Mandatory Reporting Agent
256.877.8669	Jerrod Nelms, PhD (Evaluator/Statistician)

If you have any questions about your rights as a VAST participant, or complaints about this project/study, please direct them to:

REAL HOUSE RECOVERY, INC.

Croix-Ronald Coppáge, VAST Administrator

127 Pine Street, Montclair, NJ 07042

256.877.8669 | croix@vastnj.com

Also, you can visit, www.vastnj.com, click on the Contact Us button and complete the online form.



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You will be given a signed copy of this form.

STATEMENT OF CONSENT:

I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had my questions answered. I have been given enough time to consider participating. I agree to participate.

Printed name of Veteran

Signature of Veteran

Date

Printed name of person obtaining consent

Role in Project

Signature of person obtaining consent

Date