In 2005, an estimated 2.3 million veteran renter households had low incomes. The proportion of veteran renter households that were low income varied by state but did not fall below 41 percent. Further, an estimated 1.3 million, or about 56 percent of these low-income veteran households nationwide, had housing affordability problems—that is, rental costs exceeding 30 percent of household income (see map for state percentages). Compared with other (nonveteran) renter households, however, veterans were somewhat less likely to be low income or have housing affordability problems.

HUD’s major rental assistance programs are not required to take a household’s veteran status into account when determining eligibility and calculating subsidy amounts, but eligible veterans can receive assistance. The majority of the 41 largest public housing agencies that administer the housing choice voucher or public housing programs had no veterans’ preference for admission. The 13 largest performance-based contract administrators that oversaw most properties under project-based programs reported that owners generally did not adopt a veterans’ preference.

In fiscal year 2005, an estimated 11 percent of all eligible low-income veteran households (at least 250,000) received assistance, compared with 19 percent of nonveteran households. Although the reasons for the difference are unclear, factors such as differing levels of need for affordable housing among veteran and other households could influence the percentages.