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NJ
2015
Counts!

Gloucester County's 2015 Point-In-Time Count of the Homeless

February 3, 2015

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This report was prepared for
 The New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency
 by
 Monarch Housing Associates

I. Introduction

NJ Counts 2015

NJ Counts 2015, New Jersey's annual Point-In-Time (PIT) Count of the Homeless, provides a statewide snapshot of homeless households in our communities; where they find shelter, what their needs are, and what factors contribute to making them homeless. The 2015 Count reveals important demographic and other information about families and individuals who were homeless on the night of Tuesday, January 27th, 2015 or Tuesday, February 3rd, 2015 (depending on the community, see limitations below), and was carried out with the help of government agencies, community-based organizations, and local volunteers.

In New Jersey, each County's count is planned, coordinated, and carried out locally, and the information gathered enables each community to better allocate housing resources and services in order to prevent and end homelessness. The PIT Count is the only opportunity throughout the year for most communities to take a comprehensive look at the total homeless population, and is especially crucial in assessing the needs of the unsheltered homeless.

Acknowledgements

Monarch would like to thank all Point-In-Time Coordinators, homeless service providers, agencies, and volunteers who participated in NJ Counts 2015. Monarch would also like to specifically thank Bergen County for providing a Spanish translation of the 2015 paper survey tool.

Finally, a special acknowledgement is given to all the respondents who were willing to share personal information about themselves and their households' experiences in order to help our communities better understand and assist the homeless.

Funding for coordinating New Jersey's 2015 Point-In-Time and producing this report was provided by New Jersey's Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (NJHMFA).

This Report

The findings in this report are presented in the following sections:

1. Total homeless population;
2. Those experiencing chronic homelessness (families and individuals that have been homeless for a year or longer, or who have experienced at least four episodes of homelessness in the last three years, and have a disabled head of household); and

3. Unsheltered families and individuals;

The structure of this report is intended to provide not only an overall snapshot of the homeless population counted in the Point-In-Time, but also to focus attention on the homeless subpopulations that are the most in need, and those that represent federal funding priorities set forth by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

In addition to the main findings presented in the body of this report, Appendix A includes charts illustrating the responses to all survey questions that were part of the 2015 Point-In-Time Count.

II. Data Collection and Methodology

Requirements for the Count

As part of its Continuum of Care (CoC) application for homelessness funding, HUD requires that jurisdictions across the nation conduct a statistically reliable and unduplicated count of the homeless for one overnight period during the last 10 days of January. New Jersey's Continuums of Care (regional networks of organizations, agencies, and community stakeholders that plan local efforts to help the homeless) conduct an annual count of sheltered homeless persons (i.e. persons in emergency shelter, transitional housing for the homeless, and Safe Haven programs) and at least a biennial count of unsheltered homeless persons. 2015 was a HUD-required full count year.

In their Point-In-Time Count, CoCs must count and report all individuals and families who meet the criteria in paragraph (1)(i) of the homeless definition in 24 CFR 91.5 of HUD's Homeless Definition Rule on the night designated for the count. This includes individuals and families who are:

- **Sheltered**, or "living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals)," or
- **Unsheltered**, "with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground."

Because this report focuses on those respondents who meet HUD's definition of homeless, it does not include information about those who may be at risk of homelessness, precariously housed, or considered homeless under other federal statutes. Persons who, on the night of the count, were living doubled up with another household, living in illegal or overcrowded units, being discharged from a jail or health facility with no subsequent

residence, scheduled to be evicted, or paying for its own motel unit were not considered homeless. All survey information collected for respondents who were at risk of homelessness or precariously housed was preserved and shared with each community for local planning purposes, but is not included in this report unless otherwise noted.

Data Collection Methods

Monarch Housing Associates provided each of New Jersey's 21 counties with in-person training, online video and print training guides, a practice online survey tool, and technical assistance to aid in the data collection process for New Jersey's 2015 Point-In-Time Count. Point-In-Time Coordinators in each county disseminated PIT training materials and helped facilitate local planning around implementation of the PIT count in their communities.

For the second year, the count of homeless persons who were sheltered on the night of the point in time was primarily taken from New Jersey's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), while the count for the unsheltered and those sheltered by non-HMIS programs was conducted using a Paper Survey tool, personal interviews, and agency client records. This strategy was designed in accordance with HUD guidance regarding conducting both sheltered and unsheltered Point-In-Time Counts.

The 2015 PIT Survey tool closely mirrors information collected in HMIS so that the data was comparable for important factors such as household characteristics, income, services needed, and factors contributing to homelessness. Agencies updated all HMIS data to accurately reflect the night of the count, and those with programs that were non-HMIS-participating submitted information from interviews utilizing the Paper Survey tool through SurveyMonkey.

Limitations

1. HUD requires a count of sheltered homeless persons and families annually, but only a biennial count of those who are unsheltered. Even though New Jersey conducts both a sheltered and unsheltered count each year, the comprehensiveness of the unsheltered count may be influenced during the non-HUD required full count years. This report includes comparison data from 2011 to 2015. 2012 and 2014 were not HUD required full reporting years while 2011, 2013 and 2015 were.
2. The winter of 2014 to 2015 was particularly cold, with parts of New Jersey seeing significant snow accumulation. NJ Counts 2015 was originally scheduled to take place Tuesday, January 27th, 2015. Unfortunately, there was a blizzard predicted for the night of the PIT, which led to about half of the Counties in the State postponing the PIT activities to the following week, Tuesday, February 3rd, 2015. This weather led to half the communities counting the households that were homeless on the night of January 27th and the other half counting those that were homeless on the night of February 3rd. Besides leaving the date of the count inconsistent, this winter weather forced many

communities to set up emergency warming stations or shelters for the unsheltered. While this means that many more people are able to sleep in a warm place, it may skew Point-In-Time data to show fewer unsheltered households than are actually present in communities on a regular basis.

3. The information presented in this report is based on survey interviews and agency HMIS records. In some cases, survey respondents did not answer every question completely, and homeless provider agencies did not report all client information on the night of the count. For this reason, all charts presented in this report will be based on the responses received, while all percentages will be based on the total households or individuals served and may not equal 100% in each category due to possible missing data.
4. Because the Point-In-Time Count represents only one night during the last ten days of January, it is widely accepted that the PIT will undercount the overall homeless population. Undercounting may occur due to difficulty finding those living on the street, incomplete information for people who do not agree to complete the survey, a shortage of volunteers to cover a geographic area, or homeless persons choosing not to seek housing services on the night of the count. This data should not be viewed as a comprehensive measurement of all families and individuals who experience homelessness throughout the year, but rather as a minimum number of persons who experience homelessness in New Jersey on a given night.

De-duplication

Monarch Housing Associates collected and merged all HMIS and SurveyMonkey Point-In-Time data from each community into its combined database. Monarch generated two unique identifiers, one more general and one more in-depth, based on the identifying information for each individual record. Using a formula, these unique identifiers were compared to all identifiers for other records in the database to identify potential duplicates.

All duplicates detected through comparison of unique identifiers were then de-duplicated by the following process:

1. Multiple HMIS records where all fields match – a single record was preserved, and all duplicates were removed;
2. Multiple SurveyMonkey records where all fields match – a single record was preserved, and all duplicates were removed;
3. Comparing HMIS to SurveyMonkey records where unique identifiers, disabilities, income sources, household size, and location on the night of the count all match – the HMIS record was preserved and the SurveyMonkey duplicates were removed.

Following this de-duplication of the data, communities were given preliminary data to review all identified duplicates and records with missing data. Communities were then able to update records with missing information and/or request any additional de-duplication they determined prudent. Monarch then updated and removed additional records based on community feedback prior to completing its final analysis and report.

III. Findings for Total Homeless Population

Key Findings

- On the night of February 3rd, 2015 a total of 68 households, including 120 persons, were experiencing homelessness in Gloucester County, according to the 2015 Point-In-Time Count.
- A total of 2 households, with 2 persons, were identified as chronically homeless.
- 6 unsheltered households, 5 single adults, and 1 family of four, were counted.

Total Homeless Population

As a note, due to the refinement of HUD’s definition of homeless, updates were made to some of the emergency shelter data that was released in the 2014 report. The 2015 report compares 2015 data to the updated data that was submitted to HUD for 2014. While the comparisons in this report are accurate, the numbers listed for 2014 may not match the report that was released last year for this reason.

On the night of February 3rd, 2015, a total of 120 persons, in 68 households, were experiencing homelessness in Gloucester County, according to the 2015 Point-In-Time Count. This is a decrease of 411 persons (77.4%) and 187 households (73.3%) from 2014. Gloucester County had 1.2% of New Jersey’s statewide homeless population in 2015.

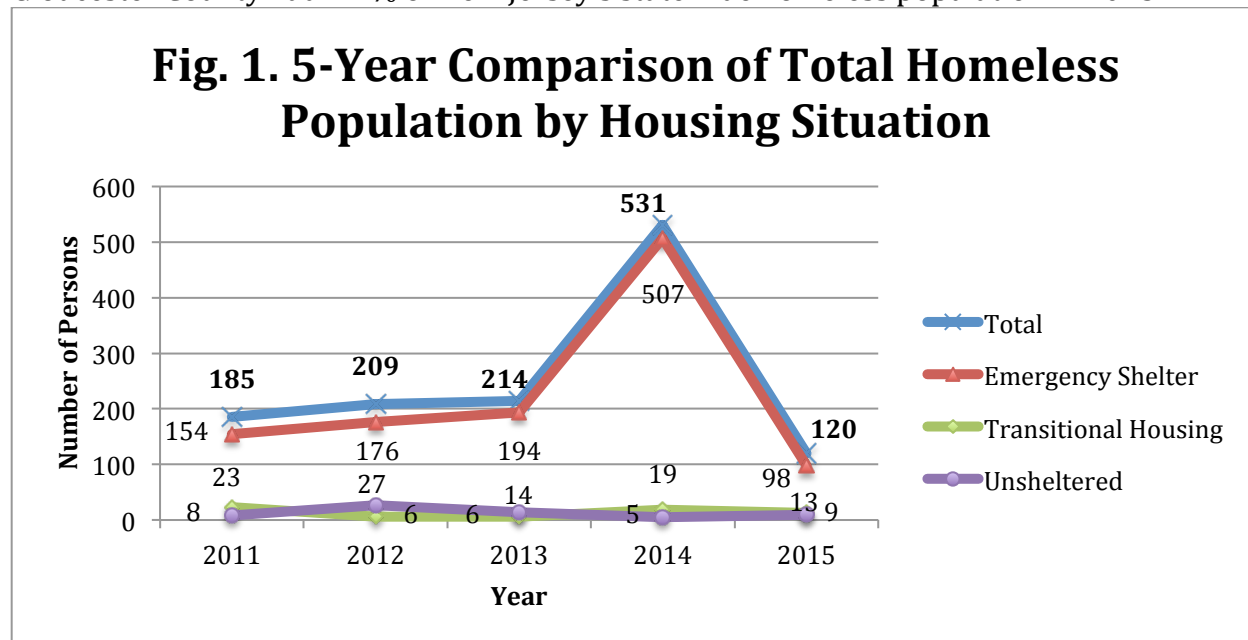
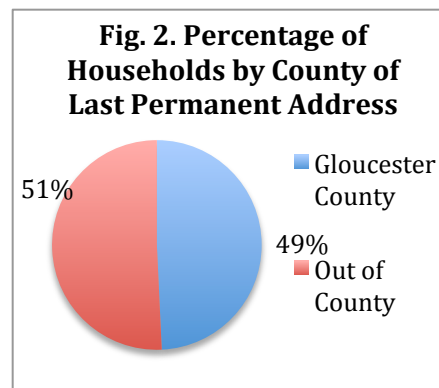


Figure 1 shows that, in 2015, 98 homeless persons stayed in emergency shelters, 13 stayed in transitional housing, and 9 were living unsheltered on the night of the count. The number of those in emergency shelters dropped by 409 (80.7%) in the past year. The number of those in transitional housing on the night of the count fell by 6 (31.6%). The totals of those living unsheltered, however, increased by 4 to 9 persons (80%).

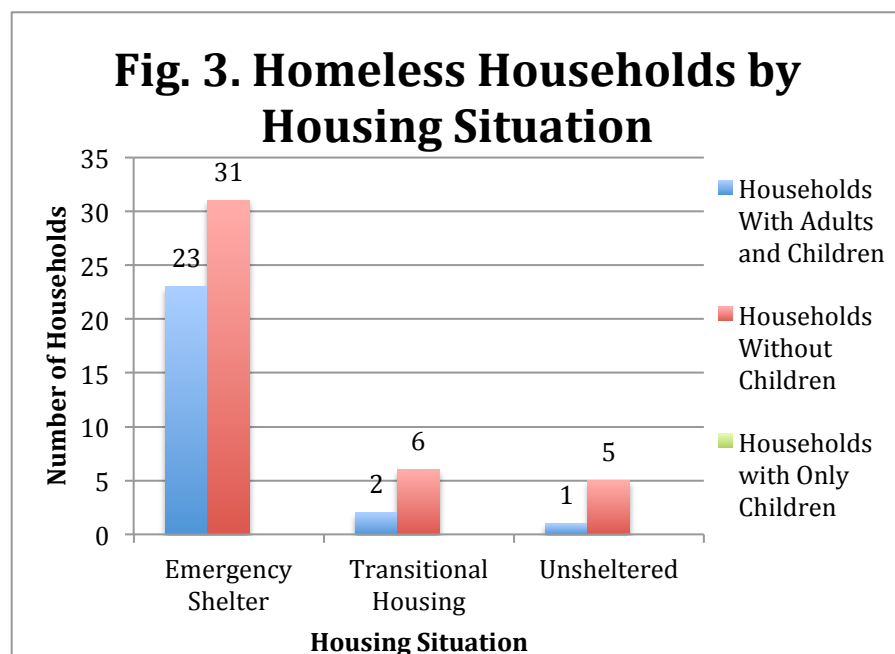
Gloucester County has seen a decrease in the overall number of homeless persons during the past five years (65 persons, 35.1%). During the same five-year period, the number of persons in emergency shelter on the night of the count decreased while the number of unsheltered persons is up 12.5% overall.

As Figure 2 shows, in 2015 51% of homeless respondents in Gloucester County reported that their household's last permanent address prior to becoming homeless was outside of the county.



Homeless Families and Individuals

When reading the data regarding different types of homeless households, it is important for the reader to remember that, in this report, 'household' means "any group of persons who, if they were able to attain permanent housing, would choose to live together; and, shared the same sleeping arrangements on the night of the count." Three different types of households are discussed below: households with adults and children under 18 ('families'), households without children ('individuals'), and households with only children under 18 ('unaccompanied youth').



Of the 68 homeless households counted in Gloucester County in 2015, 26 (38.2%) were families with at least one child under the age of 18 and one adult. These families included 75 persons, 44 children under age 18, and 31 adults. The average family size was 2.8 persons. Figure 3 shows that 23 of the families were staying in emergency shelter (88.5%), and 2 were in transitional housing

programs for the homeless (7.7%). There was 1 (3.8%) unsheltered family counted. In 2015, Gloucester County counted 114 fewer homeless families than 2014, down 81.4%.

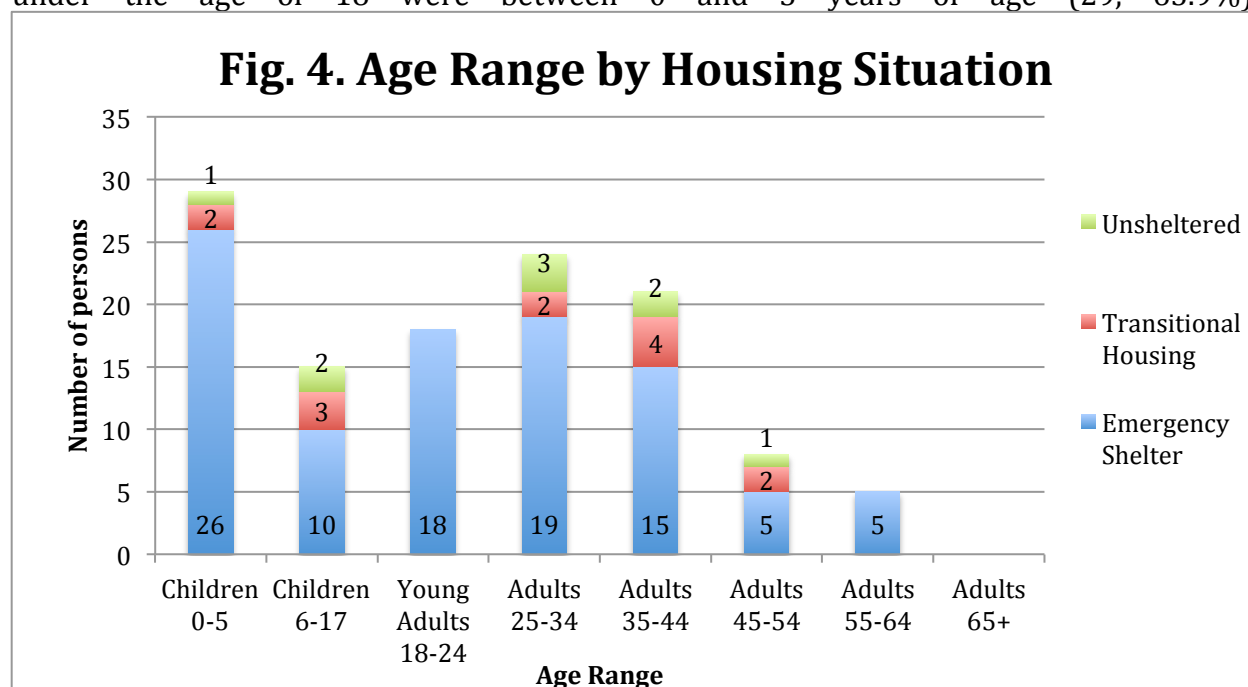
61.8% (42) of the homeless households in Gloucester County were households without children under 18, and they were composed of 45 adult individuals. 31 (73.8%) of these

adult-only households were staying in emergency shelters, 6 (14.3%) were in transitional housing, and 5 (11.9%) were unsheltered. Gloucester County has seen the number of adult-only households decrease by 71 (62.8%) since 2014.

As Figure 3 indicates, there were no households with only children under 18 years old were reported in 2015. This represents a decrease of 2 households from 2014.

Demographics

There were a total of 18 (15%) homeless adults between 18 and 24 years old, 58 (48.3%) adults over age 24, and 44 (36.7%) children under 18 years old experiencing homelessness on the night of the count. Figure 4 shows that the majority of homeless children who were under the age of 18 were between 0 and 5 years of age (29, 65.9%).



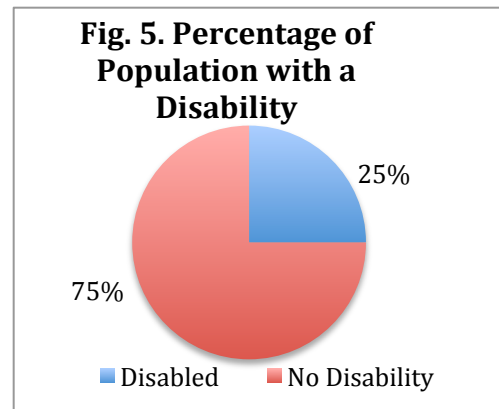
Children under 18 years old, was also the age range most represented among the homeless population. Among adults, more were between 25 and 34 years old than any other age range (31.6% of adults over 18).

62.5% (75) of homeless respondents were female, and 37.5% (45) were male.

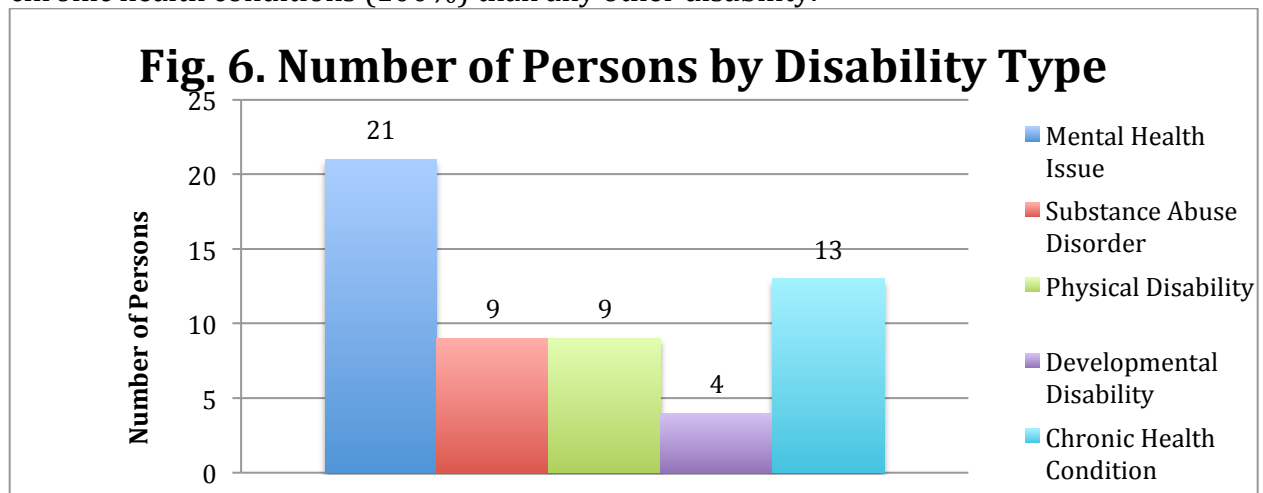
55% of respondents identified their race as Black or African-American, making that the largest racial subgroup of homeless persons reported. The next largest group self-identified as White (39.2%), followed by those identifying as Multi-Racial (2.7%). With regard to ethnicity, 17.1% of respondents identified themselves as Hispanic, or Latino.

Disabilities

Figure 5 illustrates that 25% of homeless persons reported having some type of disability. 36.8% of adults reported some type of disability compared to 4.5% of children. Figure 6 shows the number of the homeless persons that identified as having various disabilities. The most common disabilities identified include mental health issues and chronic health conditions.

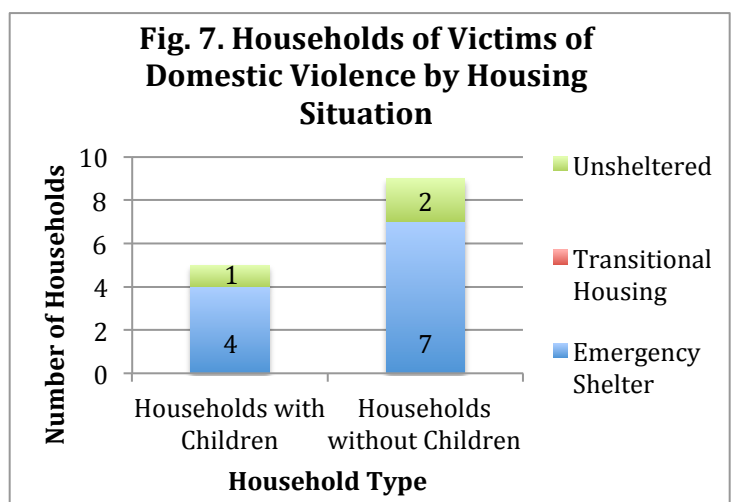


Among disabled adults, 71.4% reported mental health issues making this the most prevalent disability (26.3% of total adult population). More disabled homeless children had chronic health conditions (100%) than any other disability.



Victims of Domestic Violence

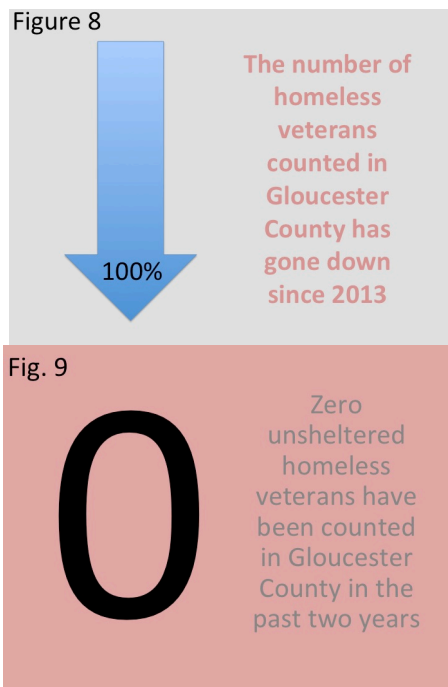
On the night of the count, in Gloucester County, 14 homeless households (20.6%) identified as a victims of domestic violence (See Figure 7). The majority (64.3%) were households without children under the age of 18. 7 of these households (77.8%) were staying in an emergency shelter and 2 (22.2%) were unsheltered. 4 of the 5 family households (80%) with at least one adult and one child under 18 were staying in emergency shelter. 20% of victim families (1 family), were unsheltered.



Veterans

In its plan, *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending homelessness among veterans by 2015. Many communities in New Jersey have also been working hard to end homelessness among our country's servicemen and women.

There were no homeless veterans counted in Gloucester County on the night of the count. This represents a 100% decrease (2 veterans) since 2014.



Income and Benefits

Among all households experiencing homelessness on the night of the count, 19.1% reported no source of income, and 7.4% reported receiving some kind of earned cash income. The two most common sources of income among respondents were Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and General Assistance (GA), received by 36.8% and 22%, respectively. Figure 11, below, shows the average monthly income for all homeless households.

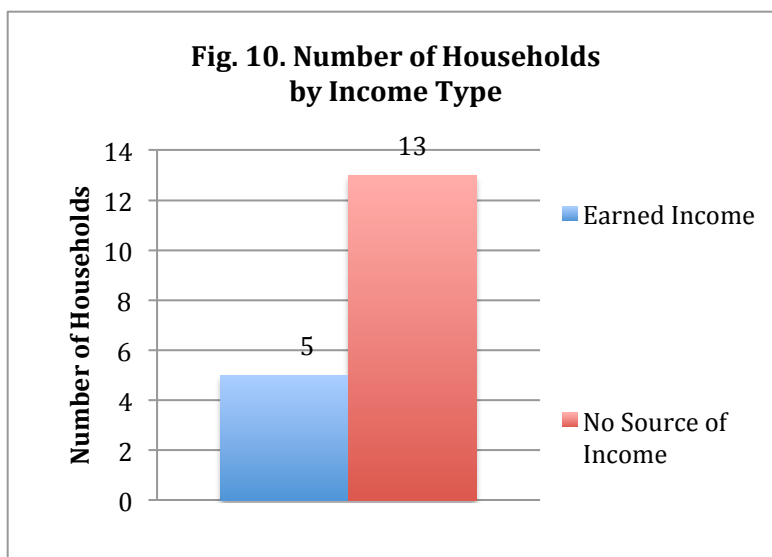
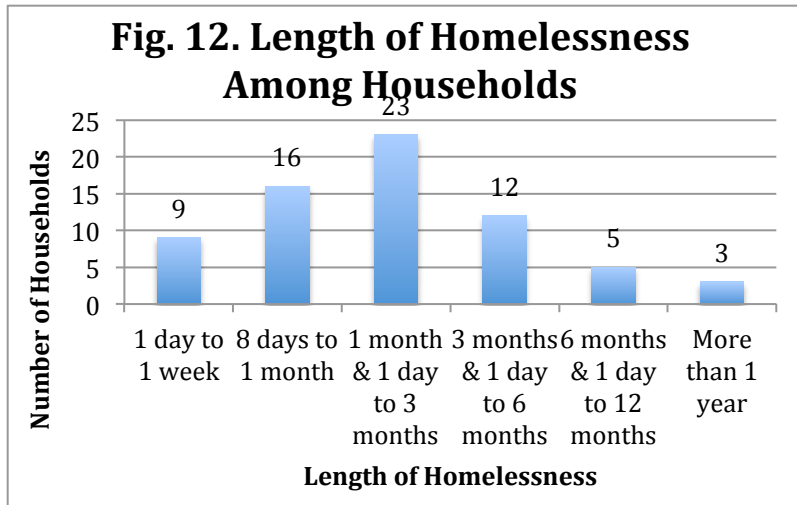


Figure 11. Average Monthly Income For Households by Housing Situation			
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered
Average for All Households	\$1,074.11	\$360.00	\$300.00

7.4% of homeless households reported receiving no kind of non-cash benefit on the night of the count. Medicaid was the top reported non-cash benefit, and was received by 61.8% of respondents. 44.1% of households were receiving temporary Food Stamps, or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

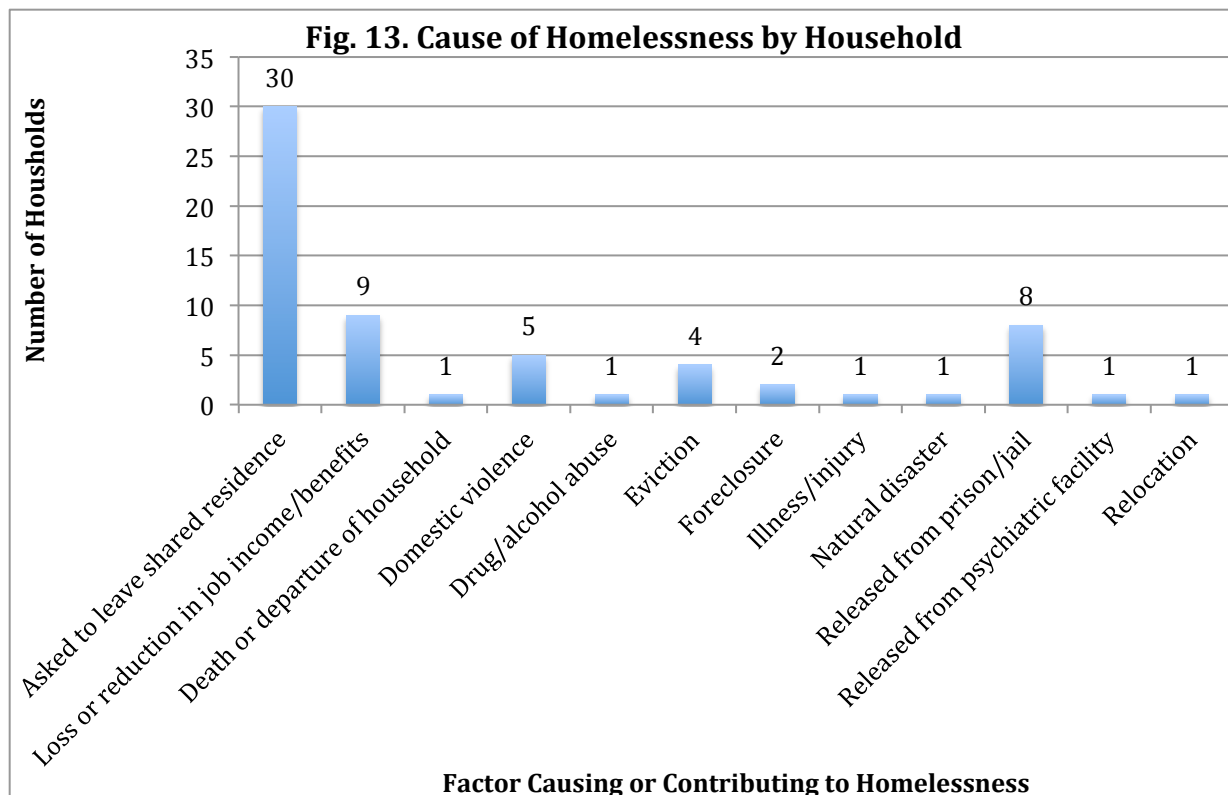
Length of Homelessness

As Figure 12 shows, 23 (33.8%) of the homeless households reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted from 1 month and 1 day to 3 months, while 16 (23.5%) reported that they had been homeless between 8 days and 1 month. 3 households, or 4.4% of all homeless households in Gloucester County had been experiencing homelessness for more than 1 year on the night of the count.



Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to being asked to leave a shared residence (30 households, 44.1%) than any other cause. As Figure 13 shows, the next most common factor reported was a loss or reduction of job income or benefits (13.2%).



When households were asked ‘what was your residence prior to your current living situation?’ more said they were staying or living with friends or family (44.1%) than any other type of residence. 20.6% reported residing in permanent housing, 11.7% said they were in emergency shelter, and 8.8% said they were living in a place not meant for human habitation prior to their current living situation.

IV. Findings for the Chronically Homeless

Someone with a long-term disabling condition, who has been continually homeless for a year or more, or at least four times in the past three years, meets HUD’s definition of chronically homeless. Any family with one adult that meets this definition is considered a chronically homeless family.

HUD has established a goal of ending chronic homelessness by 2017. This goal reflects the urgency of helping to house those persons who have not been able to remain stably housed over the course of an extended period of time. Chronically Homeless persons are among the most vulnerable homeless groups, and providing effective supportive services and case management may be required in order to help some stay in the housing they need. Prioritization of new Continuum of Care funding opportunities has recently been giving some communities in New Jersey new resources for housing this subgroup.

Total Chronically Homeless Population

2 households, made up of 2 persons, were chronically homeless in Gloucester County, according to the 2015 Point-In-Time Count. This is a decrease of 18 persons (90%) from 2014. This decrease, in conjunction with lower homelessness in the County overall, caused the rate of chronic homelessness to shrink as a percentage of the overall homeless population from 3.4% to 1.7%.

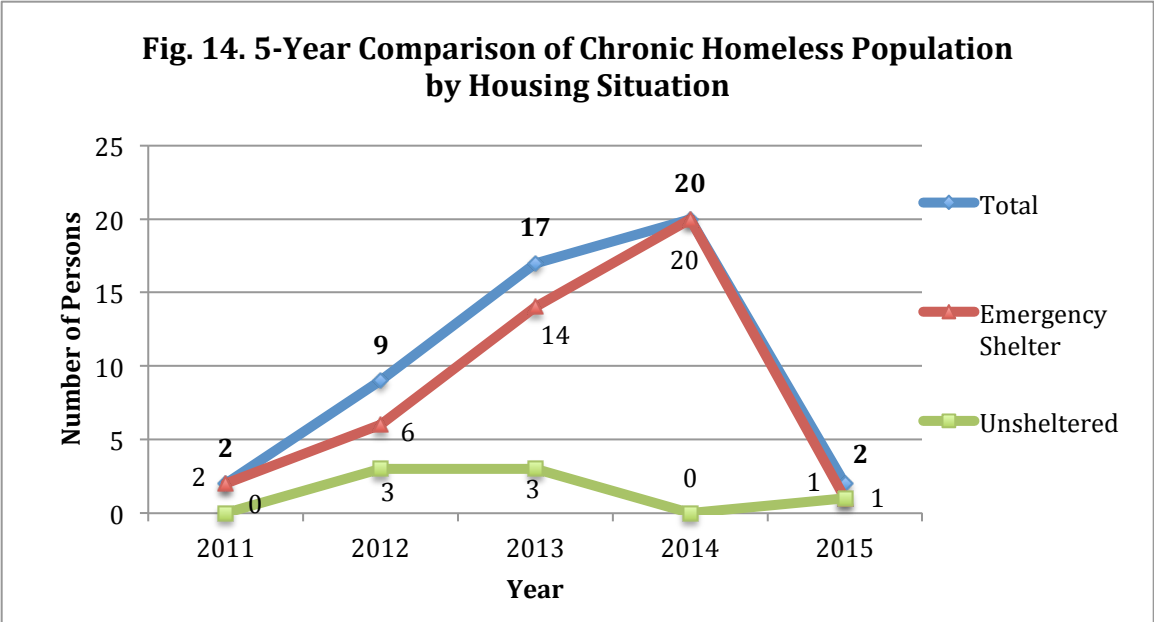
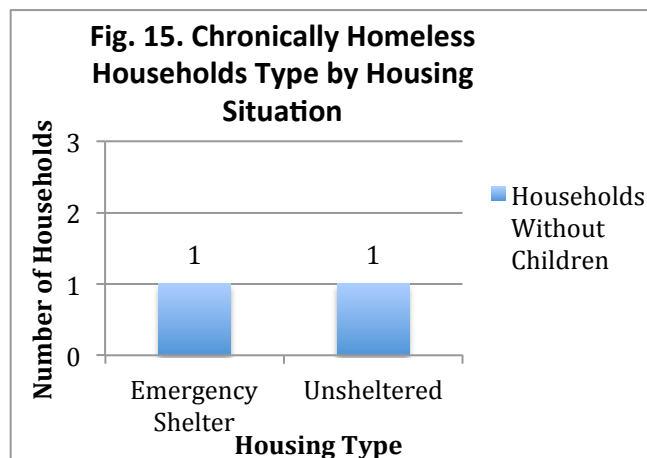


Figure 14 shows the number of chronically homeless respondents who were in emergency shelters or living unsheltered in Gloucester County from 2011 to 2015. Over the first four years the total of chronically homeless persons counted went up each year. In 2015, however, the number of chronically homeless persons dropped to the same as the number counted in 2011. The number of unsheltered chronically homeless persons has fluctuated with 1 counted on the night of the count in 2015.

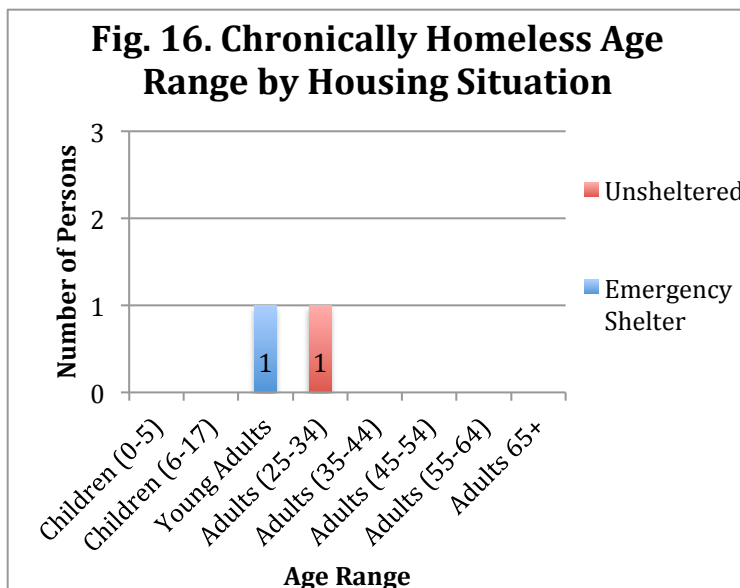
Families and Individuals

Of the 2 chronically homeless households counted in 2015, both were single adult individuals. 1 household was sheltered in an emergency shelter, down by 11 such households in 2014 (91.7%). 1 of these adult households was unsheltered on the night of the count, up from 0 last year.



Demographics

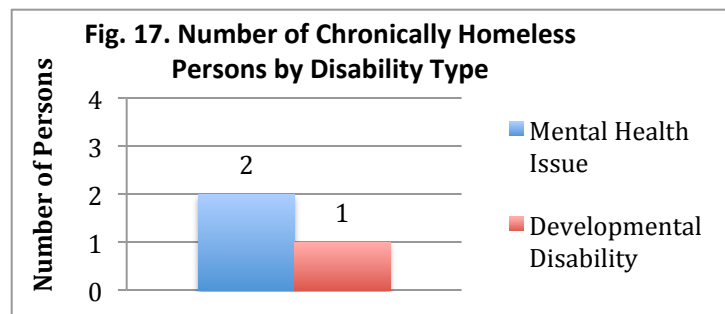
Of the 2 chronically homeless persons, 1 (50%) was between 18 and 24 years old, and 1 was between the ages of 25 and 34.



100% of those counted as chronically homeless were female.

The racial subgroups of chronically homeless persons included White (50%) and Black or African-American (50%) in equal measure. With regard to ethnicity, 0% of respondents identified themselves as Hispanic, or Latino.

Disabilities



In order to meet the definition of chronically homeless, at least one adult in each household must have some kind of disability. The disabilities most commonly identified were mental health issues (31.8%) and substance abuse

disorders (22.7%). The complete numbers of reported disabilities among the chronically homeless can be seen in Figure 17.

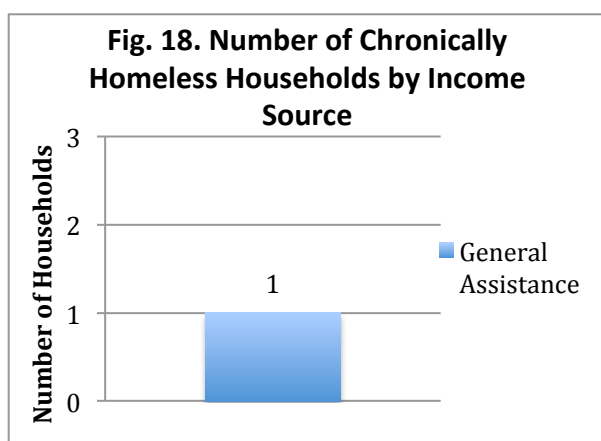
Subpopulations

On the night of the count, 1 chronically homeless person in Gloucester County reported being a victim of domestic violence (50%). This person was unsheltered.

There were 0 veterans identified as chronically homeless on the night of the count.

Income and Benefits

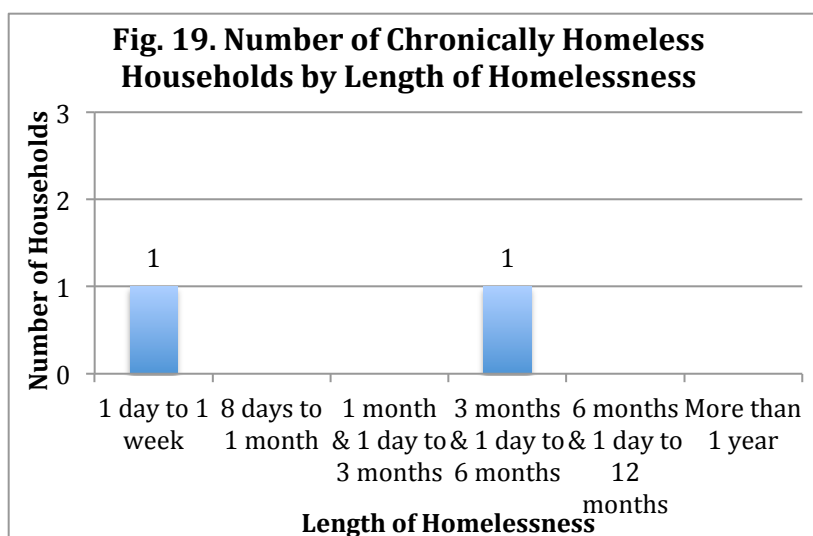
With regard to income, none of the chronically homeless household reported receiving earned income. Figure 18 shows that only one household received General Assistance (GA). This was the only income source reported by chronically homeless households.



Only one of the chronically homeless households reported receipt of mainstream benefits. This household was connected to Food Stamps (SNAP) and Medicaid.

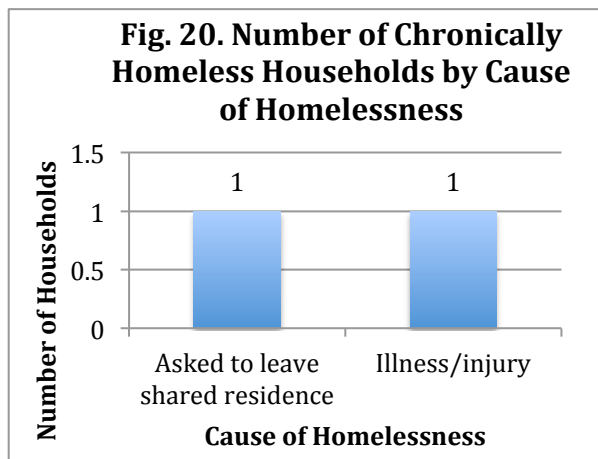
Length of Homelessness

Figure 19 shows that 1 chronically homeless household (50%) reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted between 1 day and 1 week and the other from 3 months and 1 day to 6 months. This means that both of the chronically homeless households reported having at least 4 separate episodes of homelessness in the past 3 years.



Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, 1 chronically homeless household cited being asked to leave a shared residence (50%). As Figure 20 shows, the other household reported that illness or injury was the cause of homelessness (50%).



V. Findings for the Unsheltered Homeless

HUD’s definition of “unsheltered homeless” applies to any individual or family “with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.”

Unsheltered homeless individuals and families are among those with the most critical housing needs in a community. The unsheltered are especially vulnerable in the cold weather and the elements, which are in evidence at the end of January when the Count takes place. The Point-In-Time survey can play an important role in helping communities understand why some of the homeless remain unsheltered, and who is included in this group.

Total Unsheltered Homeless Population

6 households, made up of 9 persons, were living unsheltered in Gloucester County, according to the 2015 Point-In-Time Count. This is an increase of 1 (25%) household, and 4 (80%) persons from 2014.

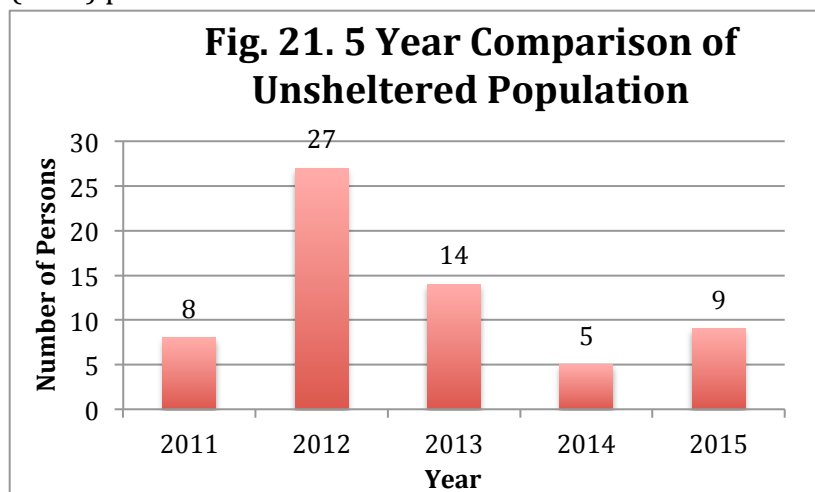


Figure 21 shows the number of unsheltered respondents from 2011 to 2015. Over the past five years, while the numbers have fluctuated, the total number of unsheltered persons is up overall. Since 2012, however, the number of unsheltered homeless persons has trended downward by 66.7%.

Families and Individuals

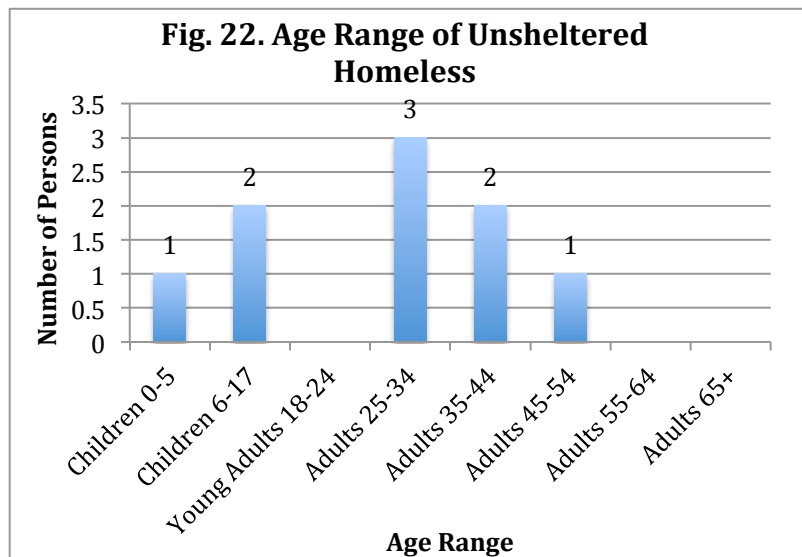
There was 1 family with adults and children identified as unsheltered on the night of the count. The family had four household members, 1 adult and 3 children.

The remaining 5 households were adult-only households made up of 5 single adult persons.

Demographics

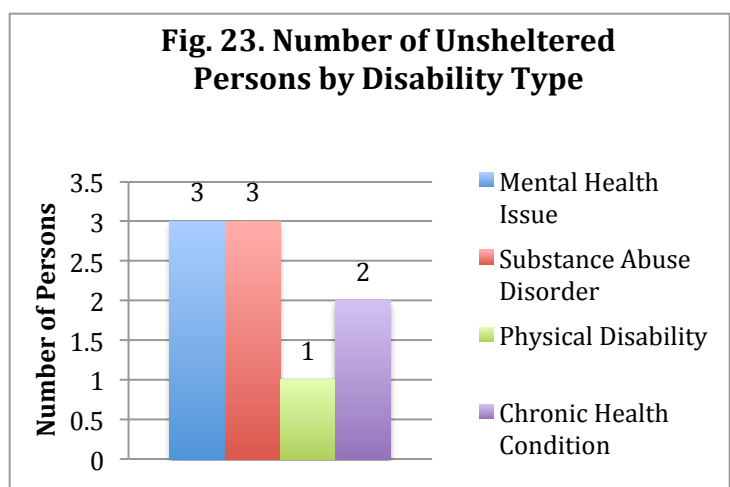
Of the 9 unsheltered persons counted, 3 were under 18 years old (33.3%). Another third (33.3%) of those living unsheltered were between the ages of 25 and 34.

6 of the 9 unsheltered persons were female (66.7%). 33.3% of respondents identified with multiple racial identities, with 7 (77.8%) identifying as White, and 4 (44.4%) identifying as Black or African American. None of the respondents identified as Hispanic.



Disabilities

5 of the unsheltered adults reported a disability. None of the unsheltered children indicated a disability. The most prevalent disabilities identified among unsheltered households were mental health issues and substance abuse disorders. These conditions were reported by 60% of the unsheltered disabled population, representing 50% of the adult unsheltered population.



Subpopulations

On the night of the count, 3 of the unsheltered homeless households in Gloucester County identified as victims of domestic violence. 2 of these households were single adults, and 1 was a family of four.

There were no unsheltered veterans identified on the night of the count.

Income and Benefits

Among all the unsheltered households on the night of the count, 2 (33.3%) reported a source of cash income. 1 (16.7%) reported earned income and 1 (16.7%) reported temporary state disability. The average monthly income among unsheltered households was approximately \$300.

1 unsheltered household (16.7%) reported that they were not receiving any type of non-cash benefit on the night of the count. Food Stamps (SNAP) and Medicaid were equally the top reported non-cash benefits among this population, with 33.3% receiving each benefit, while 16.7% were receiving WIC (Special Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children).

Fig. 24. Number of Unsheltered Households by Income Source

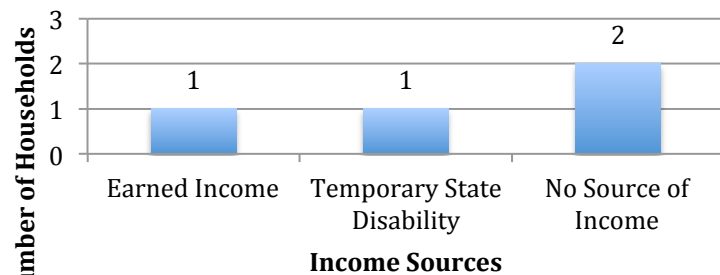
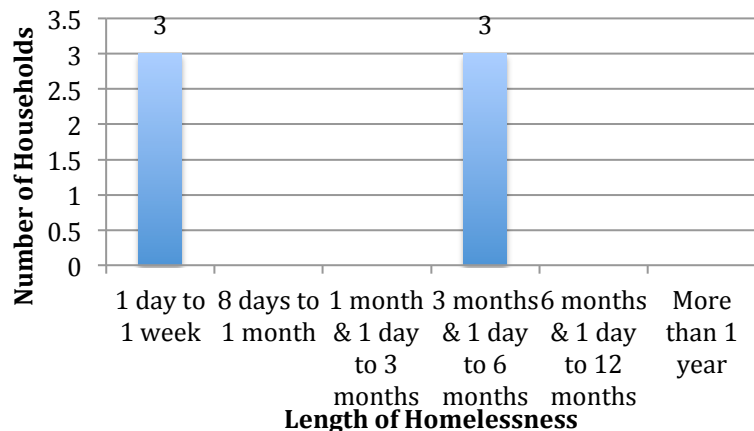


Fig. 25. Number of Unsheltered Households by Length of Homelessness

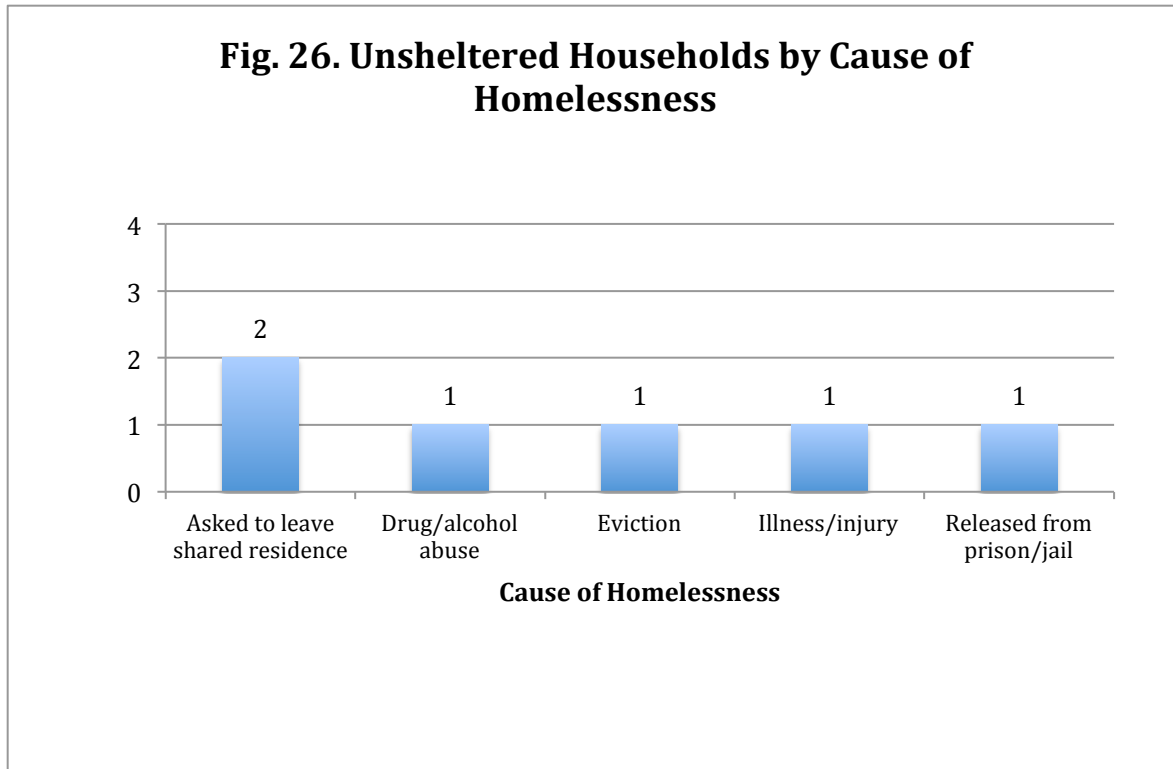


Length of Homelessness

As shown in Figure 25, 3 unsheltered homeless households (50%) reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted between 1 day and 1 week. The other 50% reported a length of homelessness between 3 months and 1 day and 6 months.

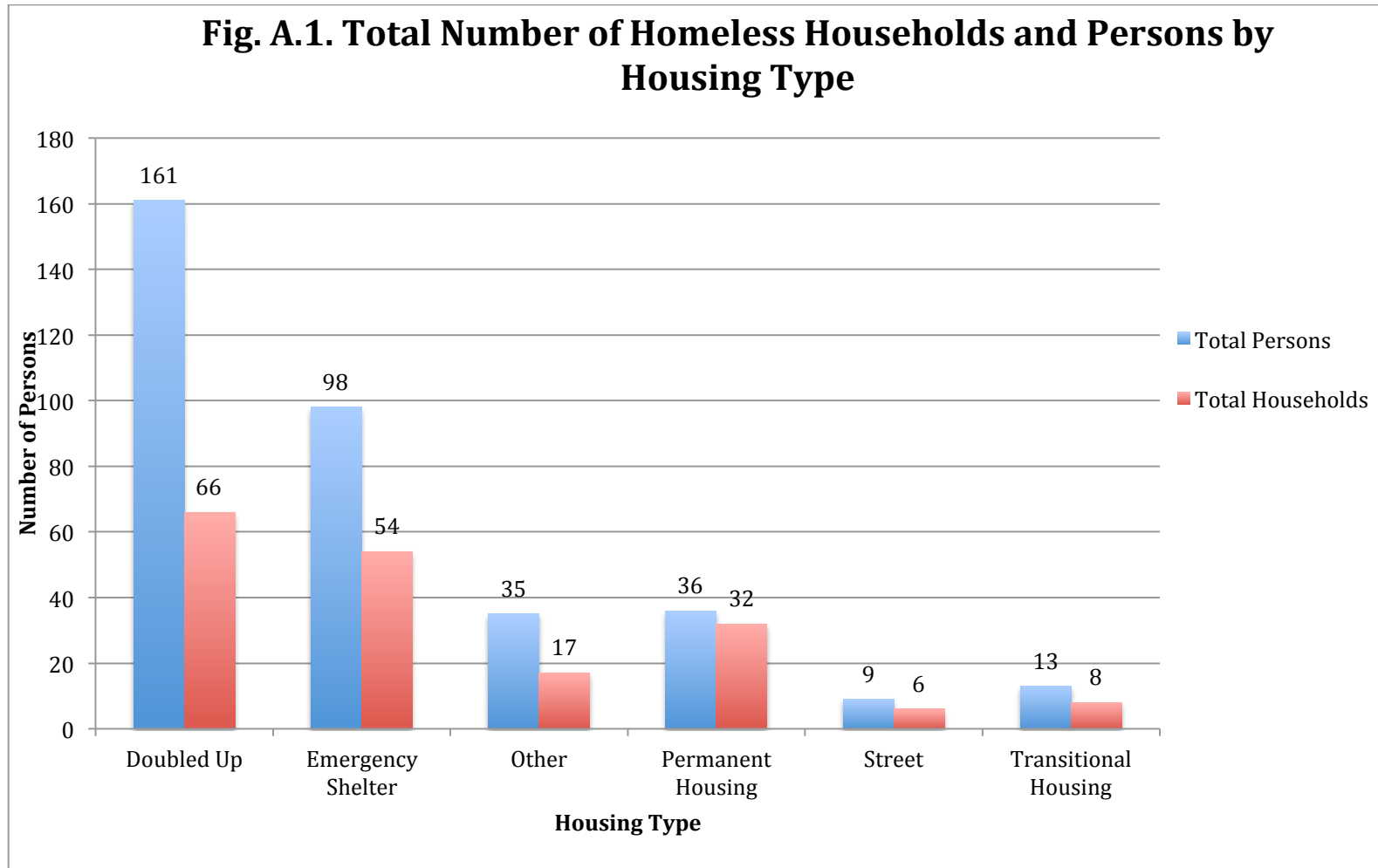
Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more unsheltered households said they had been asked to leave a shared residence. Other reasons cited can be seen in Figure 26.



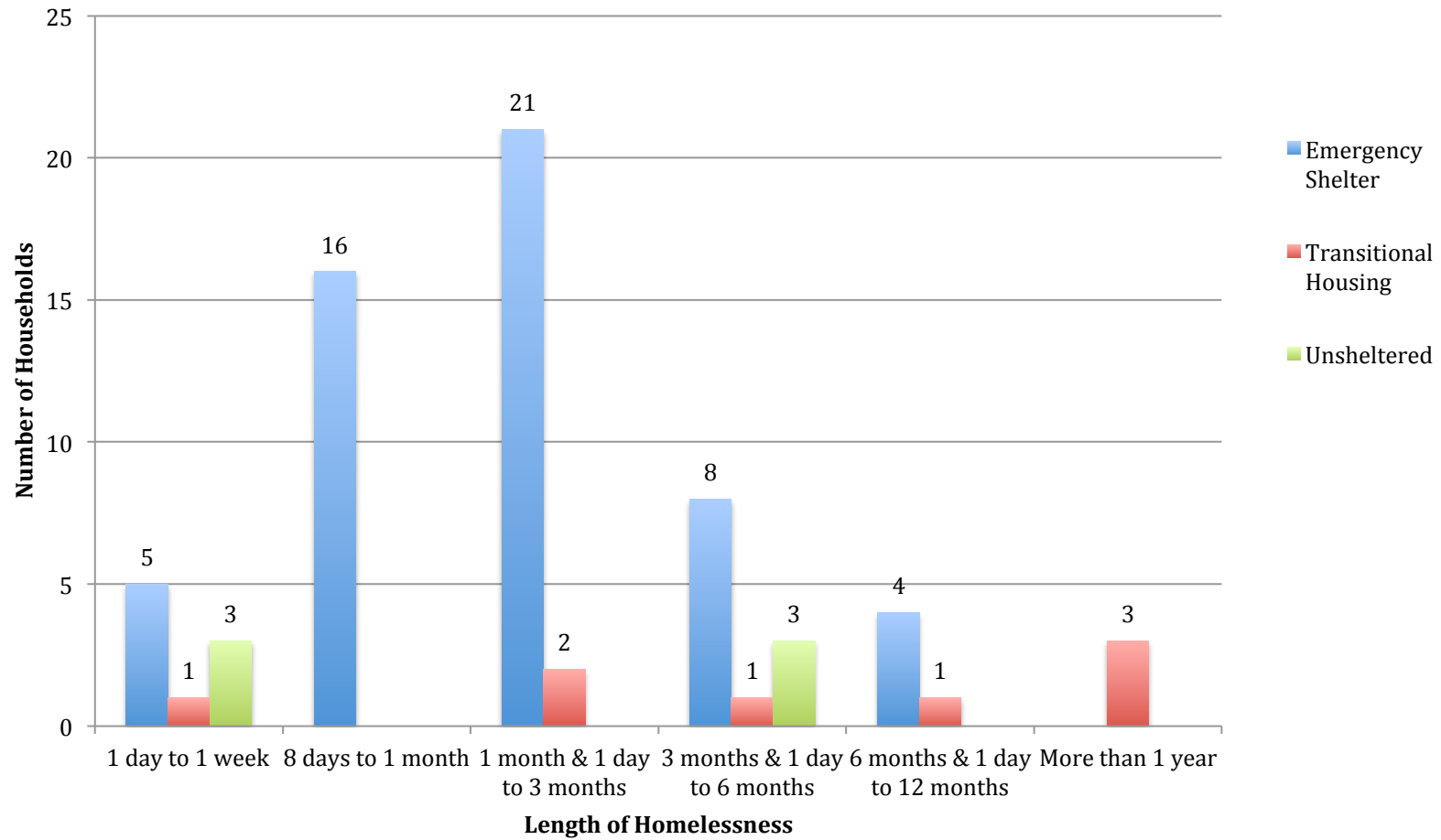
VI. Appendix

Where did you spend the night of Tuesday, February 3, 2015?



How long have you been in your current living situation?

Fig. A.2. Homeless Households by Length of Homelessness and Housing Type



Who was homeless with you on the night of February 3rd?

Fig. A.3. Number of Homeless Persons by Age Range and Housing Type

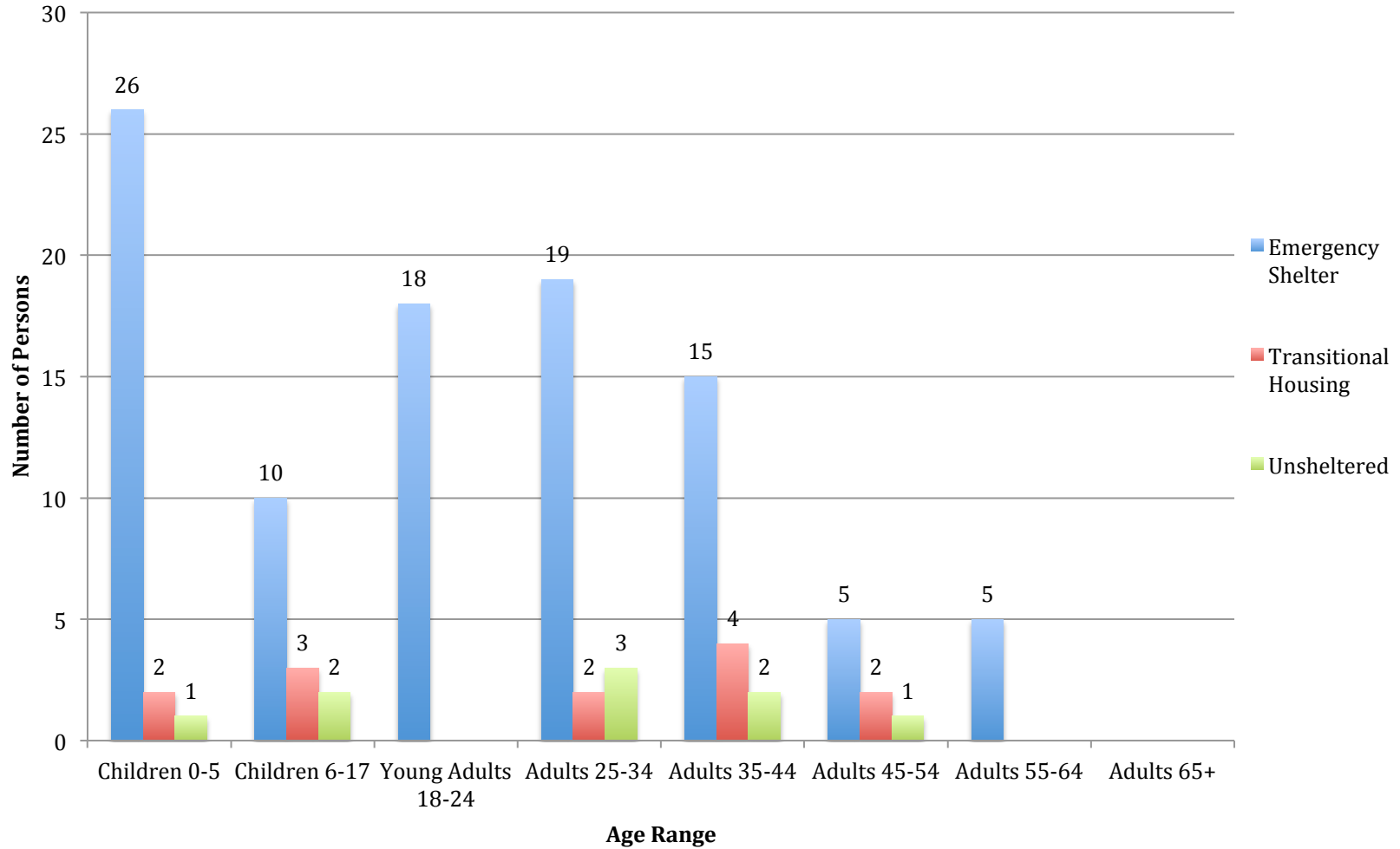


Fig. A.4. Number of Homeless Persons by Gender and Housing Situation

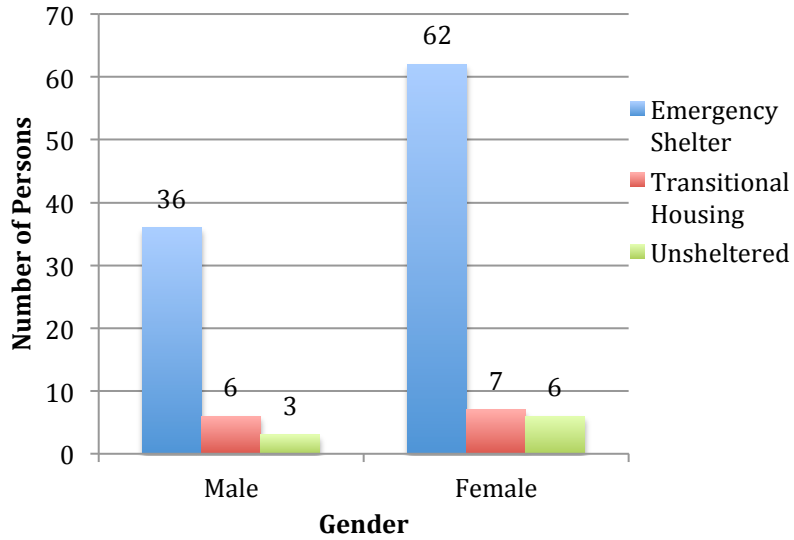


Fig. A.5. Number of Homeless Persons by Race

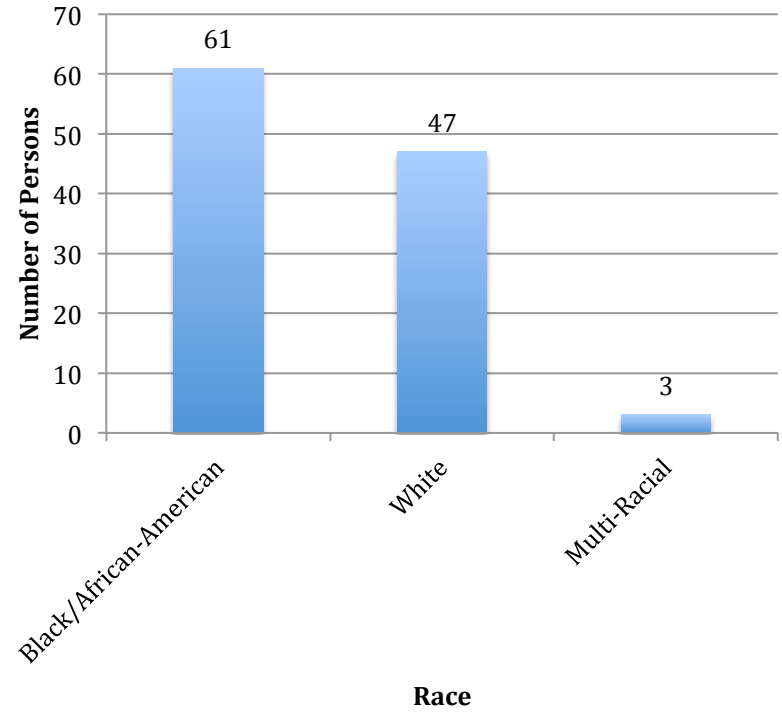
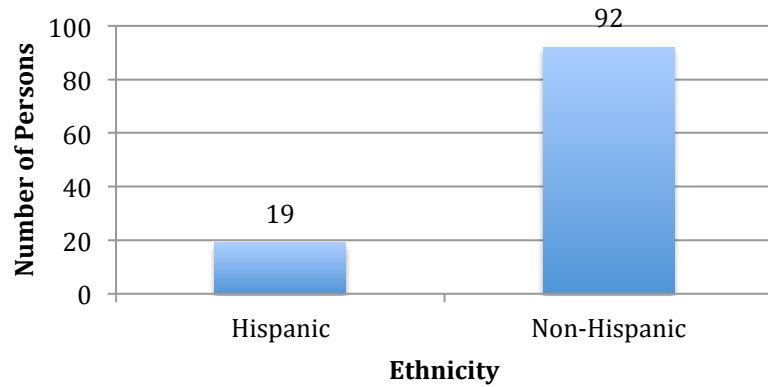
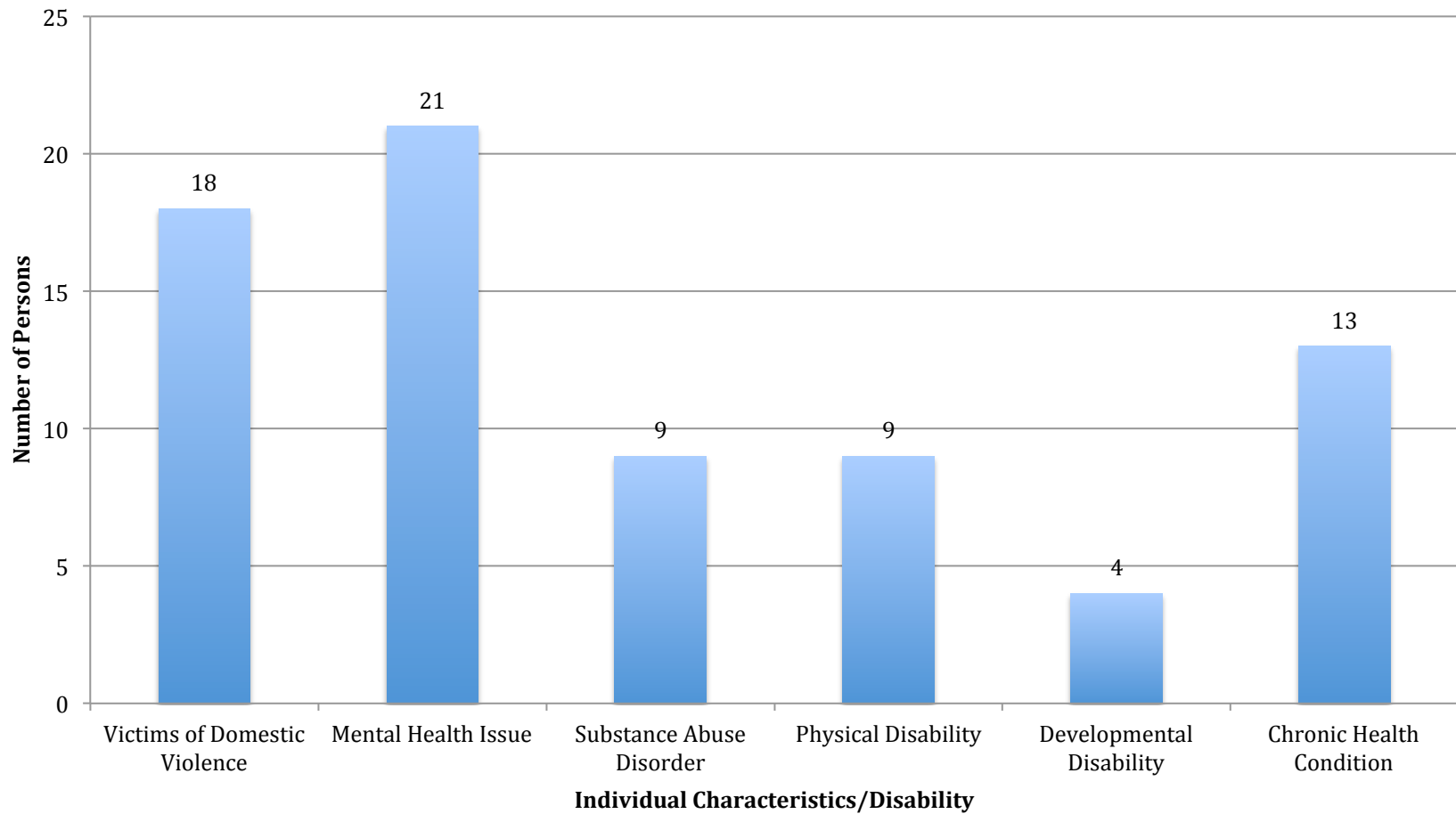


Fig. A.6. Number of Homeless Persons by Ethnicity



Household Characteristics – check all that apply to each person

Fig. A.7. Number of Homeless Persons by Victims of Domestic Violence, Veteran Status, and Disability

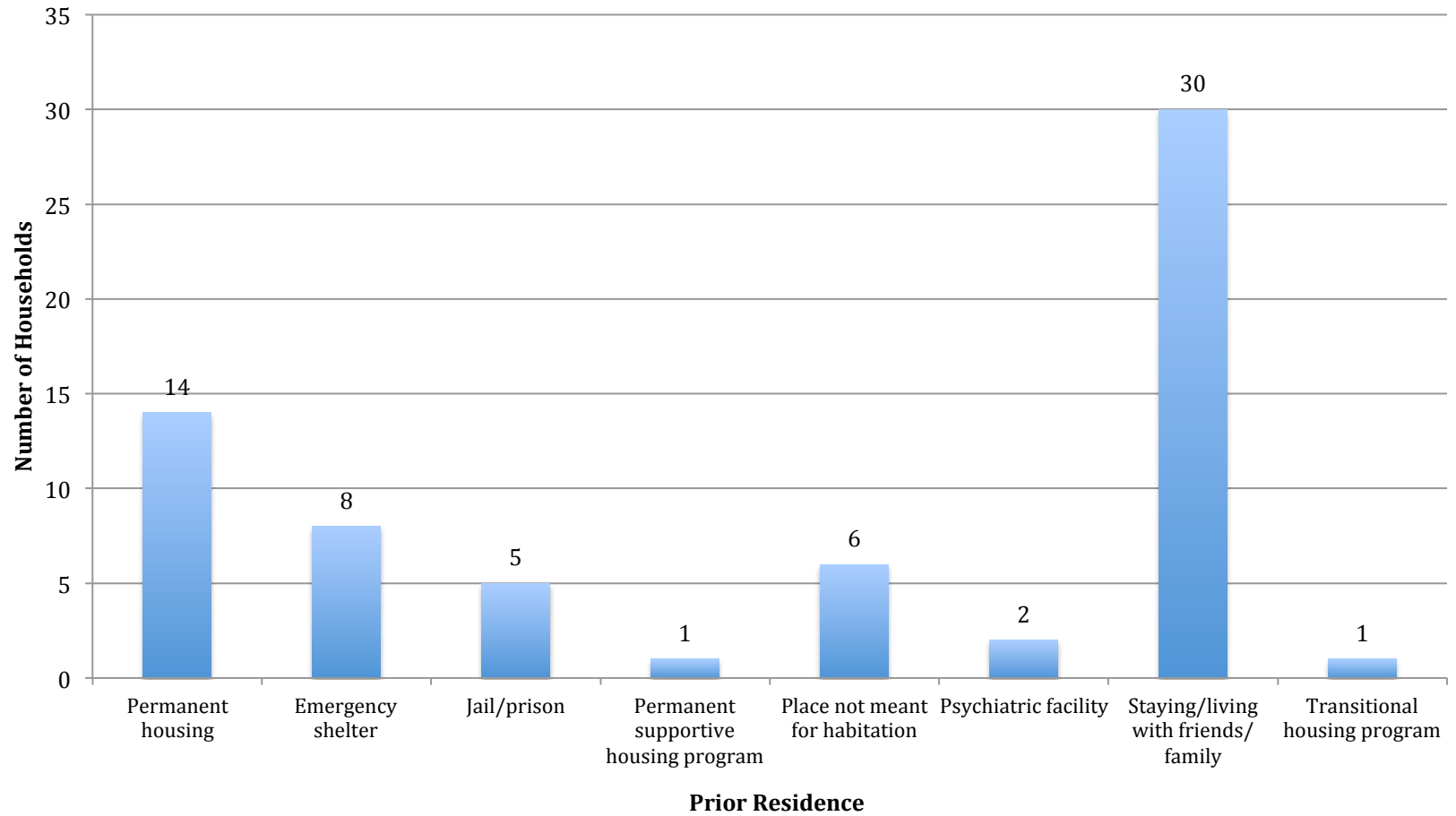


Where was your last permanent address before becoming homeless?

Fig. A.8. Number of Households by County or State of Last Permanent Address	
Last Permanent Address - County/State	Number of Households
Atlantic County	1
Burlington County	1
Camden County	27
Colorado	1
Florida	1
Gloucester County	33
Middlesex County	1
Pennsylvania	1
Salem County	1

What was your residence prior to your current living situation?

Fig. A.9. Number of Homeless Households by Prior Residence



Which of the following sources of income or non-cash benefits do you, or anyone in your household, receive?

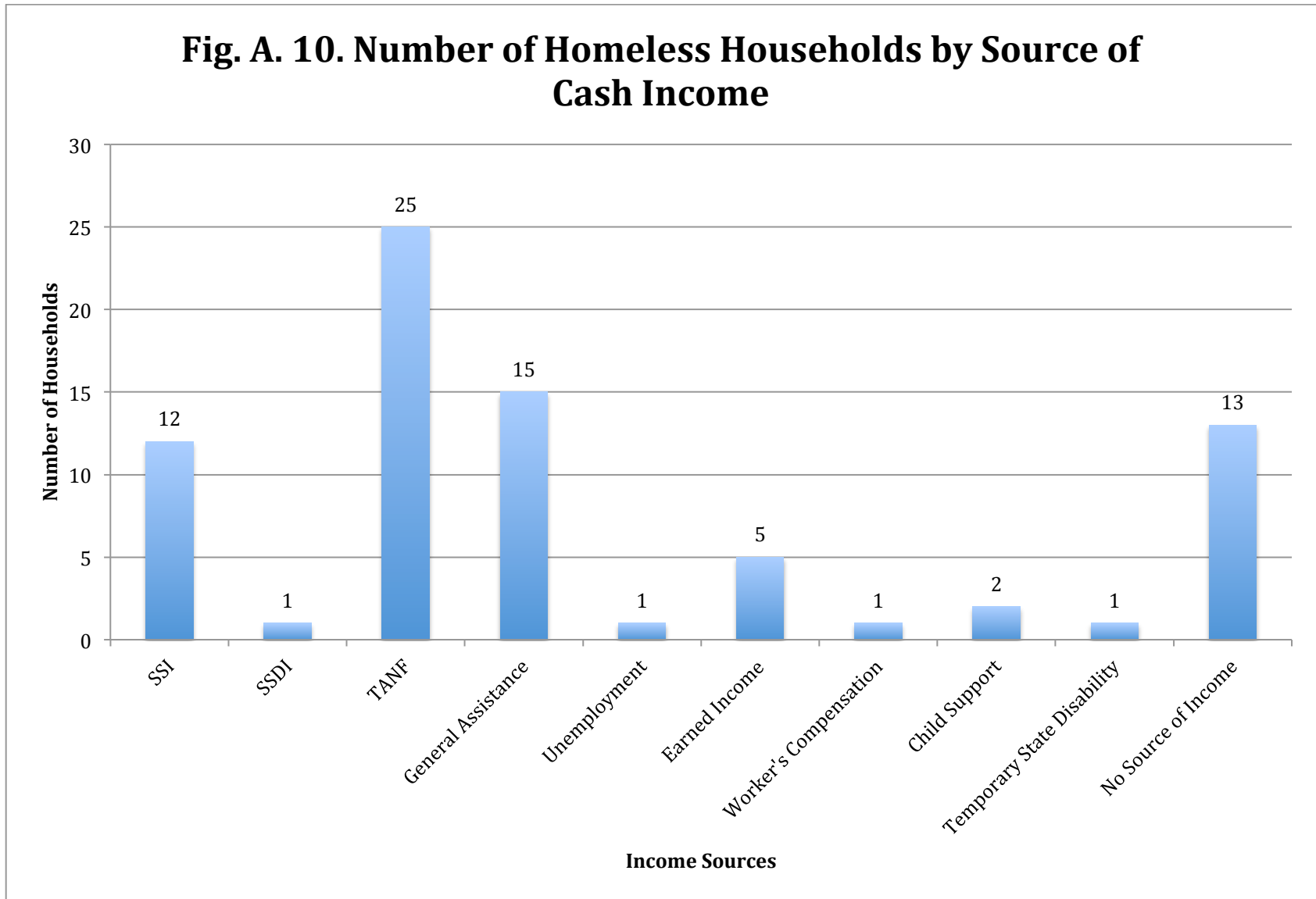
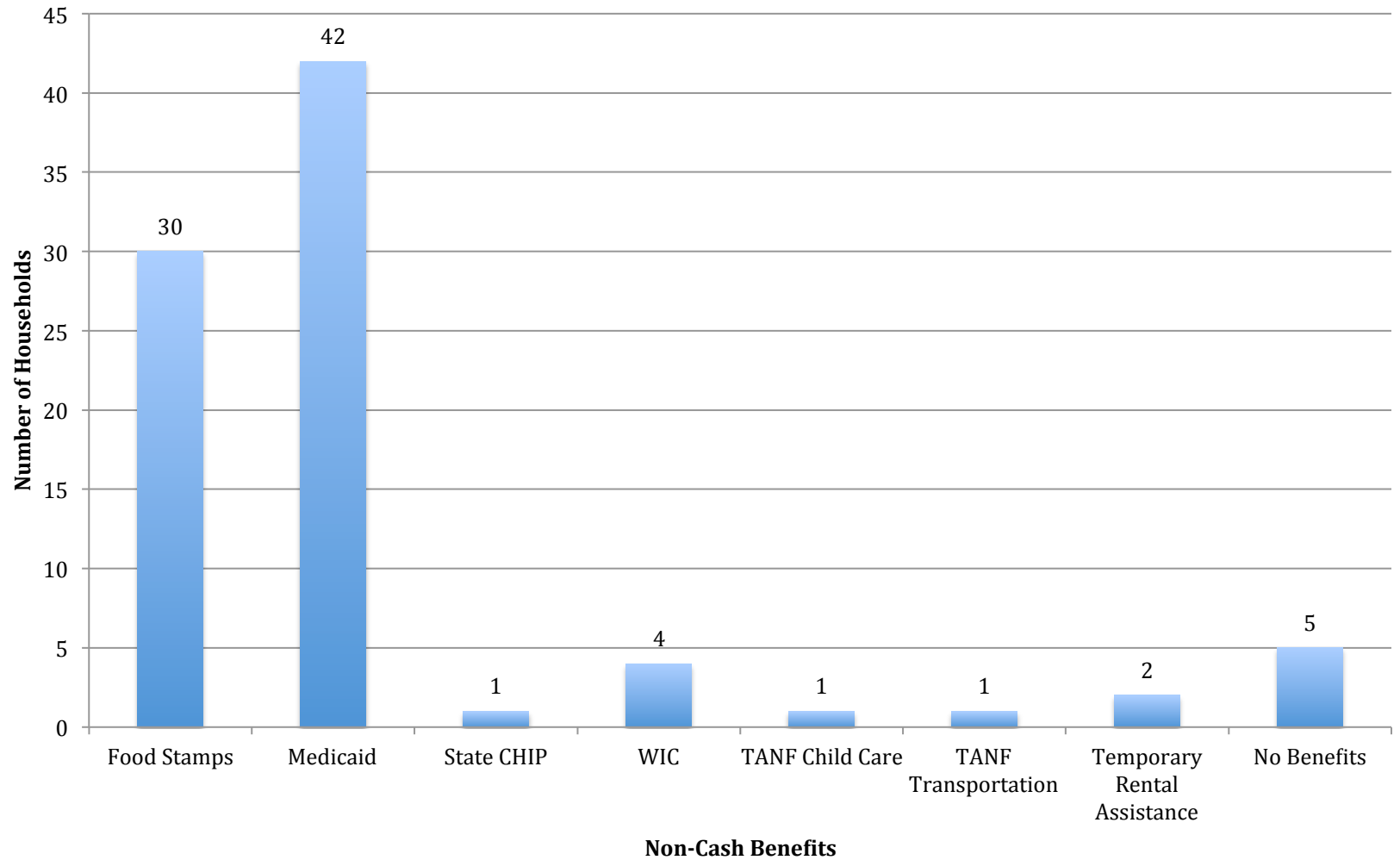
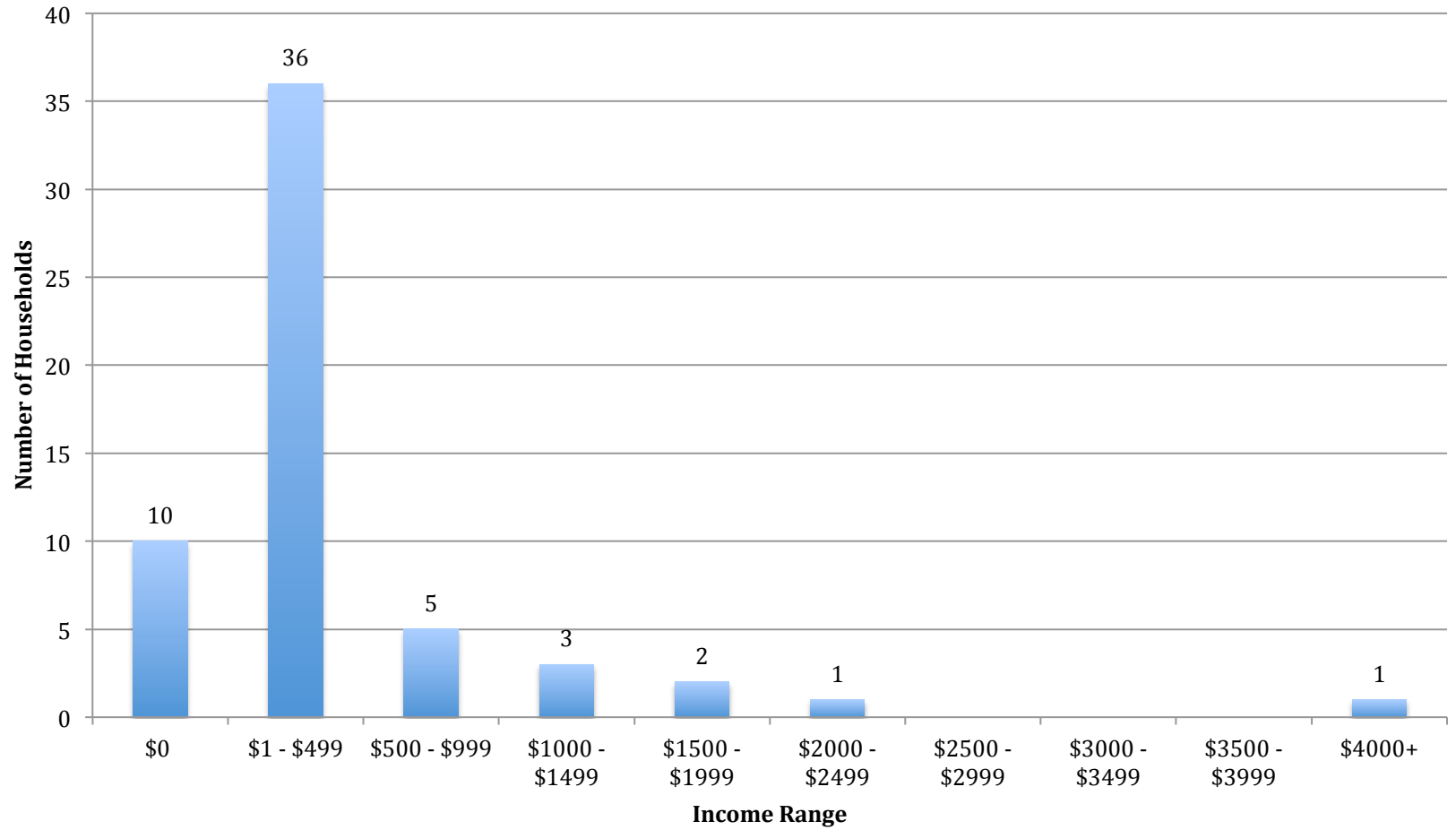


Fig. A. 11. Number of Homeless Households by Sources of Non-Cash Benefits



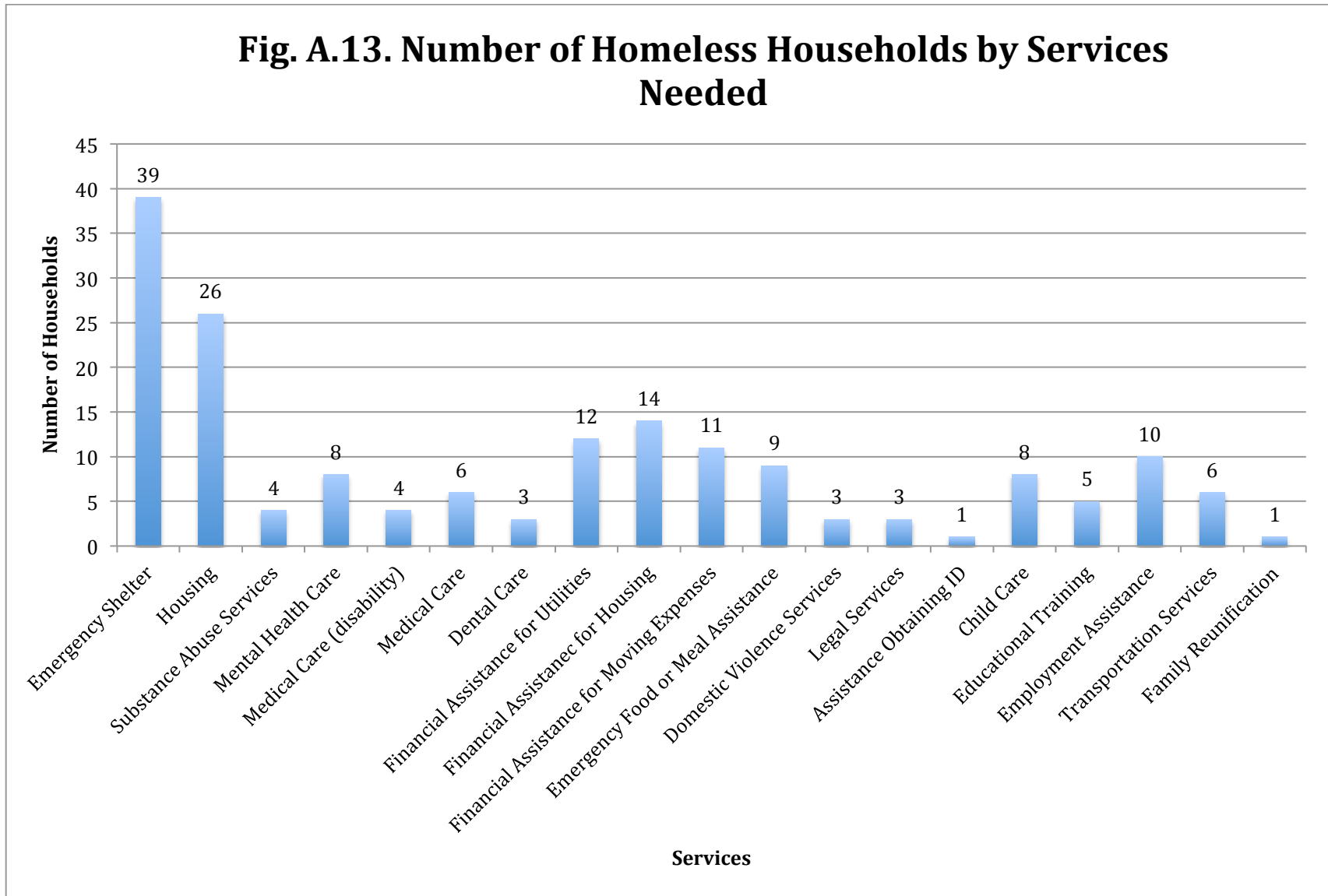
What is your monthly household income?

Fig. A.12. Number of Homeless Households by Monthly Income Range



Would you, or anyone in your household, like to receive any of the following services?

Fig. A.13. Number of Homeless Households by Services Needed



What was the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, your current living situation?

Fig. A.14. Number of Homeless Households by Cause of Homelessness

