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HOUSING ASSOCIATES

NJ
2015
Counts!

New Jersey's 2015
Point-In-Time Count of
the Homeless

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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 nights of the 2015 Point in Time count a total of 7,441 households, including 10,211 persons, were experiencing homelessness in New Jersey
- A total of 1,425 individuals, in 1,249 households, were identified as chronically homeless.
- 900 households, with 974 persons were unsheltered on the night of the count.

County	Total Homeless Persons	% of Total Homeless
Atlantic	548	5.4%
Bergen	340	3.3%
Burlington	1,347	13.2%
Camden	611	6%
Cape May	157	1.5%
Cumberland	201	2%
Essex	1,723	16.9%
Gloucester	120	1.2%
Hudson	917	8.9%
Hunterdon	140	1.4%
Mercer	600	5.9%
Middlesex	604	5.9%
Monmouth	456	4.5%
Morris	384	3.8%
Ocean	605	5.9%
Passaic	459	4.5%
Salem	38	0.3%
Somerset	342	3.3%
Sussex	57	0.6%
Union	504	4.9%
Warren	58	0.6%
Total	10,211	100%

Figure i. Number of Homeless Persons by County and Percentage of State Total

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. Fore this reason, while the comparisons in this report are accurate, the numbers listed for 2014 may not match the report that was released last year.

On the nights of the 2015 point in time count, a total of 10,211 persons, in 7,441 households, were experiencing homelessness in New Jersey. This is a decrease of 1,645 persons (13.9%) and 693 households (8.5%) from 2014.

Fig. 1. 5-Year Comparison of Total Homeless Population by Housing Situation
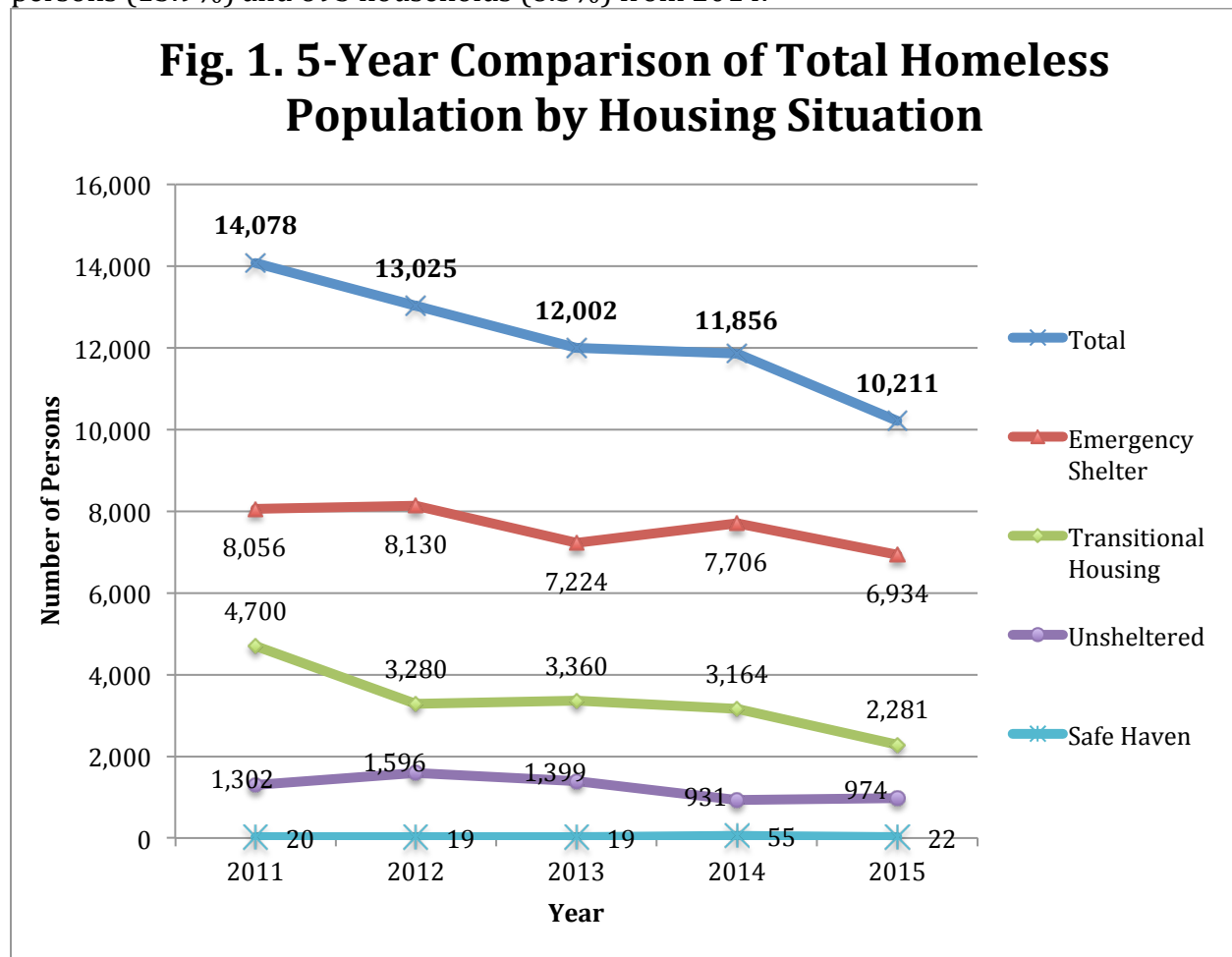
Figure 1 shows that, in 2015, 6,934 homeless persons stayed in emergency shelters, 2,281 stayed in transitional housing, 22 were in safe havens, and 974 were living unsheltered on the night of the count. When comparing to 2014, decreases are seen in the number of homeless persons staying in emergency shelter (772 persons, 10%), transitional housing (883 persons, 27.9%), and safe havens (33 persons, 60%). While this is true, there was a slight increase in the number of unsheltered persons counted in 2015 when compared to 2014 (43 persons, 4.6%).

Figure 1 also shows that, over the past five years, the total number of homeless persons has been consistently declining. New Jersey has seen an overall decrease of 3,867 persons, or 27.5% from 2011 to 2015. The largest decrease can be seen in transitional housing (2,419 persons, 51.5%).

As Figure 2 shows, 5% of the homeless households in New Jersey in 2015 reported that their last permanent address prior to becoming homeless was outside of the state.

Fig. 2. Percentage of Households by State of Last Permanent Address
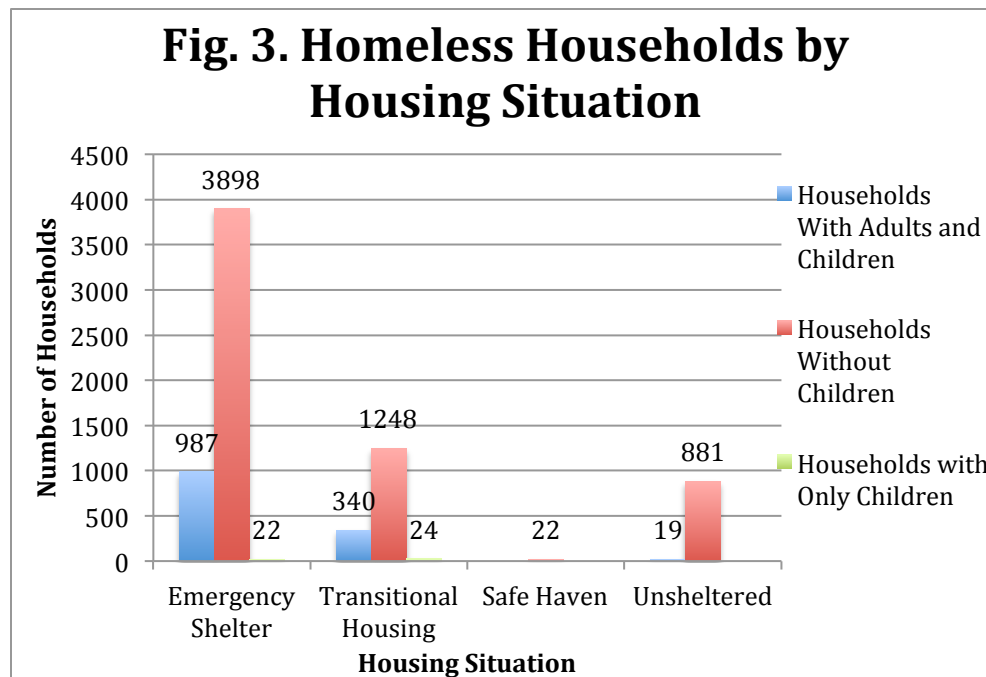

- New Jersey
- Out of State

5%
95%
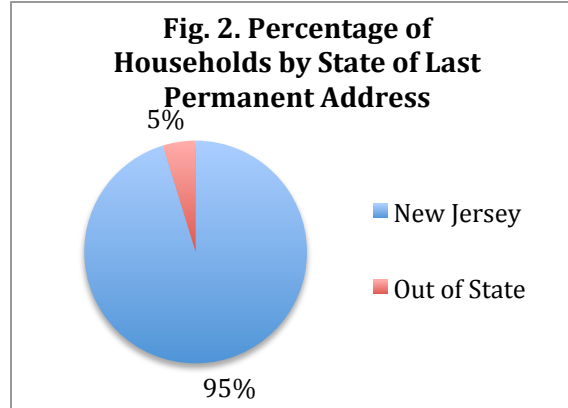
Homeless Families and Individuals

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').

Fig. 3. Homeless Households by Housing Situation

Of the 7,441 homeless households counted in New Jersey in 2015, 1,346 (18.1%) were families with at least one child under the age of 18 and one adult. This is a decrease of about 21% from 2014. These families included 4,014 persons, including 2.425 children under age 18 and 1,589 adults. The average family size was 3 persons. Figure 3 shows that 987 families (73.3%) were staying in emergency shelters. There were 19 unsheltered families with adults and children, including 78 persons. This is an increase of 11 unsheltered families from 2014.

6,049 (81.3%) of the homeless households in New Jersey were households without children under 18, and they were composed of 6,151 adult individuals. This is a decrease of about 3% from the number of adult only households in 2014. The majority of adult only households (64.4%) were staying in emergency shelters on the night of the count. 881 were unsheltered in 2015, an increase of 15 households from 2014.

As Figure 3 indicates, 46 households with only children under 18 years old were reported in 2015, a decrease a 23 households from 2014. 52.2% of these unaccompanied youth households were staying in transitional housing project. There were 0 unsheltered youth households in 2015, a decrease from the 2 reported in 2014.

Demographics

There were a total of 1,074 (10.5%) homeless adults between 18 and 24 years old, 6,666 (65.3%) adults over age 24, and 2,471 (24.2%) children under 18 years old experiencing homelessness on the night of the count. Figure 4 shows that similar to 2014, the age range most represented is Adults between 45 and 54 (1,981 persons, 19.4%).

Fig. 4. Age Range by Housing Situation
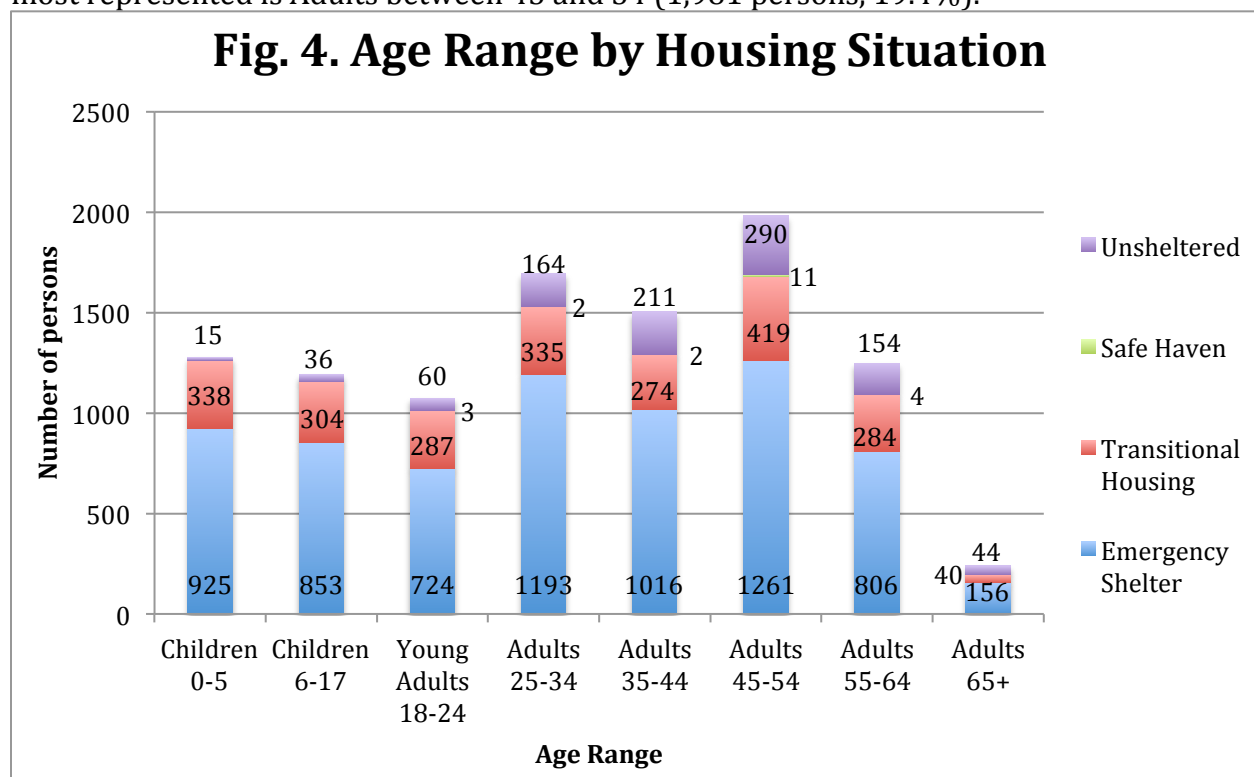
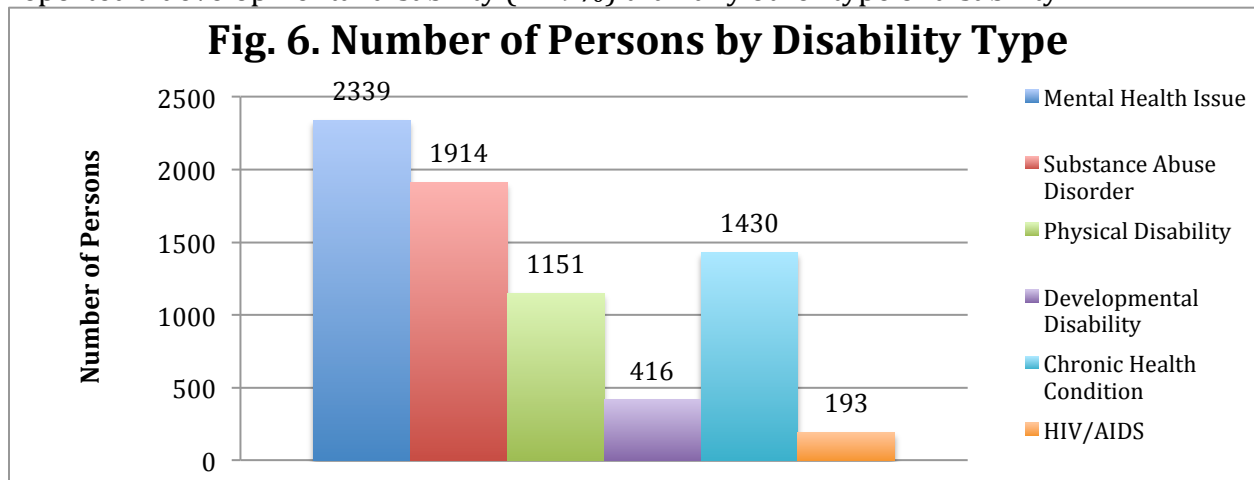58.3% of homeless persons were male, 41.3% were female, and 11 (0.1%) were transgendered.

52.7% of persons identified their race as Black or African-American, making this the largest racial subgroup of homeless persons counted. The next largest group self-identified as White (40.7%), followed by those identifying as Asian (1%%). With regard to ethnicity, 17.1% of persons identified themselves as Hispanic.

Disabilities

Figure 5 illustrates that 42% of homeless persons reported having some type of disability. 52.4% of adults 18 or older reported some type of disability compared to 7.9% of children. Figure 6 shows the number of the homeless persons that identified as having various disabilities. The most common disabilities included mental health issues and substance abuse disorders.

Fig. 5. Percentage of Population with a Disability

58%   42%

■ Disabled   ■ No Disability
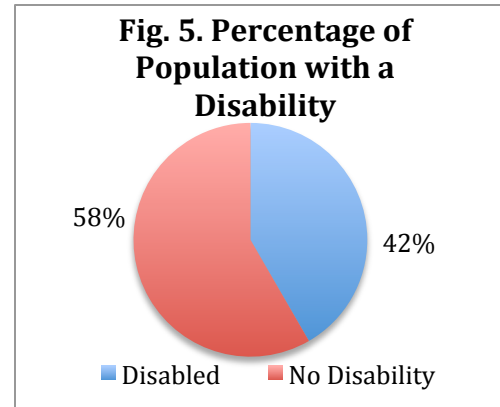
Among disabled adults, 55.8% reported mental health issues making this the most prevalent disability (29.3% of all homeless adults). More disabled homeless children reported a developmental disability (42.9%) than any other type of disability.

Fig. 6. Number of Persons by Disability Type

Number of Persons

2339, 1914, 1151, 416, 1430, 193

■ Mental Health Issue
■ Substance Abuse Disorder
■ Physical Disability
■ Developmental Disability
■ Chronic Health Condition
■ HIV/AIDS

Victims of Domestic Violence

On the night of the count, in New Jersey, 877 homeless households (11.8% of all households) reported having a victim of domestic violence, this is a decrease of approximately 36 domestic violence households counted in 2014. The majority of these households (59.9%) were adult-only households. 350 (39.9%) of the victim households were families with at least 1 adult and 1 child and there were 2 youth only households that reported being a victim of domestic violence. 10.3% of domestic violence households were unsheltered on the night of the count.

Fig. 7. Households of Victims of Domestic Violence by Housing Situation

Number of Households

Households with Children: 242, 104, 4
Households without Children: 351, 86, 2, 86
Households with only Children: 1, 1

Household Type

■ Unsheltered
■ Safe Haven
■ Transitional Housing
■ Emergency Shelter
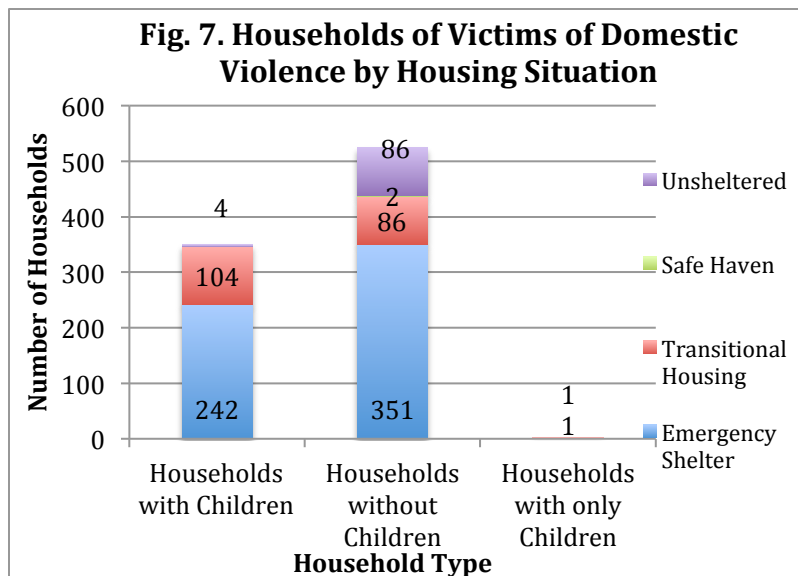
Veterans

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.

695 homeless veteran households, composed of 738 persons were counted on the nights of the 2015 count, an increase of about 74 households (11.9%) from 2014. 674 households were individual veterans, 6 were adult only households and the remaining 15 households (2.2%) were veteran families. The largest contingent of homeless veteran households was found to be staying in transitional housing (47.5%). There were 80 unsheltered veteran households, composed of 85 persons in 2015. This is an increase of 5 households from 2014.

Fig. 8. Number of Persons in Veteran's Households by Housing Situation

- Emergency Shelter: 315
- Transitional Housing: 336
- Safe Haven: 2
- Unsheltered: 85

(Number of Persons / Housing Type)
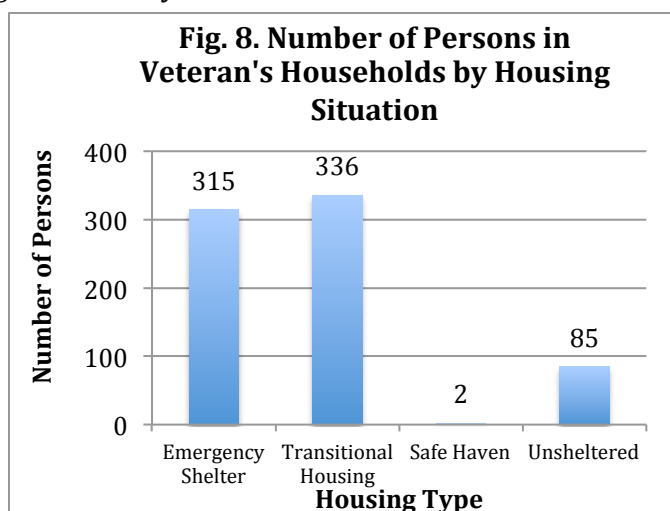
The large majority of persons in veteran households were male (89.6%). The most common racial background identified among persons in veteran households was Black or African American (53%). Another 43% identified as White. Figure 9 Illustrates the percentage of persons in veteran households by age range.

Fig. 9. Persons in Veteran's Households by Age Range

- 0-5: 14 (2%)
- 6-17: 13 (2%)
- 18-24: 8 (1%)
- 25-34: 78 (10%)
- 35-44: 79 (11%)
- 45-54: 233 (32%)
- 55-64: 259 (35%)
- 65+: 54 (7%)

40 individual veterans reported being victims of domestic violence and 536 persons in veteran households (72.6%) reported having some kind of disability. The most common disabilities reported were mental health issues (59.9%), substance abuse disorders (54.5%) and chronic health conditions (44.4%).
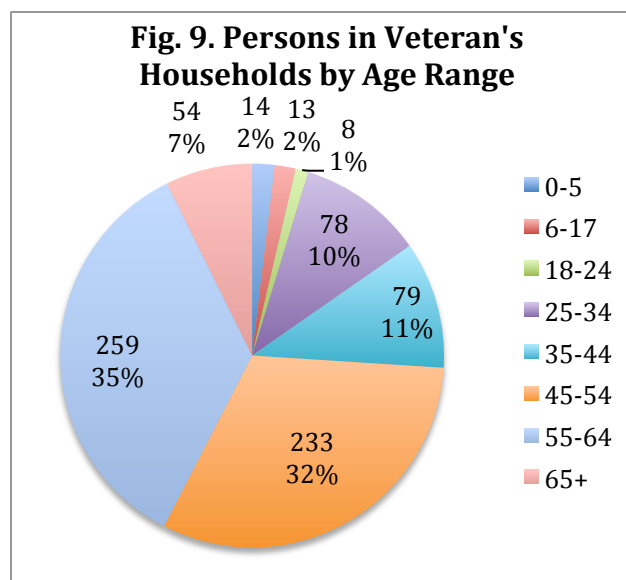
41.7% of veteran households reported no source of cash income. 3.2% of veteran households reported receiving Veteran's Pension and 13.2% reported receiving Veteran's Disability. In regards to non-cash benefits, nearly half (47.3%) of veterans households said they were connected to VA Benefits. The top three services that homeless veteran households sought were emergency shelter (59.6%), financial assistance for housing (25.6%) and mental health care (23.7%).

Income and Benefits

Among all homeless households on the night of the count, 36.6% had no source of income, and 8.4% reported having earned income. The three most common sources of income among households were General Assistance (GA), SSI, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), with 21%, 19.6%, and 11.5% of households receiving each, respectively.
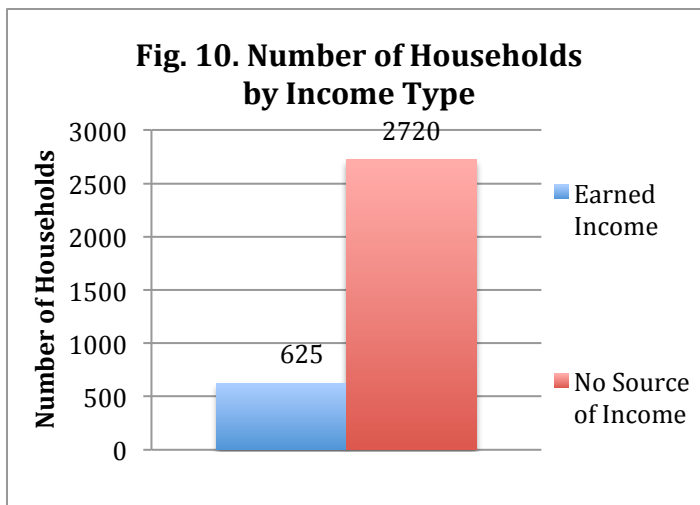
Fig. 10. Number of Households by Income Type

Figure 11 show the average monthly income among households in each housing situation.

Figure 11. Average Monthly Income For Households by Housing Situation				
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Safe Haven	Unsheltered
Average for All Households	$435.64	$735.00	$312.08	$277.22

23.9% of homeless households reported receiving no kind of non-cash benefit on the nights of the count. Food Stamps, or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), was the top reported non-cash benefit, and was received by 49.4% of households. 43.8% were receiving Medicaid, and 4.5% were connected to VA Benefits.

Length of Homelessness

As seen in Figure 12, 19.2% of the homeless households reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness was from 1 month and 1 day to 3 months. This was the most common response among households, followed by those who had been homeless 3

Fig. 12. Length of Homelessness Among Households
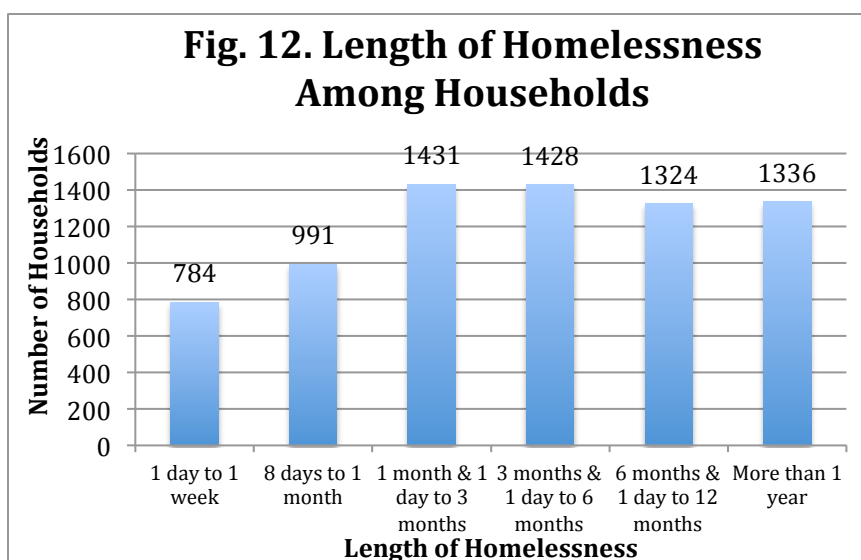
months and 1 day to 6 months (19.2%). There was a slight decrease in the number of households reporting that their most recent episode of homelessness lasted more than 1 year when compared to 2014, 20.7% in 2014 to 18% in 2015.

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 (1591 households, 21.4%) than any other cause. As Figure 13 shows, the next most common factor reported was a loss or reduction in their job income or benefits (16.8%) followed by eviction (12.7%).

Fig. 13. Cause of Homelessness by Household
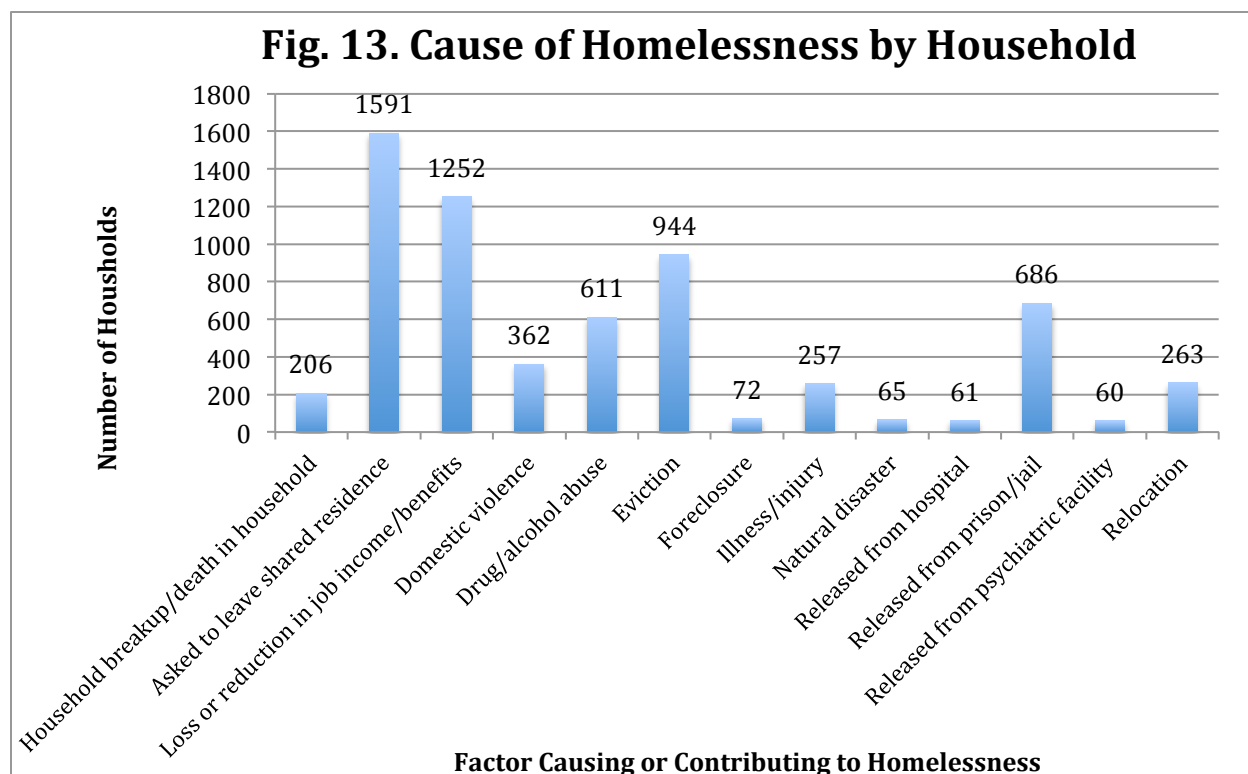
When households were asked 'what was your residence prior to your current living situation?' more said they were staying or living with friends or family (37.1%) than any other type of residence. 16.9% reported residing in an emergency shelter and 14.6% reported residing in permanent housing prior to 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 currently has 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

1,249 households, made up of 1,425 persons, were chronically homeless in New Jersey, according to the 2015 Point-In-Time Count. This is an increase of 3 households, but a decrease of 74 persons (4.9%) from 2014. The rate of chronic homelessness as a percentage of overall homelessness in New Jersey was 14%.

Fig. 14. 5-Year Comparison of Chronic Homeless Population by Housing Situation
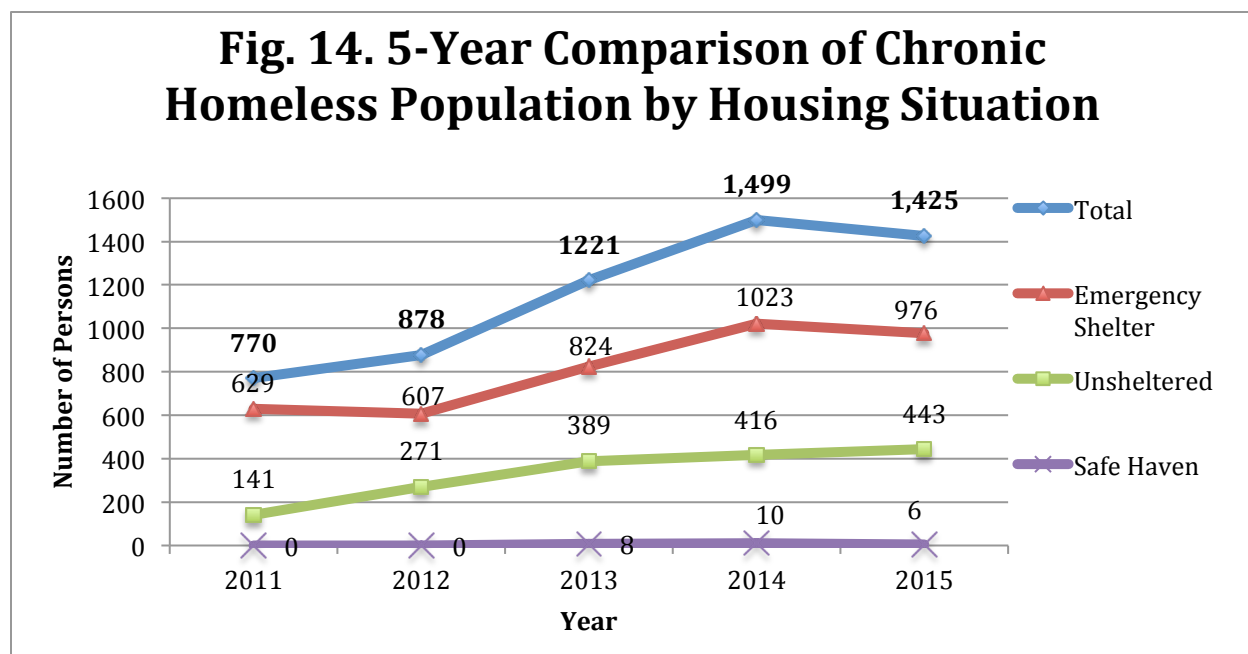
Figure 14 shows the number of chronically homeless respondents who were in emergency shelters, safe havens or living unsheltered in New Jersey from 2011 to 2015. As seen in Figure 14, the total number of chronically homeless persons has risen steadily from 2011 to 2014, but 2015 shows a change in the trend with a slight decrease from 2014. Even with this decrease, when looking at the total number of chronically homeless from 2011, 2015 shows an increase of about 85%.

Families and Individuals

Of the 1,249 chronically homeless households counted in 2015, 75 (6%) were households with at least 1 adult and 1 child; 2 less than 2014. 3 unsheltered chronically homeless families were counted (4%).

Fig. 15. Chronically Homeless Households Type by Housing Situation

Number of Households (vertical axis)

- Emergency Shelter: Households With Adults and Children = 72; Households Without Children = 737
- Safe Haven: Households Without Children = 6
- Unsheltered: Households With Adults and Children = 3; Households Without Children = 431

Legend:
- Households With Adults and Children
- Households Without Children

Housing Type (horizontal axis)

The remaining 1,174 chronically homeless households (94%) were adult-only households, composed of 1,197 persons. The majority of adult-only households (62.8%) were in emergency shelter, while 36.7% were unsheltered on the night of the count.
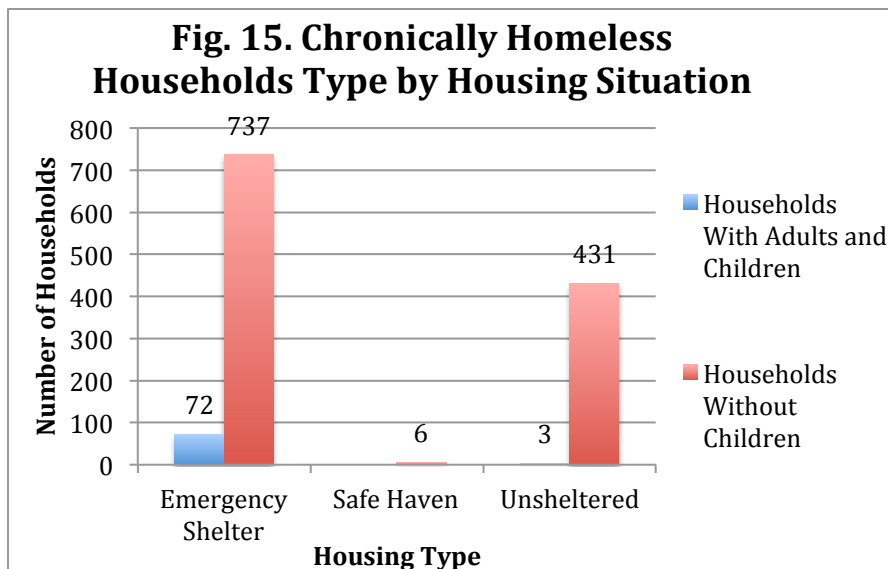
Demographics

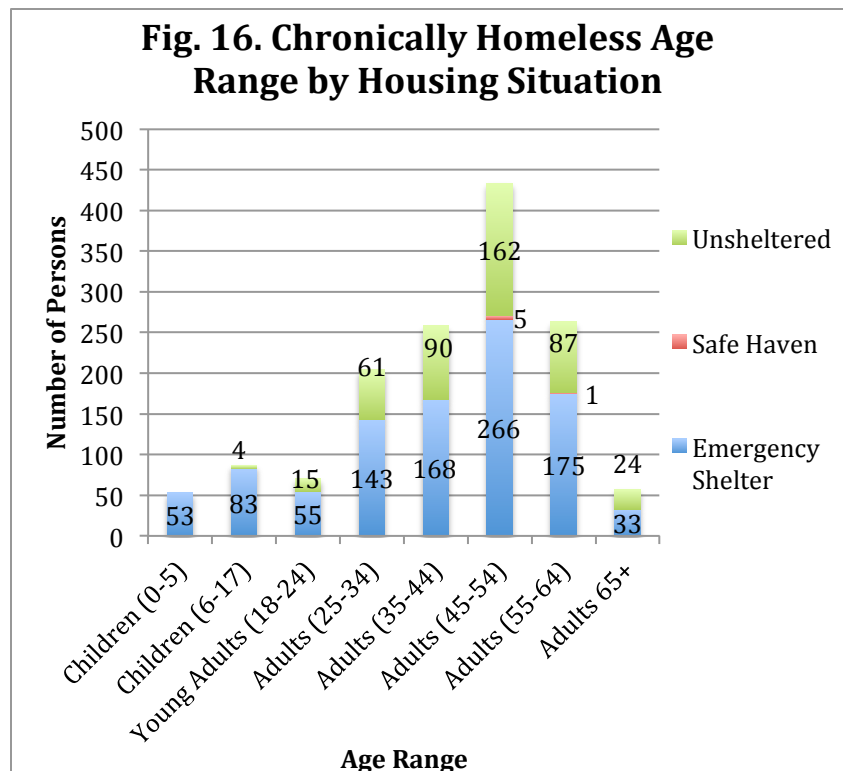Of the 1,425 total chronically homeless persons, 70 (4.9%) were between 18 and 24 years old and 140 (9.8%) were children 17 or younger. Figure 16 shows that the largest number of chronically homeless persons (433, 30.4%) in a single category fell between the ages of 45 and 54 years of age.

Fig. 16. Chronically Homeless Age Range by Housing Situation

Number of Persons (vertical axis)

- Children (0-5): Emergency Shelter = 53
- Children (6-17): Emergency Shelter = 83; Unsheltered = 4
- Young Adults (18-24): Emergency Shelter = 55; Unsheltered = 15
- Adults (25-34): Emergency Shelter = 143; Unsheltered = 61
- Adults (35-44): Emergency Shelter = 168; Unsheltered = 90
- Adults (45-54): Emergency Shelter = 266; Safe Haven = 5; Unsheltered = 162
- Adults (55-64): Emergency Shelter = 175; Safe Haven = 1; Unsheltered = 87
- Adults 65+: Emergency Shelter = 33; Unsheltered = 24

Legend:
- Unsheltered
- Safe Haven
- Emergency Shelter

Age Range (horizontal axis)

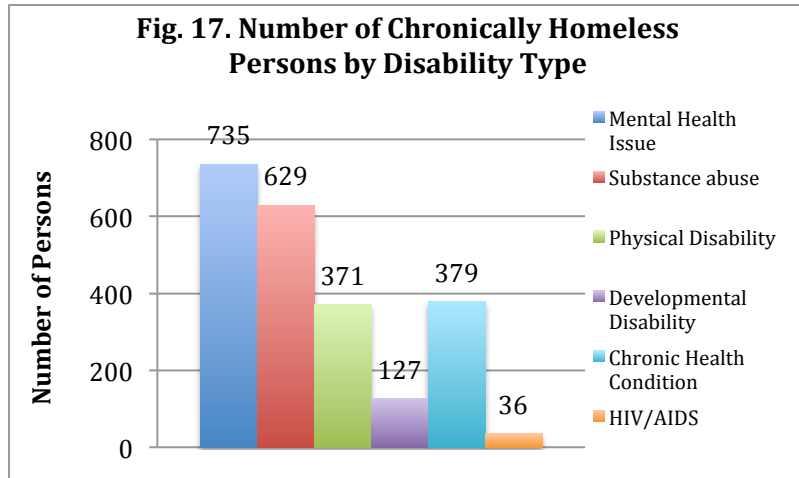66.5% of chronically homeless persons were male, 32.9% were female and 2 were transgendered.

The largest racial subgroup of chronically homeless persons reported their race as White (49.1%). The next largest group self-identified as Black or African-American (45.5%), followed by persons identifying as Asian (1.2%). With regard to ethnicity, 13.3% of chronically homeless persons identified themselves as Hispanic.

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 and substance abuse disorders.
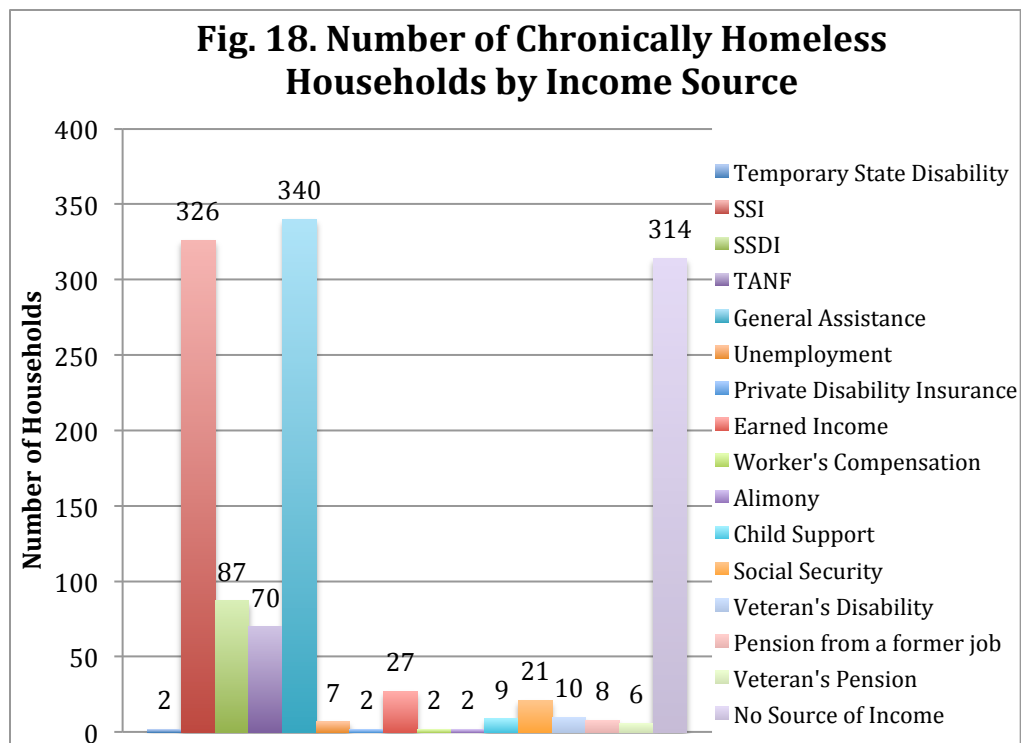
Subpopulations

Fig. 17. Number of Chronically Homeless Persons by Disability Type

Number of Persons

- Mental Health Issue: 735
- Substance abuse: 629
- Physical Disability: 371
- Developmental Disability: 127
- Chronic Health Condition: 379
- HIV/AIDS: 36

On the nights of the count, 146 chronically homeless households in New Jersey, composed of 194 persons reported having a victim of domestic violence (11.7%). The majority of these households (94, 64.4%) were staying in emergency shelters while the remaining 52 households (35.6%) were unsheltered.

There were 108 veteran households identified as chronically homeless on the night of the count (8.6%). 60 (55.6%) were in emergency shelters, 2 (1.9%) were in safe havens, and 46 (42.6%) were unsheltered.

Income and Benefits

Among all the chronically homeless households on the nights of the count, 25.1% reported receiving no type of cash income. Figure 18 shows the sources of income received. The most common

Fig. 18. Number of Chronically Homeless Households by Income Source

Number of Households

- Temporary State Disability: 2
- SSI: 326
- SSDI: 87
- TANF: 70
- General Assistance
- Unemployment: 7
- Private Disability Insurance: 2
- Earned Income: 27
- Worker's Compensation: 2
- Alimony: 2
- Child Support: 9
- Social Security: 21
- Veteran's Disability: 10
- Pension from a former job: 8
- Veteran's Pension: 6
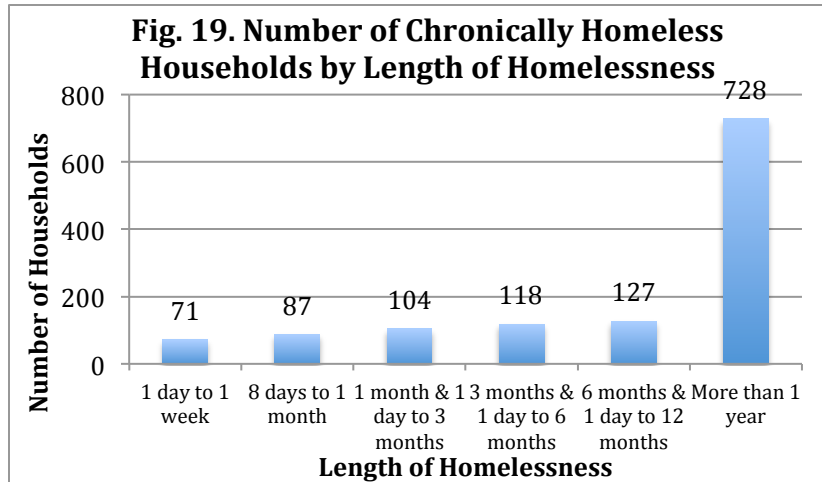- No Source of Income: 314

source of cash income among all chronically homeless households was General Assistance, which was received by 27.2%, followed by SSI (27.2%). 2.2% of chronically homeless households reported having earned income.

18.4% of chronically homeless households reported they were not receiving any type of non-cash benefit on the nights of the count. Food Stamps (SNAP) was the top reported non-cash benefit among this population, with 51.3% reporting receiving this benefit. 42% of households also reported being connected to Medicaid benefits.
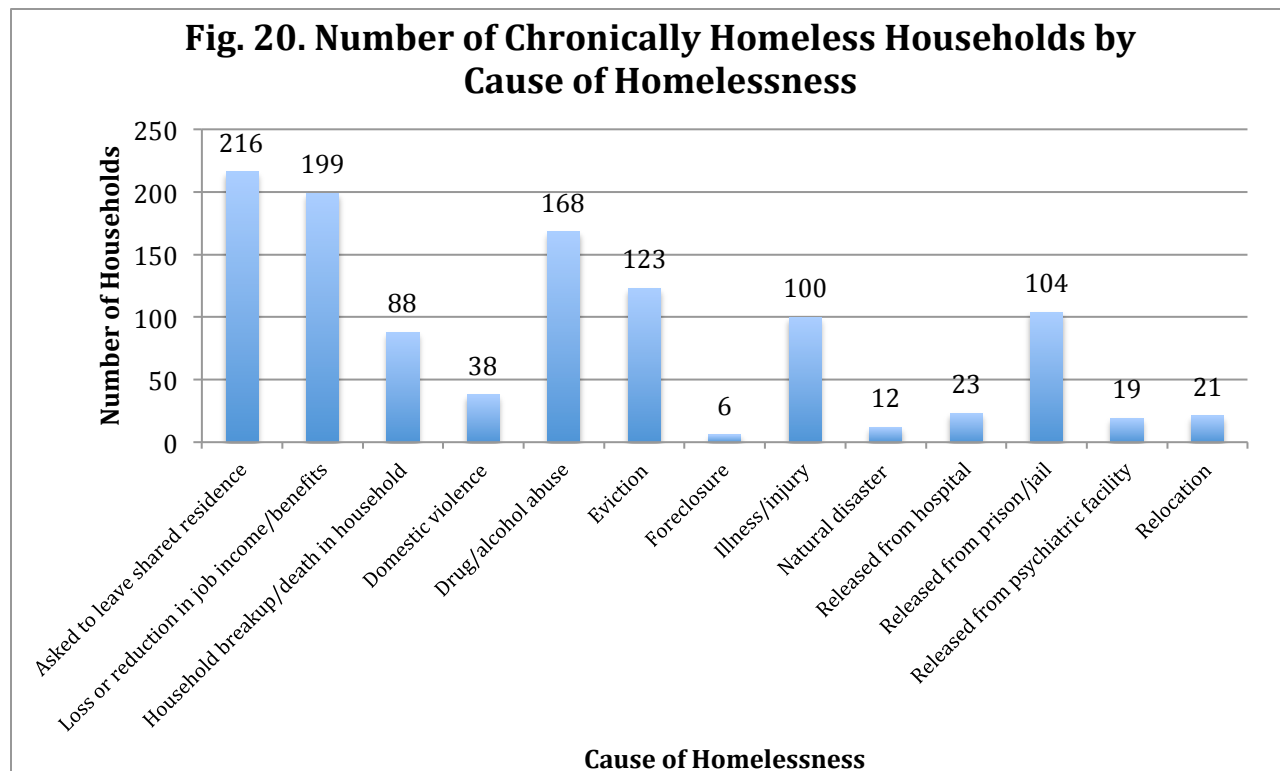
Length of Homelessness

Figure 19 shows that similar to 2014, the majority of chronically homeless households (58.3%) reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted for more than 1 year.

Fig. 19. Number of Chronically Homeless Households by Length of Homelessness

Number of Households

Length of Homelessness	Number
1 day to 1 week	71
8 days to 1 month	87
1 month & 1 day to 3 months	104
3 months & 1 day to 6 months	118
6 months & 1 day to 12 months	127
More than 1 year	728

Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more chronically homeless households cited being asked to leave a shared residence (17.3%) than any other. As Figure 20 shows, the next most common factors were a loss or reduction in job income or benefits (15.9%) and drug or alcohol abuse (13.5%).

Fig. 20. Number of Chronically Homeless Households by Cause of Homelessness

Number of Households

Cause of Homelessness	Number
Asked to leave shared residence	216
Loss or reduction in job income/benefits	199
Household breakup/death in household	88
Domestic violence	38
Drug/alcohol abuse	168
Eviction	123
Foreclosure	6
Illness/injury	100
Natural disaster	12
Released from hospital	23
Released from prison/jail	104
Released from psychiatric facility	19
Relocation	21

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

900 households, made up of 974 persons, were living unsheltered in New Jersey on the nights of the 2015 Point in Time Count. This is an increase of 24 households (2.7%) and 43 persons (4.6%) from 2014. These 974 unsheltered persons made up 9.5% of New Jersey's total 2015 homeless population.

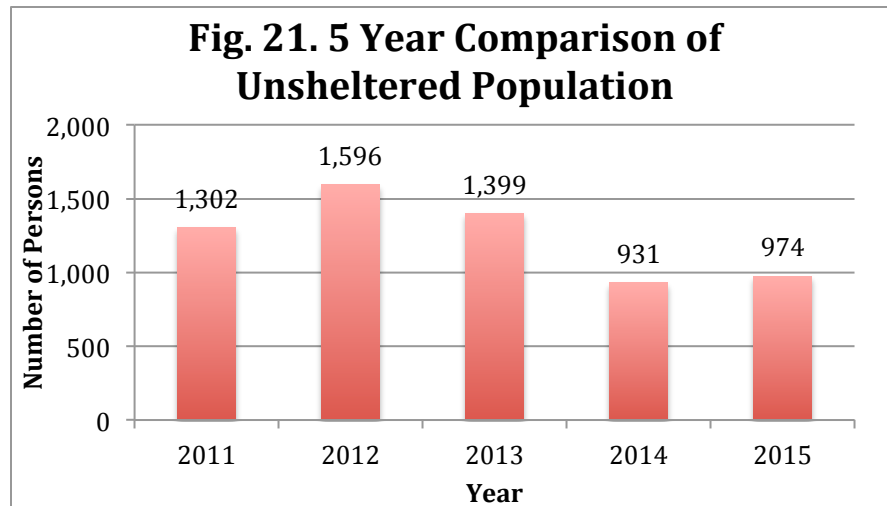Fig. 21. 5 Year Comparison of Unsheltered Population

Figure 21 shows the number of unsheltered respondents from 2011 to 2015. While there was a slight increase from 2014, the charts shows an overall decrease of about 328 persons or 25% from 2011.

Families and Individuals

Of the 900 unsheltered households counted in 2015, 19 (2.1%) were families (78 persons) with at least 1 adult and 1 child, and increase of 11 families from 2014.
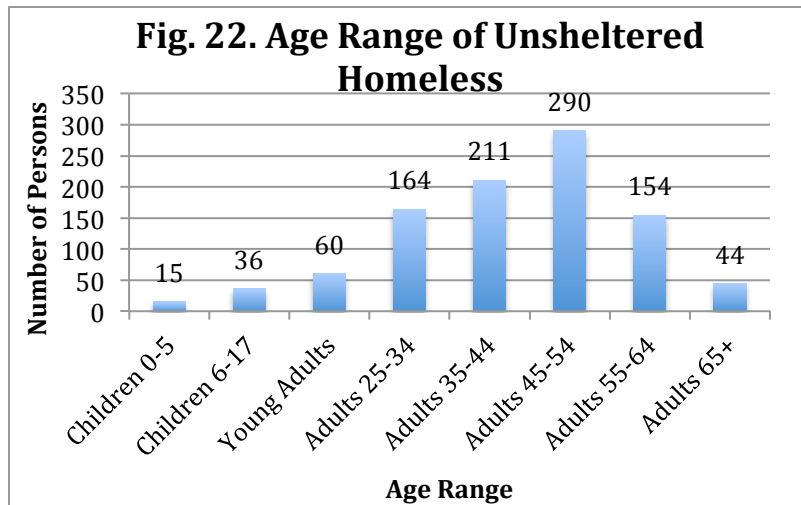
The major portion (881 households, 97.9%) were adult-only households, with a total of 896 persons.

There were no unsheltered youth only households in New Jersey in 2015.
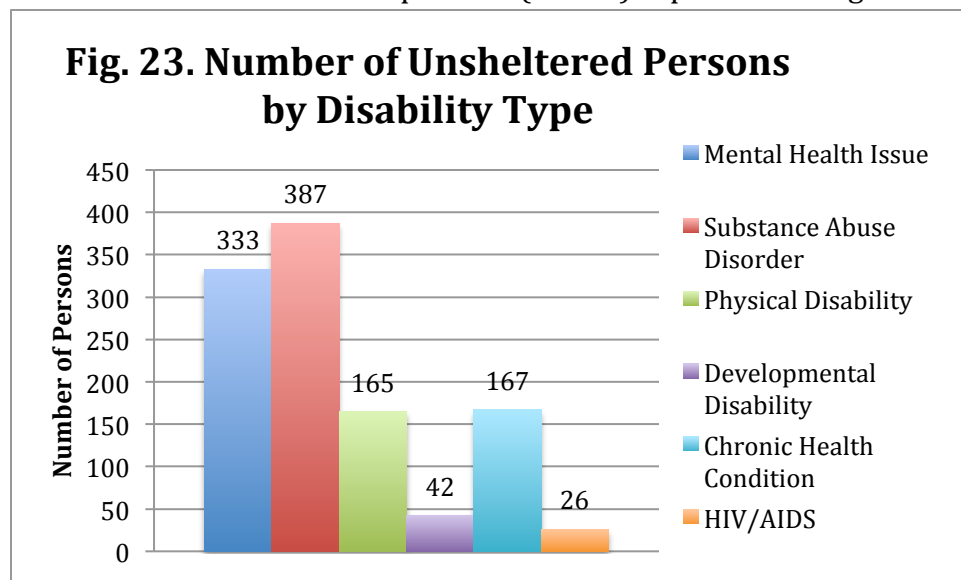
Demographics

Similar to 2014, the largest portion of the 974 unsheltered persons counted in 2015, 29.8%, was between 45 and 54 years old as Figure 22 illustrates.

Most unsheltered persons were male (73.4%) and 24.1% were female. 52.1% of respondents identified their race as Black or African-American and 40.5% identified as White. With regards to ethnicity, 20.3% of unsheltered persons identified as Hispanic.

Fig. 22. Age Range of Unsheltered Homeless

Number of Persons (y-axis): 0, 50, 100, 150, 200, 250, 300, 350

Age Range	Number of Persons
Children 0-5	15
Children 6-17	36
Young Adults	60
Adults 25-34	164
Adults 35-44	211
Adults 45-54	290
Adults 55-64	154
Adults 65+	44

Disabilities

609 of the 974 unsheltered persons (62.5%) reported having some kind of disability. The disabilities most commonly identified were substance abuse disorders (63.5%) and mental health issues (54.7%). The complete numbers of reported disabilities among the unsheltered can be seen in Figure 23.

Fig. 23. Number of Unsheltered Persons by Disability Type

Number of Persons (y-axis): 0, 50, 100, 150, 200, 250, 300, 350, 400, 450

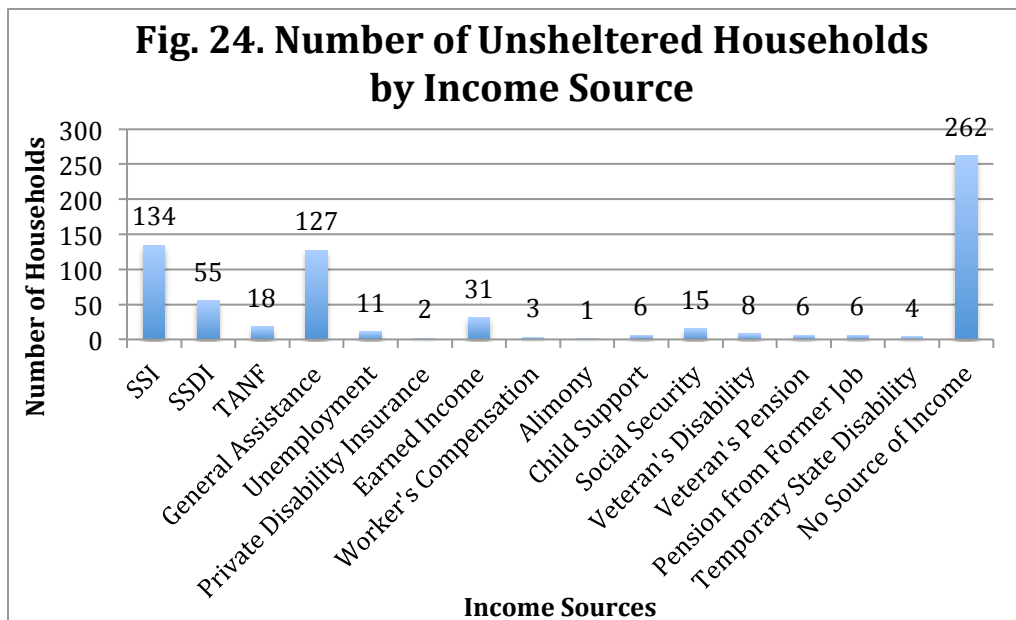| Disability Type	Number of Persons
Mental Health Issue	333
Substance Abuse Disorder	387
Physical Disability	165
Developmental Disability	42
Chronic Health Condition	167
HIV/AIDS	26

Subpopulations

On the night of the count, 90 unsheltered households in New Jersey, composed of 103 persons, reported having victims of domestic violence (10%). 85 (94.4%) of these were single adults, 1 was an adult couple, and the remaining 4 households (4.4%) were families with at least 1 adult and 1 child.

There were 80 (8%) unsheltered veteran households identified on the nights of the count.

Income and Benefits

Among all the unsheltered households on the nights of the count, 262 (29.1%) reported having no source of cash income. The average monthly income among unsheltered households was approximately $277. 14.9% of unsheltered households received SSI, making it the most common source of income. Figure 24 shows all of the sources of income received.

Fig. 24. Number of Unsheltered Households by Income Source

224 unsheltered households (24.9%) reported they were not receiving any type of non-cash benefit on the nights of the count. Food Stamps (SNAP) and Medicaid were the top reported non-cash benefit among this group, with 27.7% and 19.8% receiving each of these benefits, respectively.

Length of Homelessness

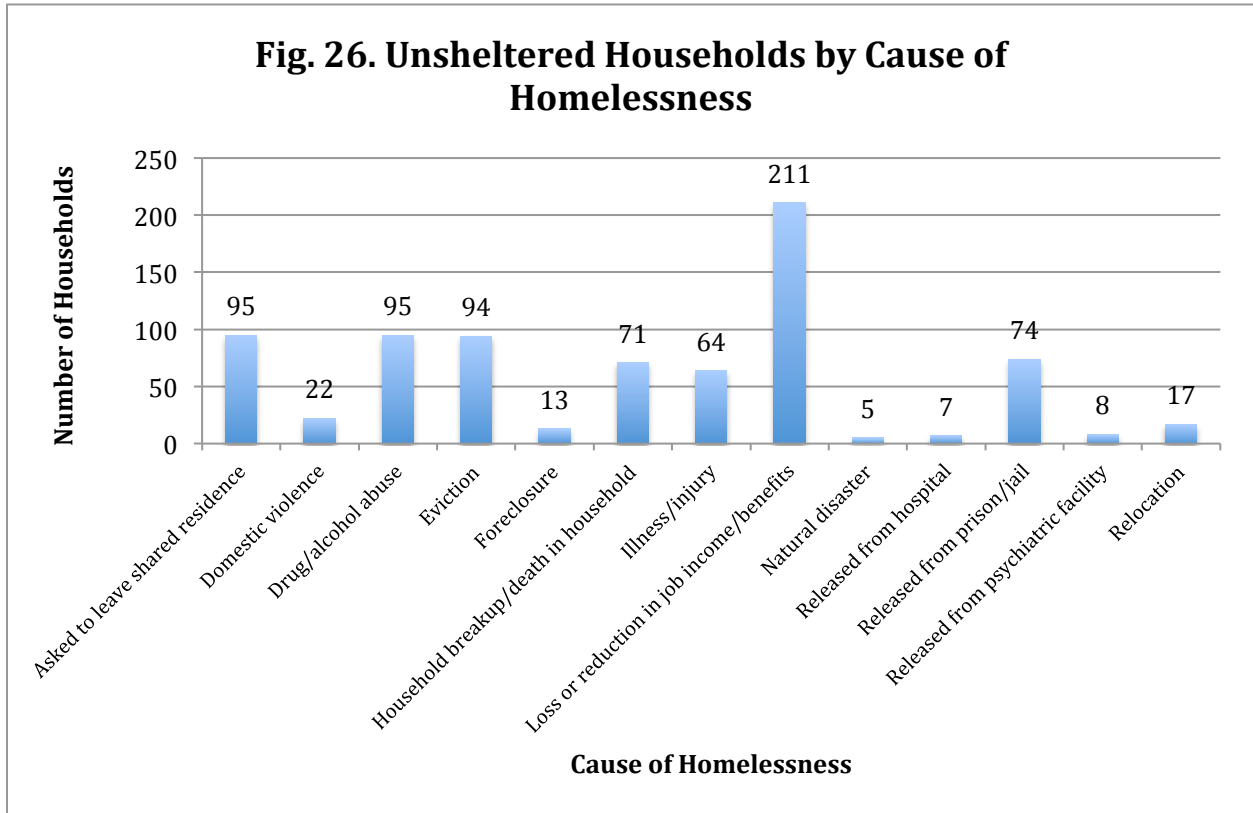**Fig. 25. Number of Unsheltered Households by Length of Homelessness**
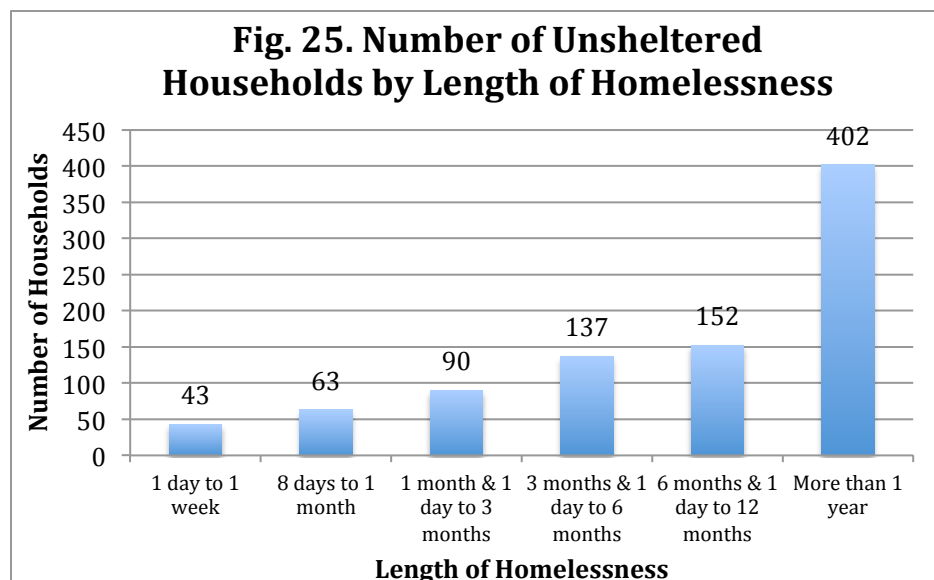
As shown in Figure 25, similar to 2014, more unsheltered homeless households reported that their households' most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted for over a year than any other length of time (44.7%). Another 16.9% of households reported they had been homeless between 6 months and 1 year. This means that 61.6% of unsheltered households had been homeless for more than 6 months.
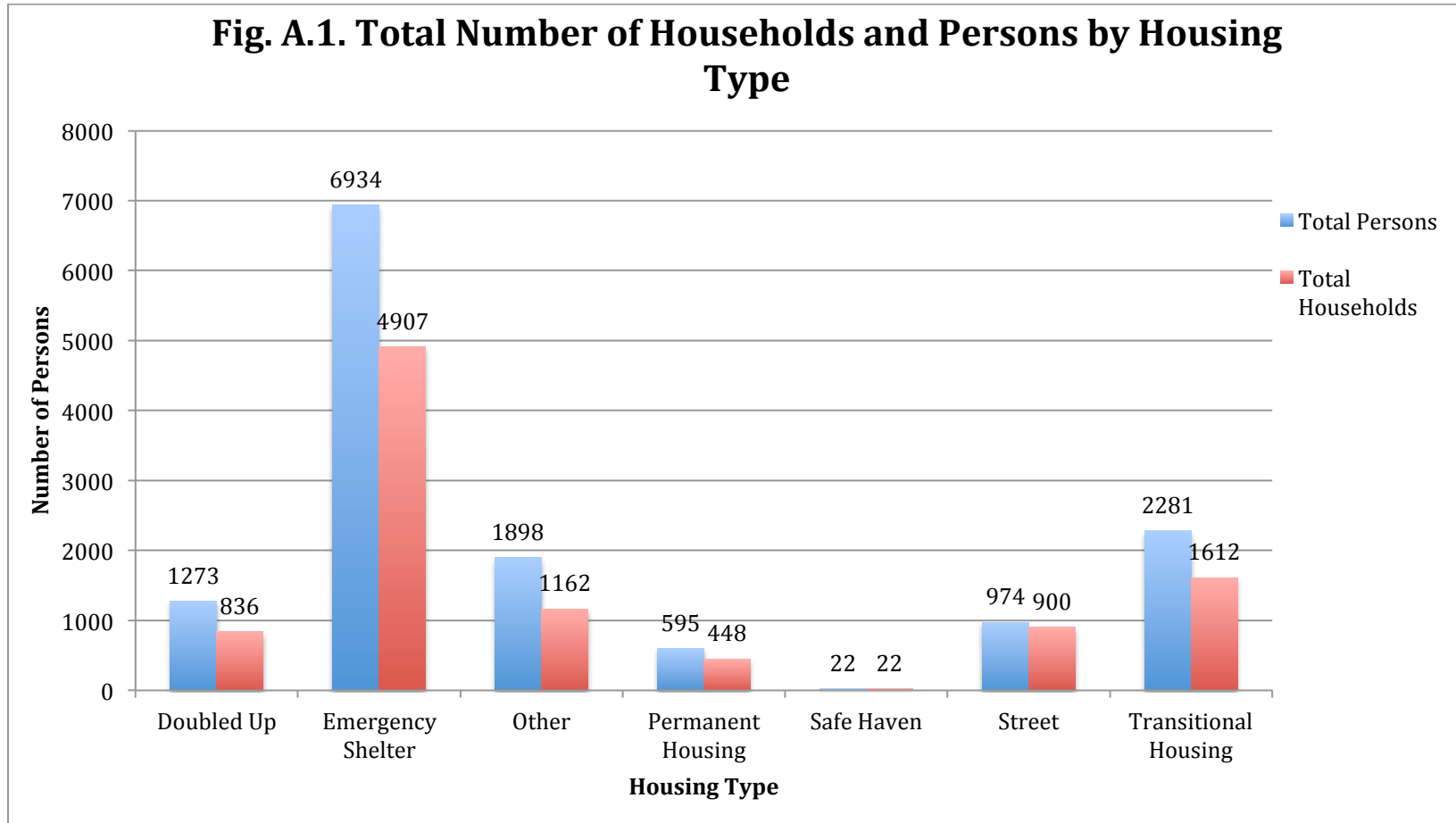
Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more unsheltered households said loss or reduction of job income or benefits (23.4%) than any other factor. Figure 26 give the full list of responses provided by unsheltered households.

Fig. 26. Unsheltered Households by Cause of Homelessness

Number of Households (y-axis): 0, 50, 100, 150, 200, 250

Cause of Homelessness	Number of Households
Asked to leave shared residence	95
Domestic violence	22
Drug/alcohol abuse	95
Eviction	94
Foreclosure	13
Household breakup/death in household	71
Illness/injury	64
Loss or reduction in job income/benefits	211
Natural disaster	5
Released from hospital	7
Released from prison/jail	74
Released from psychiatric facility	8
Relocation	17

VI. Appendix

Where did you spend the night of the Point in Time?

Fig. A.1. Total Number of Households and Persons by Housing Type

How long have you been in your current living situation?

Fig. A.2. Homeless Housholds by Length of Homelessness and Housing Type
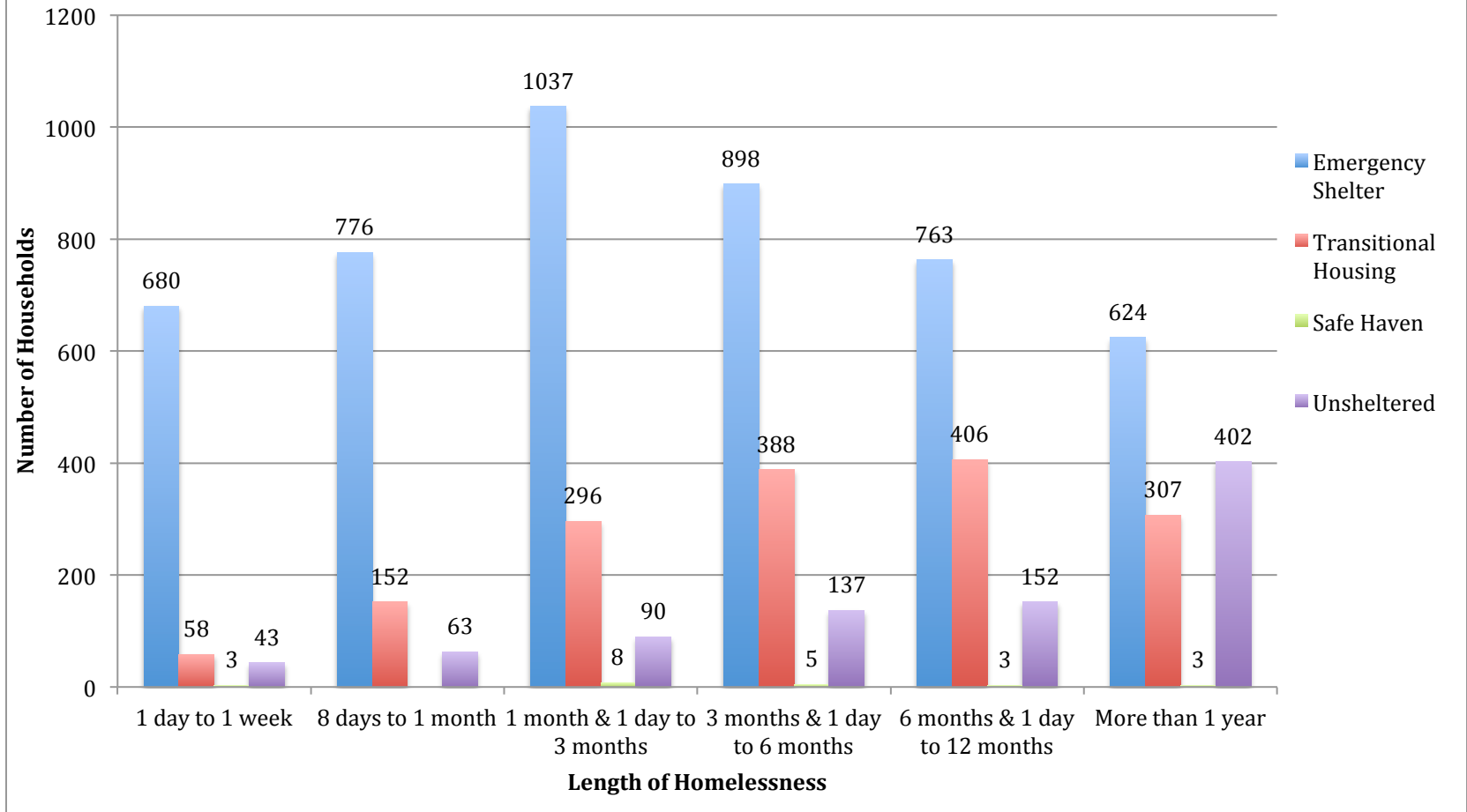
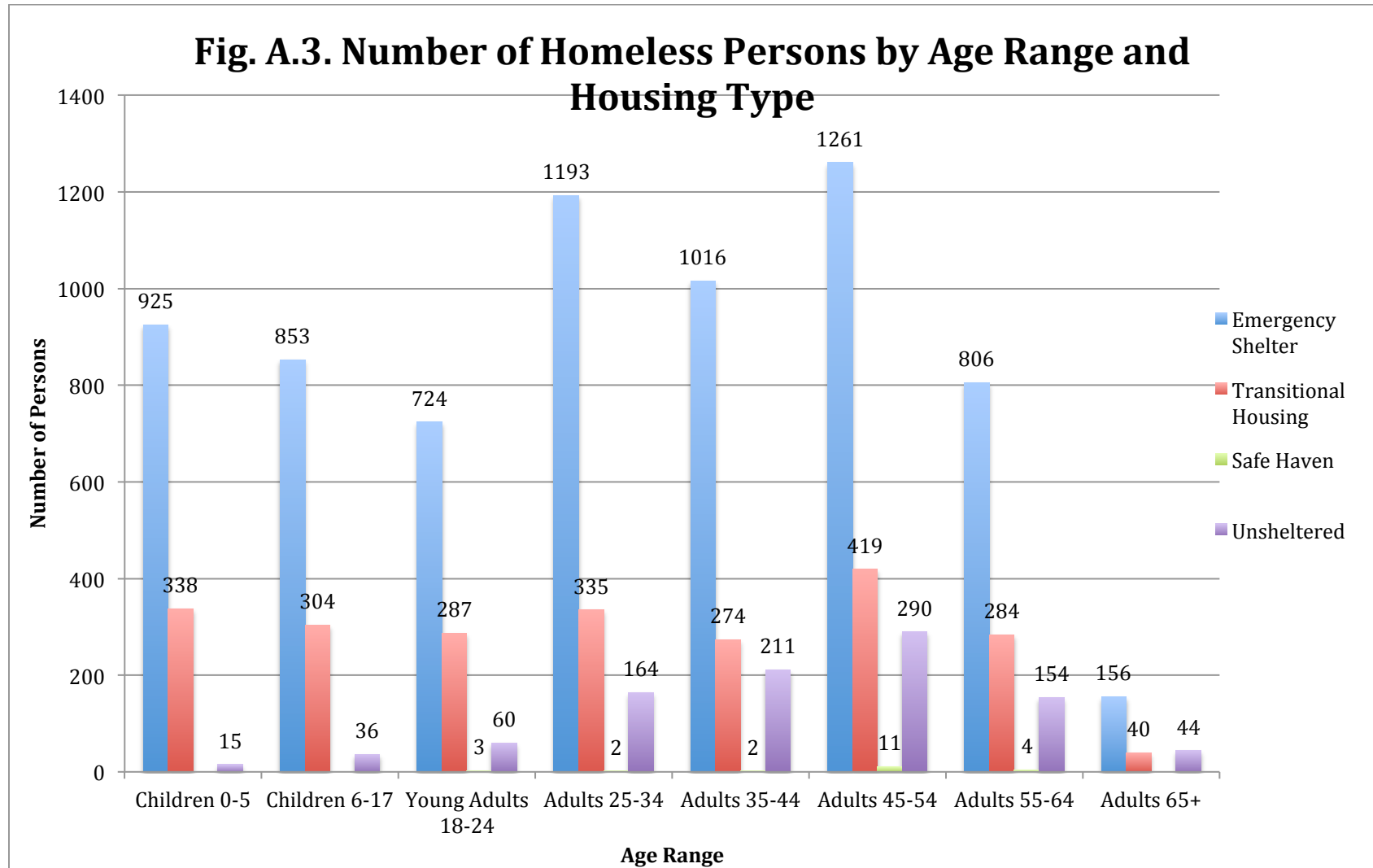**Who was homeless with you on the night of the Point in Time count?**
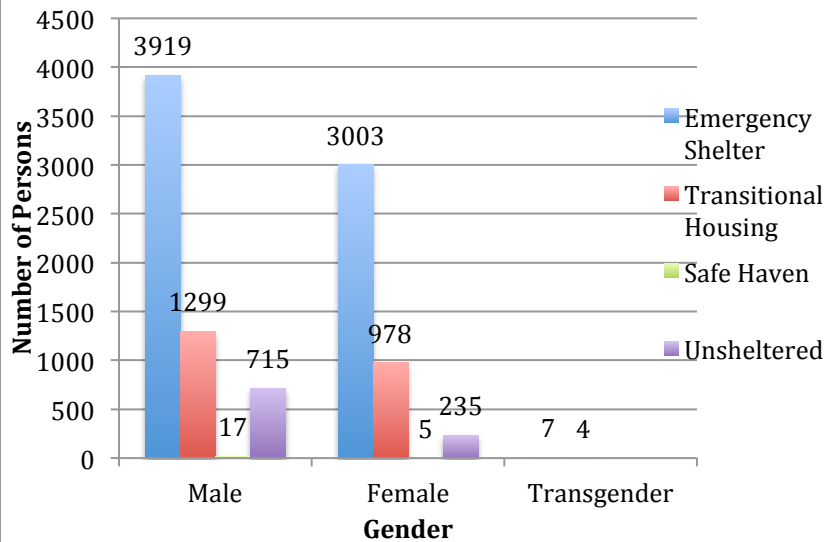

Fig. A.3. Number of Homeless Persons by Age Range and Housing Type

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

Legend:
- Emergency Shelter
- Transitional Housing
- Safe Haven
- Unsheltered

Male: 3919, 1299, 17, 715
Female: 3003, 978, 5, 235
Transgender: 7, 4

X-axis: Gender (Male, Female, Transgender)
Y-axis: Number of Persons

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

American Indian/Alaska Native: 27
Black/African-American: 5381
Asian: 99
Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian: 33
White: 4160
Multi-Racial: 45

X-axis: Race
Y-axis: Number of Persons
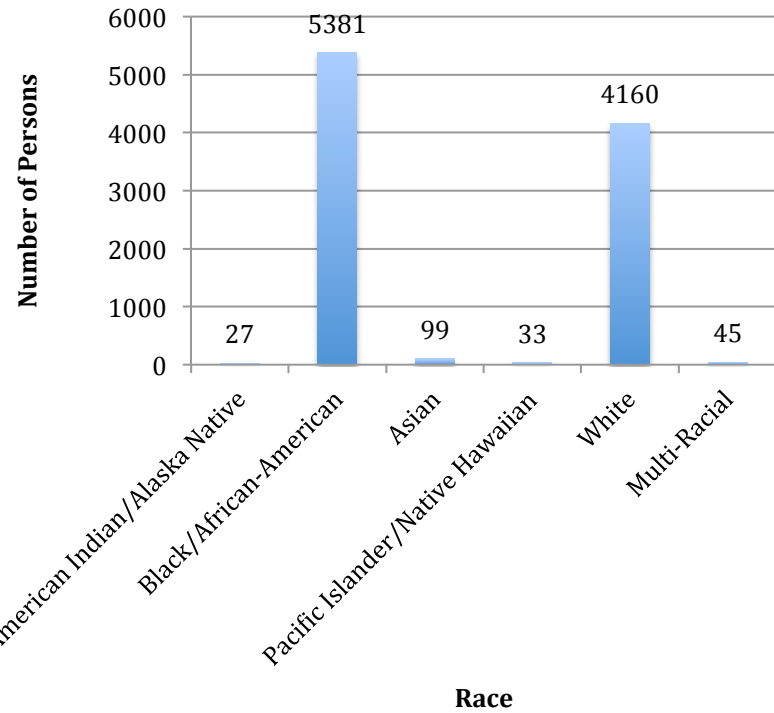
Fig. A.6. Number of Homeless Persons by Ethnicity

Hispanic: 1742
Non-Hispanic: 8049

X-axis: Ethnicity
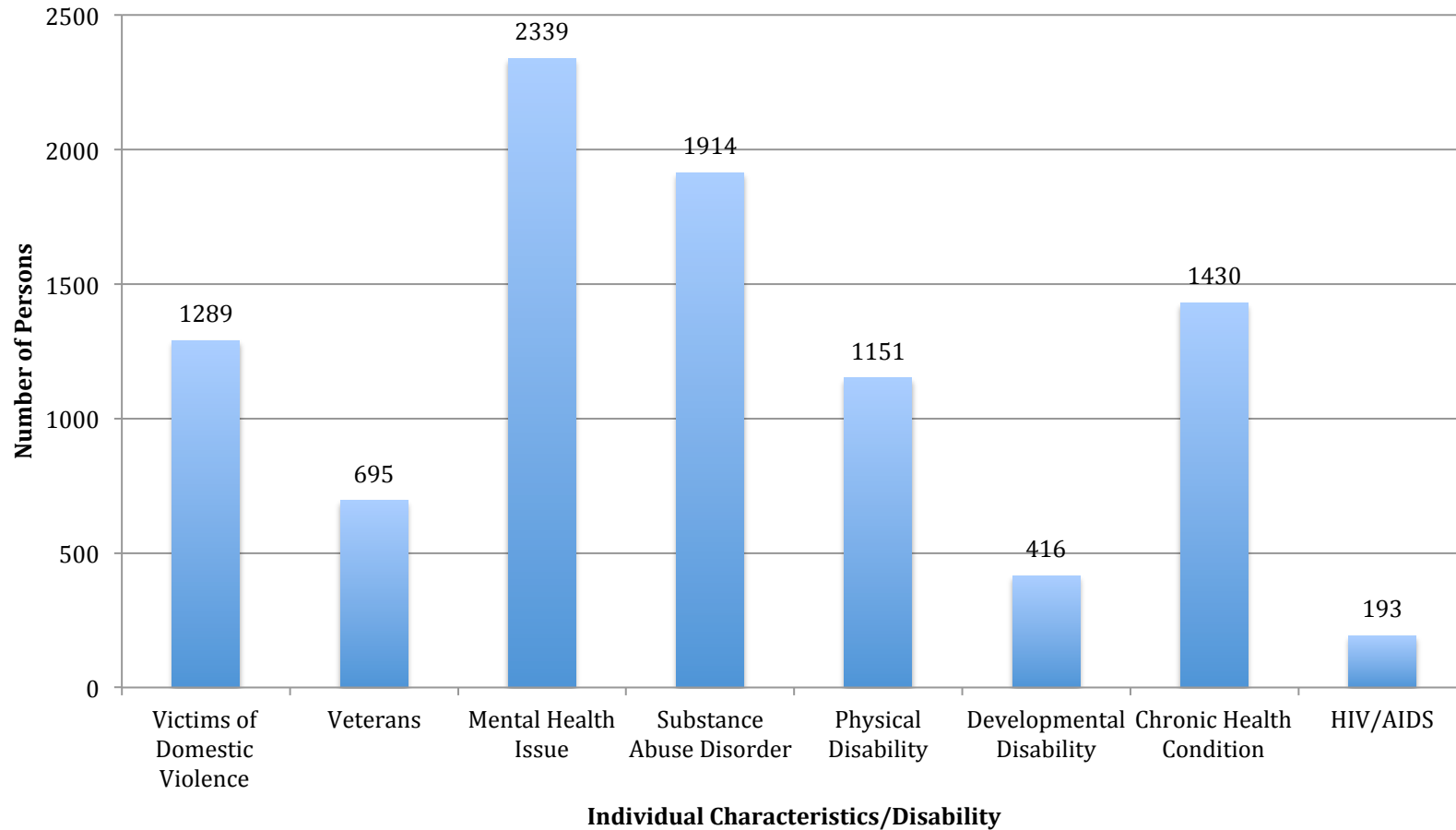Y-axis: Number of Persons
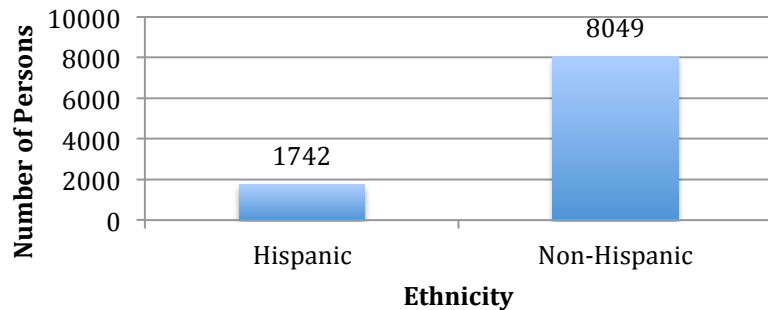
Household Characteristics – check all that apply to each person

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 Homeless Households by State or Country of Last Permanent Address	
Last Permanent Address – State/Country	**Number of Households**
Alabama	3
Arizona	1
California	8
Colorado	5
Connecticut	4
Delaware	6
Florida	26
Georgia	7
Idaho	1
Illinois	4
Indiana	3
Kansas	1
Maine	1
Maryland	8
Massachusetts	2
Mexico	1
Michigan	4
Missouri	3
Nebraska	1
Nevada	1
New Jersey	**6280**
New Mexico	1
New York	73
North Carolina	14
Ohio	5
Pennsylvania	95
Puerto Rico	6
South Carolina	6
South Dakota	1
Tennessee	3
Texas	2
Utah	1
Virginia	11
Washington DC	3
West Virginia	1
Wisconsin	1

What was your residence prior to your current living situation?

Fig. A.9. Number of Homeless Households by Prior Residence
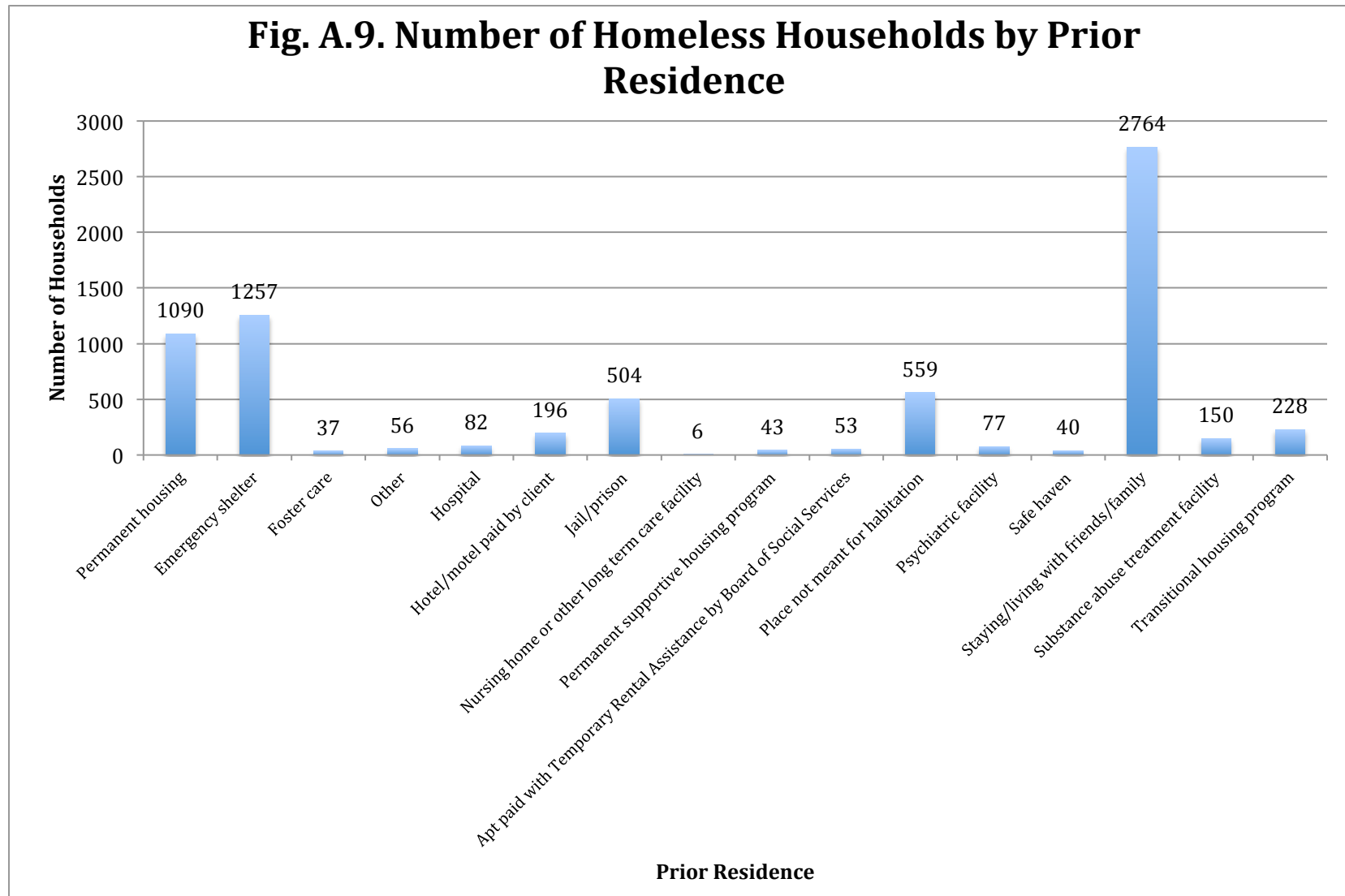
Which of the following sources of income or non-cash benefits do you, or anyone in your household, receive?

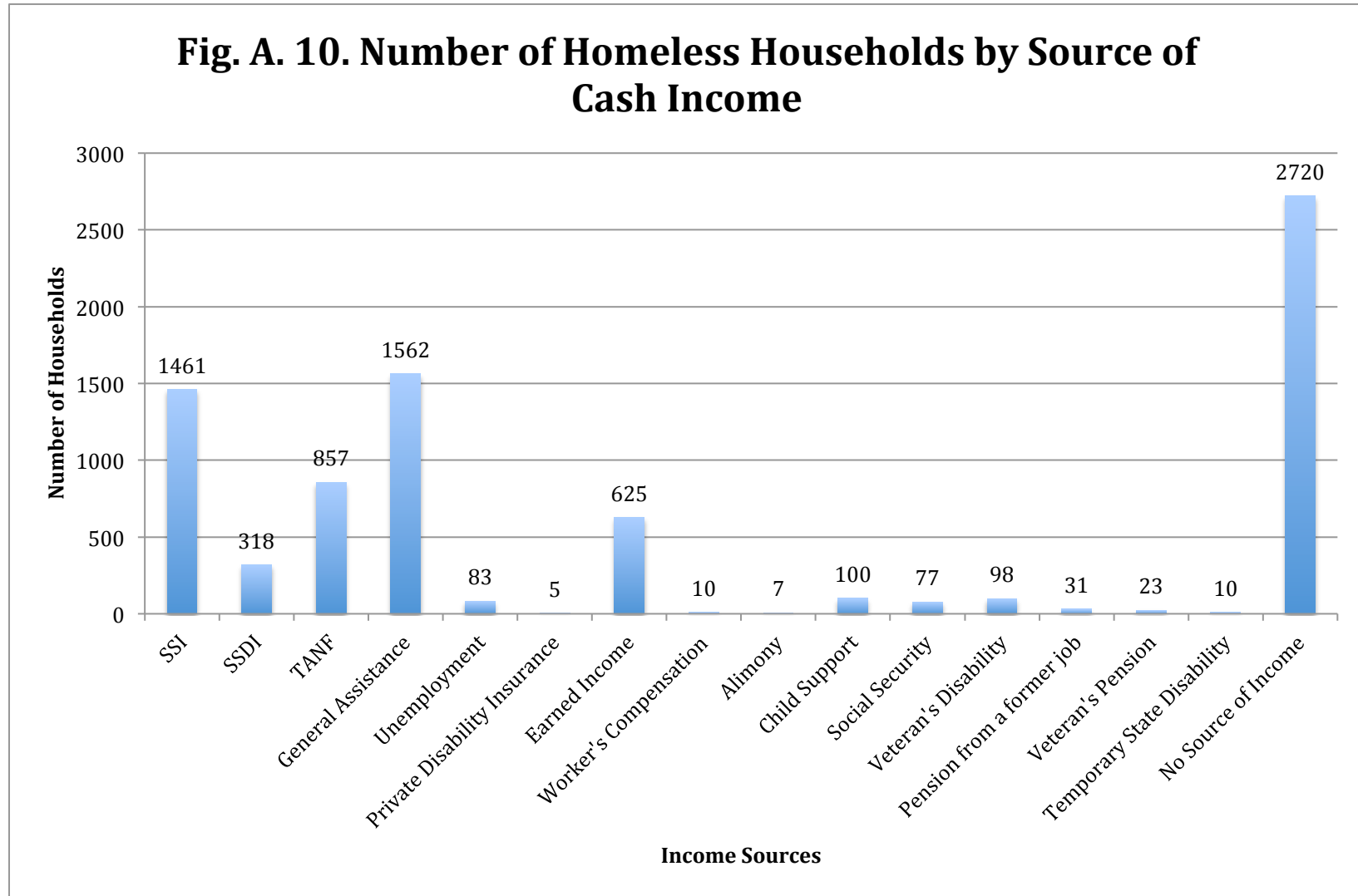## Fig. A. 10. Number of Homeless Households by Source of Cash Income

Bar chart. Y-axis: Number of Households (0 to 3000). X-axis: Income Sources.

- SSI: 1461
- SSDI: 318
- TANF: 857
- General Assistance: 1562
- Unemployment: 83
- Private Disability Insurance: 5
- Earned Income: 625
- Worker's Compensation: 10
- Alimony: 7
- Child Support: 100
- Social Security: 77
- Veteran's Disability: 98
- Pension from a former job: 31
- Veteran's Pension: 23
- Temporary State Disability: 10
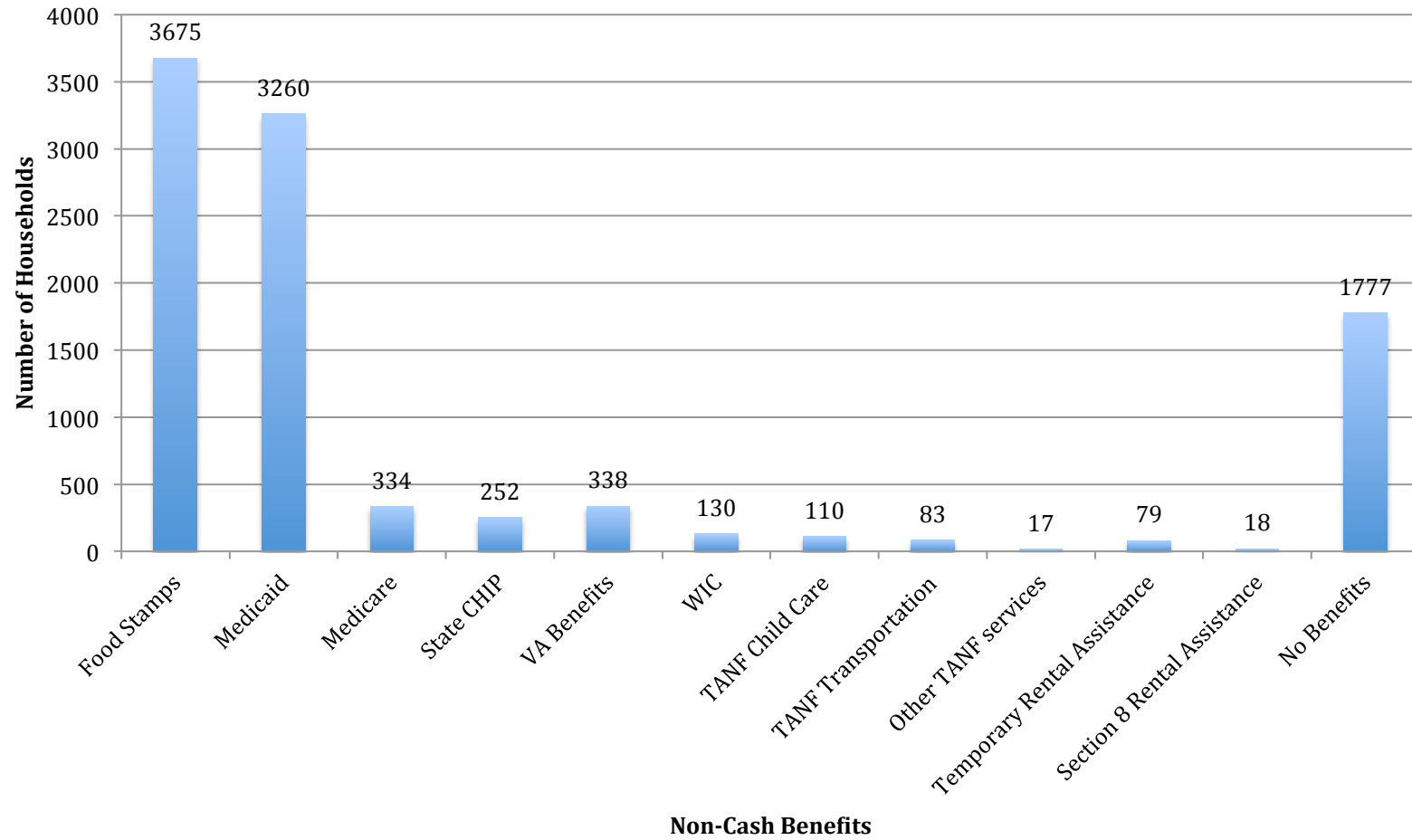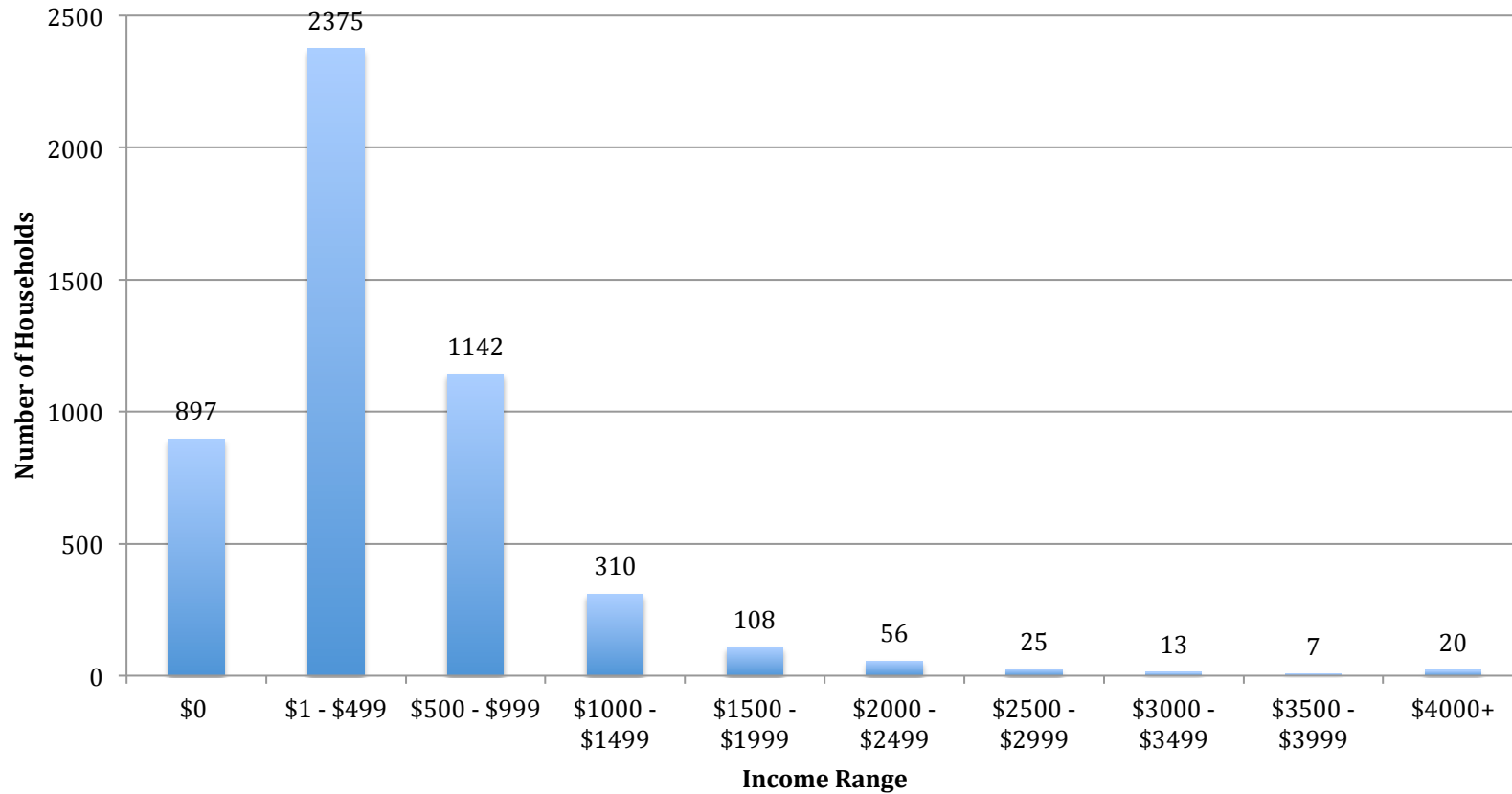- No Source of Income: 2720

Fig. A. 11. Number of Homeless Households by Sources of Non-Cash Benefits
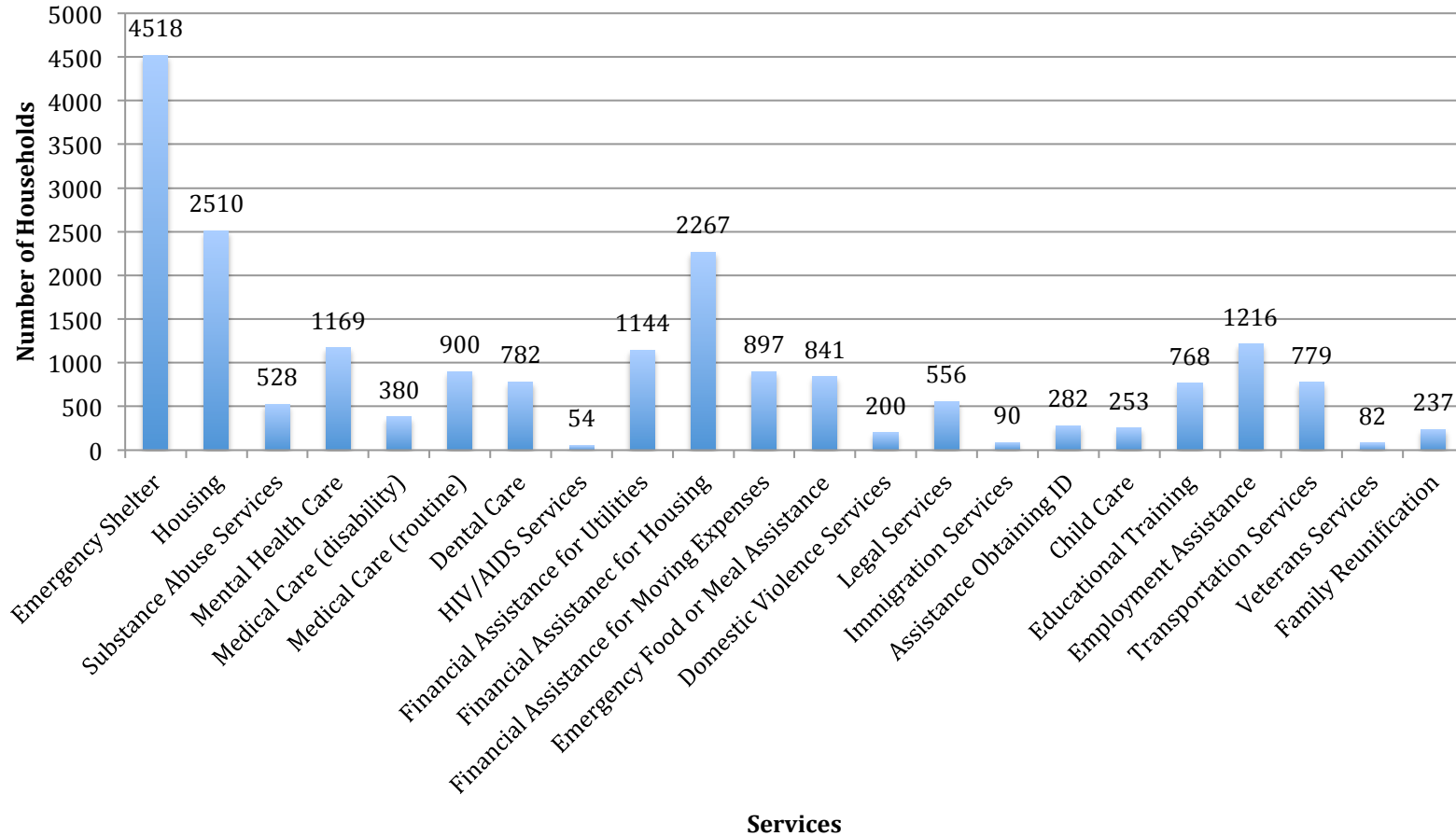
What is your monthly household income?

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