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NJ
2015
Counts!

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

January 27, 2015

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This report was prepared for
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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 January 27th, 2015 a total of 42 households, including 58 persons, were experiencing homelessness in Warren County, according to the 2015 Point-In-Time Count.
- A total of 14 households, with 15 persons, were identified as chronically homeless.
- 4 unsheltered homeless persons 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. For 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 night of January 27th, 2015, a total of 58 persons, in 42 households, were experiencing homelessness in Warren County, according to the 2015 Point-In-Time Count. This is a decrease of 10 households (19.2%) and 10 persons (14.7%) from 2014. Warren County had 0.6% of New Jersey’s statewide homeless population in 2015.

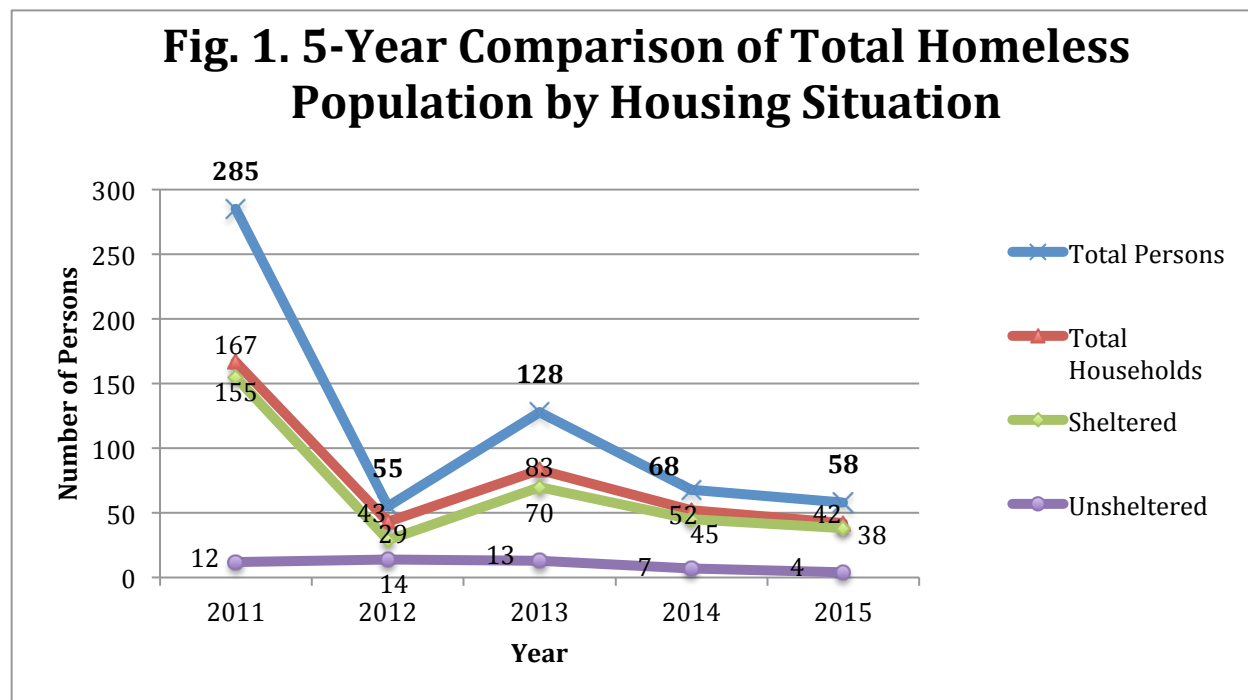


Figure 1 shows that, in 2015, 38 homeless households were sheltered and 4 were living unsheltered on the night of the count. The total number of those counted as sheltered was a

decrease of 7 households (15.6%) and a decrease of 3 households (42.9%) from unsheltered households from 2014.

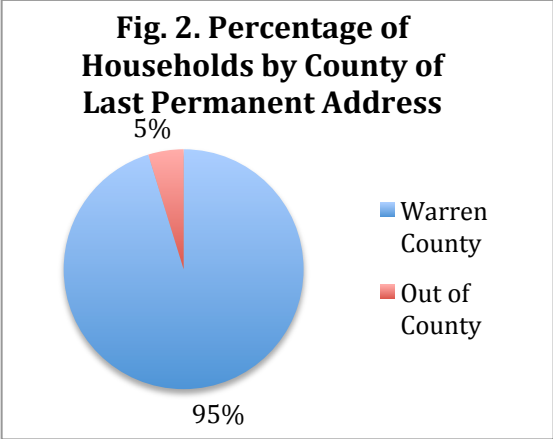


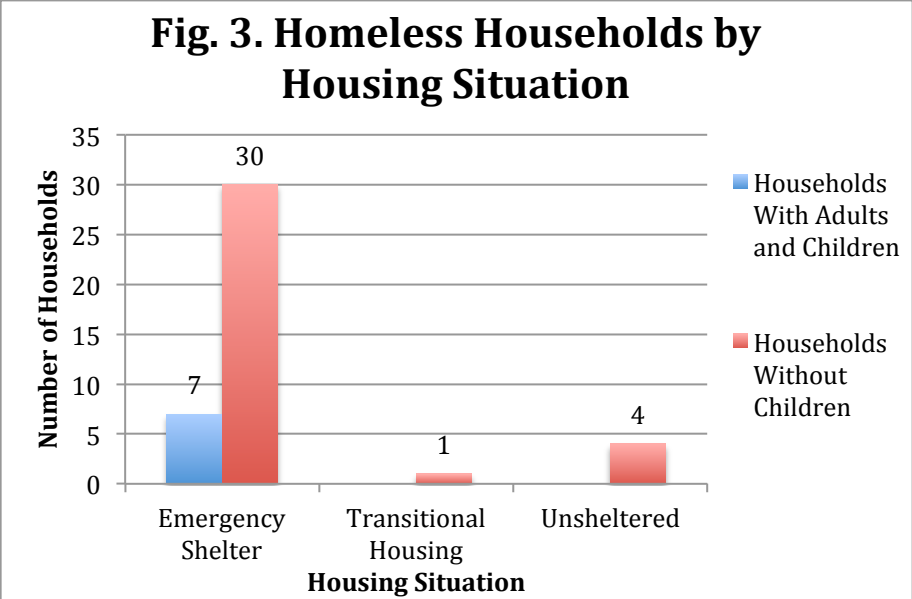
Figure 1 also shows that, over the past five years, the total number of homeless households has been fluctuating in Warren County, with the highest count in 2011 (167 households). When looking though at the change from 2011 to 2015, Warren County has seen a decrease of 125 households or 74.9%. While the number of sheltered households may have been fluctuating, the number of unsheltered households has been decreasing consistently from 2012, showing an overall reduction of 10 persons (71.3%).

As Figure 2 shows, 5% of homeless households in Warren County reported that their last permanent address prior to becoming homeless was outside 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 42 homeless households counted in Warren County in 2015, 7 (16.7%) were families with at least one child under the age of 18 and one adult, an increase of 2 families from 2014. These families included 22 persons, 13 children under age 18, and 9 adults. The average family size was 3.1 persons. Figure 3 shows that all 7 families were staying in emergency shelters on the night of the count.

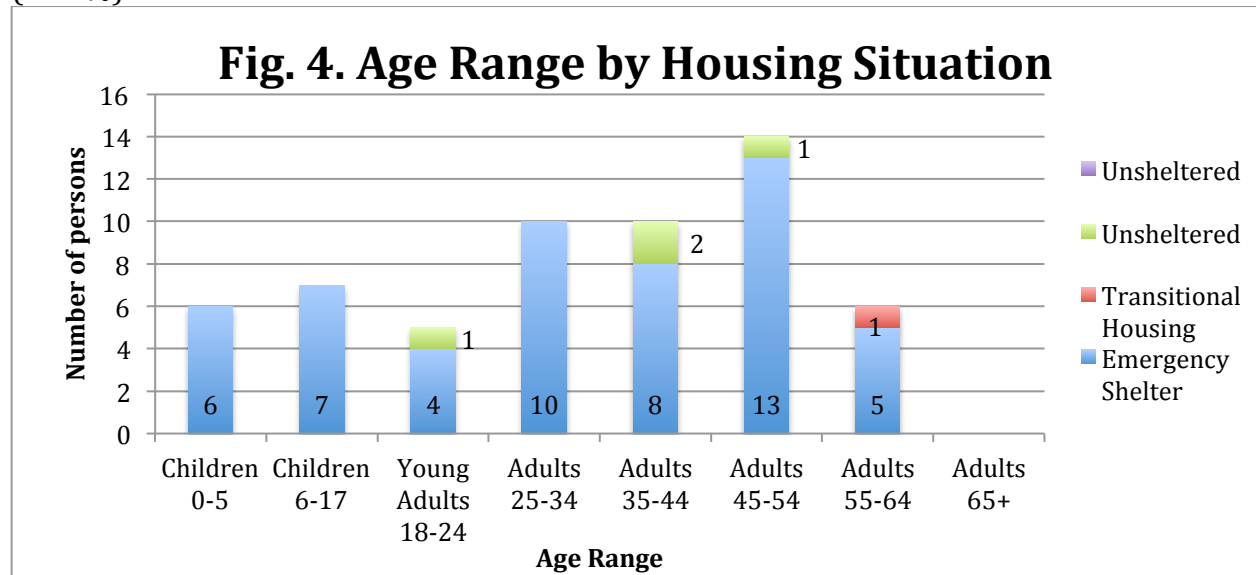


83.3% of the homeless households (35) counted in Warren County were households without children under 18, and they were composed of 36 persons. 4 of the individual adult households were unsheltered on the night of the count, 1 was in a transitional housing project, and the remaining 30 were in emergency shelters.

There were 0 youth only households counted in 2015, a decrease of 1 from 2014.

Demographics

The majority (40 persons, 69%) of those experiencing homelessness in Warren County on the night of the count were adults over age 24. There were a total of 5 (8.6%) homeless young adults between 18 and 24 years old, and 13 (22.4%) children under 18 years old as well. Figure 4 shows that the age range that was most represented was 45 to 54 years old (24.1%).

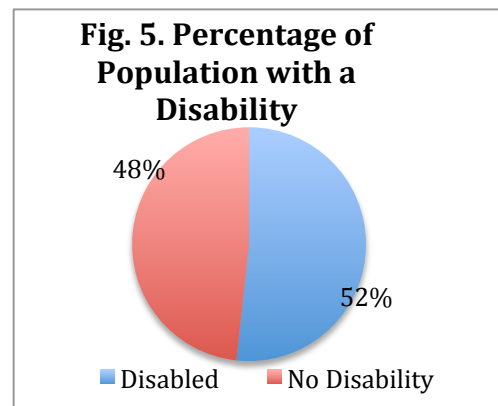


56.9% of homeless persons were male, 43.1% were female.

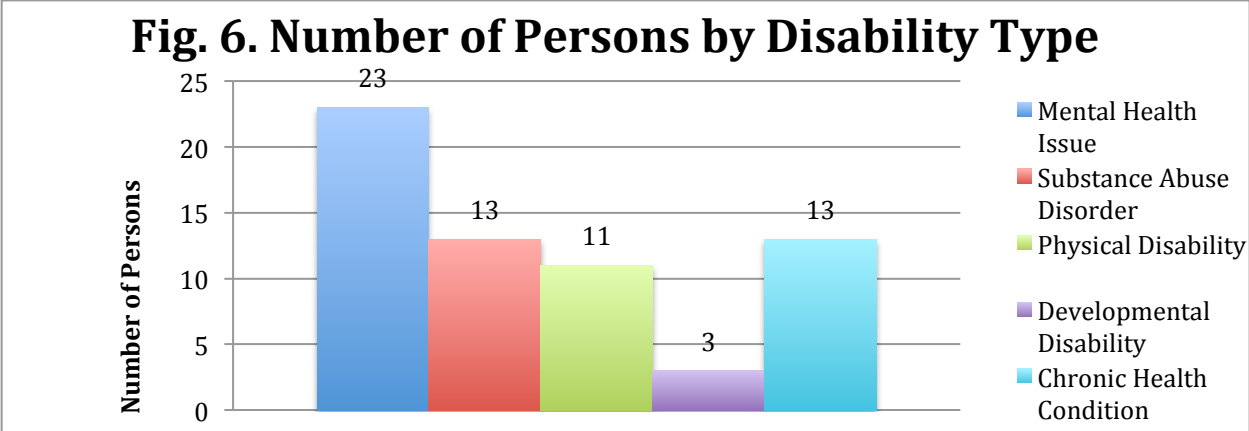
72.4% of persons identified their race as White, making that the largest racial subgroup of homeless persons reported. The second largest group self-identified as Black or African American (22.4%). With regard to ethnicity, 15.5% of persons identified themselves as Hispanic.

Disabilities

Figure 5 illustrates that 52% of homeless persons reported having some type of disability. All 30 disabled persons were adults. Figure 6 shows the number of the homeless persons that identified as having various disabilities. The most prevalent disabilities were mental health issues and chronic health conditions.

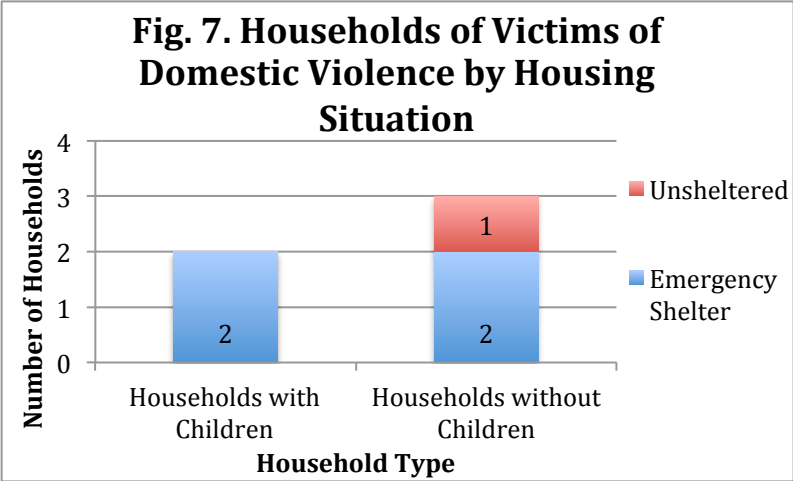


Among disabled adults, 76.7% reported mental health issues making this the most prevalent disability; representing 51.1% of the total adult homeless population.



Victims of Domestic Violence

On the night of the count, in Warren County, 5 homeless households reported having a victim of domestic violence. As shown in Figure 7, 40% of these households were families composed of 8 persons. The other 3 households were adult only households composed of 4 persons, 1 individual of which was unsheltered.



Veterans

There were 0 homeless veterans counted in Warren County on the night of the point in time.

Income and Benefits

Among all homeless households 11.9% had no source of income, and 0% reported having earned income. The most common source of cash income among homeless households was General Assistance, which was reported by 52.4% of households.

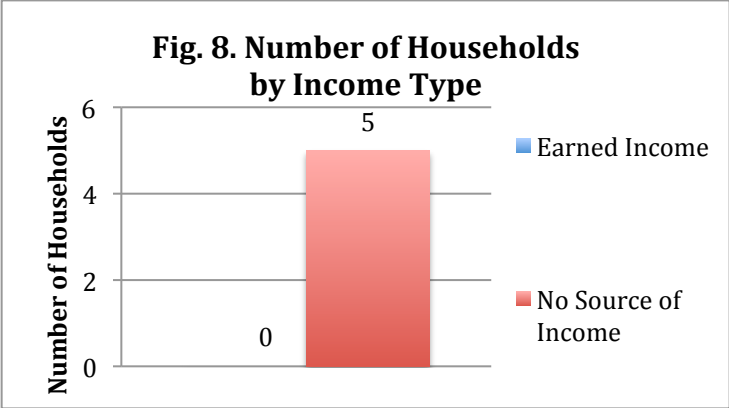


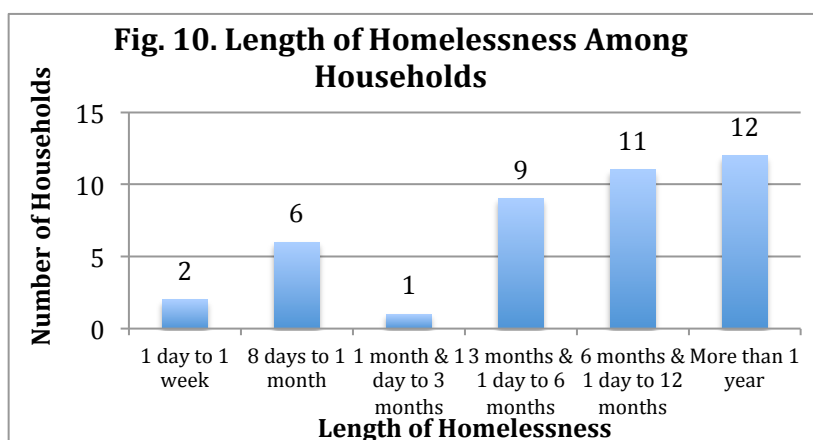
Figure 9 shows the average monthly income for all households.

Figure 9. Average Monthly Income For Households by Housing Situation		
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing
Average for All Households	\$298.23	\$752.00

11.9% of households reported that their household was receiving no kind of non-cash benefit on the night of the count. Medicaid was the top reported non-cash benefits, which was reported by 83.3% of households. Food Stamps, or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) was reported by 81% of households.

Length of Homelessness

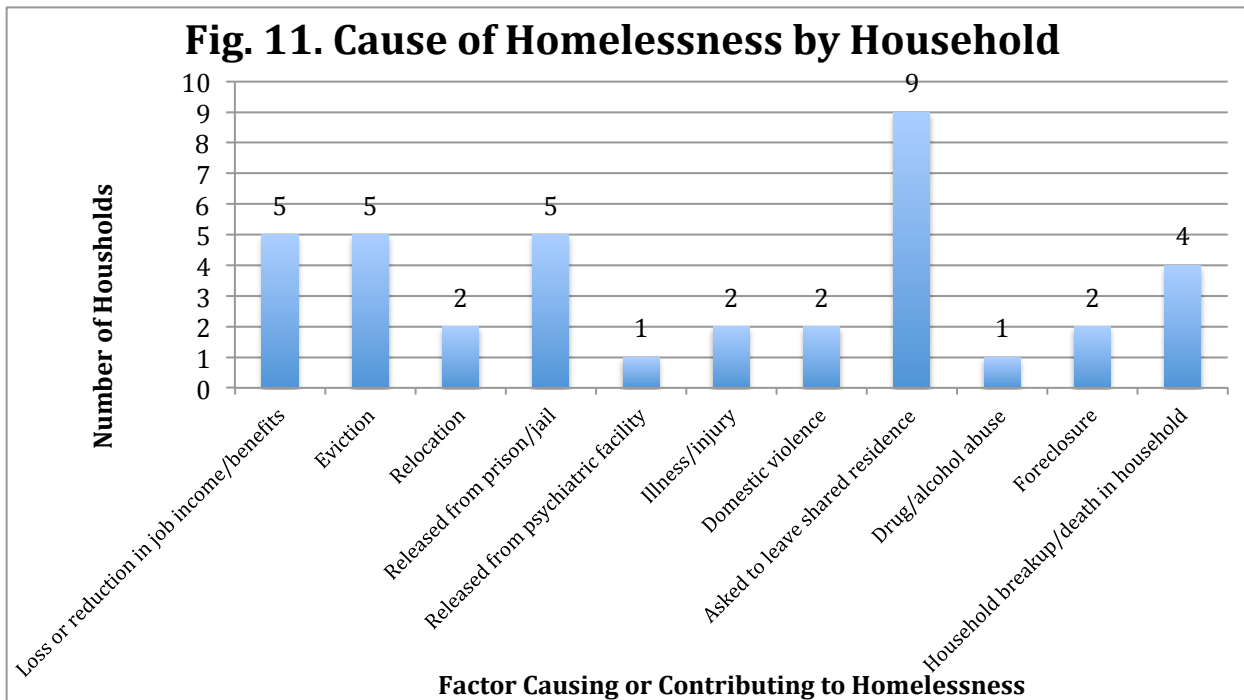
Figure 10 shows that similar to 2014, the largest percent of households (28.6%) reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted more than 1 year. The majority of households (54.8%) reported that their episode of homelessness lasted more than 6 months.



Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households identified being asked to leave a shared residence (9 households, 21.4%) than any other cause. Figure 11 has the full list of causes reported.

When homeless respondents were asked ‘what was your residence prior to your current living situation?’ more said they were staying or living with family or friends (45.2%) than any other residence.



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

14 households, made up of 15 total persons, were chronically homeless in Warren County, according to the 2015 Point-In-Time Count. This is a decrease of 2 households (12.5%) and 3 persons (16.7%) from 2014. The rate of chronic homelessness as a percentage of overall homelessness was 25.9% in 2015.

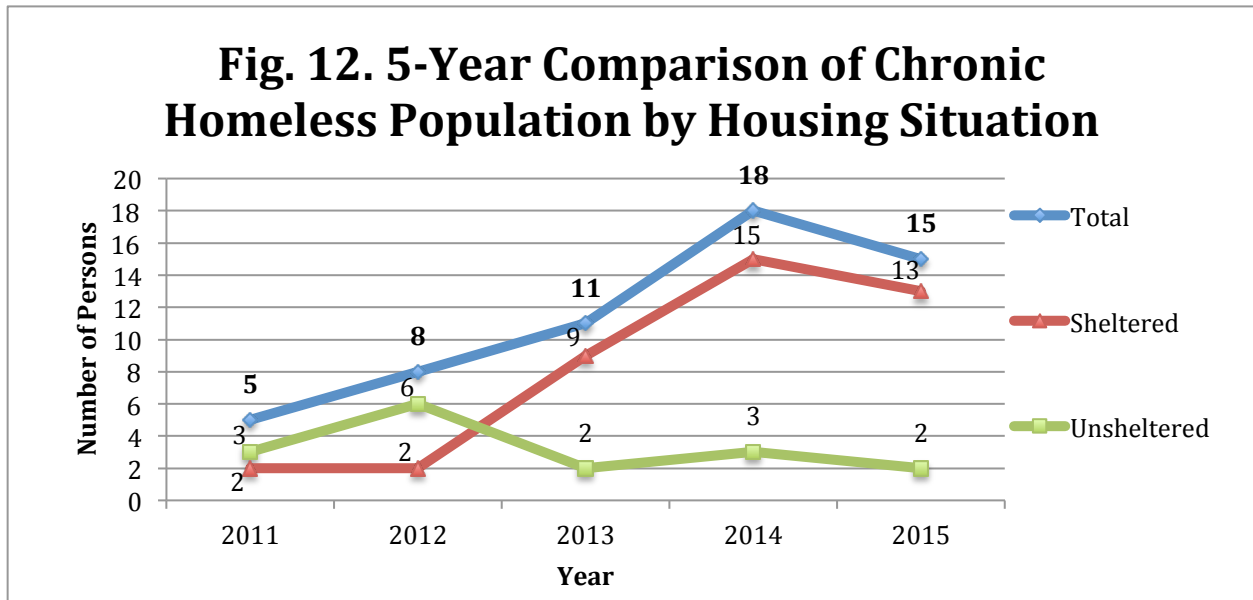
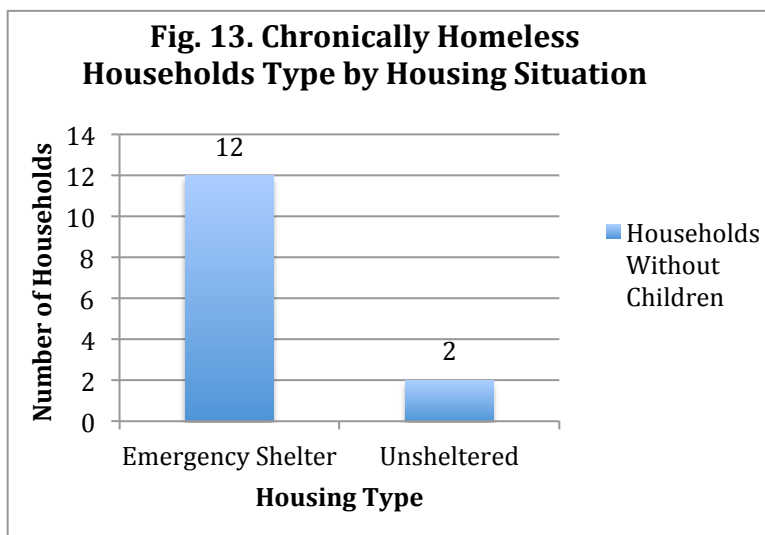


Figure 12 shows the number of chronically homeless persons who were in emergency shelter or living unsheltered in Warren County from 2011 to 2015. While there was a decrease in the number of chronically homeless from 2014, when looking over the past 5 years, Warren County has seen an increase of 10 persons or 200% from 2011.

Families and Individuals



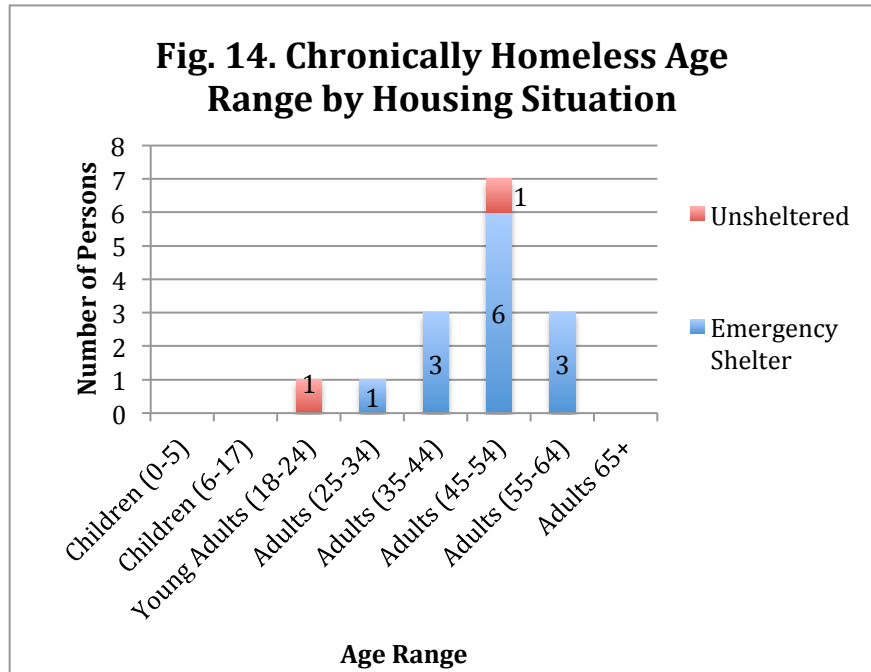
There were 0 chronically homeless families counted in Warren County, a decrease of 1 from 2014.

Figure 13 shows that all 14 chronically homeless households were adult only households, composed of 15 persons. Only 2 individual chronic adults were unsheltered on the night of the PIT.

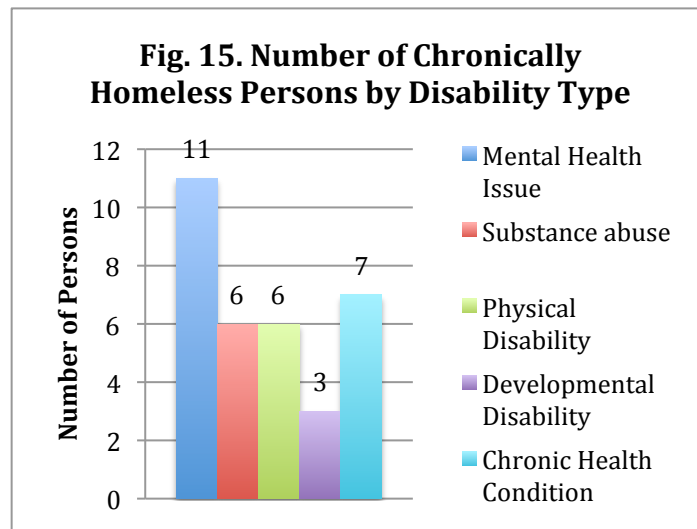
Demographics

Of the 15 total chronically homeless persons, 1 (6.7%) was between 18 and 24 years old. As shown in Figure 14, the age range with the highest concentration of chronically homeless persons was adults between 45 and 54 years old, which had 7 persons (47.7%).

73.3% of the chronically homeless were male, and 26.7% were female.



The largest racial subgroup of homeless persons reported their race as White (73.3%).



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 (73.3%) and physical disabilities (46.7%). The complete numbers of reported disabilities among the chronically homeless can be seen in Figure 15.

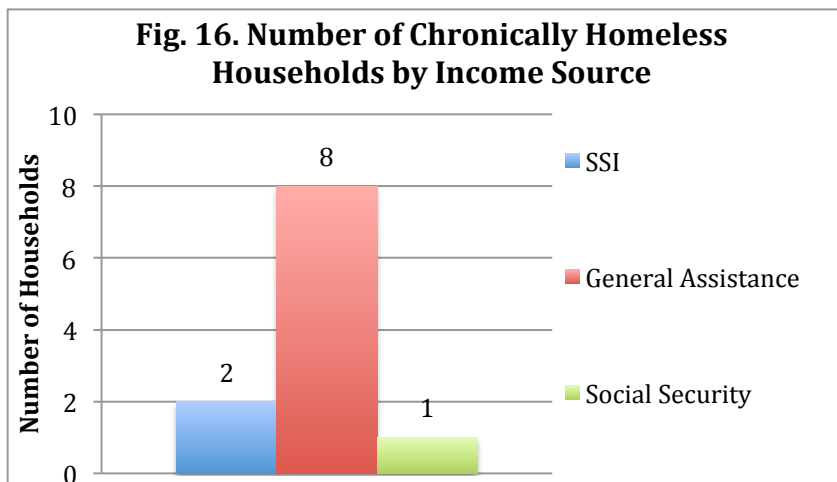
Subpopulations

On the night of the count, 2 chronically homeless households identified having victims of domestic violence. 1 individual was unsheltered; the other household was an adult household composed of 2 persons in an emergency shelter.

There were no chronically homeless veterans identified on the night of the count.

Income and Benefits

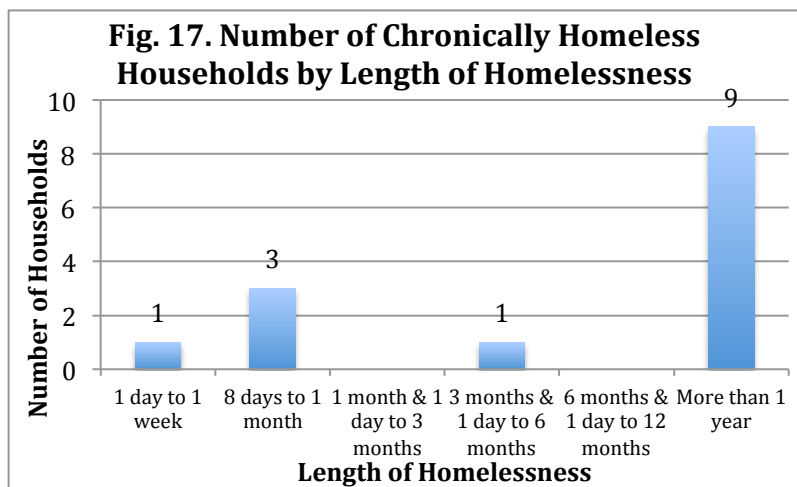
Among all the chronically homeless households on the night of the count, 0% reported receiving no type of cash income. Figure 16 shows the sources of income received. The most common source of cash income among chronically homeless households was General Assistance, which was received by 57.1%. No households reported any earned income.



7.1% of chronically homeless households reported they were not receiving any type of non-cash benefit on the night of the count. Food Stamps (SNAP) and Medicaid were the top reported non-cash benefits, with 92.9% and 78.6% of households receiving each, respectively.

Length of Homelessness

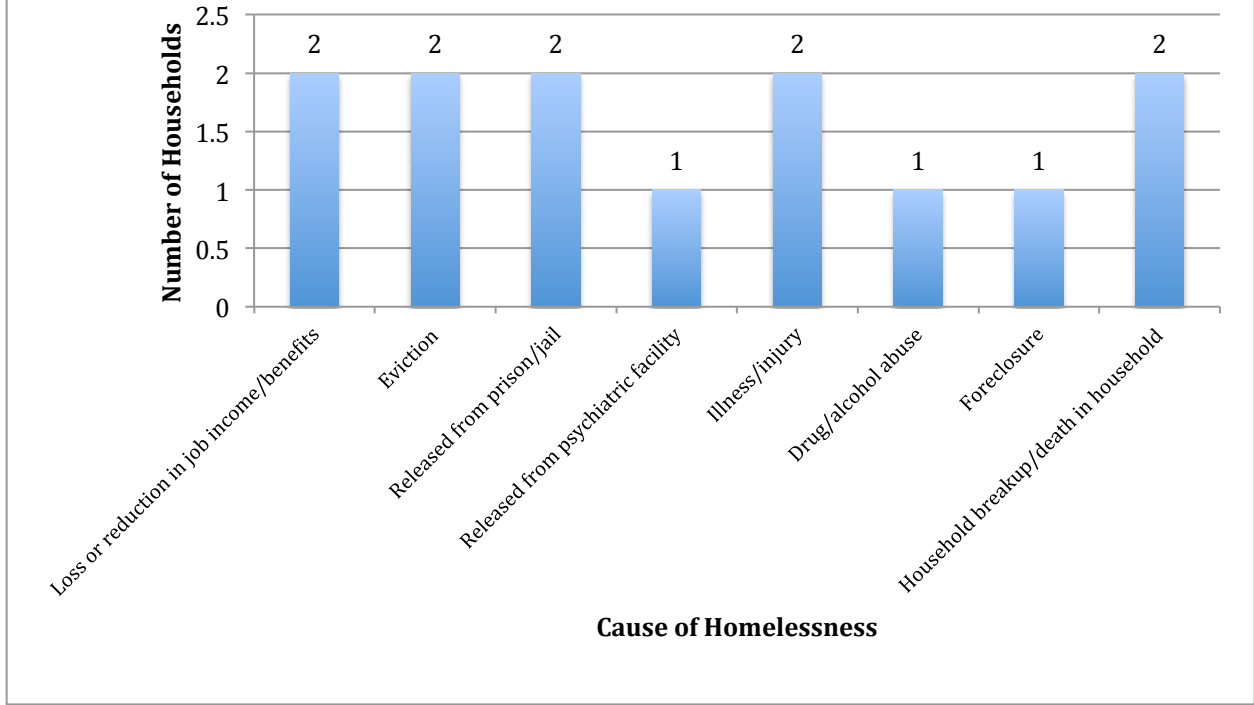
Figure 17 shows that similar to 2014, the largest number of chronically homeless households (64.3%) reported their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted for more than 1 year. 33.3% of chronically homeless households were homeless at least 4 times in the past 3 years.



Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, chronically homeless households had a variety of answers. All responses can be seen in Figure 18.

Fig. 18. Number of Chronically Homeless Households by Cause of Homelessness



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

4 households, made up of 4 persons, were living unsheltered in Warren County, according to the 2015 Point-In-Time Count. This is a decrease of 3 households (42.9%) and 4 persons (50%) from 2014.

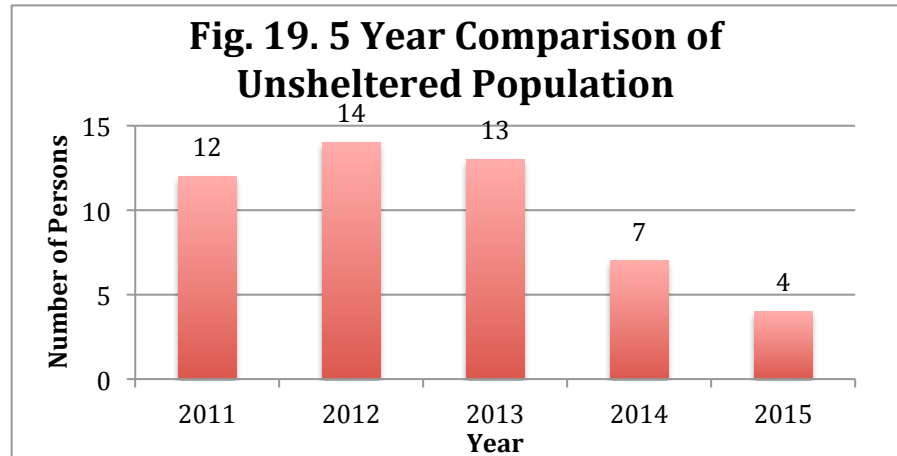
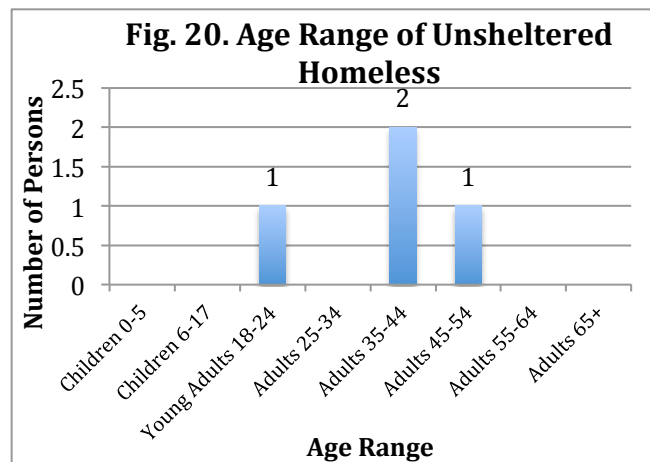


Figure 19 shows the number of unsheltered persons from 2011 to 2015. Overall the number of unsheltered persons has decreased in Warren County, demonstrating a decrease of 8 persons (66.7%) from 2011.

Families and Individuals

All 4 unsheltered households counted in Warren County in 2015 were composed of individual adults.



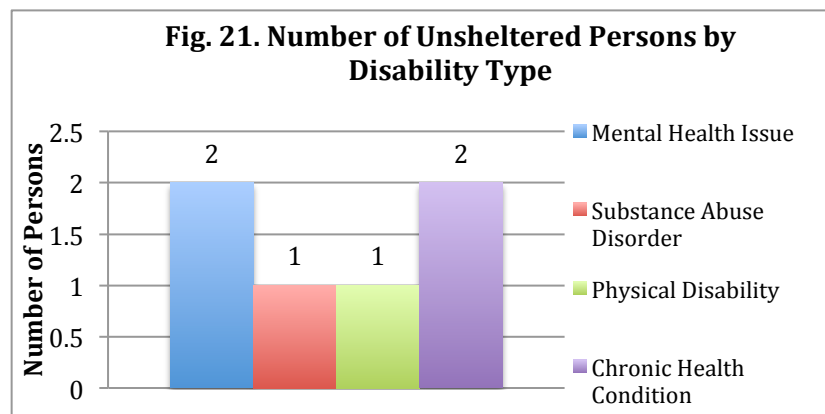
Demographics

The largest portion of the 4 unsheltered persons counted in 2015, 50%, was between 35 and 44 years old.

3 of the 4 unsheltered persons were male (75%). 50% identified their race as Black or African American and 50% also reported their ethnicity as Hispanic.

Disabilities

2 of the 4 unsheltered persons (50%) reported having some type of disability. The reported disabilities can be seen in Figure 21.



Subpopulations

On the night of the count, 1 unsheltered homeless individual in Warren County reported being a victim of domestic violence.

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

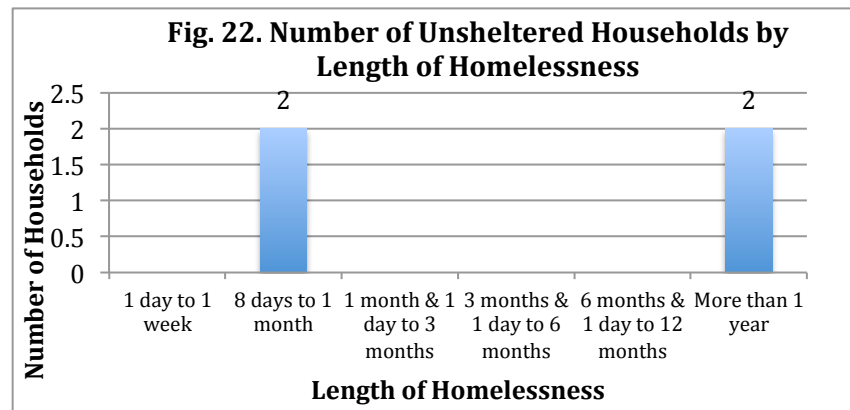
Income and Benefits

Among the 4 unsheltered households, only 1 answered with information about their sources of income. This 1 individual reported not having any sources of income.

1 of the 4 unsheltered households (25%) also reported not receiving any non-cash benefits. The other 3 households reported receiving Food Stamps (SNAP), 2 reported connection to Medicaid, and 1 reported receiving Medicare benefits on the night of the Point in Time.

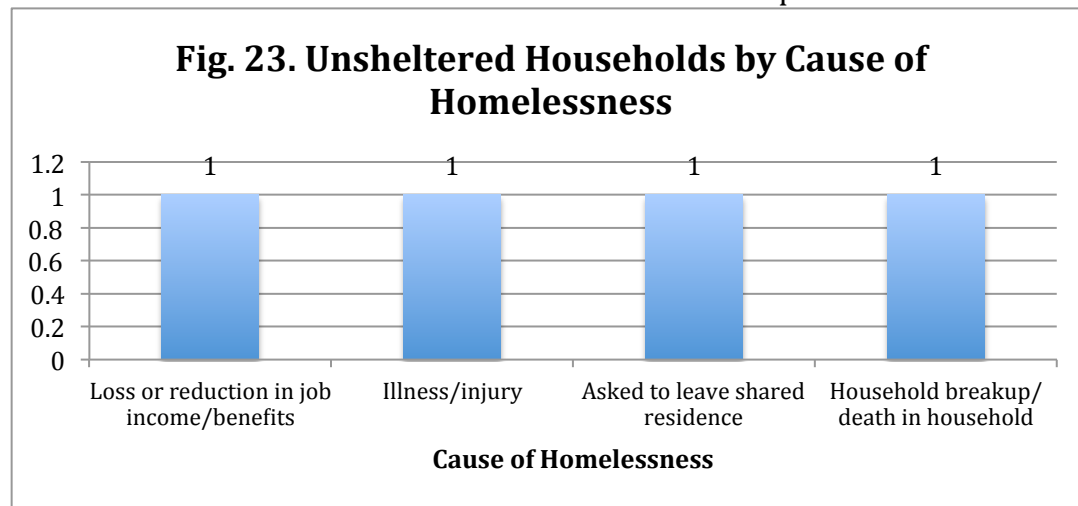
Length of Homelessness

As shown in Figure 22, 50% of unsheltered households reported their length of homelessness lasted more than 1 year.



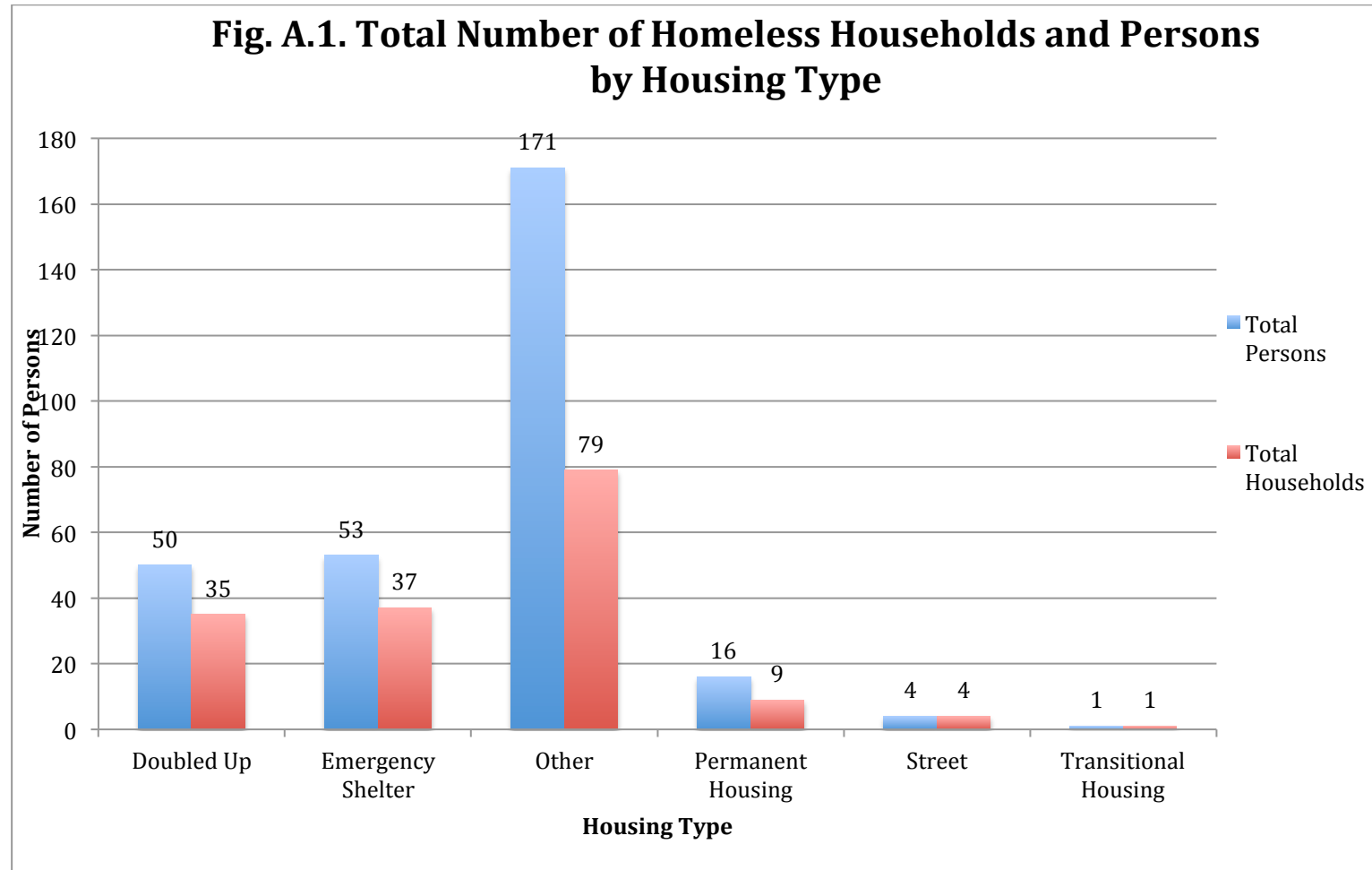
Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, each unsheltered household answered different. The responses can be seen in Figure 23.

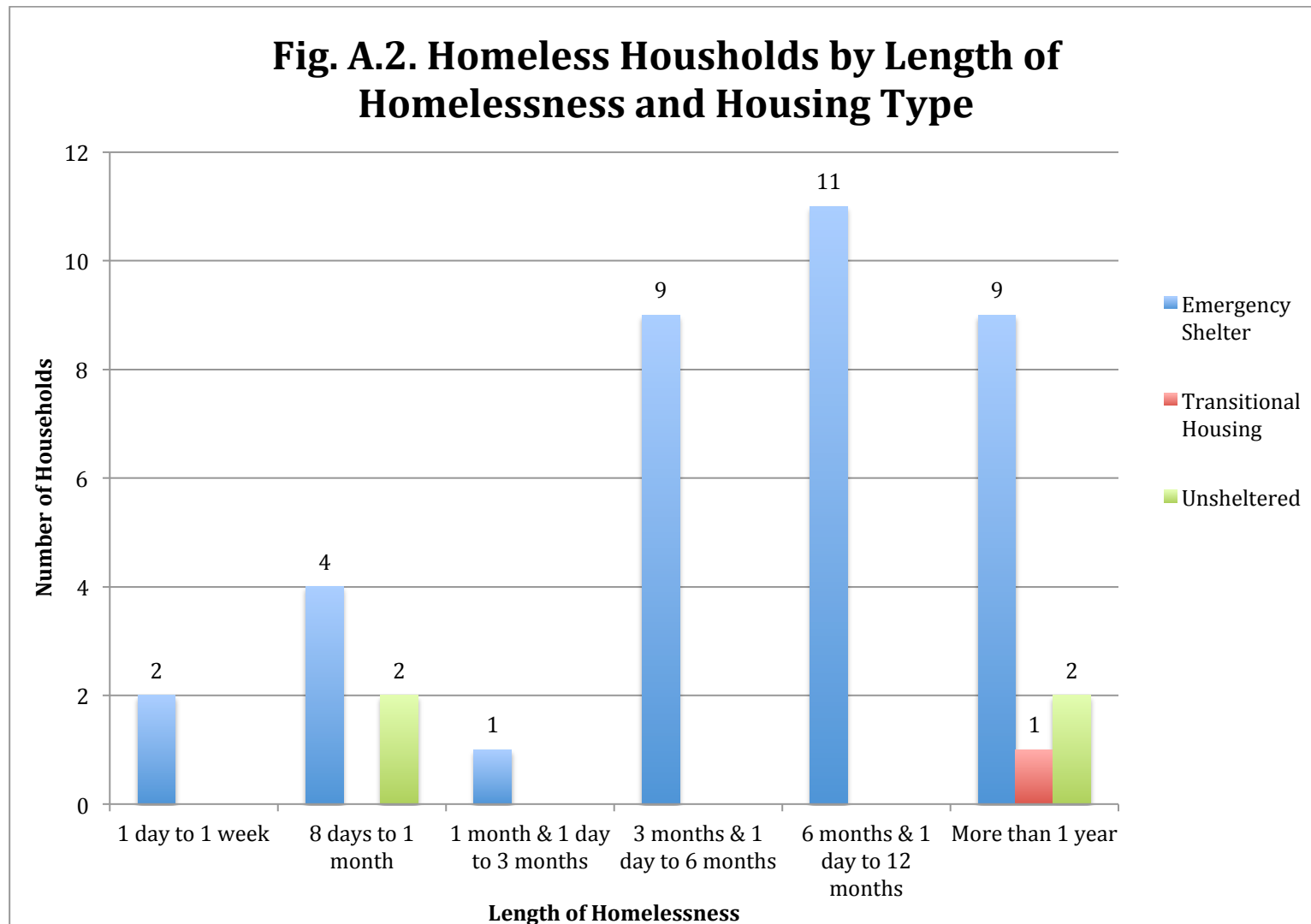


VI. Appendix

Where did you spend the night of Tuesday, January 27, 2015?



How long have you been in your current living situation?



Who was homeless with you on the night of January 27th?

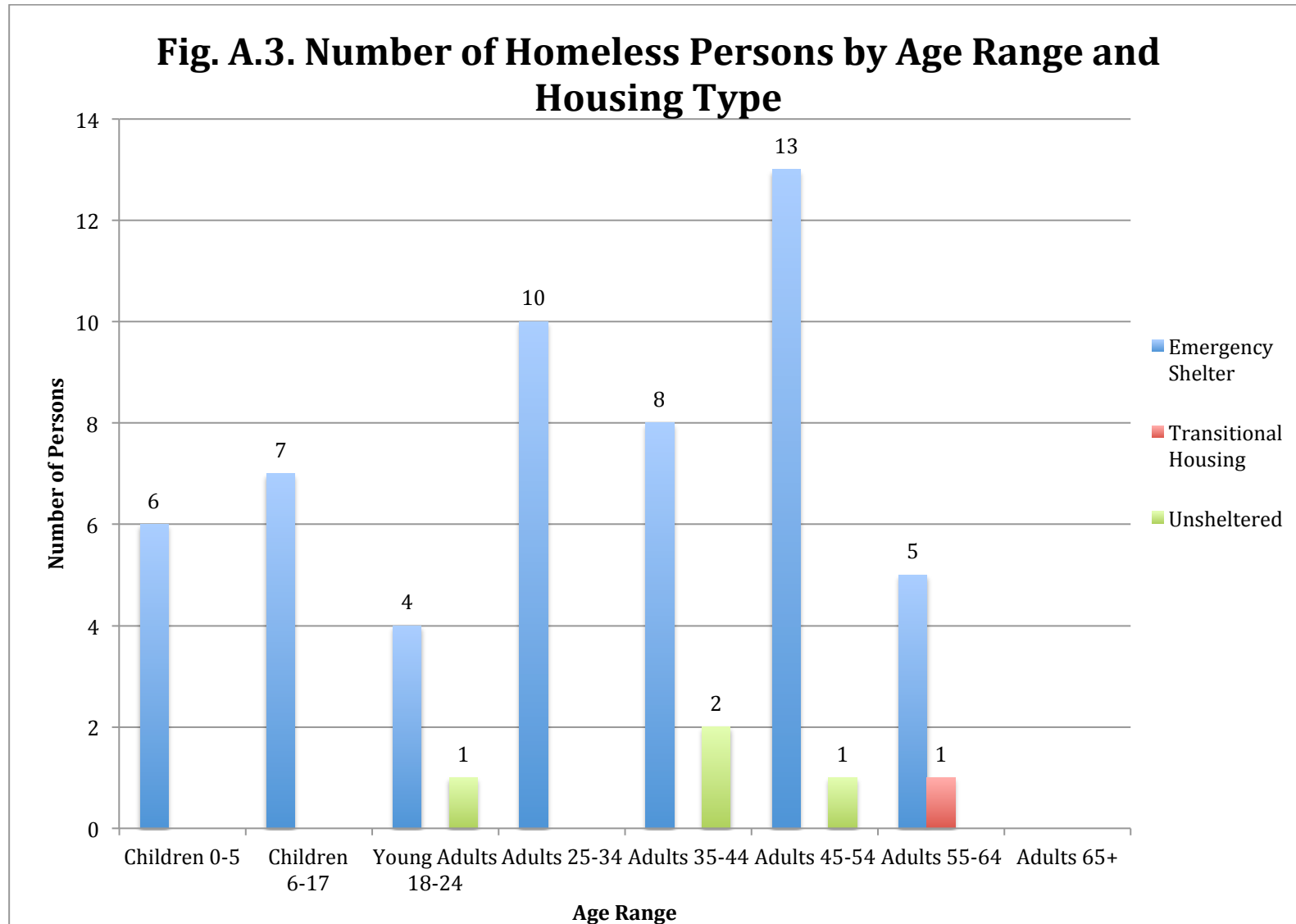


Fig. A.4. Number of Homeless Persons by Gender and Housing Situation

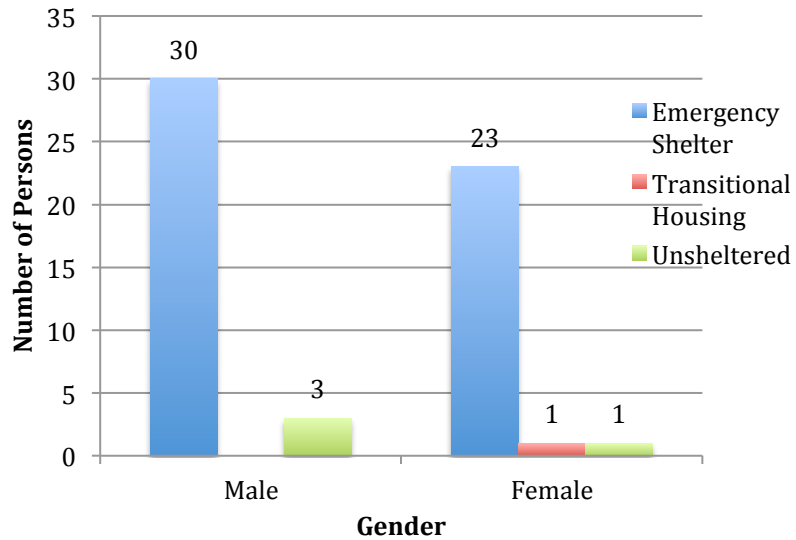


Fig. A.5. Number of Homeless Persons by Race

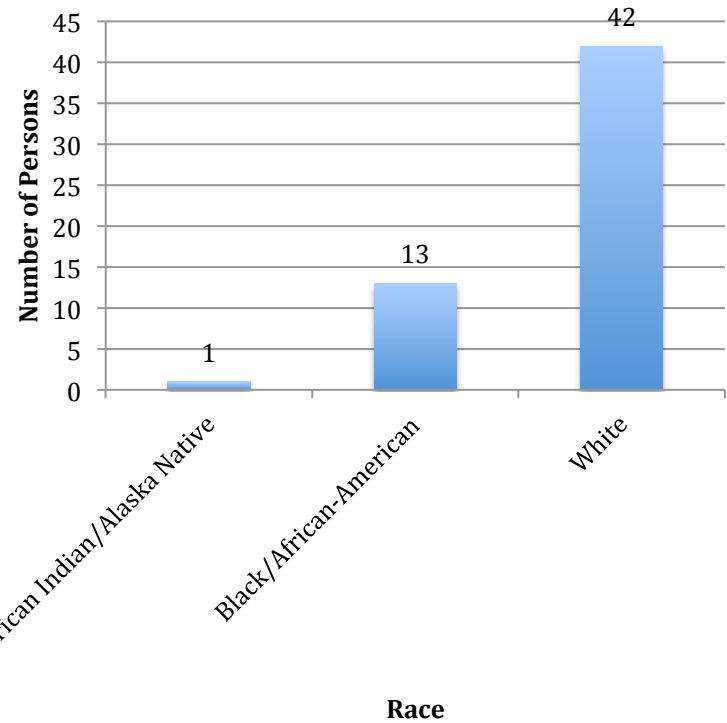
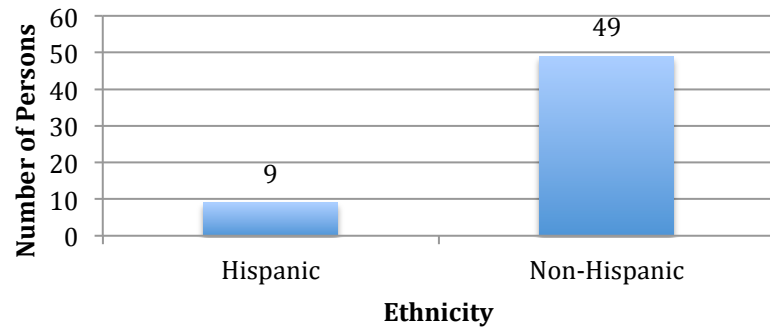
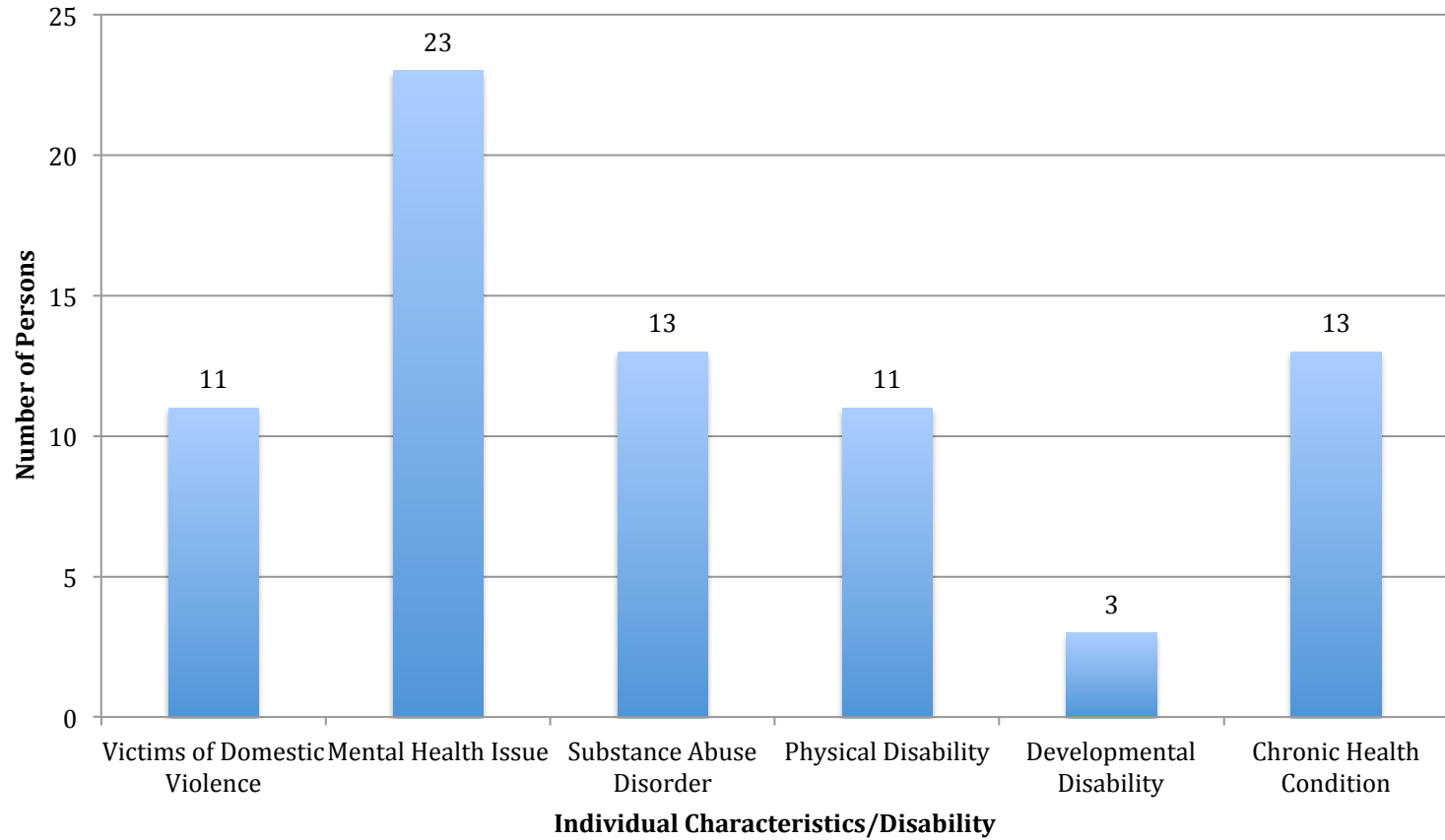


Fig. A.6. Number of Homeless Persons by Ethnicity



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

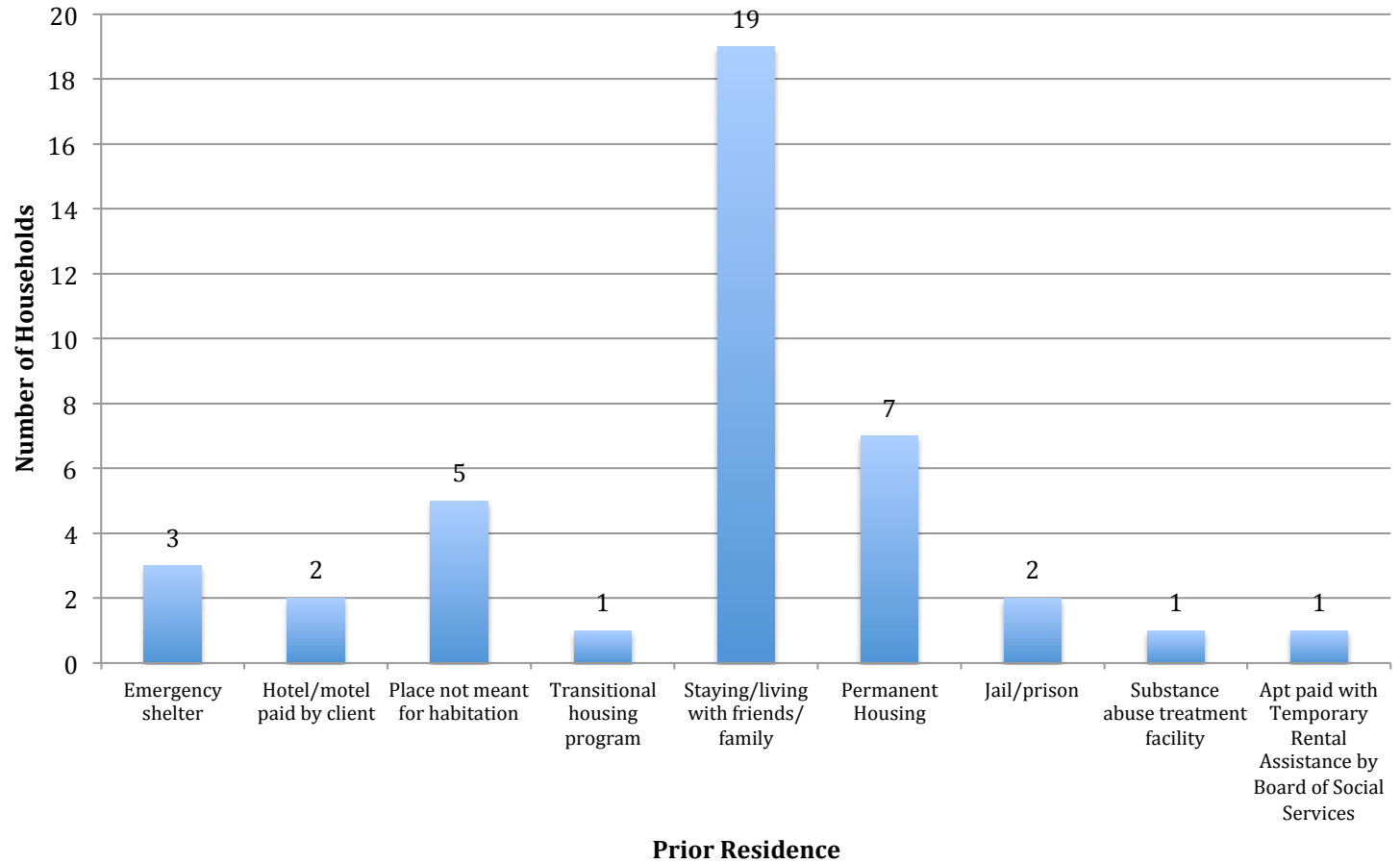


Where was your last permanent address before becoming homeless?

Fig. A.8. Number of Homeless Households by County, State or Country of Last Permanent Address	
Last Permanent Address - County/State	Number of Households
New York	1
Ohio	1
Warren County	40

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?

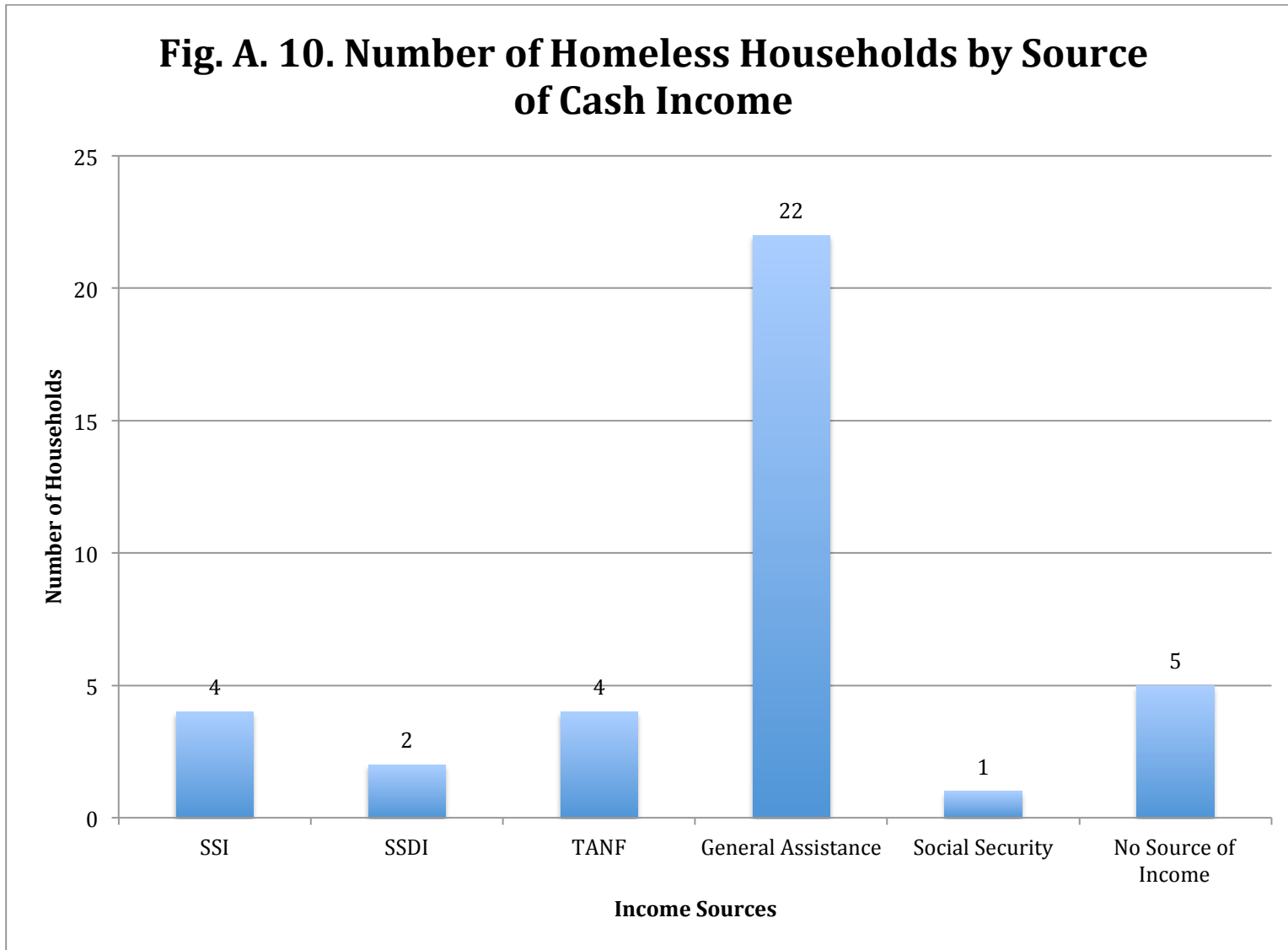
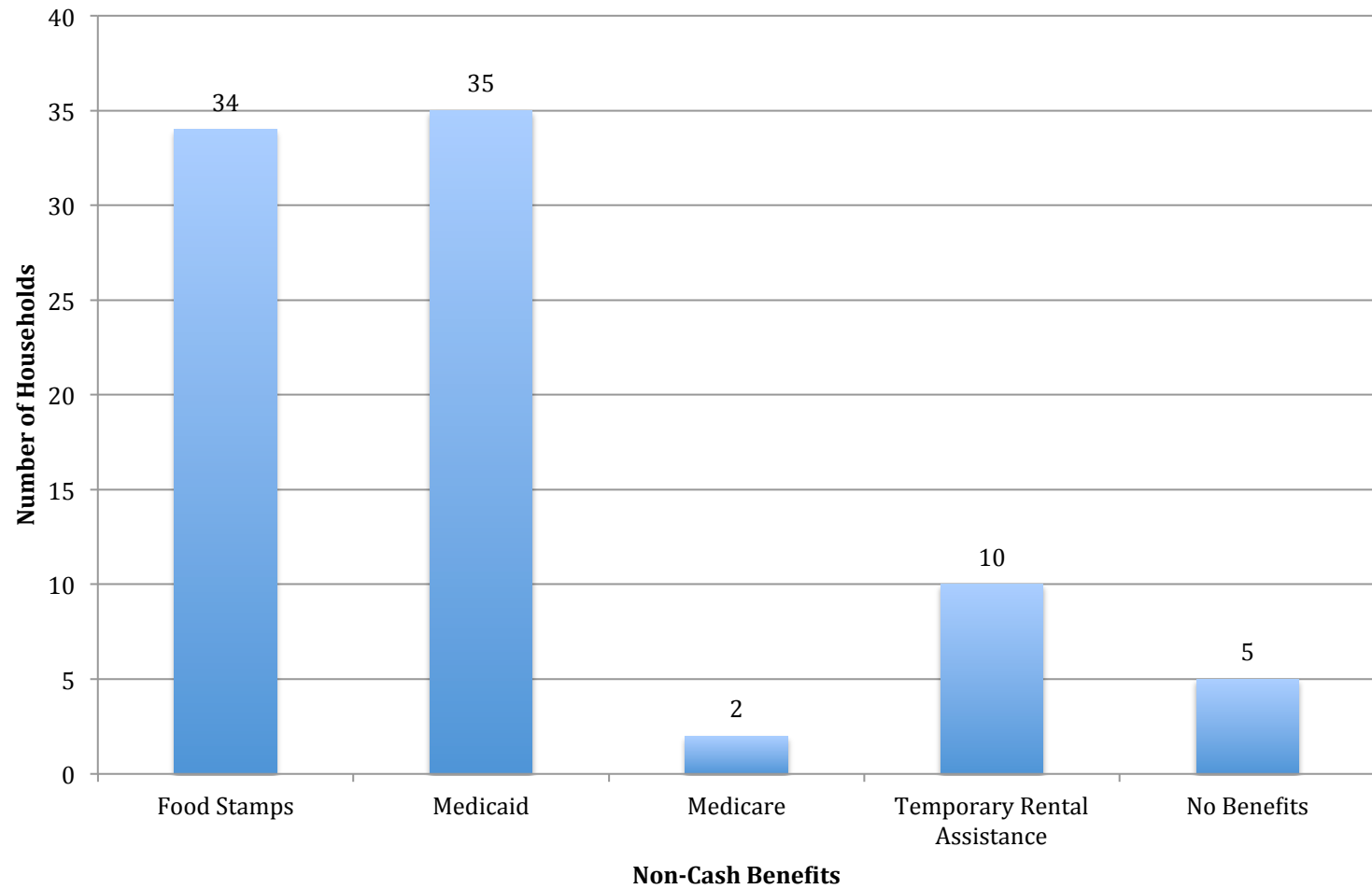
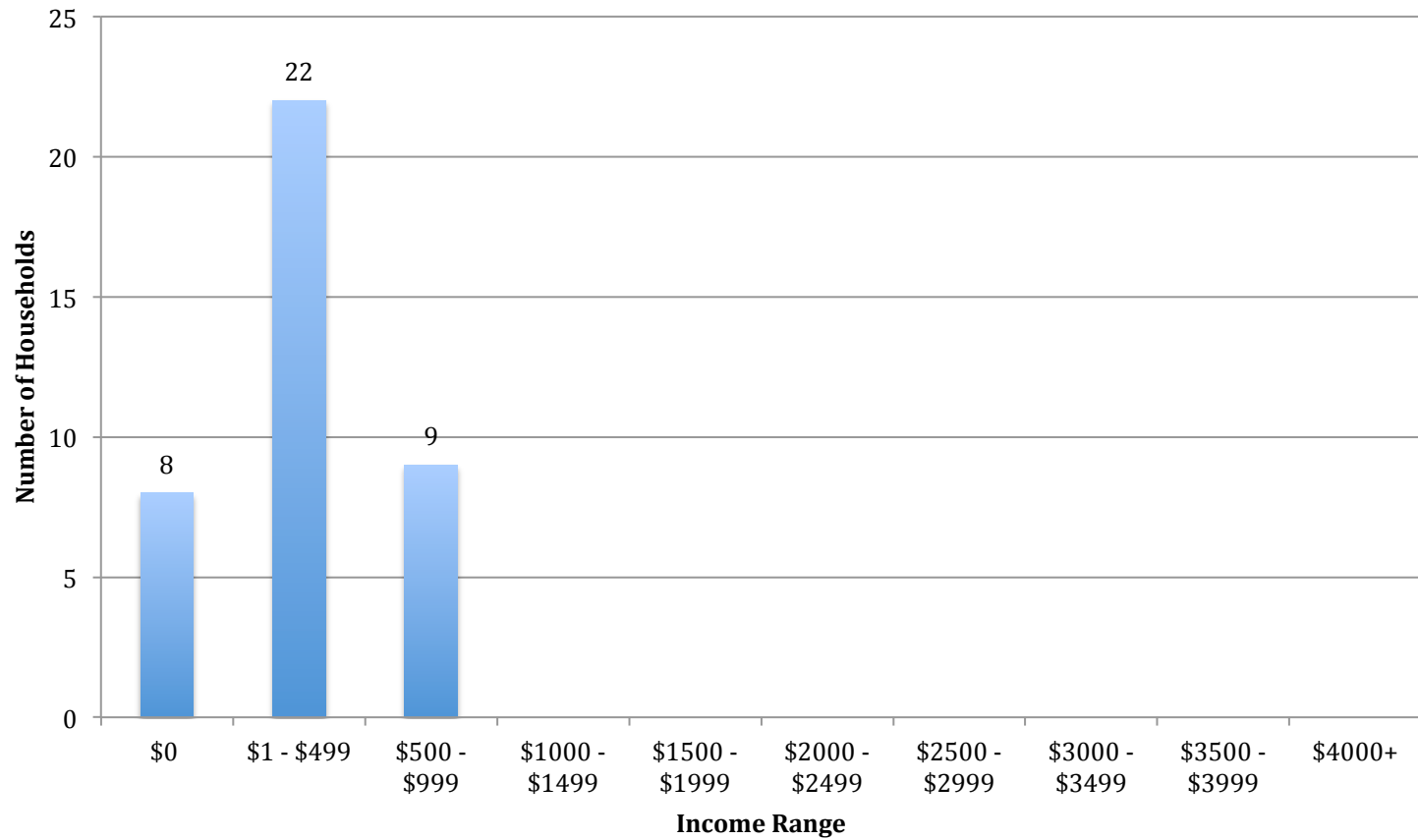


Fig. A. 11. Number of Homeless Households by Sources of Non-Cash Benefits



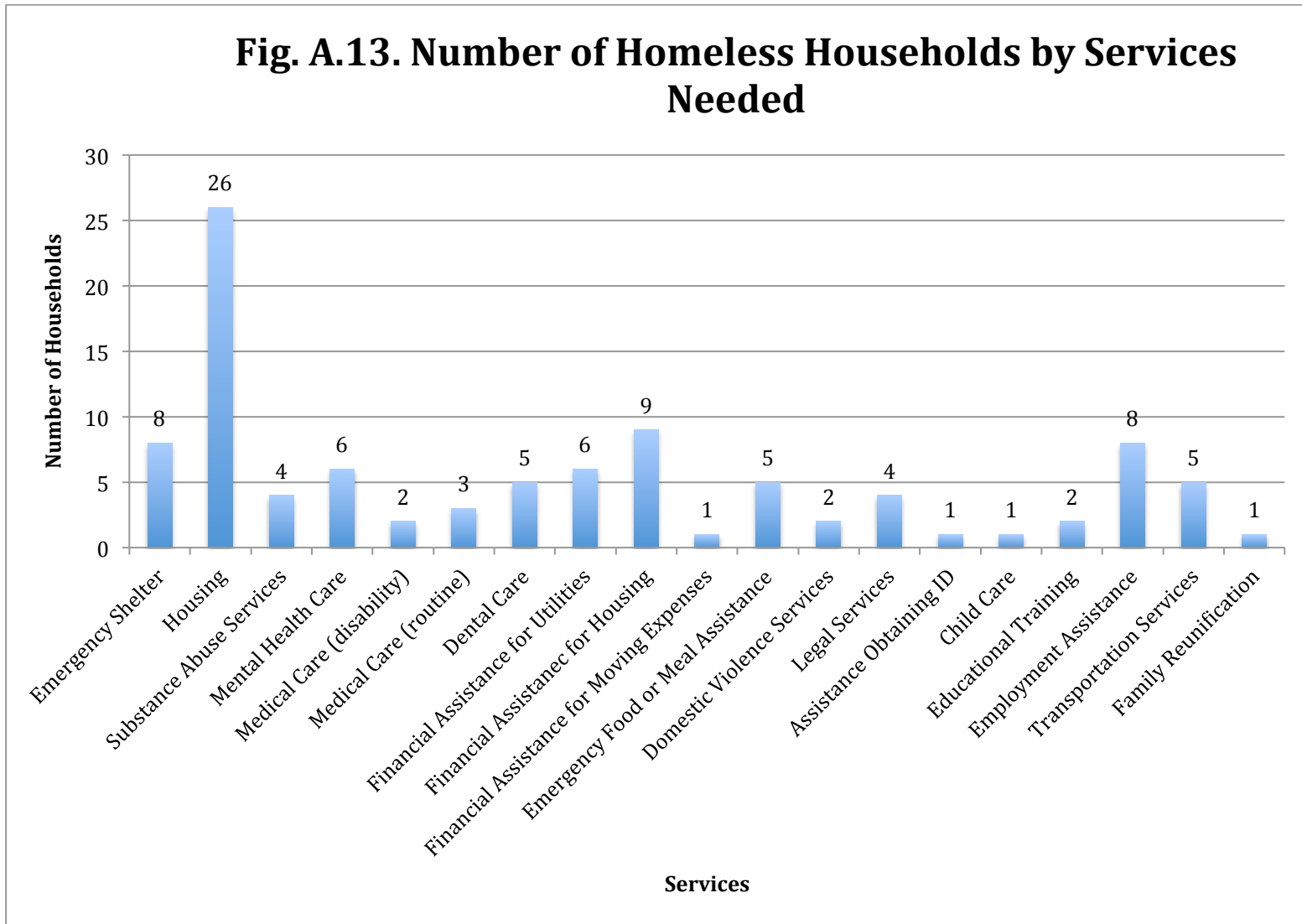
What is your monthly household income?

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

