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NJ
2016
Counts!

**Cumberland County's
2016
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 2016

NJ Counts 2016, 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 2016 Count reveals important demographic and other information about families and individuals who were homeless on the night of Tuesday, January 26th, 2016 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 2016. Monarch would also like to specifically thank Bergen County for providing a Spanish translation of the 2016 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 2016 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 in which the episodes equal at least 12 months, 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 2016 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.

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 2016 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 third 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 2016 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 2012 to 2016. 2012, 2014 and 2016 were not HUD required full reporting years while 2013 and 2015 were.
2. 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.
3. 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 26th, 2016 a total of 115 households, including 140 persons, were experiencing homelessness in Cumberland County, according to the 2016 Point-In-Time Count.
- A total of 19 persons in 19 households were identified as chronically homeless.
- 69 households, including 73 persons were unsheltered on the night of the count.

Total Homeless Population

On the night of January 26th, 2016, a total of 140 persons, in 115 households, were experiencing homelessness in Cumberland County, according to the 2016 Point-In-Time Count. This is a decrease of 61 persons (30.3%) and 51 households (30.7%) from 2015. Cumberland County had 1.6% of New Jersey’s statewide homeless population in 2016.

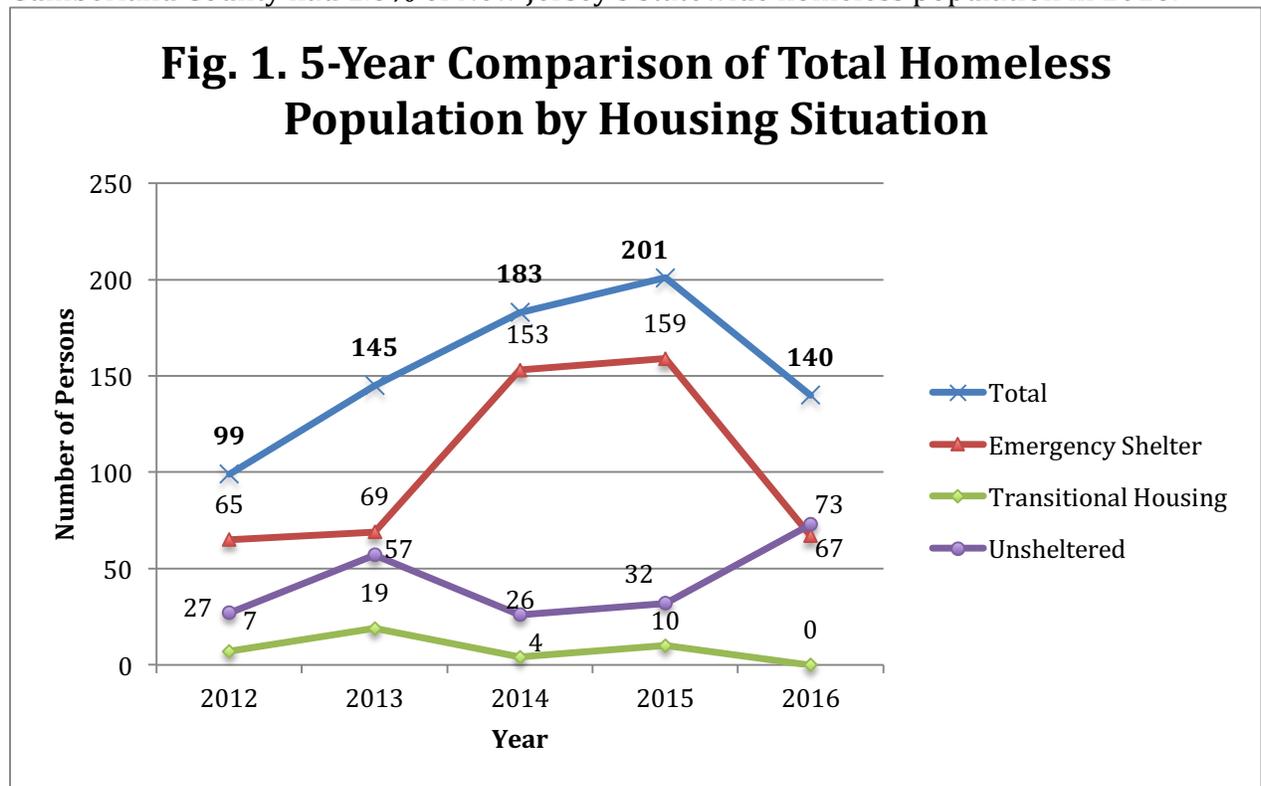
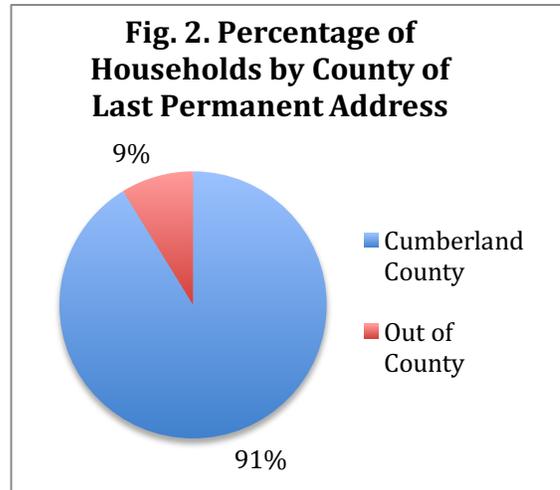


Figure 1 shows that, in 2016, 67 homeless persons stayed in emergency shelters, 0 stayed in transitional housing, and 73 were living unsheltered on the night of the count. The number of persons in transitional housing decreased by 10 persons (100%) from 2015 and the number of persons in emergency shelter decreased by 92 persons (57.9%) while the number of those in unsheltered locations increased by 41 persons (128.1%).

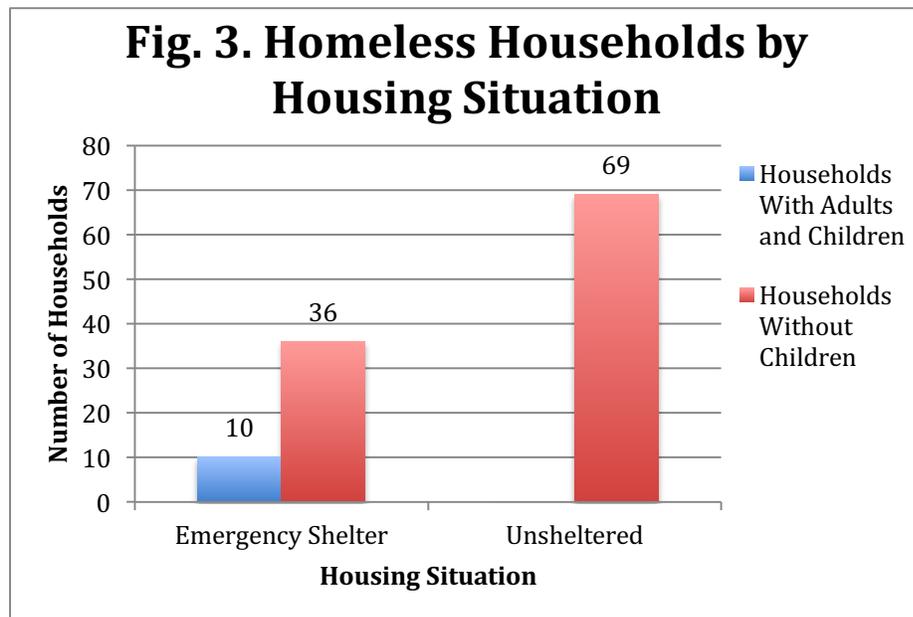
Figure 1 also shows that, between 2012 and 2015 the total homeless population steadily increased each year increasing at an average rate of 27.5% annually. However, in 2016 there was a significant drop in the homeless population by 30%. While there was a significant drop in the homeless population between 2015 and 2016, the 5-year comparison to the 2012 homeless population reflects a 41.4% increase. During this 5-year period the most significant change has been in the unsheltered population which increased by 170.4% since 2012.



As Figure 2 shows, 9% of the homeless households in Cumberland County in 2016 reported that their 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 115 homeless households counted in Cumberland County in 2016, 10 (8.7%) were families with at least one child under the age of 18 and one adult. These families were composed of 31 persons, including 21 children under age 18. The average family size was 2.9 persons. Figure 3 shows that all 10 families were staying

in emergency shelter on the night of the count. There were 0 unsheltered families. In

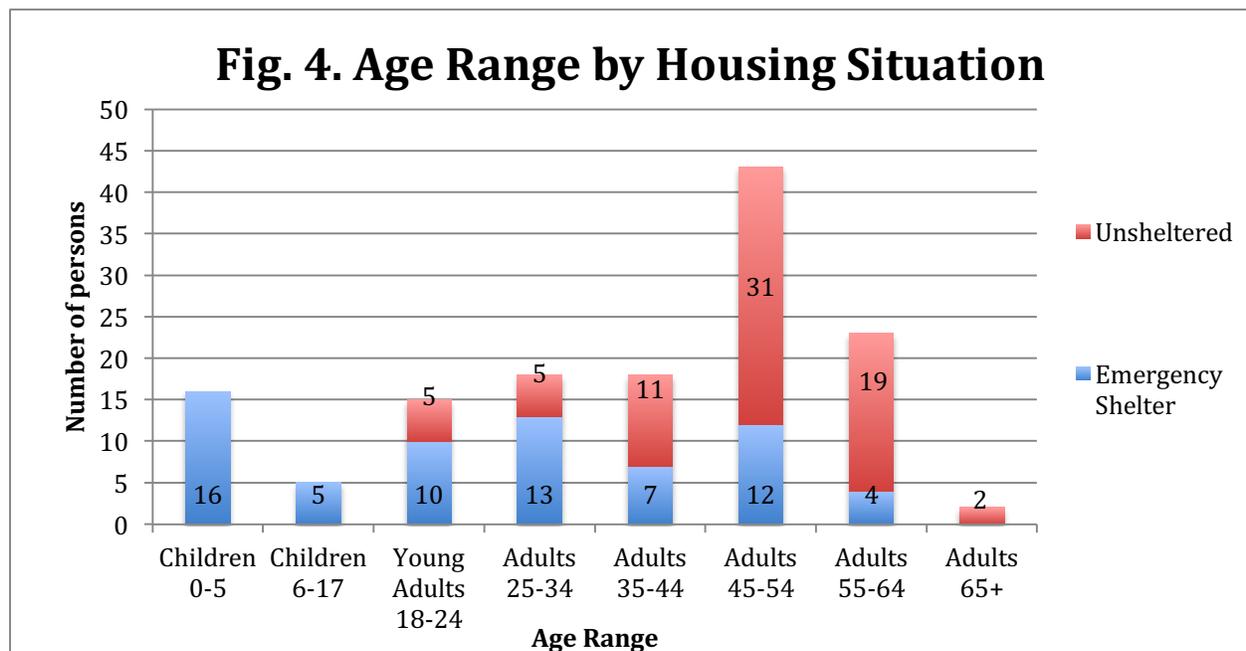
2016, Cumberland County counted 1 more homeless families than in 2015, an increase of 11.1%.

91.3% (105) of the homeless households in Cumberland County were households without children under 18, and they were composed of 109 adults. 36 (34.3%) of these adult-only households were staying in emergency shelters and 69 (65.7%) were unsheltered. Cumberland County has seen the number of adult-only homeless households decrease by 52 (33.1%) since 2015.

Like 2015, there were 0 households with only children under 18 identified in Cumberland County in 2016.

Demographics

There were a total of 15 (10.7%) homeless adults between 18 and 24 years old, 104 (74.3%) adults over age 24, and 21 (15%) children under 18 years old experiencing homelessness on the night of the count. Figure 4 shows that the age range most represented overall was adults between 45 and 54 (43 persons, 30.7%), followed by adults between 55 and 64 (23, 16.4%).



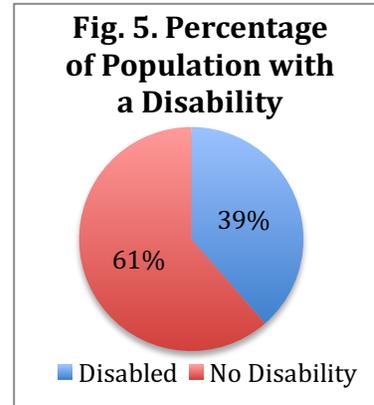
73.6% of homeless persons were male, and 26.4% were female.

53.6% of persons identified their race as Black or African-American, making that the largest racial subgroup among persons experiencing homelessness on the night of the count. The next largest group self-identified as White (44.3%), followed by those

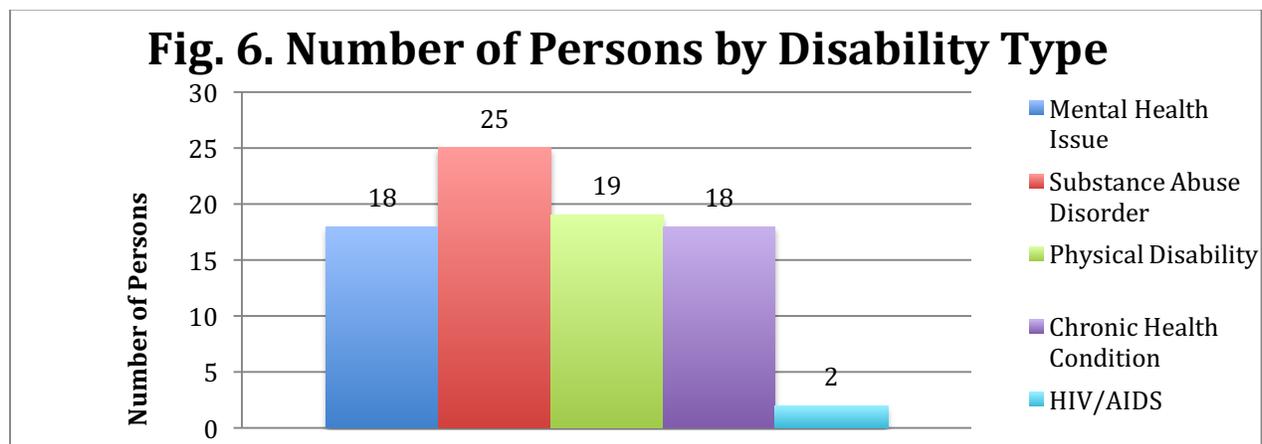
identifying as American Indian (1.4%). With regard to ethnicity, 20% of persons identified themselves as Hispanic.

Disabilities

Figure 5 illustrates that 39% of homeless persons reported having some type of disability. 45.4% of adults (54 persons) 18 or older reported some type of disability compared to 0% of children. Figure 6 shows the number of the homeless persons that identified as having various disabilities. The most common disabilities included substance abuse disorders and chronic health conditions.

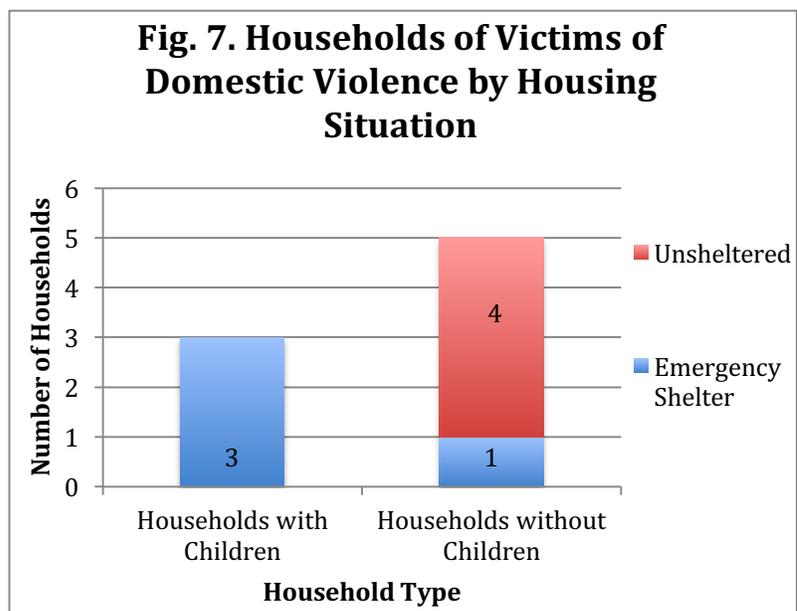


Among disabled adults, 46.3% reported a substance abuse disorder, making this the most prevalent disability. Adults with substance abuse disorders were 21% of the total homeless adult population. Among homeless children, none reported any disabilities on the night of the count.



Victims of Domestic Violence

On the night of the count, in Cumberland County, 8 homeless households (7% of all households) identified having a victim of domestic violence. A total of 15 homeless persons who were members of those households were impacted. The majority (62.5%) of these households were adult households without children,

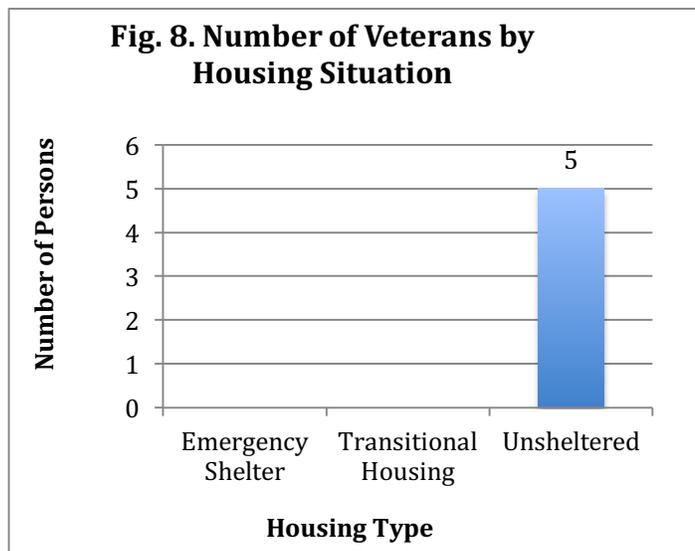


80% of which were unsheltered on the night of the count. 1 adult-only victim household (20%) and all 3 victim families were in emergency shelters on the night of the count.

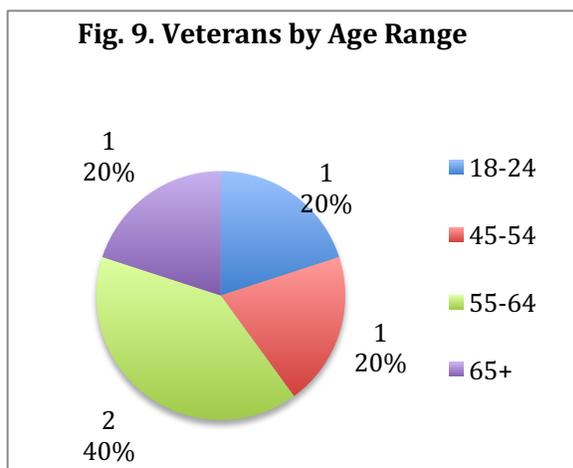
Veterans

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.

5 homeless veterans were identified on the night of the count. This is 4 fewer (44.4%) homeless veterans than were counted in 2015. All of the homeless veterans counted were in households with only adults. While most veterans counted in 2015 were in emergency shelters, all of homeless veterans counted in 2016 were unsheltered on the night of the count, a 150% increase in the number of unsheltered veterans.



All 5 veterans experiencing homelessness in Cumberland County on the night of the count were male. The most common racial background identified among them (3 veterans, 60%) was Black or African American, with 2 (40%) identified as White. Figure 9 illustrates the percentage of homeless veterans by age range. No veterans were between 25 and 44 years old.



2 of the 5 veterans, 40%, reported having some kind of disability. Both of the disabled homeless veterans (100%) reported physical disabilities, and 1 reported a chronic health conditions. The type of service that homeless veterans sought the most was housing (80%). 60% also sought each of the following: veterans services, emergency food assistance, employment assistance, and financial assistance for housing. None of the homeless veterans reported being connected with VA pensions, disability, or medical benefits. 40% of homeless veterans reported having no

source of income, and 40% reported that they were not connected with any kind of non-cash mainstream benefit.

Income and Benefits

Among all homeless households on the night of the count, 62.6% had no source of income and 6.1% reported having earned cash income (see Figure 10). The three most common sources of non-earned cash income among households were SSI (16.5%), General Assistance (9.6%), and SSDI (4.3%).

Figure 11 shows the average monthly income for all homeless households by housing situation.

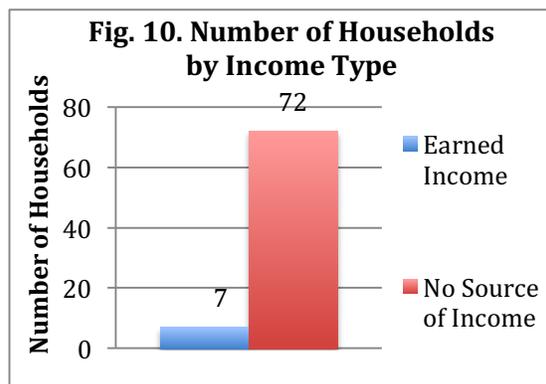


Figure 11. Average Monthly Income For Households by Housing Situation

| | Emergency Shelter | Transitional Housing | Unsheltered |
|----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Average for All Households | \$259.04 | N/A | \$141.15 |

50.4% of homeless households reported receiving no kind of non-cash benefit on the night of the count. The top reported non-cash benefits were Food Stamps (SNAP) (32.2%) and Medicaid (28.6%).

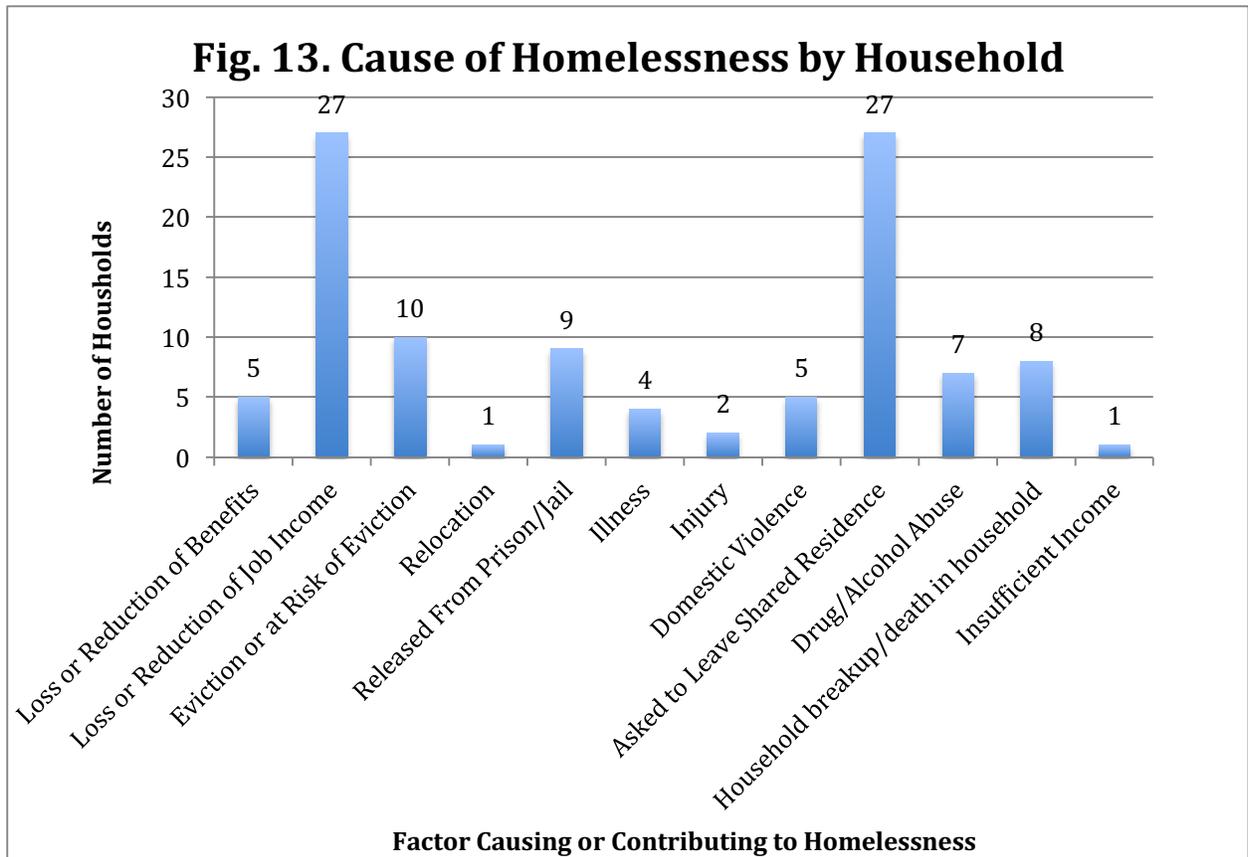
Length of Homelessness

As Figure 12 shows, the largest number of households (39 households, 33.9%) reported their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted more than 1 year. The next largest number, 24 households or 20.9%, reported being homeless between 8 days and 1 month. 13 households reported their homelessness had lasted between 6 and 12 months. Taken together with those who had been homeless more than 1 year, this means 45.2% of households had been homeless more than 6 months. 6.9% of households reported their most recent episode of homelessness as lasting for less than 1 week.



Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, 27 households (23.5%) attributed their homelessness to being asked to leave a shared residence and another 27 households (23.5%) cited loss or reduction of job income. These causes were cited more than any other causes. Figure 13 shows the next most common factors reported were eviction or risk of eviction (8.7%) and release from prison/jail (7.8%).



When homeless households were asked ‘what was your residence prior to your current living situation?’ more said they were living with friends or family (47%) than any other type of residence. 19.1% reported staying in permanent housing prior to their current living situation, and another 7% reported staying in jail or a juvenile detention center.

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. This definition has been updated since the 2015 point in time, in such that in order for a household to meet the episodic definition of chronically homeless, the 4 episodes must equal at least 12 months, which may lead to a decrease in the number of households that qualify as chronically homeless.

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

19 households, made up of 19 persons, were chronically homeless in Cumberland County, according to the 2016 Point-In-Time Count. This is a decrease of 34 persons (64.2%) from 2015. The rate of chronic homelessness as a percentage of overall homelessness decreased from 26.4% in 2015 to 13.6%.

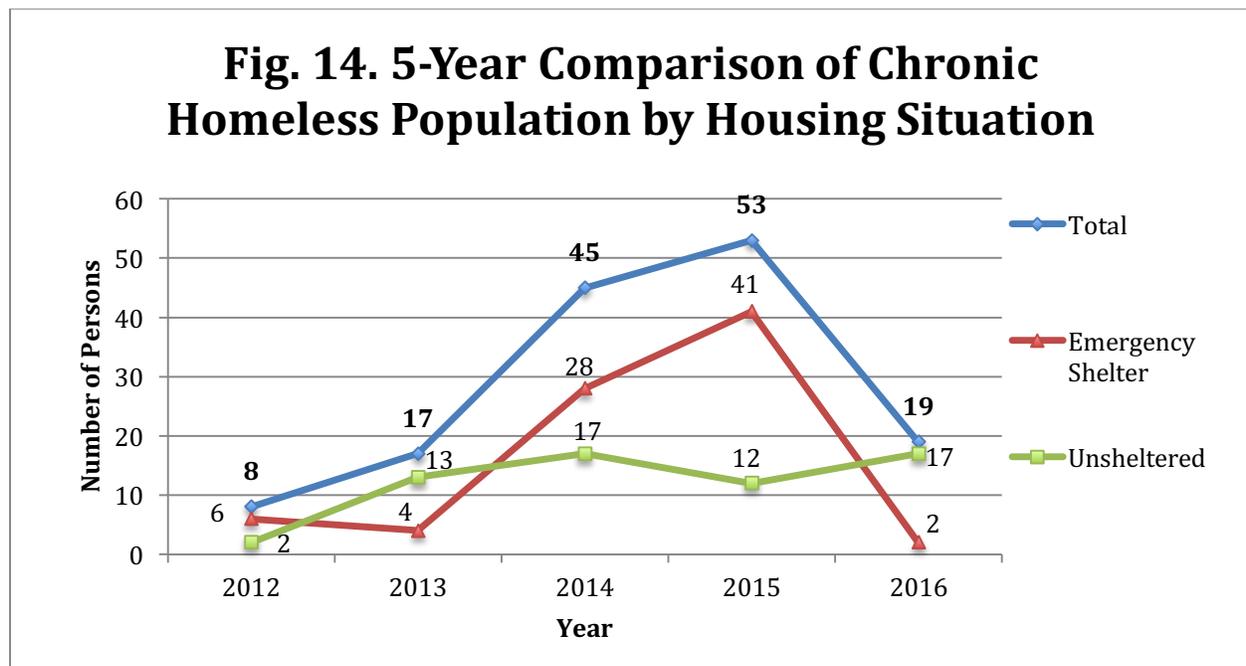


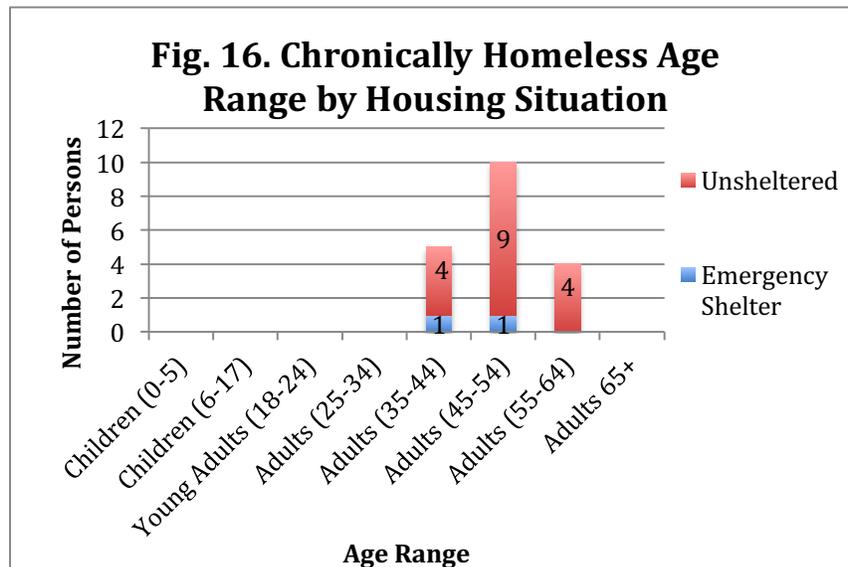
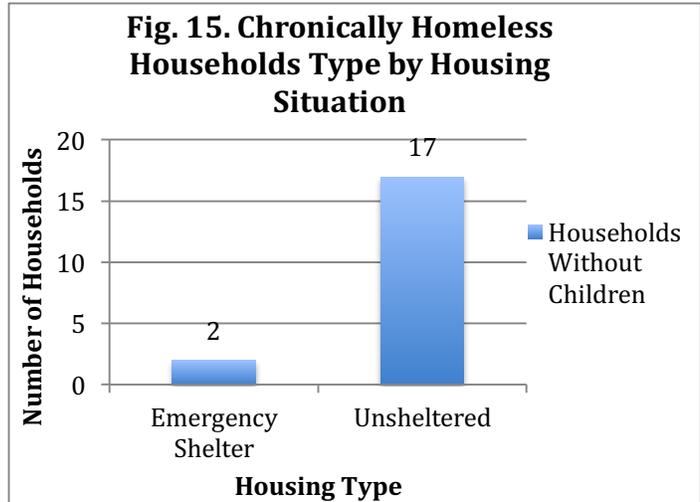
Figure 14 shows the number of chronically homeless persons who were in emergency shelters or living unsheltered in Cumberland County from 2012 to 2016. Over the past five

years the total number of chronically homeless persons trended upward, with a significant spike in 2015 and subsequent sharp decline in 2016. Overall, over the past 5 years the total number of chronic homeless has increased by 11 persons (137.5%). Since 2015, the number of chronically homeless persons in emergency shelter has decreased 95.1%, while the unsheltered chronically homeless population increased 41.7% in the same year's time.

Families and Individuals

All 19 chronically homeless households counted in 2016 were adult-only households, and none of the households were family households with adults and children under 18. This marks a 100% decrease from 2 chronically homeless families, and a 54.8% decrease from 42 adult-only households since 2015.

Demographics



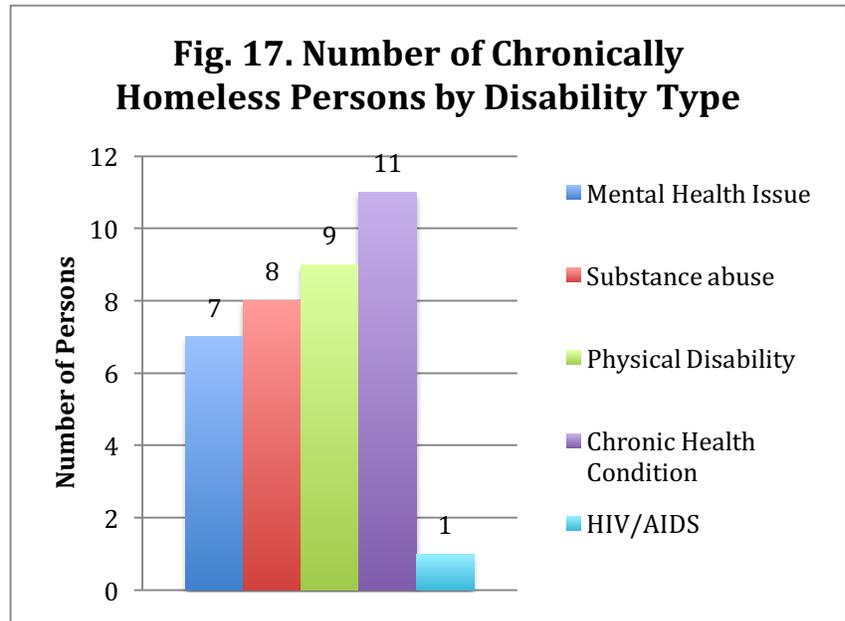
Of the 19 total chronically homeless persons, the largest number of chronically homeless persons (10, 52.6%) in a single age category fell between the ages of 45 and 54 years of age. Figure 16 shows that none of the chronically homeless individuals were under the age of 35 or over age 64.

94.7% of chronically homeless persons were male, and 6.3% were female.

The largest racial subgroup of homeless persons reported their race Black or African-American (52.6%), while 42.1% identified as White. With regard to ethnicity, 15.8% 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 chronic health conditions (57.9%), physical disabilities (47.4%), substance abuse disorders (42.1%), and mental health issues (36.8%). The complete numbers of reported disabilities among the chronically homeless can be seen in Figure 17.



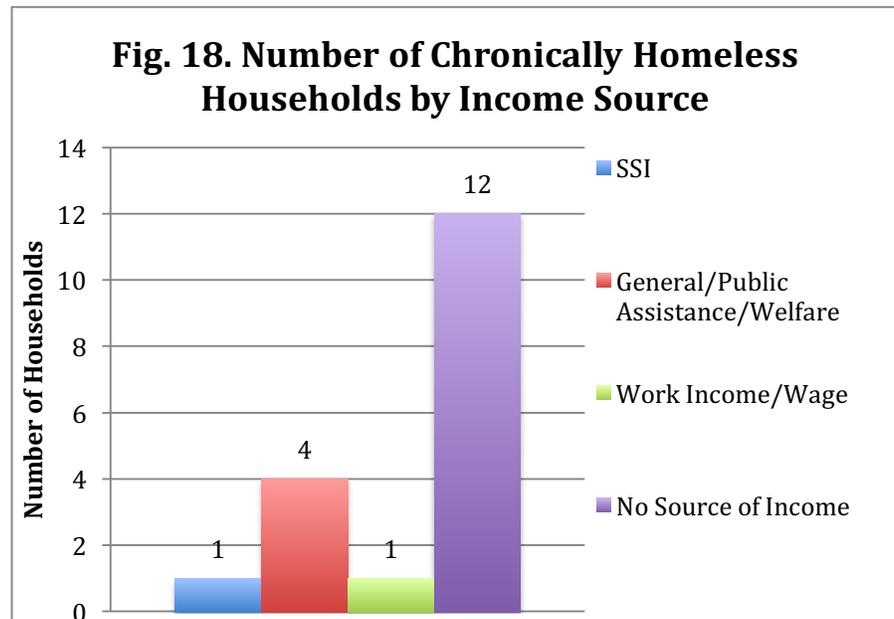
Subpopulations

On the night of the count, 1 chronically homeless person in Cumberland County reported being a victim of domestic violence. This individual was living unsheltered.

There were 0 veteran individuals identified as chronically homeless in Cumberland County on the night of the count.

Income and Benefits

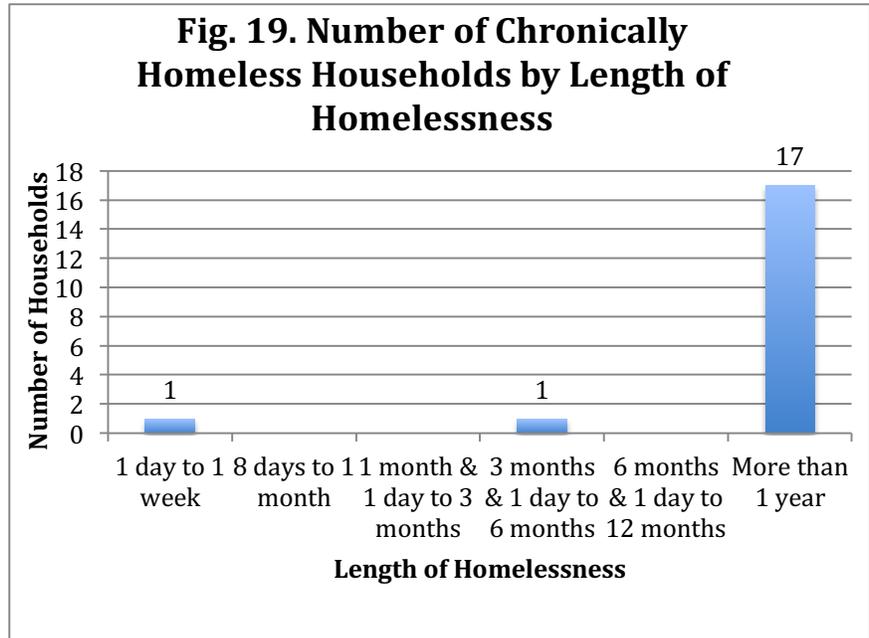
Among all chronically homeless households on the night of the count, 63.2% reported receiving no type of cash income. Figure 18 shows the sources of income received. The most common source of cash income among all chronically homeless households was General Assistance, which was received by 21%. 1 of the households reported earned income.



10 (52.6%) of the 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 only two non-cash benefits reported among this population with 47.4% and 31.6% of households receiving each, respectively.

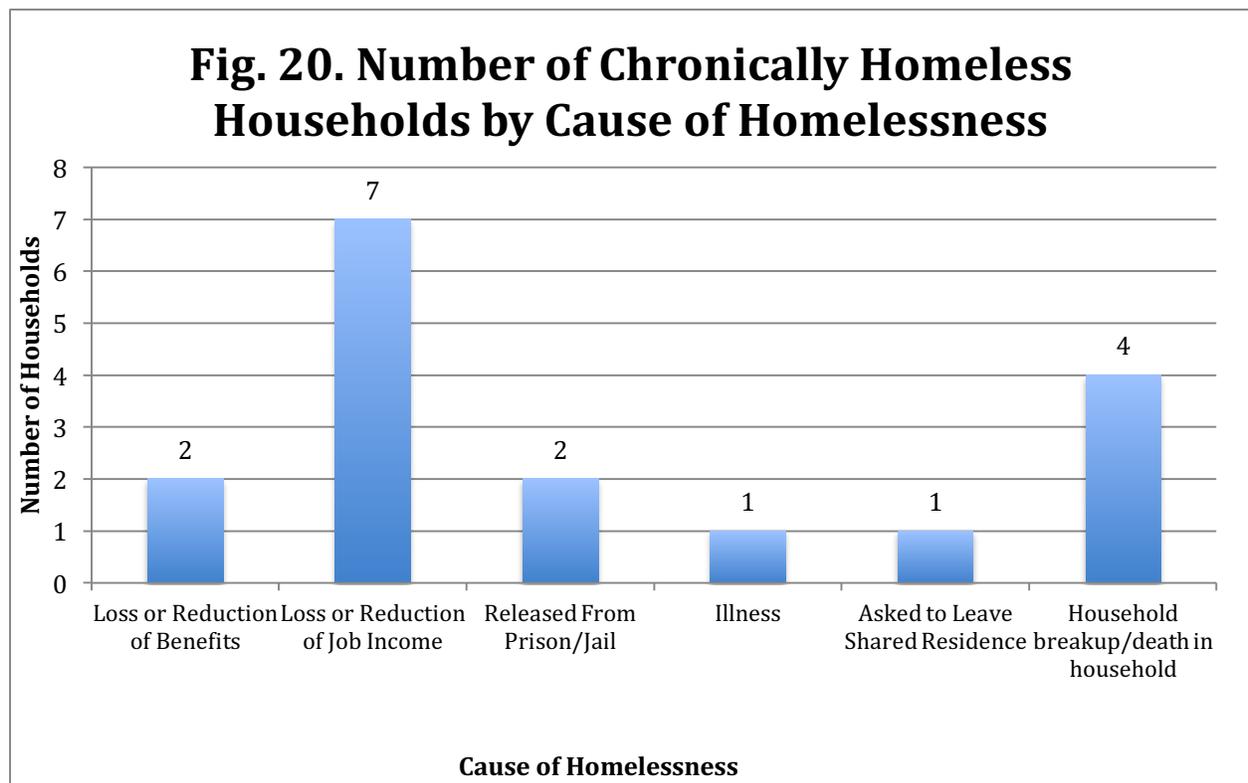
Length of Homelessness

Figure 19 shows that 17 chronically homeless households (89.5%) reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted for more than 1 year.



Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, the top two reported causes among the chronically homeless households were a loss or reduction in job income (36.8%) and household breakup or a household death (21%).

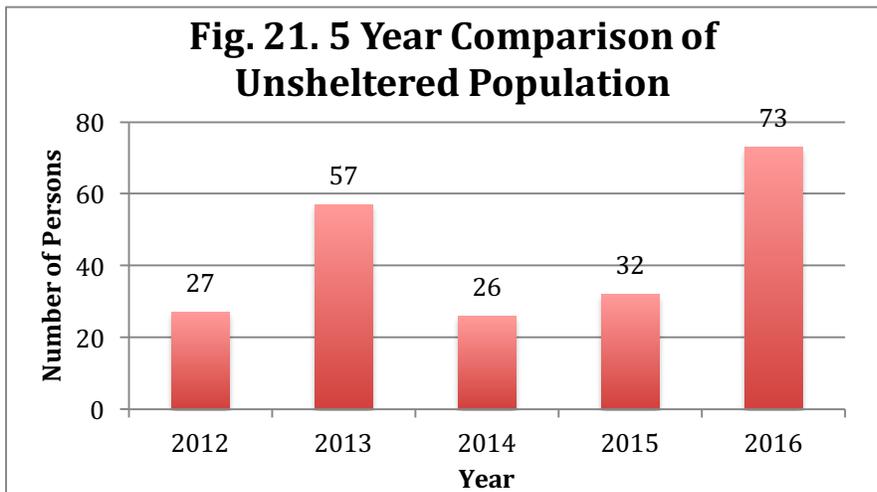


V. Findings for the Unsheltered Homeless

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



69 households, made up of 73 persons, were living unsheltered in Cumberland County on January 26th, 2016, according to the 2016 Point-In-Time Count. This is an increase of 37 households (115.6%), and an increase of 41 (128.1%) persons from 2015.

Figure 21 shows the number of unsheltered persons from 2012 to 2016. Since 2014, the unsheltered population has been steadily increasing according to the Point-In-Time Count. The 2016 count more than doubles the 2012 Count of unsheltered persons.

Families and Individuals

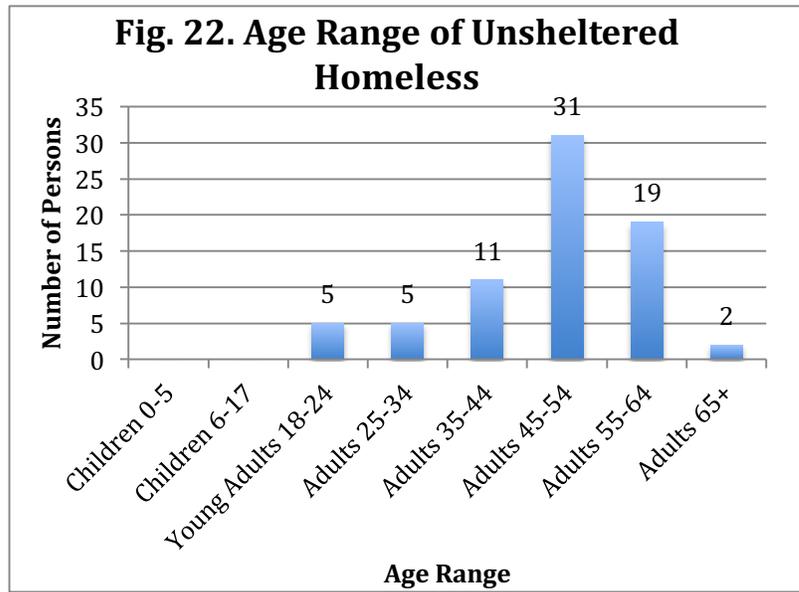
Of the 69 unsheltered households counted in 2016, none were households with children.

The 69 unsheltered households were adult-only households, and they included 73 persons. This is an increase of 37 (115.6%) adult households from 2015. 3 (4.3%) of these adult-only households included multiple adults.

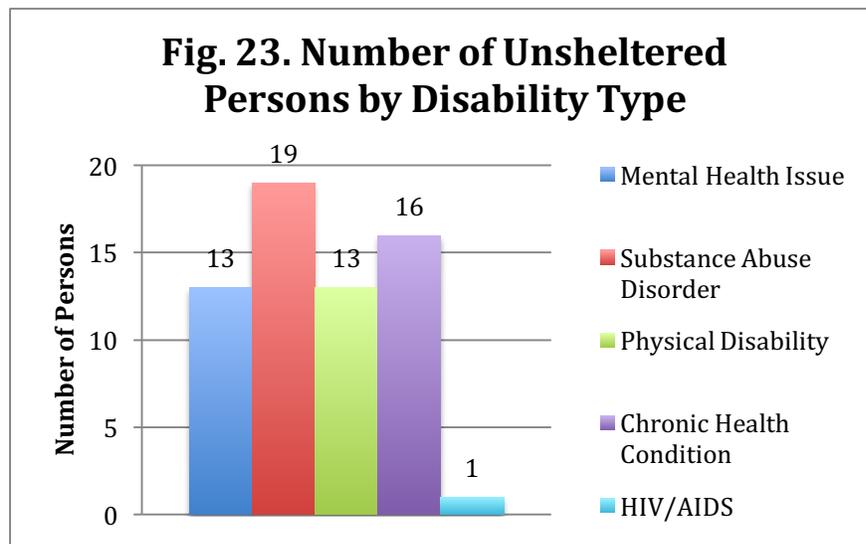
Demographics

The largest portion of the 73 unsheltered persons counted in 2016, 31 or 42.5%, were adults between 45 and 54 years old, followed by those between 55 and 64 (26%).

84.9% of unsheltered persons were male and 15.1% identified as female. 53.4% identified their race as Black or African-American and 42.5% identified as White. 19.2% of unsheltered persons identified their ethnicity as Hispanic.



Disabilities



Of the 73 unsheltered persons, 37 (50.7%) reported having some kind of disability. Among those identifying a disability, the disabilities most commonly identified were substance abuse disorders (51.4%), and chronic health conditions (43.2%). The complete numbers of reported disabilities among the unsheltered can be seen

in Figure 23.

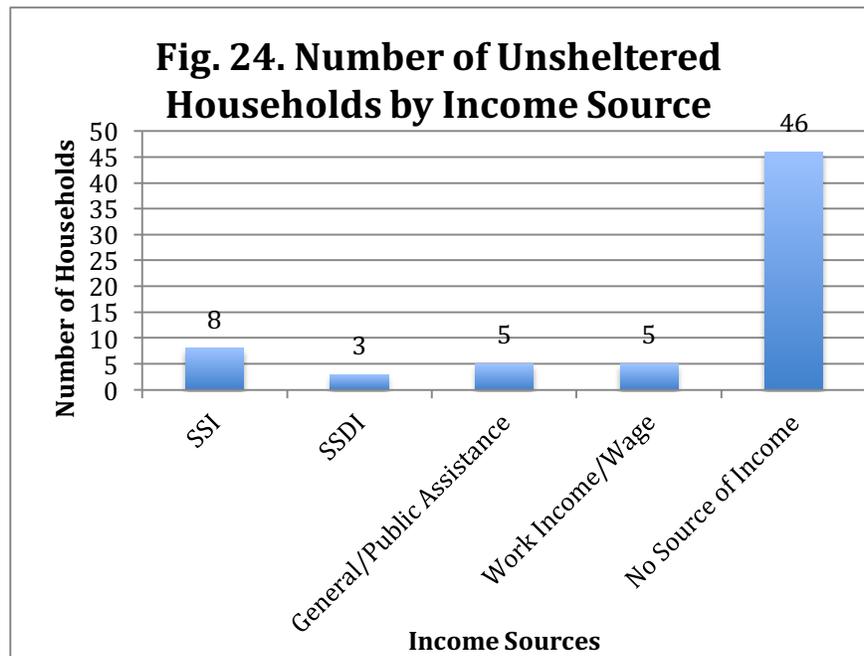
Subpopulations

On the night of the count, 4 unsheltered homeless households in Cumberland County reported having a victim of domestic violence. All were adult individuals. This is a decrease of 1 households (20%) since 2015.

There were 5 unsheltered veterans identified on the night of the count, a 150% increase from the 2 reported in 2015. All were single individuals.

Income and Benefits

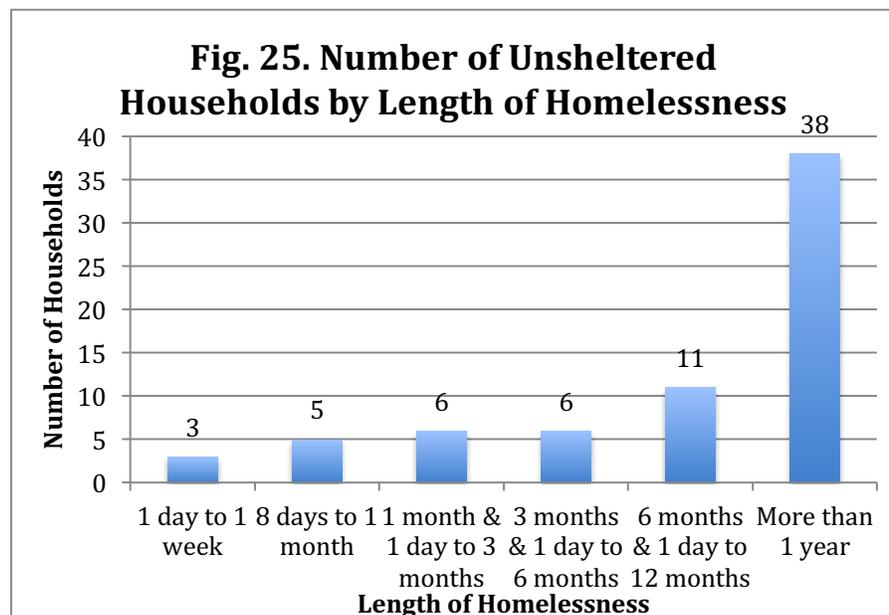
Among all unsheltered households on the night of the count, 46 (66.7%) reported having no source of income. The average monthly income among unsheltered households was approximately \$141. 11.6% of unsheltered households received SSI, 7.2% reported receiving General Assistance, and 7.2% reported earned income. Figure 24 shows all sources of income received.



43 unsheltered households (62.3%) 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 benefit among this group, with 24.6% and 18.8% receiving each of these benefits, respectively.

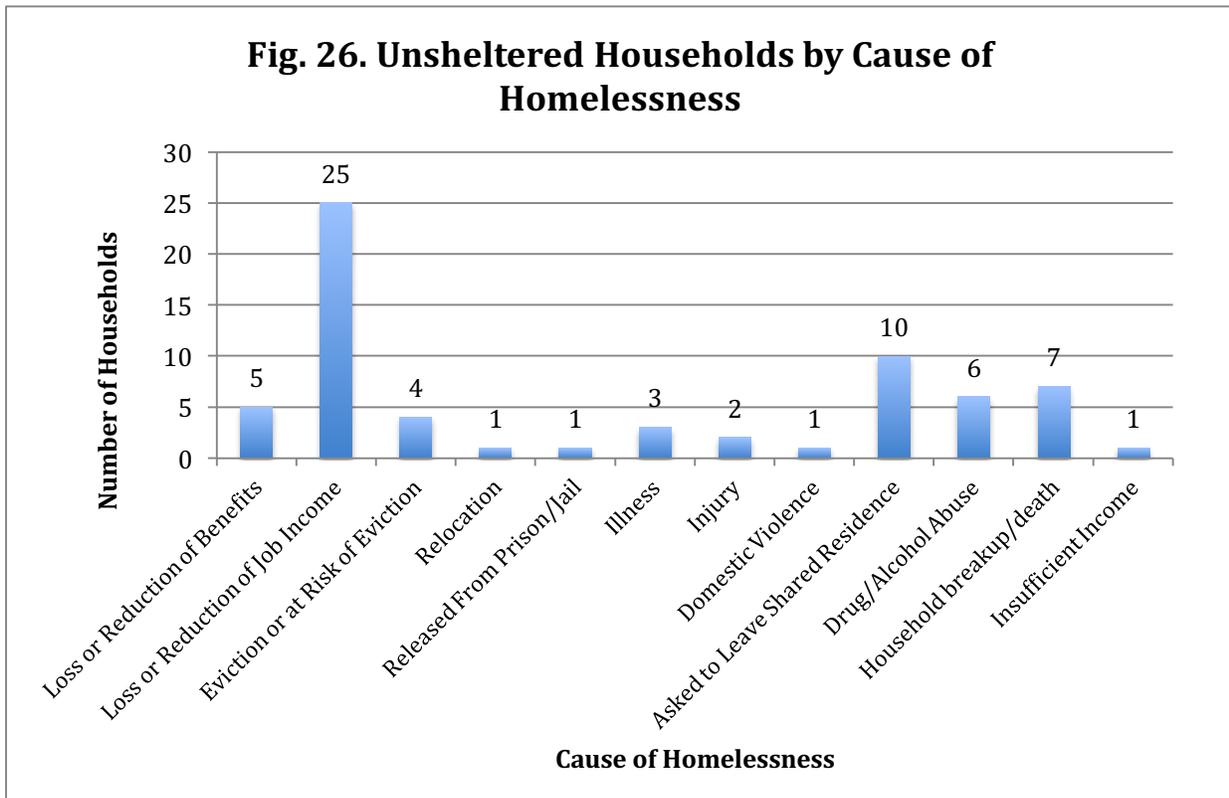
Length of Homelessness

As shown in Figure 25, more unsheltered homeless households reported that their households' most recent, continuous episode of homelessness was for more than 1 year (55.1%) than any other. Another 15.9% of unsheltered homeless reported being unsheltered between 6 and 12 months.



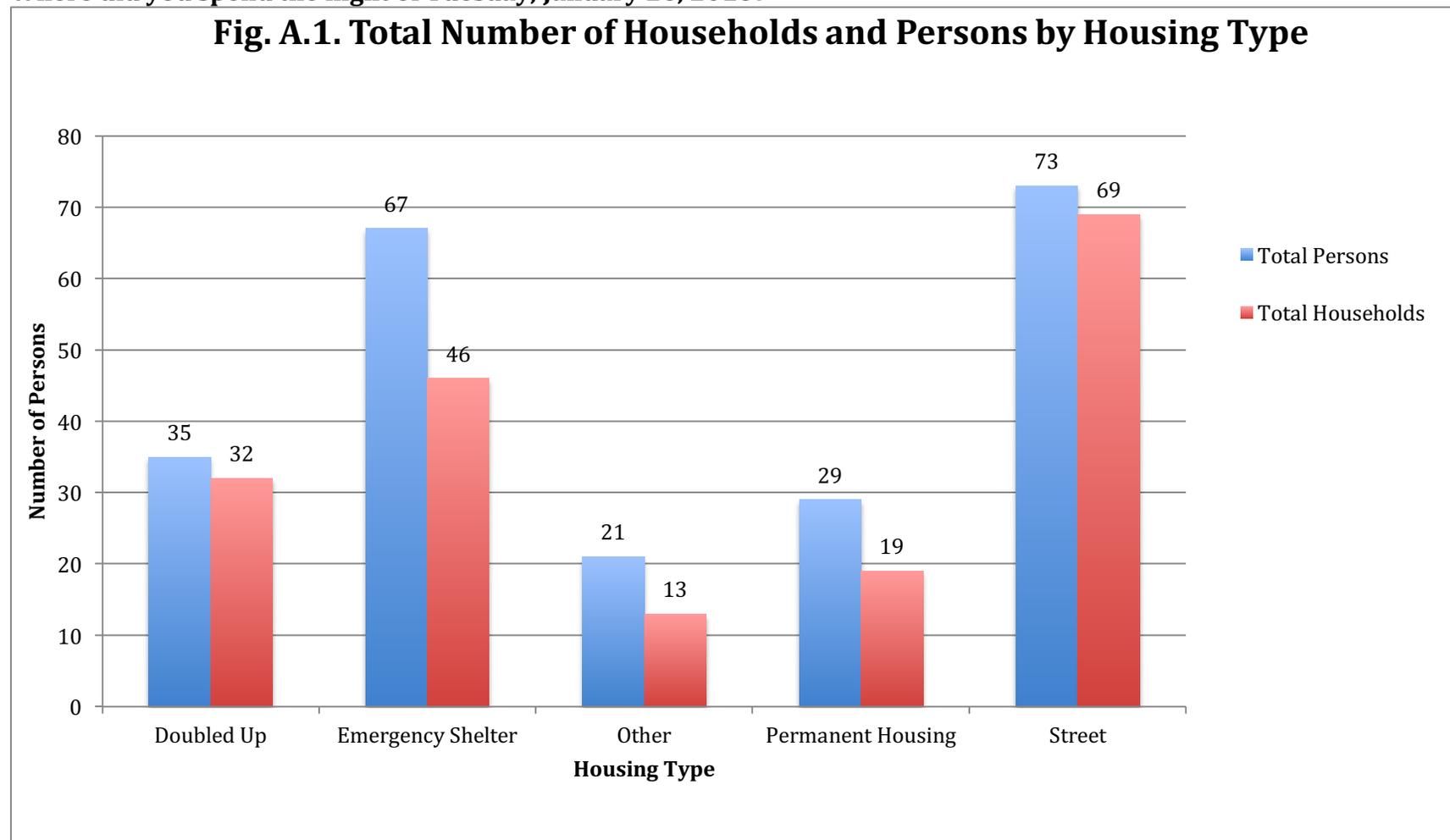
Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, the two most common responses were loss or reduction of job income (36.2%) and being asked to leave a shared residence (14.5%).

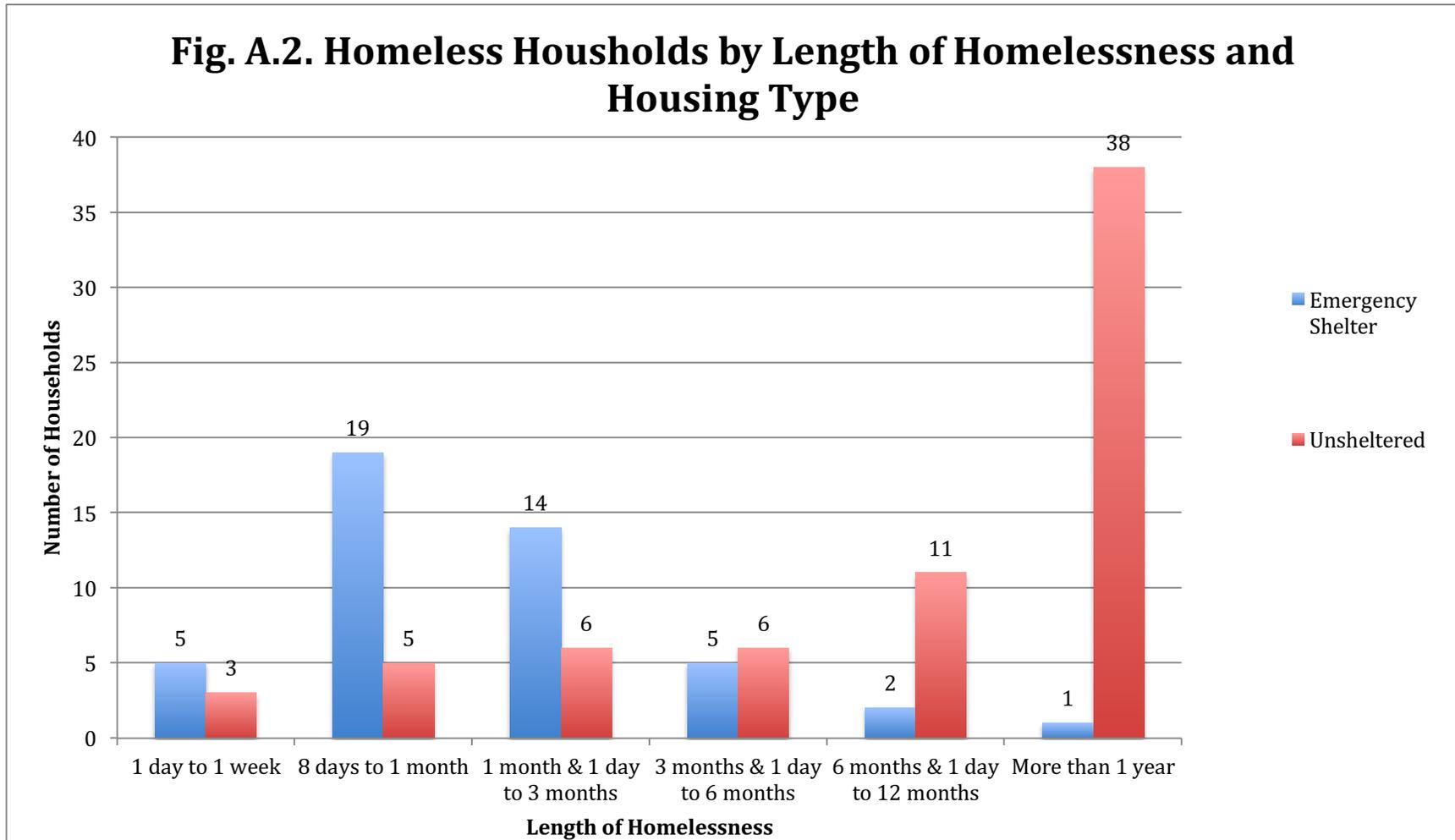


VI. Appendix

Where did you spend the night of Tuesday, January 26, 2016?



How long have you been in your current living situation?



Who was homeless with you on the night of the January 26th?

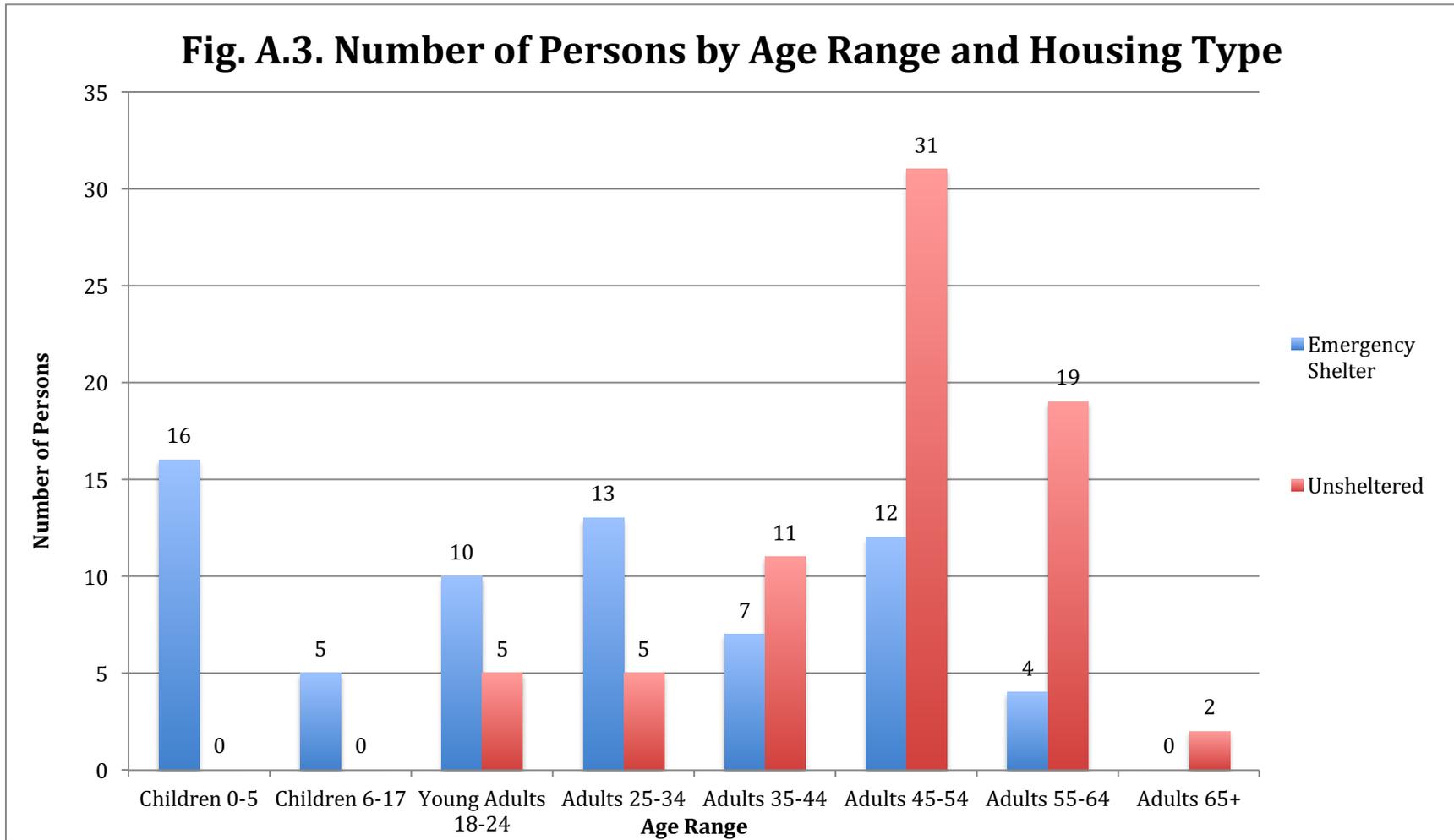


Fig. A.4. Number of Persons by Gender and Housing Situation

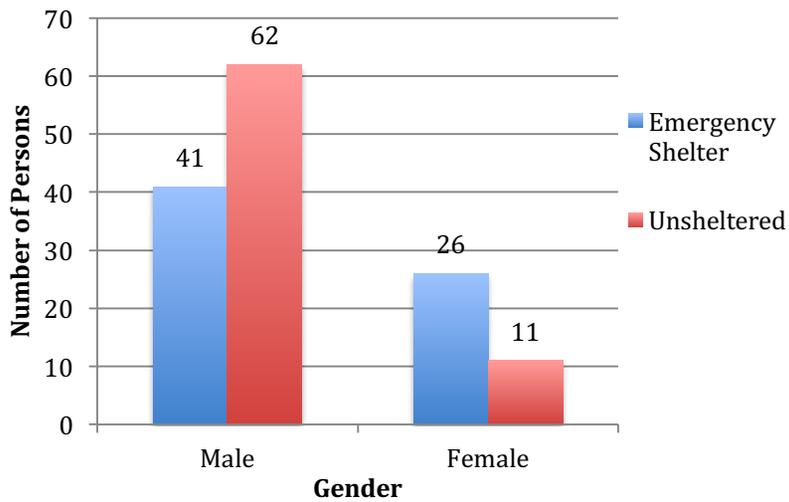


Fig. A.5. Number of Homeless Persons by Race

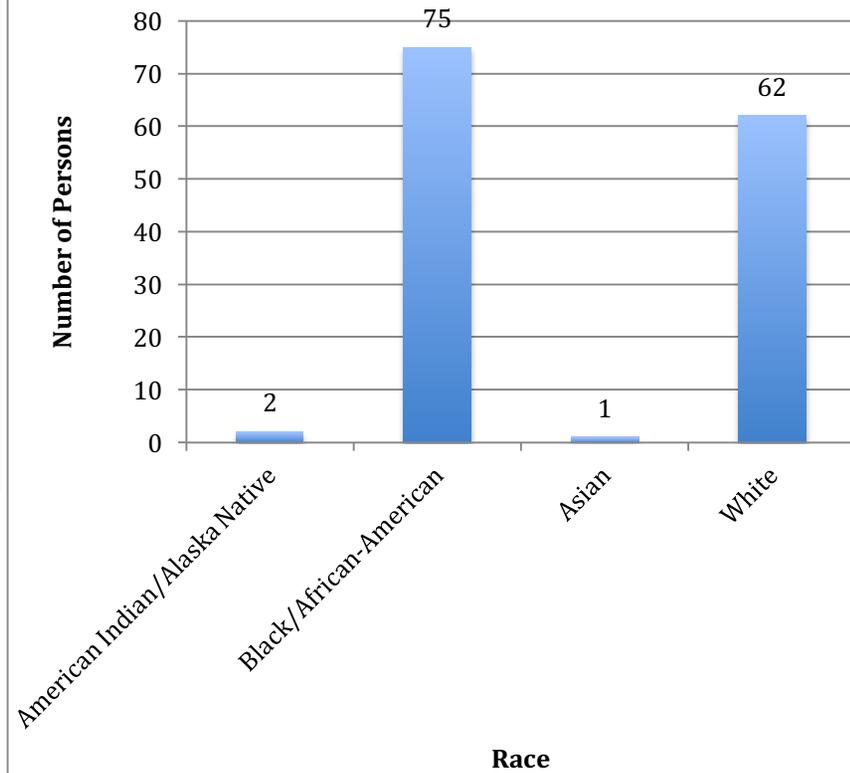


Fig. A.6. Number of Homeless Persons by Ethnicity

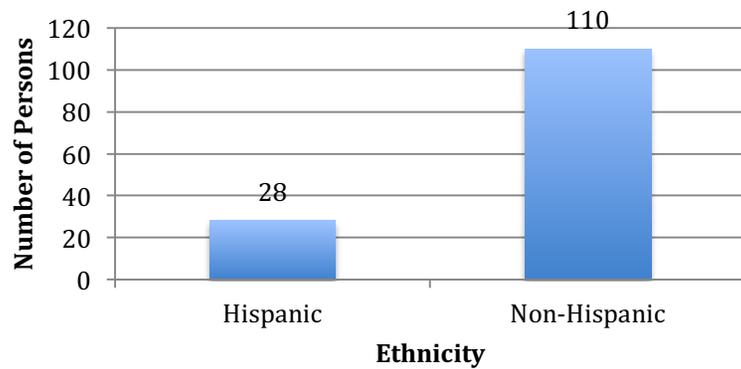
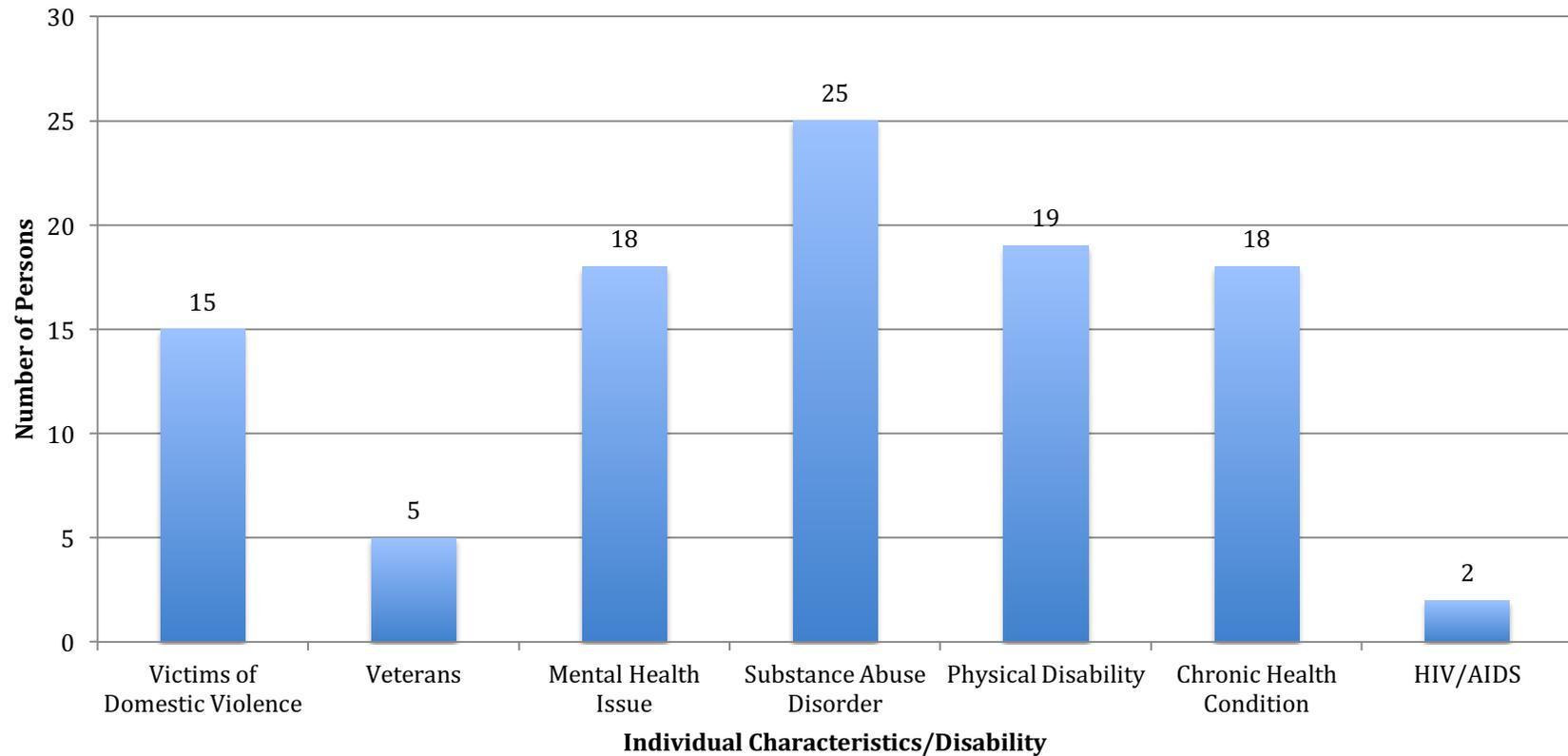


Fig. A.7. Number of Homeless Persons by Victims of Domestic Violence, Veteran Status, and Disability

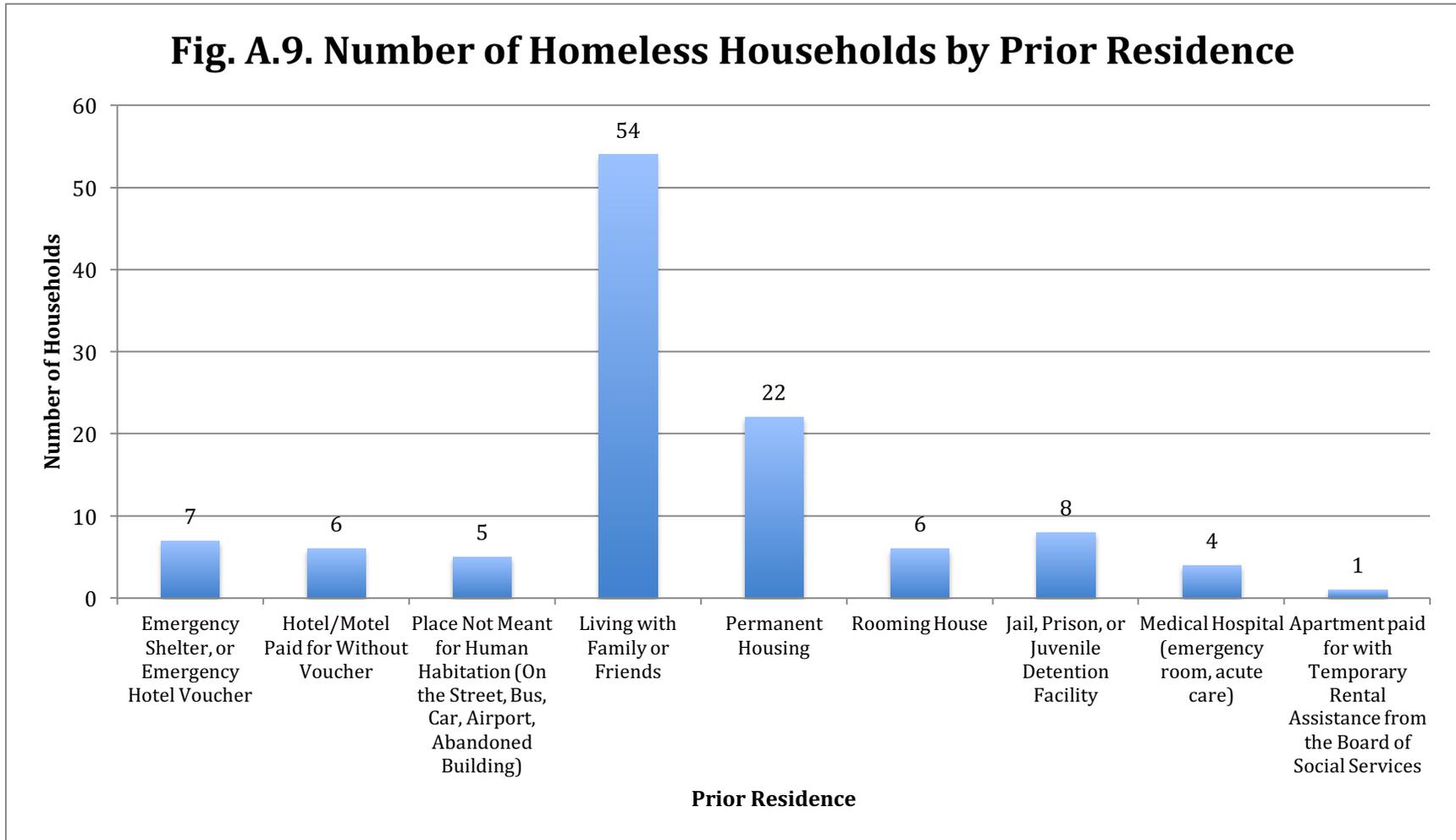


Where was your last permanent address before becoming homeless?

Fig. A.8. Number of Homeless Households by County or State of Last Permanent Address

| Last Permanent Address - County/State | Number of Households |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Atlantic County | 5 |
| Camden County | 1 |
| Cumberland County | 104 |
| Salem County | 1 |
| Florida | 1 |
| New Hampshire | 1 |
| South Carolina | 1 |

What was your residence prior to your current living situation?



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

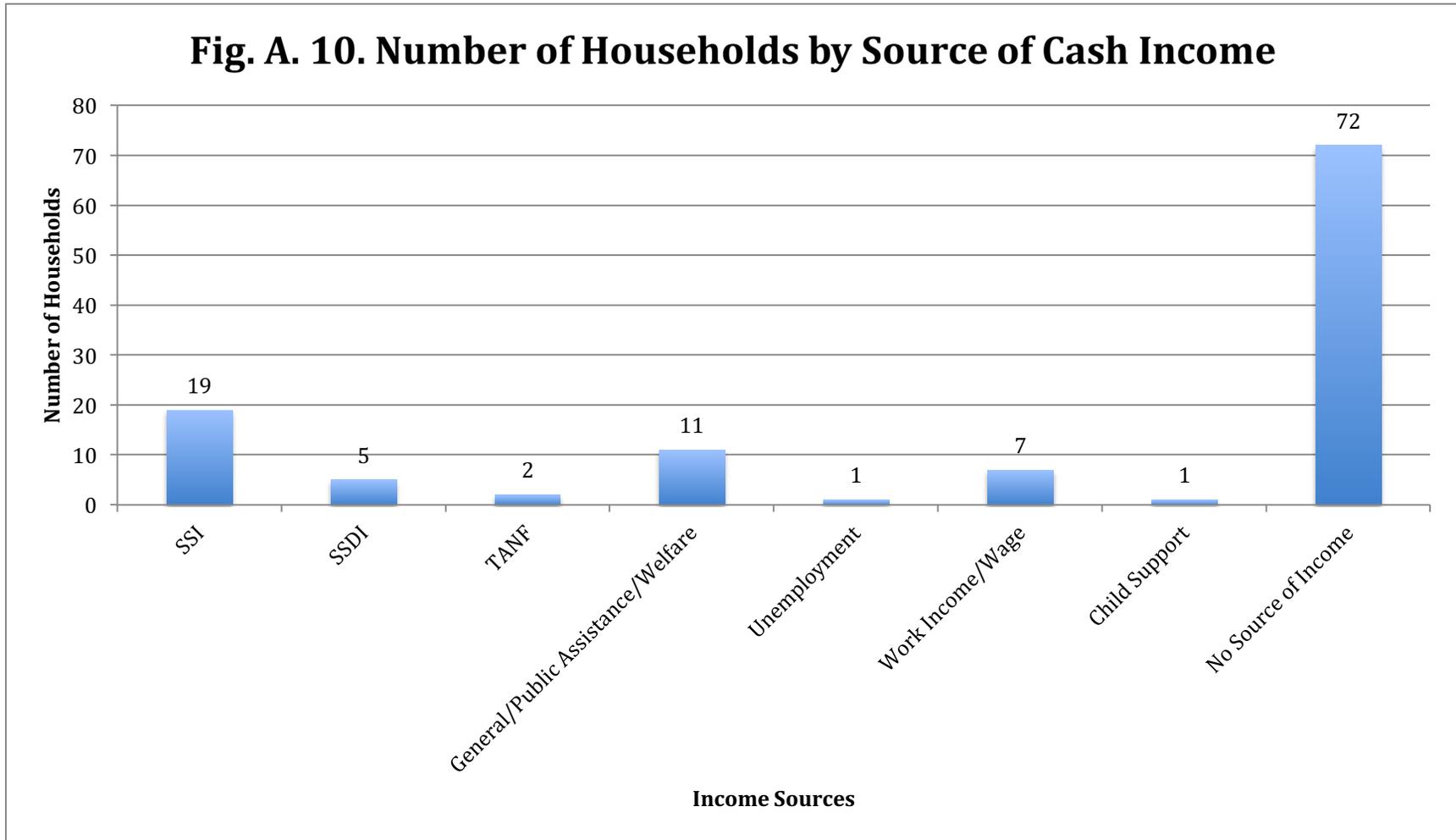
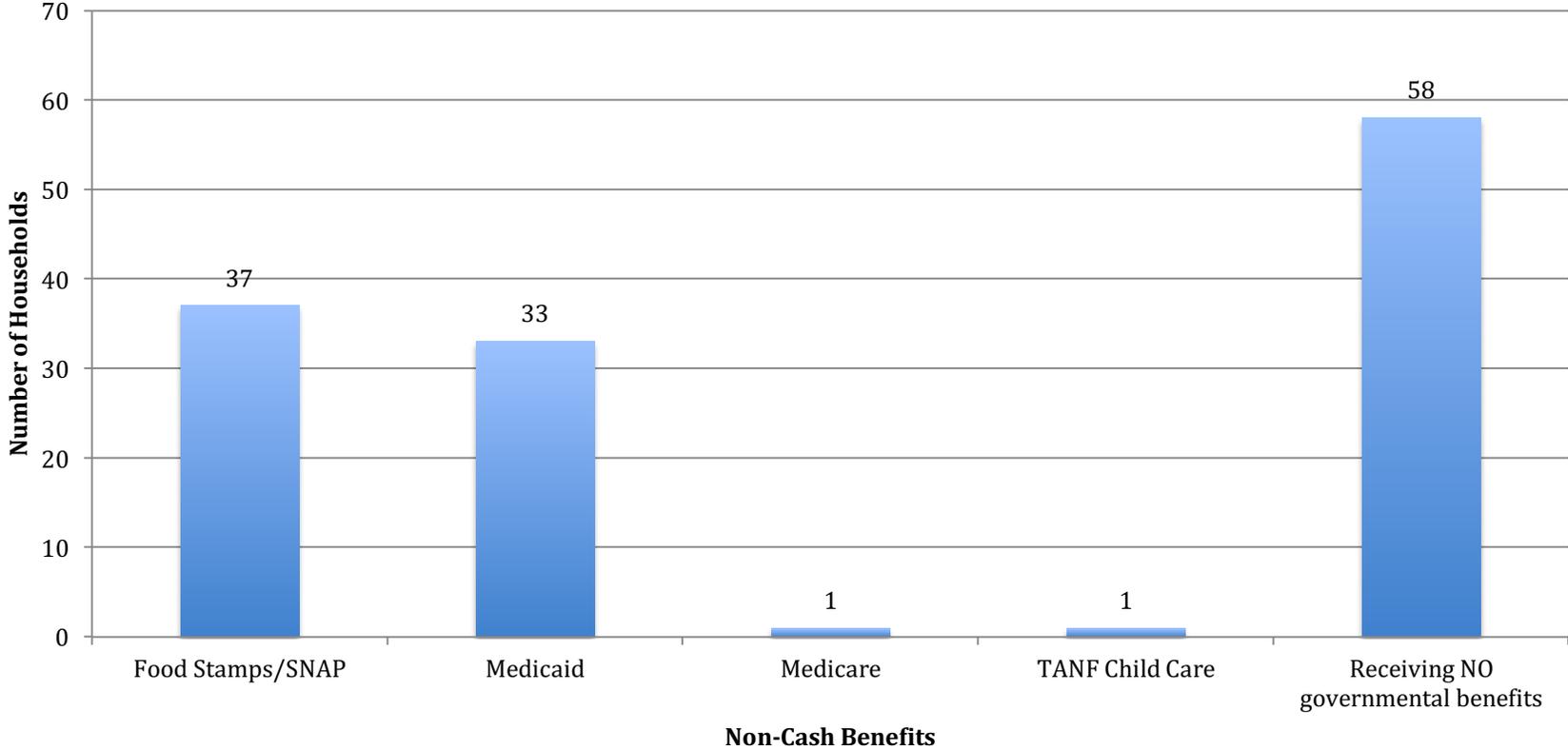
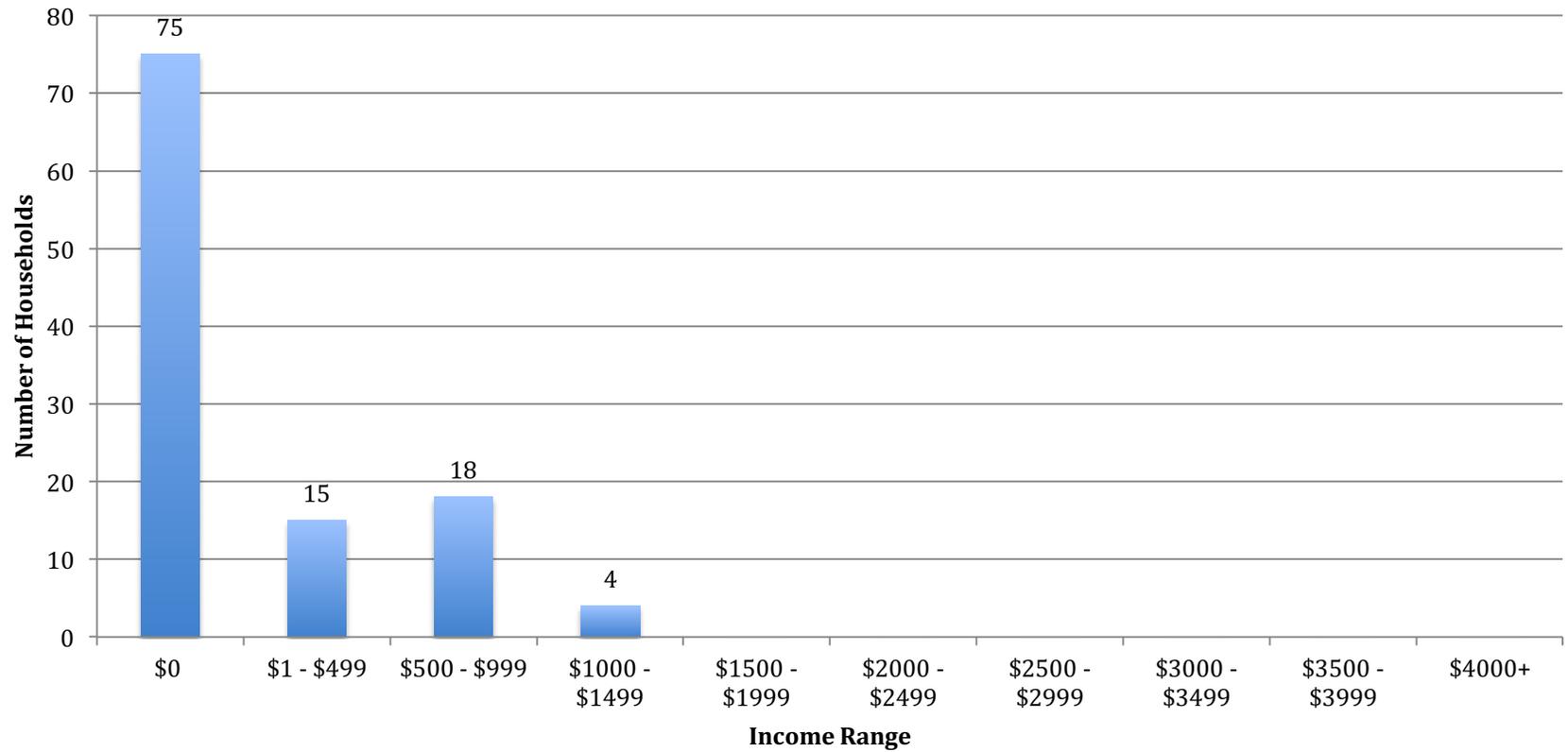


Fig. A. 11. Number of Households by Sources of Non-Cash Benefits



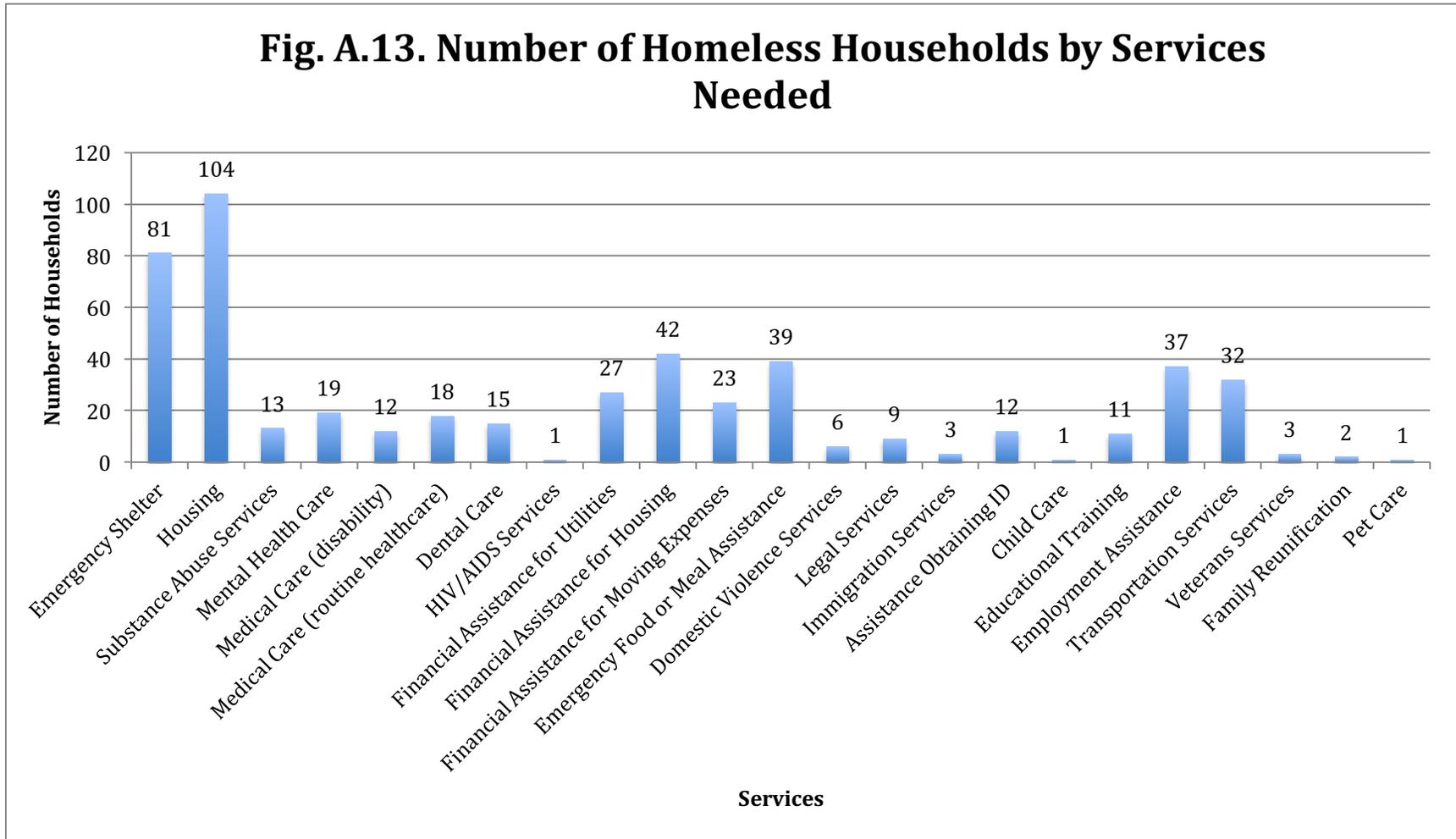
What is your monthly household income?

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?

