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A large, stylized graphic of the state of New Jersey in white, set against a blue background with a pattern of small white numbers. Overlaid on the map is the text "NJ" in a large, bold, brown serif font. Below "NJ" is the year "2020" in a smaller, bold, black sans-serif font. At the bottom of the graphic is the word "Counts!" in a large, bold, brown serif font.

NJ
2020
Counts!

Mercer County 2020 Point-In-Time Count of the Homeless

January 28, 2020

Acknowledgements

Monarch would like to thank all Point-In-Time Coordinators, homeless service providers, agencies, and volunteers who participated in NJ Counts 2020. Monarch would also like to specifically thank Bergen County for providing a Spanish translation of the 2020 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.

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This report was prepared for
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by

Monarch Housing Associates

I. Introduction

NJ Counts 2020

NJ Counts 2020, New Jersey's annual Point-In-Time (PIT) Count of the Homeless, provides a statewide snapshot of households experiencing homelessness in our communities; where they find shelter, what their needs are, and what factors contribute to making them homeless. The 2020 Count reveals important demographic and other information about families and individuals experiencing homelessness on the night of Tuesday, January 28th, 2020. These findings help to understand how to better allocate housing resources and services in order to prevent and end homelessness.

This Report

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).

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

1. Racial Disparities among the Total Homeless Population;
2. Total homeless population;
3. Subpopulations
 - a. Unsheltered
 - b. Chronically Homeless
 - c. Veterans
 - d. Victims of Domestic Violence
 - e. Youth

In addition to the main findings presented in the body of this report, Appendix B includes charts illustrating the responses to all survey questions that were part of the 2020 Point-In-Time Count. Appendix A contains information on data collection and methodology.

Definition of Terms

Household - 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').

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.

Emergency Shelter - any facility, the primary purpose of which is to provide a temporary shelter for the homeless in general or for specific populations of the homeless and which does not require occupants to sign leases or occupancy agreements.

Transitional Housing - a project that is designed to provide housing and appropriate supportive services to homeless persons to facilitate movement to independent living within 24 months.

Safe Haven - a form of supportive housing that serves hard-to-reach homeless persons with severe mental illness who come primarily from the streets and have been unable or unwilling to participate in housing or supportive services. Safe Haven programs offer low barriers to program entry and low-demand services and referrals in a 24-hour residential setting to no more than 25 persons

Changes affecting the 2020 Point-in-Time Count

For 2020, a number of factors contributed to significant changes in the counted population experiencing homelessness. The factors impacting the count vary from community to community and are best described locally.

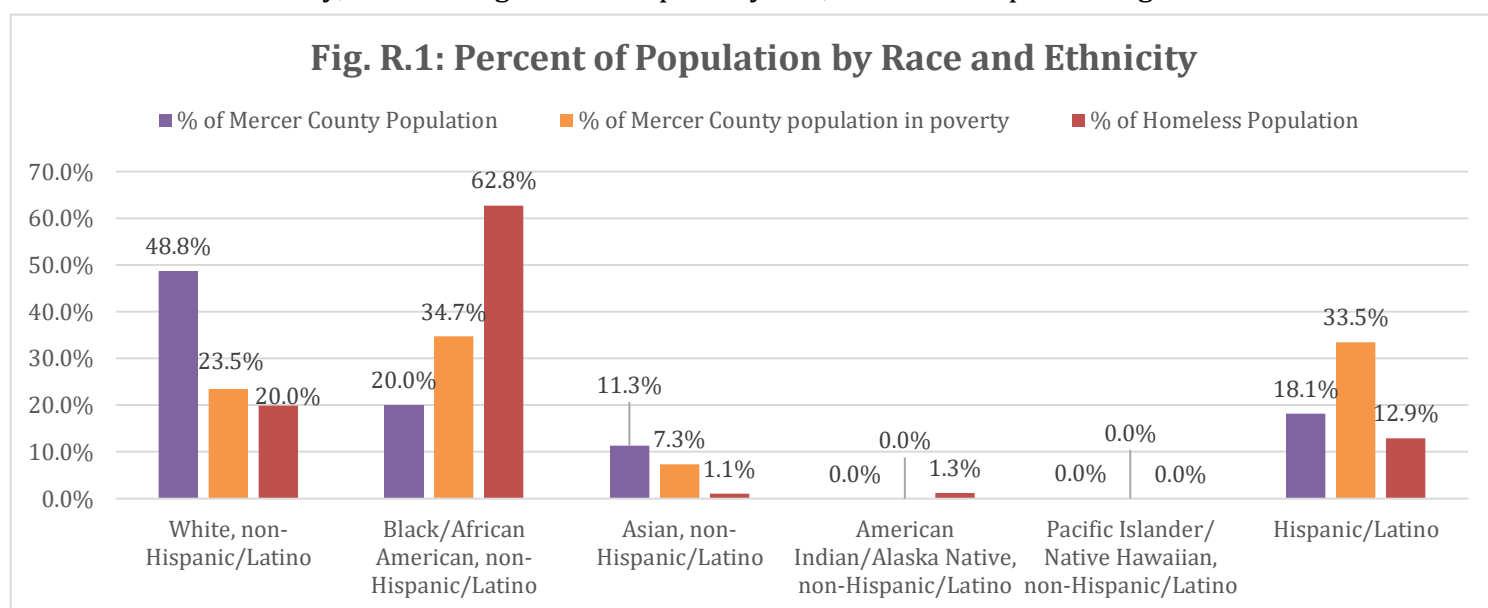
The methodology used to identify persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness was updated to include a 1-day street count along with a 7-day service based count. The 7-day service based count targeted feeding programs, drop-in centers and other services for persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness. All persons identified during the 7-day service count were asked about their housing status the night of the count (January 28th). The use of the 7-day service-based count enabled the community to improve their connection to people experiencing unsheltered homelessness helping to identify people that may have been missed during the “blitz” street count.

When reviewing data included in this report, it is important to keep in mind that the Point-in-Time data includes a census of all persons in sheltering programs (emergency shelter, transitional housing, and safe haven programs) as well as the unsheltered population identified on the night of the count. While there is uniformity and complete coverage in data collection for those utilizing the sheltering system within communities, each county develops a local methodology to identify and engage unsheltered persons within the community. As such, the strength of the unsheltered count varies from community to community. In addition, it is generally accepted that while communities work to identify and engage all persons living unsheltered within their geographic region, the count of persons unsheltered in the community may not reflect the full population experiencing homelessness.

II. Racial Disparities in Total Homeless Population

NJ Counts 2020 provides a snapshot of the population experiencing homelessness in the Mercer County on a single night. The results of this report are intended to assist communities in understanding the characteristics and needs of those experiencing homelessness to improve service delivery and resource targeting to effectively end homelessness. As communities work to expand their understanding of the root causes of homelessness it is important recognize the structural forces impacting trajectories into and out of homelessness. Disparities in who experiences homelessness highlight the impact of a pervasive structural force: Systemic Racism. Acknowledging and understanding the impact of systemic racism on those experiencing homelessness is key to developing an effective system responsive to the community and strengthened in cultural understanding and awareness.

On January 28, 2020 there were 556 persons experiencing homelessness on a single night in the Mercer County. Figure R.1 illustrates the racial breakdown of the total population in Mercer County, those living below the poverty line, and those experiencing homelessness.



In looking at the racial breakdown of those experiencing homelessness in relation to the racial breakdown in the general population and those living in poverty, disparate impacts along racial lines become evident. According to the American Community Survey 2018 annual estimates prepared by the Census Bureau, about 369,811 people live in Mercer County, and 10.8% (39,873 persons) of Mercer County residents are living below the poverty line. There is a strong correlation between poverty and homelessness, however, the racial disparities evident in the population indicate that poverty alone does not determine who will experience homelessness. Given the disparities present in the data, it is evident that systemic racism plays a significant role in factors contributing to homelessness. The data from Figure R.1 indicates the following:

- Persons identifying as Black or African American are overrepresented in the

population experiencing homelessness. While 20% of the general population, persons identifying as Black or African American are 34.7% of the population in poverty and 62.8% of the identified population experiencing homelessness.

- Persons identifying as Black or African American represent 66.7% of the sheltered population (staying in emergency shelter, transitional housing or safe havens) and 52.4% of the unsheltered population. Persons identifying as White and not Hispanic or Latino represent 17.4% of the sheltered population and 33% of the unsheltered population. Persons identifying as Hispanic/Latino represent 13.6% of the sheltered population and 11.7% of the unsheltered population.

Fig. R.2: Percent of Household Type by Race

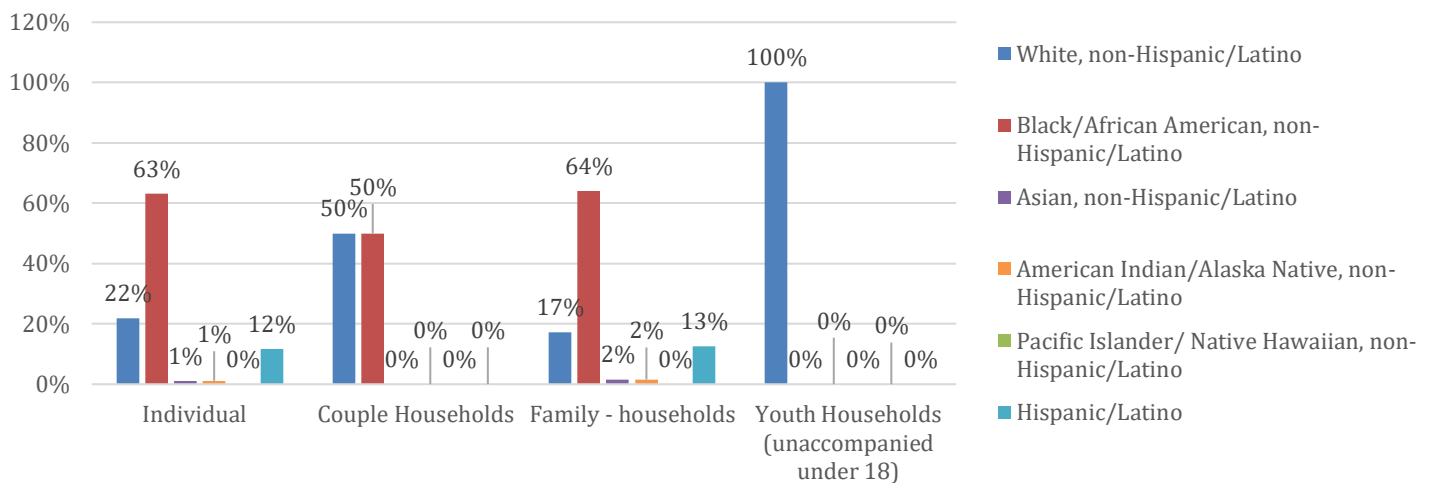


Figure R.2 illustrates the racial breakdown within each household type for those experiencing homelessness.

- Persons identifying as Black or African American make up the majority (63%) of individuals and the majority of family households (64%). Couple households identified as either White or Black /African American (50%).
- 12% of persons identifying as Black or African American and 11% of persons identifying as Hispanic/Latino were in family households as compared to 10% of persons identifying as White.

Disparities along racial and ethnic lines in the population experiencing homelessness are seen in a number of other areas including the following:

- 38% of persons identifying as White and 35% of persons identifying as Black or African American reported more than 1 episode of homelessness, as compared to 14% of persons identifying as Hispanic/Latino.
- 28% of persons identifying as Hispanic/Latino and 20% of persons identifying as Black or African were children under the age of 18, as compared to 14% of persons identifying as White.
- The most common sources of income among persons identifying as Black or African American were Earned Income (11%) and TANF (11%), whereas for persons identifying as White, the most common sources were General Assistance (10%) and SSI (10%).

- 16% of persons identifying as Hispanic/Latino reported receiving no mainstream benefits as compared to 13% of persons identifying as White and 7% of persons identifying as Black or African American.
- 70% of persons identifying as White indicated a disability as compared to 45% of person identifying as Black or African American and 40% of Hispanic/Latino persons.

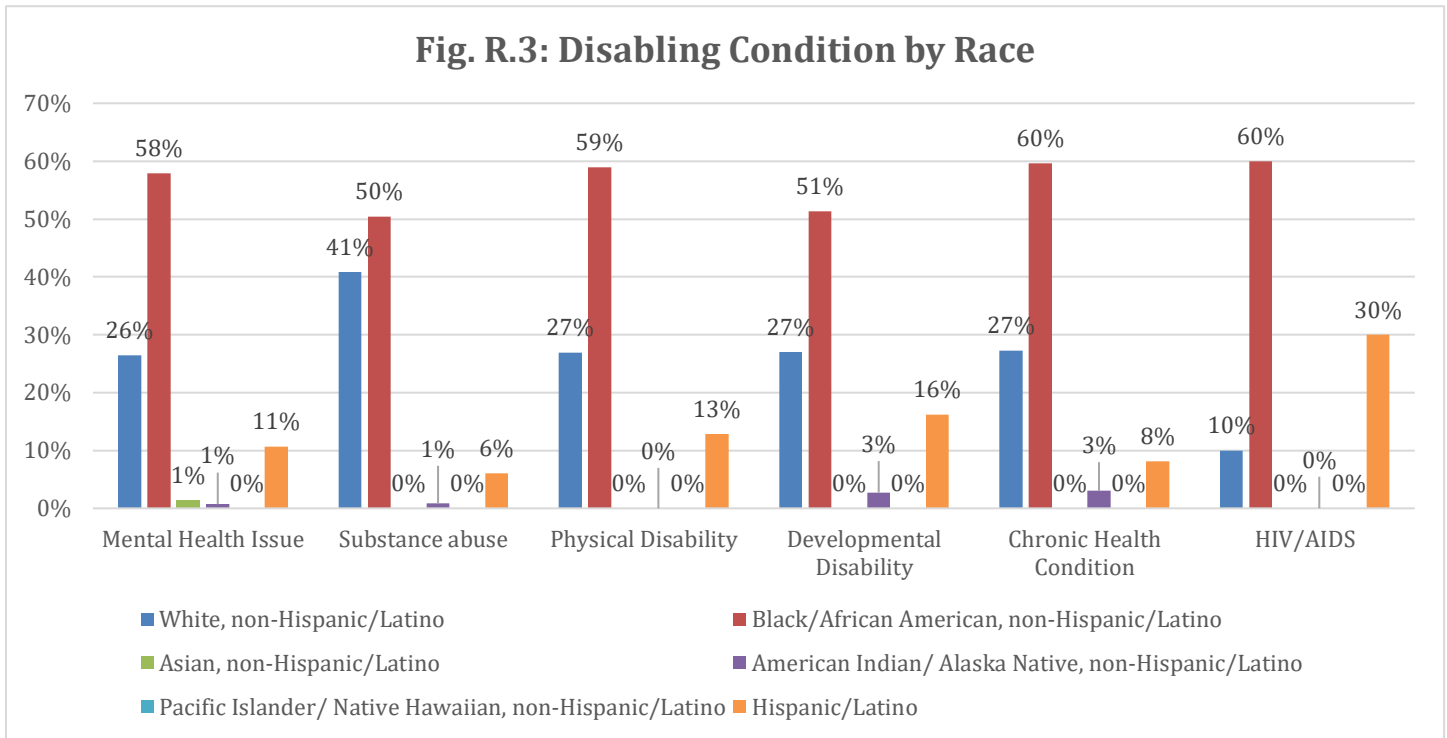


Figure R.3 illustrates the racial breakdown within each disabling condition reported.

- The most prevalent disability among persons identifying as Black or African American and Hispanic/Latino was mental health issue (23% and 21%, respectively), whereas for persons identifying as White, the most prevalent disability was substance abuse disorder (42%).
- The most prevalent disability overall, Mental Health Issues, was reported by 33% of persons identifying as White, 23% of persons identifying as Black or African American and 21% of persons identifying as Hispanic/Latino.
- The second most prevalent disability reported, substance use disorders, was identified by 42% of persons identifying as White, 17% of persons identifying as Black or African American and 10% of persons identifying as Hispanic/Latino.

Disparities were seen in a number of other questions included in the PIT survey in addition to the ones reported here. Given this information, it is clear that more research is needed to fully understand the causes, correlations and impacts as it relates to racial disparities. In addition, this information highlights the need for homeless service systems to make deliberate efforts to understand and address racial disparities in order to better serve those experiencing homelessness and effectively end their homelessness.

III. Findings for Total Homeless Population

Key Findings

- On the night of January 28th, 2020, a total of 431 households, including 556 persons, were experiencing homelessness in Mercer County, according to the 2020 Point-In-Time Count.
- A total of 71 persons, in 62 households, were identified as chronically homeless.
- 105 persons were unsheltered on the night of the count.

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

Municipalities	Total Homeless Population	% of Total population	Total sheltered population	% of sheltered population	Total unsheltered population	% of unsheltered population
Ewing	96	20.8%	95	25.9%	1	1.1%
Hamilton	15	3.2%	15	4.1%	0	0%
Hightstown	1	0.2%	0	0%	1	1.1%
Lawrence	2	0.4%	1	0.3%	1	1.1%
Princeton	1	0.2%	0	0%	1	1.1%
Trenton	347	75.1%	256	69.8%	91	95.8%
Total	462*		367		95*	

*Does not reflect total homeless persons counted as some survey responses may not have included municipality

Total Homeless Population

On the night of January 28th, 2020, a total of 556 persons, in 431 households, were experiencing homelessness in Mercer County, according to the 2020 Point-In-Time Count. This is an increase of 108 persons (24%) and 78 households (22%) from 2019.

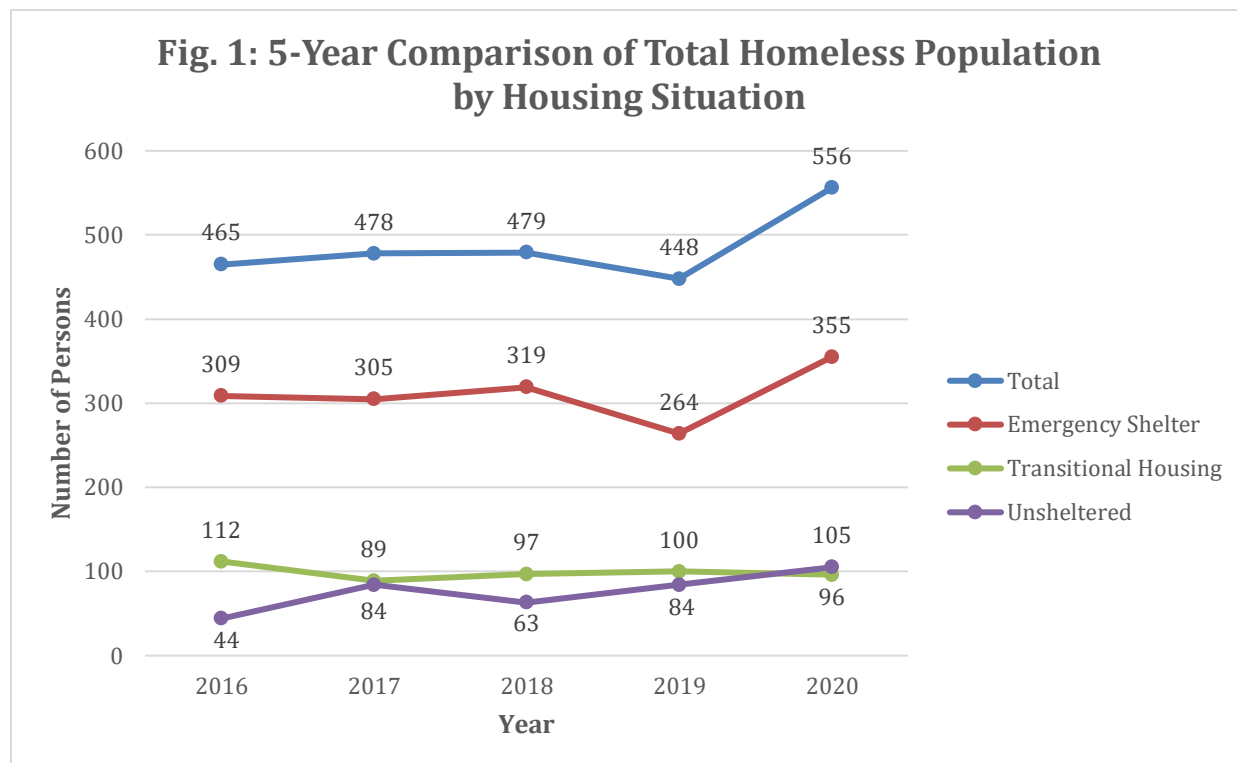
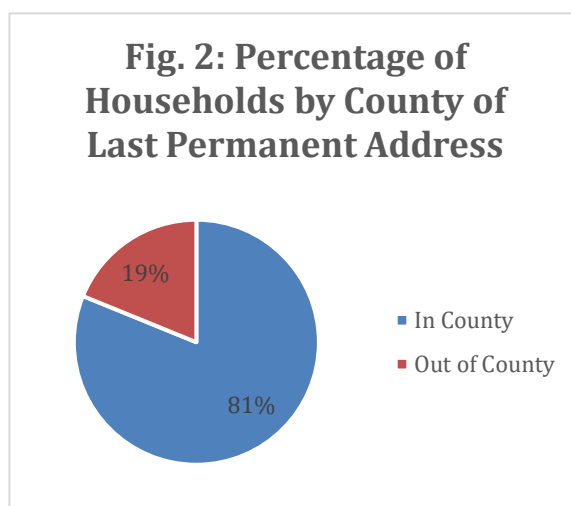


Figure 1 shows that, in 2020, 355 homeless persons stayed in emergency shelters, 96 stayed in transitional housing, and 105 were living unsheltered on the night of the count. When comparing to 2019, an increase is seen in the number of homeless persons in emergency shelter (91 persons, 34%) and unsheltered locations (21 persons, 25%) and a decrease is seen in the number of persons staying in transitional housing (4 persons, 4%).

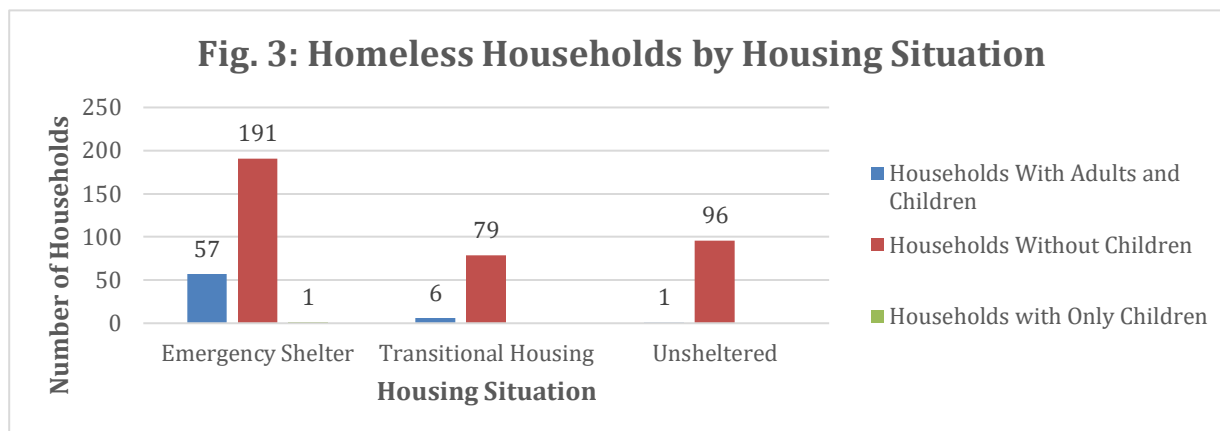
Figure 1 also shows that, over the past five years, Mercer has seen an overall increase of 91 persons, or 20% from 2016 to 2020. Over this 5-year period, there was a 15% increase in persons staying in emergency shelter, a 14% decrease in transitional housing, and a 139% increase in unsheltered persons between 2016 and 2020.

As Figure 2 shows, 19% of the homeless household respondents in Mercer in 2020 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."



Of the 431 homeless households counted in Mercer in 2020, 64 (15%) were families with at least one child under the age of 18 and one adult. This is an increase of 49% from 2019. These families included 180 persons, including 112 children under age 18 and 68 adults. The average family size was 2.81 persons. Figure 3 shows that 57 families (89%) were staying in emergency shelters. There was 1 (2%) identified unsheltered families with children under the age of 18. There were 6 families (9%) in transitional housing.

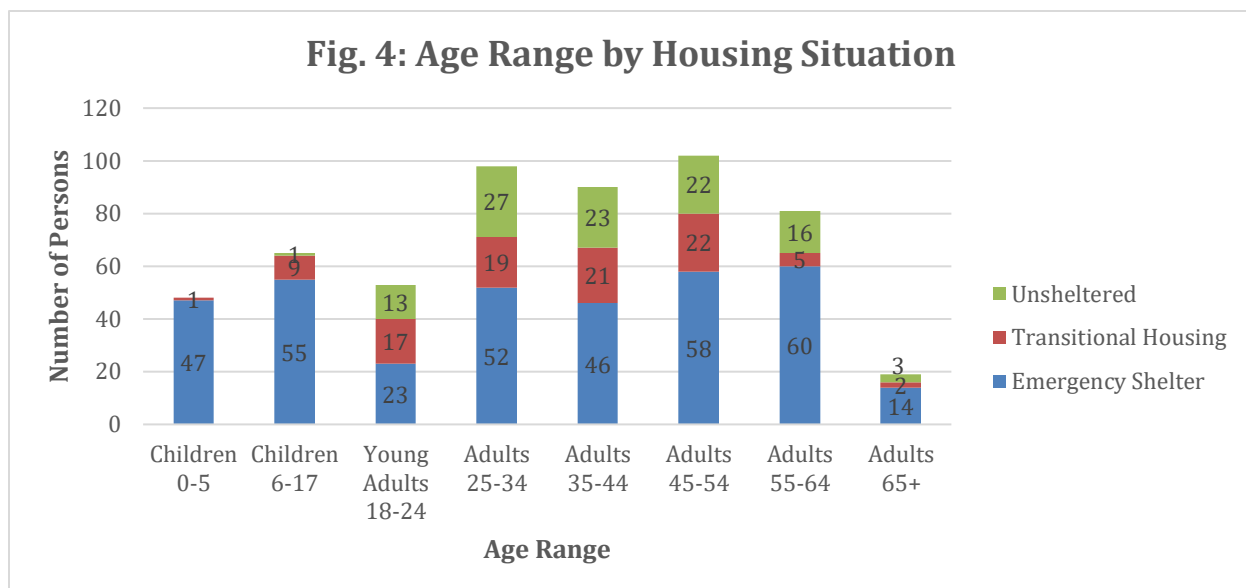
366 (85%) of the homeless households in Mercer County were households without children under 18, and they were composed of 375 adults. This is an increase of 18% from the number of adult only households in 2019. The majority of adult only households (52%) were staying in emergency shelter on the night of the count. 26% of adult only households were identified as unsheltered and 22% were staying in transitional housing in 2020.

As Figure 3 indicates, 1 household with only children under 18 years old was reported in 2020, a decrease of 2 households from 2019. 100% of these unaccompanied youth households were staying in emergency shelter.

Demographics

There was a total of 53 (10%) homeless adults between 18 and 24 years old, 390 (70%) adults over age 24, and 113 (20%) children under 18 years old experiencing homelessness on the night of the count. Figure 4 shows that the age range most represented are Adults between 45 and 54 (102 persons, 18%).

62.9% (350) of homeless persons were male and 37.1% (206) were female.

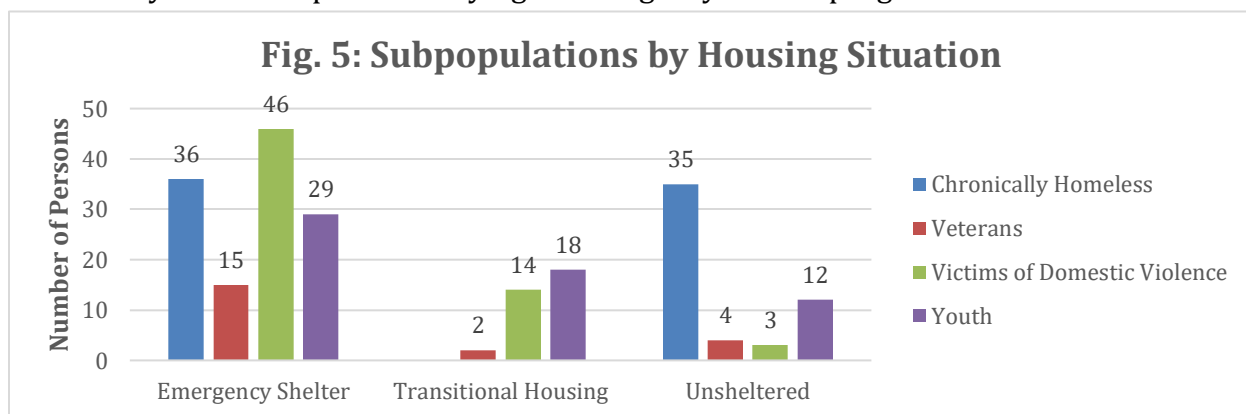


62.8% (349) of persons identified their race as Black or African American, non-Hispanic/Latino, making this the largest racial subgroup of homeless persons counted. The next largest group self-identified as White, non-Hispanic/Latino (20%, 111 persons). With regard to ethnicity, 12.9% (72) of persons identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino.

Subpopulations

On the night of January 28, 2020 out of the 556 persons identified as homeless, there were a total of 71 Chronically Homeless persons, representing 12.8% of the homeless population. There were 21 homeless veterans representing 4.7% of the adult homeless population. 63 Victims of Domestic Violence were identified representing 11.3% of the total homeless population. Homeless Youth (individuals and families with heads of households 24 years old or younger) represented 10.6% of the homeless population with 59 persons identified.

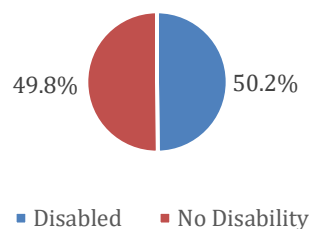
Figure 5 illustrates the break-down of each subpopulation identified by housing type. As illustrated in Figure 5 the majority Veterans, Victims of Domestic Violence and Youth were staying in emergency shelters on the night of the count with a nearly equal amount of Chronically Homeless persons staying in emergency shelter programs or Unsheltered.



Disabilities

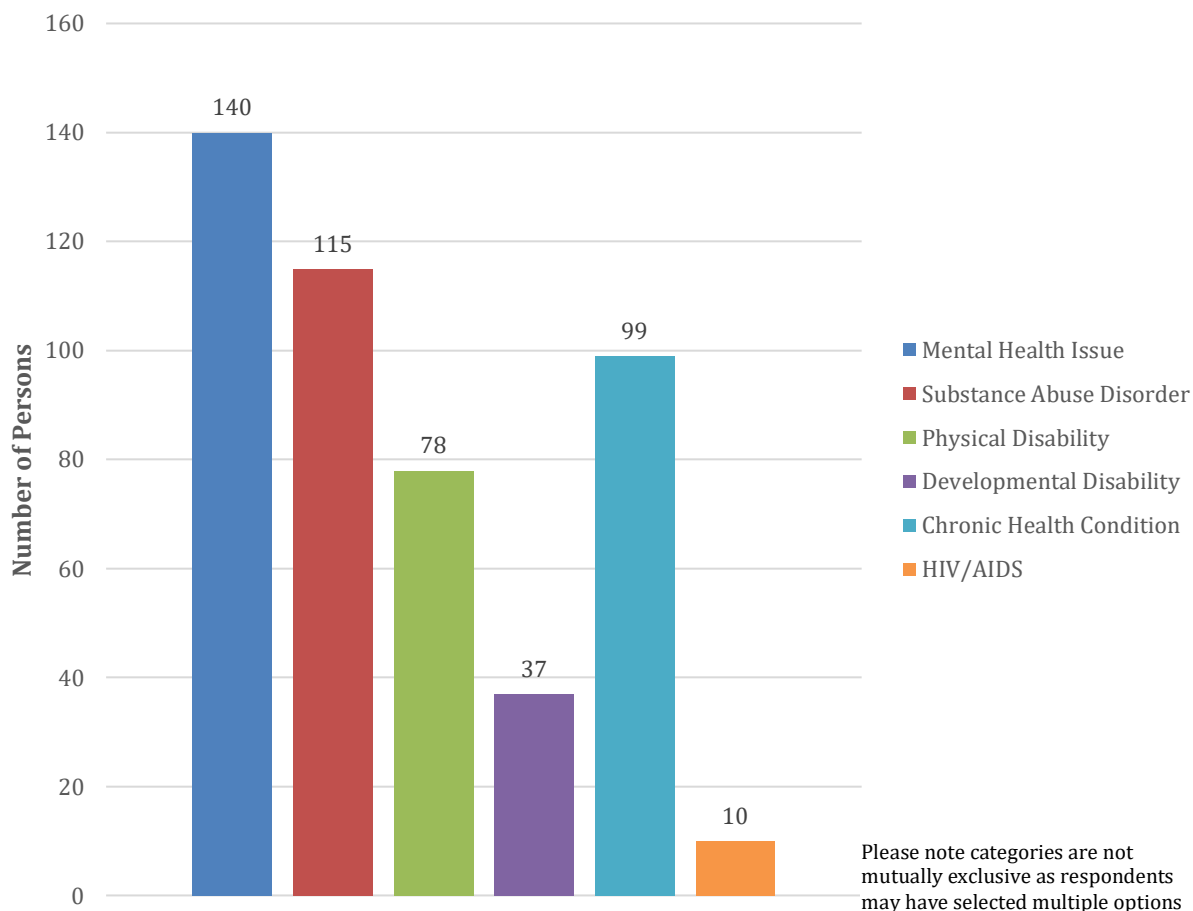
Figure 6 illustrates that 49.8% of homeless persons reported having some type of disability. 58.5% of adults 18 or older reported some type of disability compared to 15.9% of children. Figure 7 shows the number of the homeless persons that identified as having various disabilities. The most common disabilities included mental health issues and substance abuse disorders.

Fig. 6: Percent of Population with a Disability



Among disabled persons, 50.5% reported mental health issues making this the most prevalent disability; representing 52.5% of the disabled adult homeless population and 25.2% of the total population experiencing homelessness. 44.4% of disabled adults reported a substance use disorder and 35.5% reported a chronic health condition. Among disabled homeless children, 50% reported a Developmental Disability, and 38.9% reported a Chronic Health Condition.

Fig. 7: Number of Persons by Disability Type



Income and Benefits

Among all households experiencing homelessness on the night of the count, 47.4% had no source of income, and 12.1% reported having earned income. The most common sources of income among homeless households were SSI (14.2%) and earned income (12.1%) followed by TANF (9.3%). Figure 8 shows the income sources reported by respondents in relation to their housing situation on the night of the count.

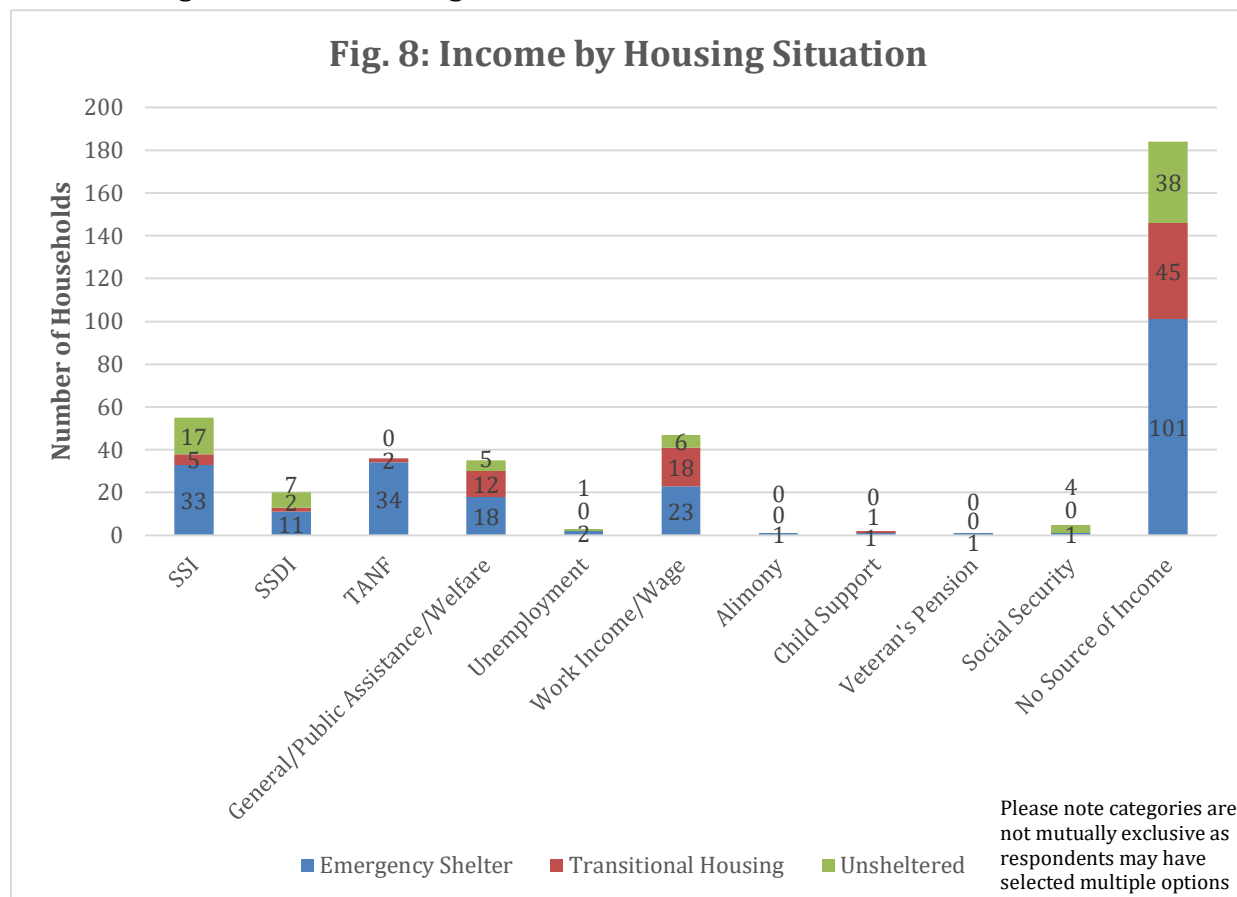


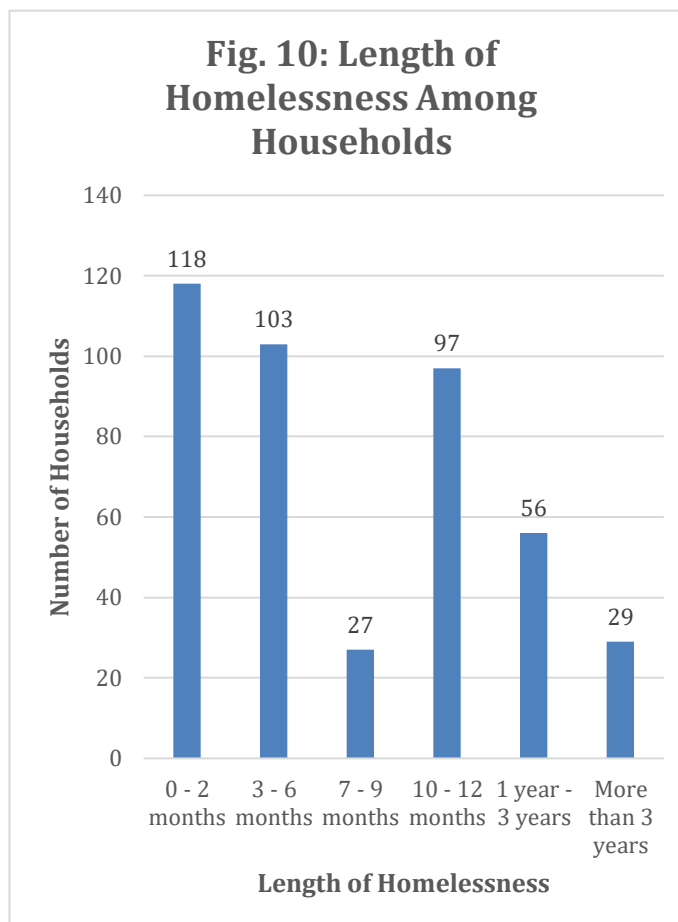
Figure 9 show the average monthly income among households in each housing situation.

Figure 9. Average Monthly Income For Households by Housing Situation			
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered
Average for All Households	\$718.68	\$824.92	\$1,030.65

10% of homeless households reported receiving no kind of non-cash benefit on the night of the count. Medicaid was the top reported non-cash benefit, received by 44.8% of homeless households. Food Stamps (SNAP), was the second most reported non-cash benefit received by 31.3% of homeless households.

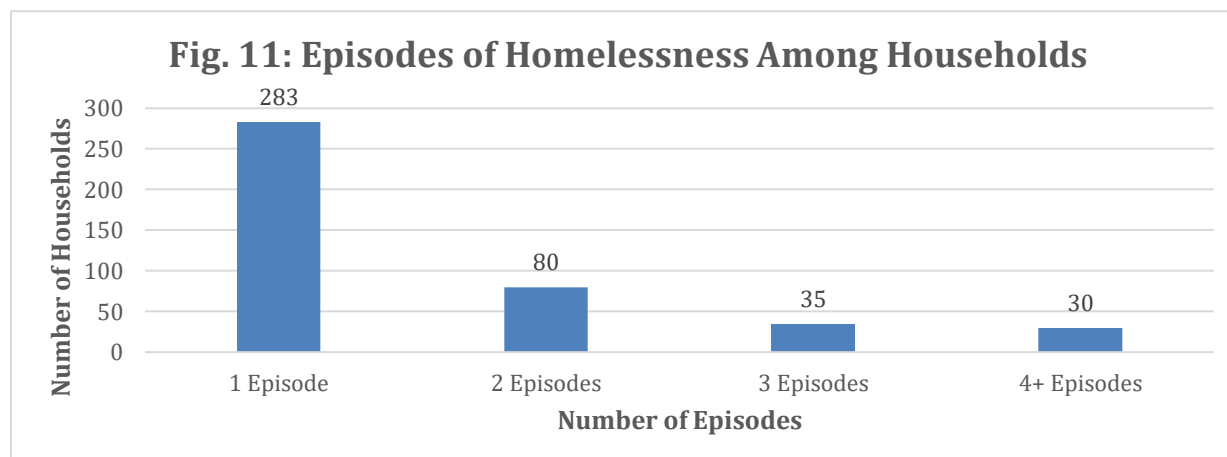
Length of Homelessness

Figure 10 illustrates the total amount of time households have reported being homeless. This includes continuous episodes of homelessness as well as the total time from various episodes of homelessness over the past 3 years. As seen in Figure 10, 51.4% of homeless households reported their total length of homelessness was between 0 and 6 months. Within this group, 27.4% were homeless from 0 – 2 months and 24% were homeless between 3 and 6 months. For those with longer periods of homelessness, 19.7% of homeless households reported that their total length of homelessness was more than 1 year. In looking at those households that had lengths of homelessness exceeding one year, 56 households (13%) were homeless between 1 and 3 years while 29 households (6.7%) reported their total length of homelessness exceeded 3 years.



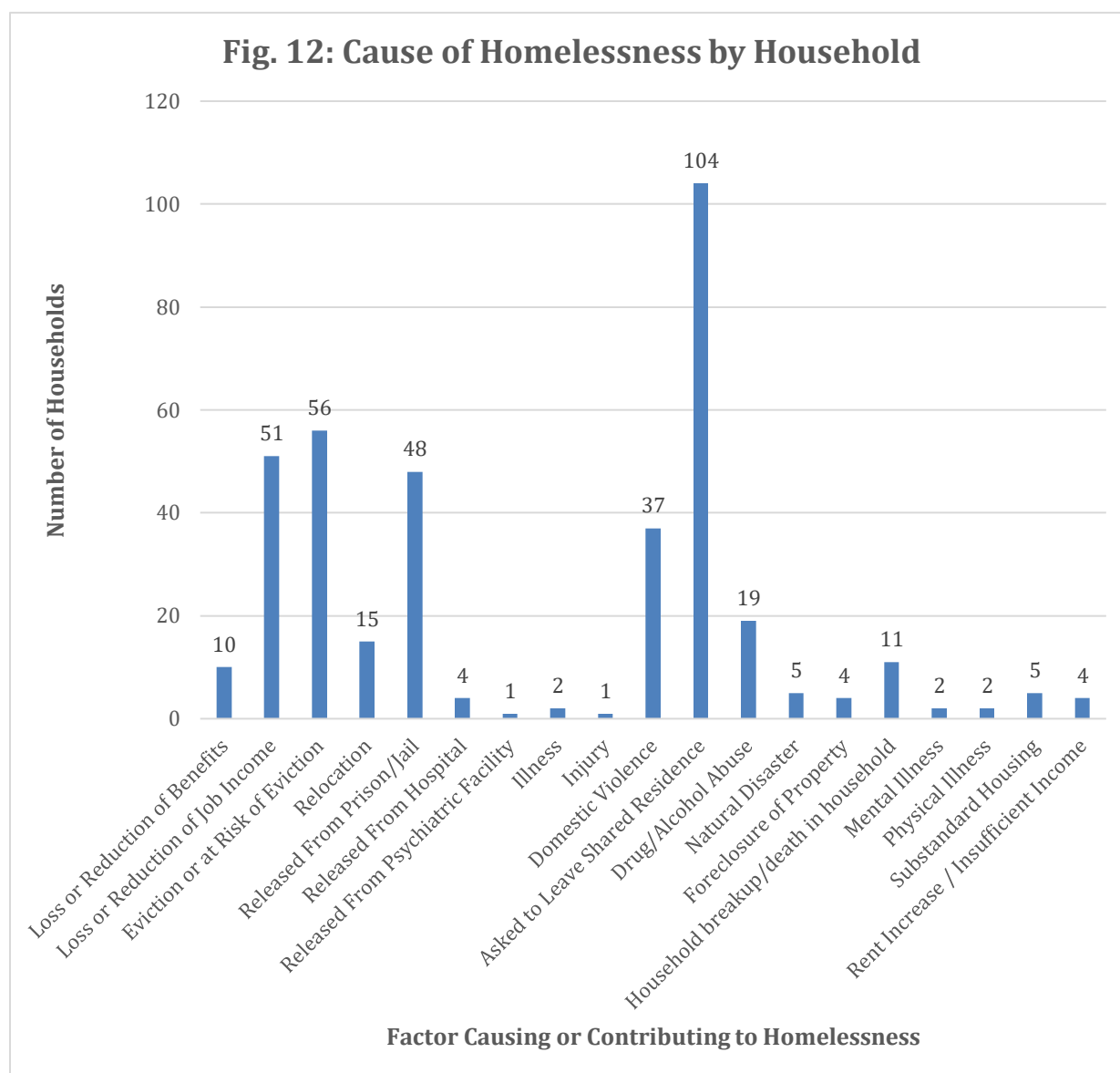
Episodes of Homelessness

There was a total of 283 households (66.1%) that reported experiencing one episode of homelessness, making this the most prevalent response. Figure 11 illustrates the total number of episodes of homelessness reported by households experiencing homelessness.



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 (104 households, 27.3%) than any other cause. As Figure 12 shows, the next most common factor reported was eviction or at risk of eviction (14.7%) followed by loss or reduction of job income (13.4%).



When households were asked ‘what was your residence prior to your current living situation?’ more said they were living with family or friends (29.5%) than any other type of residence. 17.9% reported residing in permanent housing and 16.5% reported staying in Emergency Shelter prior to their current living situation.

IV. Findings for the Chronically Homeless

Chronically Homeless households, as defined by HUD, are persons with a long-term disabling condition, who have been continually homeless for a year or more, or at least four times in the past three years where the length of time in those episodes add up to a year or more. Any family with a head of household that meets this definition is considered a chronically homeless family.

Chronically Homeless households are one of the priority populations identified by HUD. This status as a priority population 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.

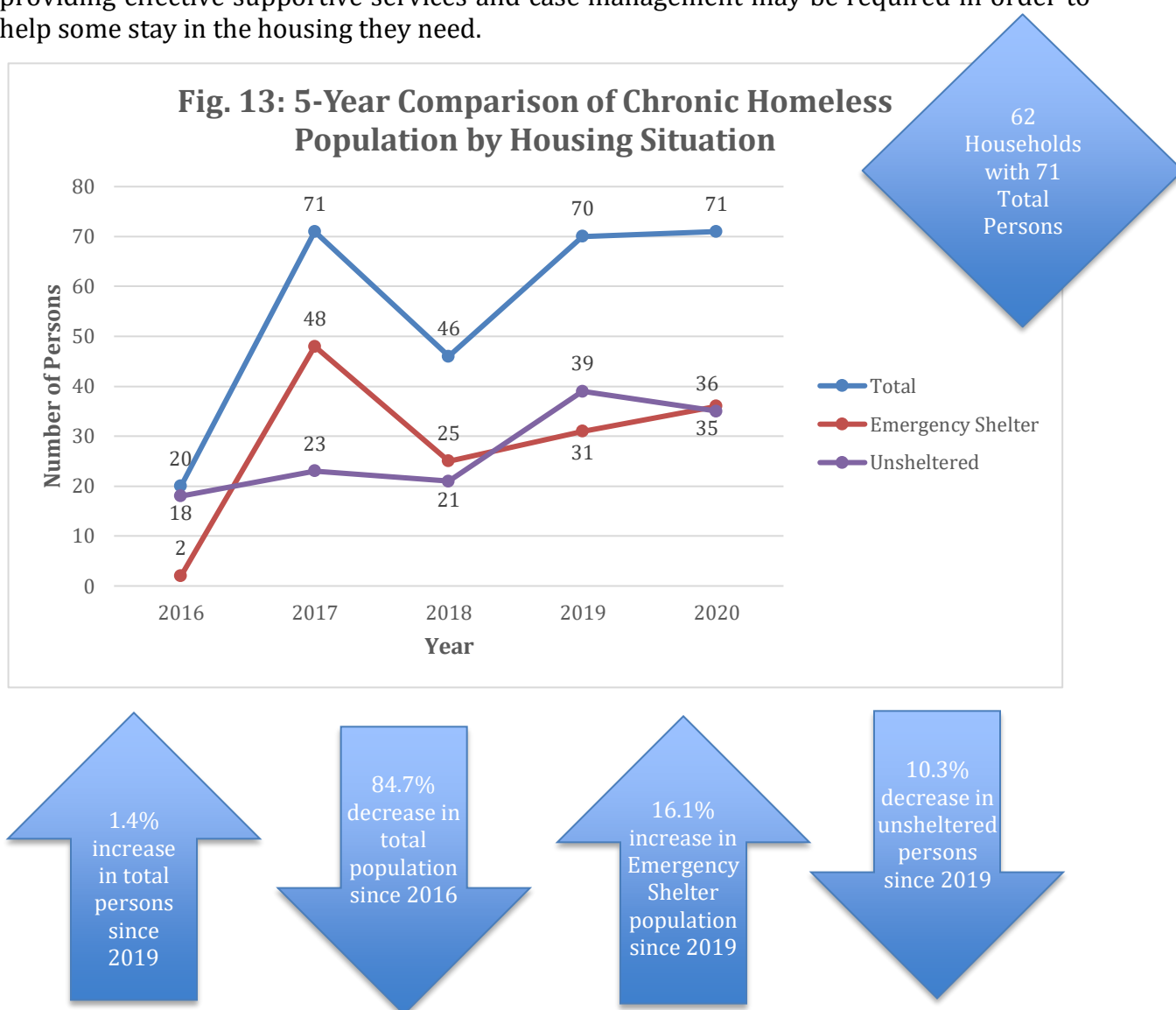
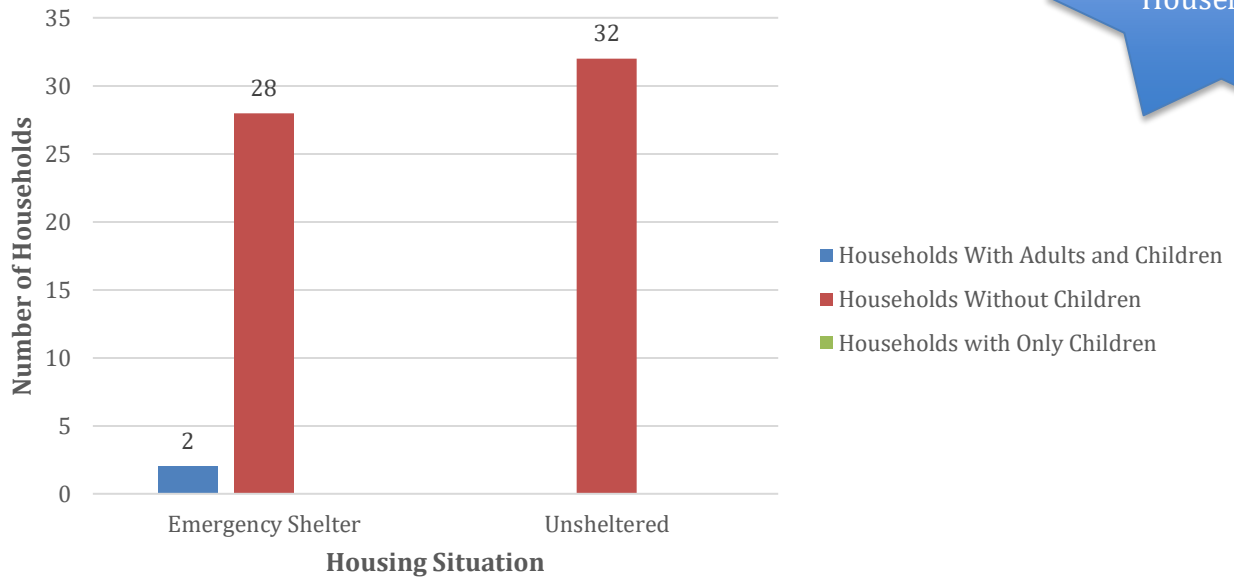
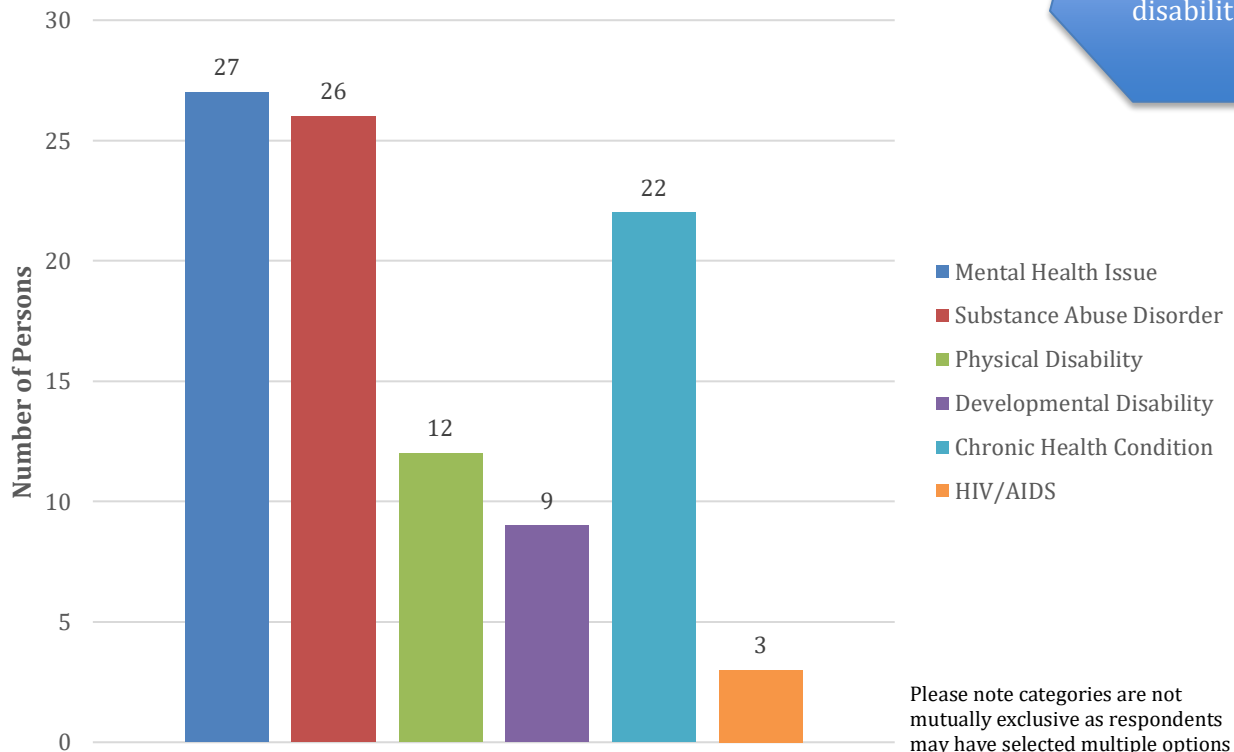


Fig. 14: Chronically Homeless Households by Housing Situation



96.8% Adult-only Households

Fig. 15: Number of Chronically Homeless Persons by Disability Type



62.7% identified multiple disabilities

Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

Fig. 16: Episodes of Homelessness Among Chronically Homeless Households

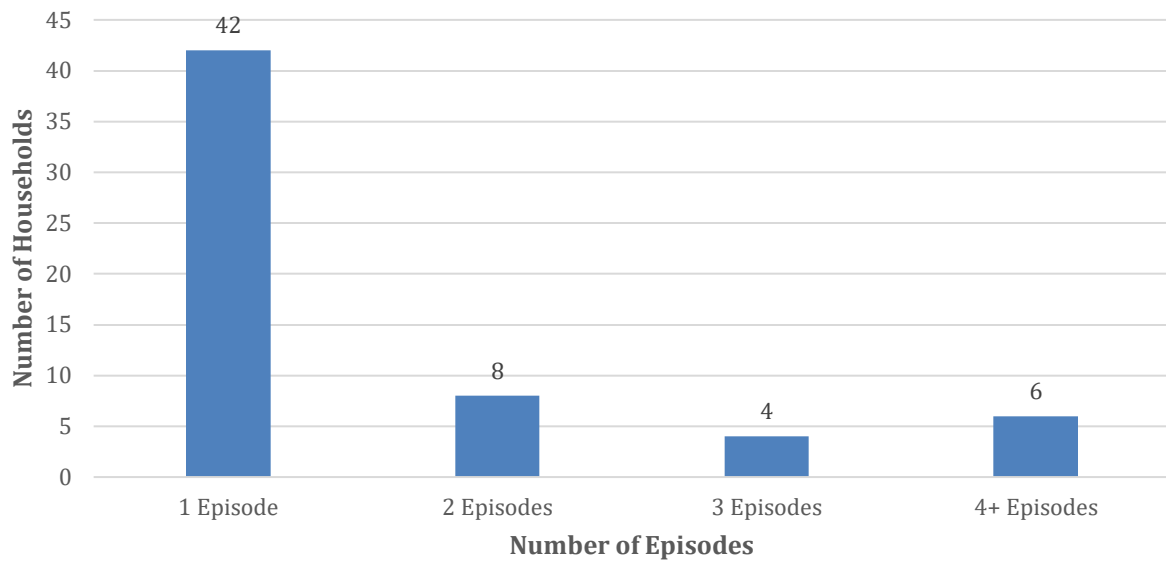
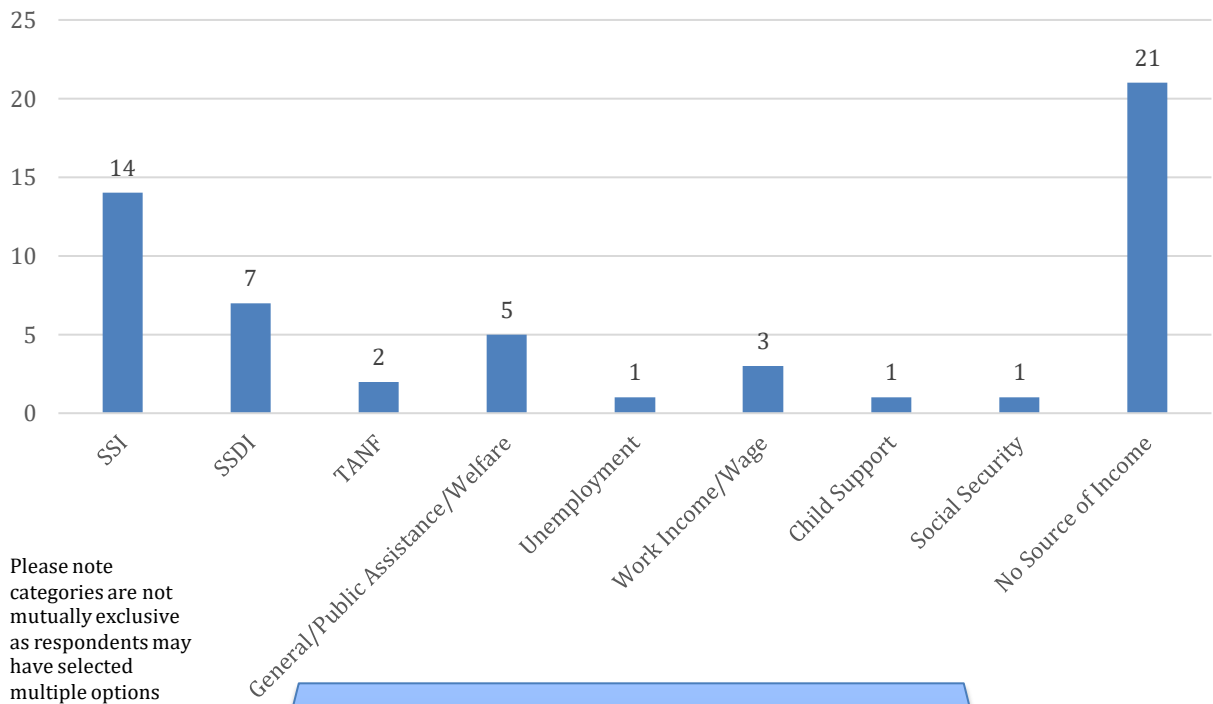


Fig. 17: Number of Chronically Homeless Households by Income Source

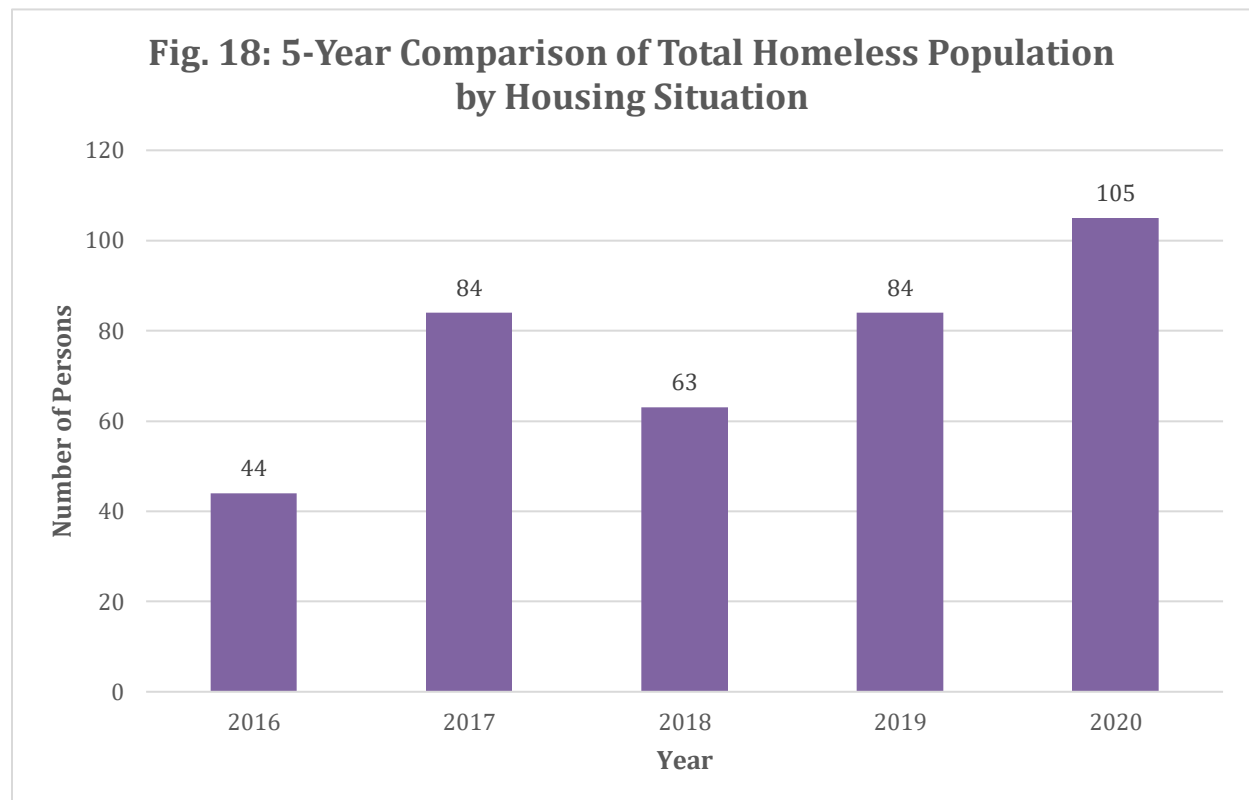


Average monthly income for chronically homeless households is \$1,848.13

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.”

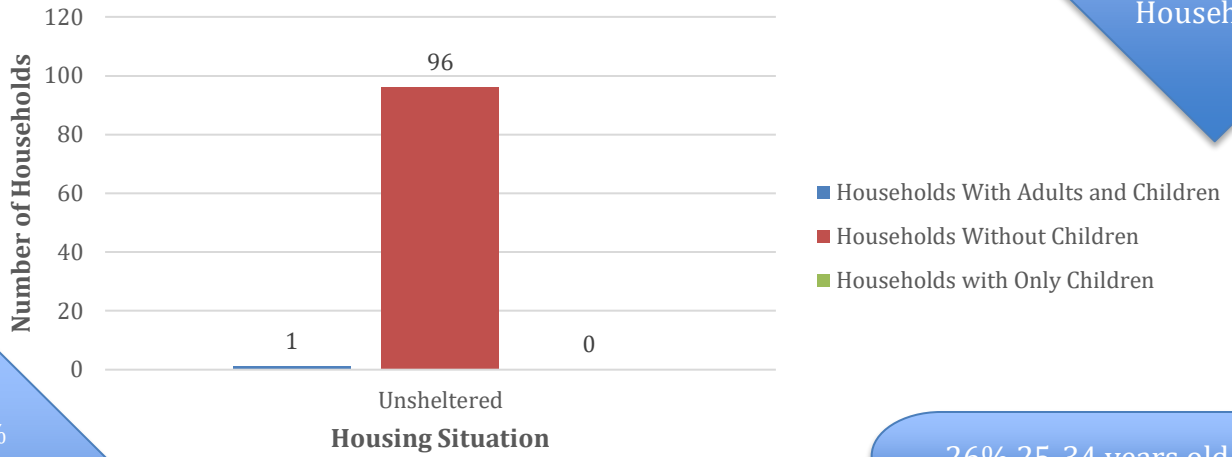
Unsheltered homeless individuals and families are among those with the most critical housing needs in a community. The unsheltered are especially vulnerable in the cold weather and the elements, which are in evidence at the end of January when the Count takes place. The Point-In-Time survey can play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



25%
increase in
persons
since 2019

61
person
increase
in
persons
from
2016

Fig. 19: Unsheltered Homeless Households by Housing Situation



99% Adult-only Households

81% male, 19% female

26% 25-34 years old

Fig. 20: Unsheltered Persons by Subpopulation

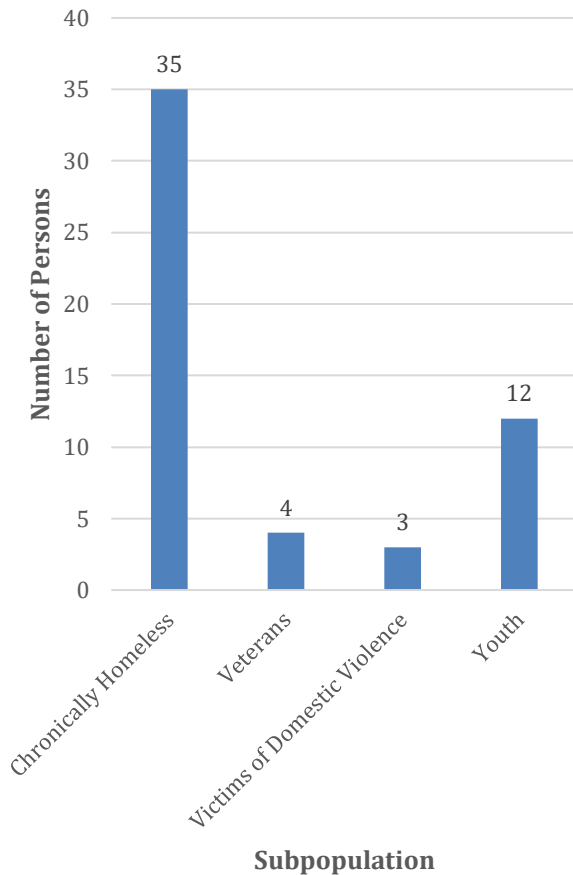
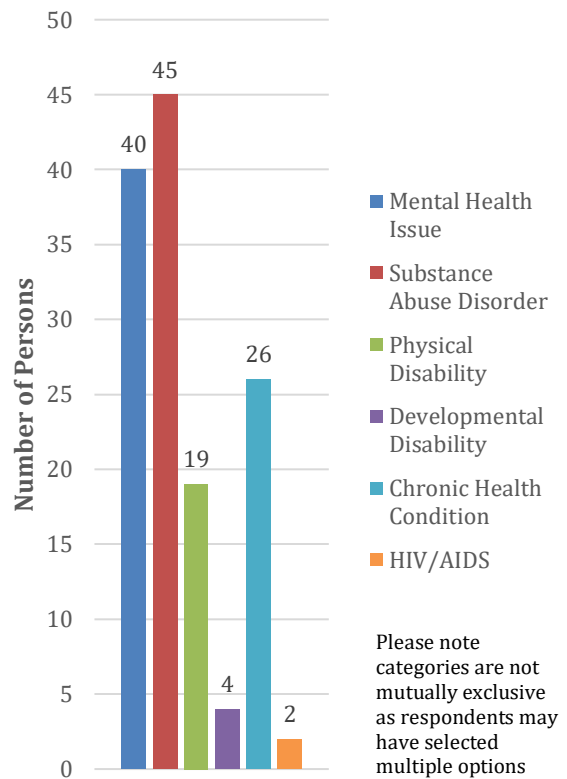


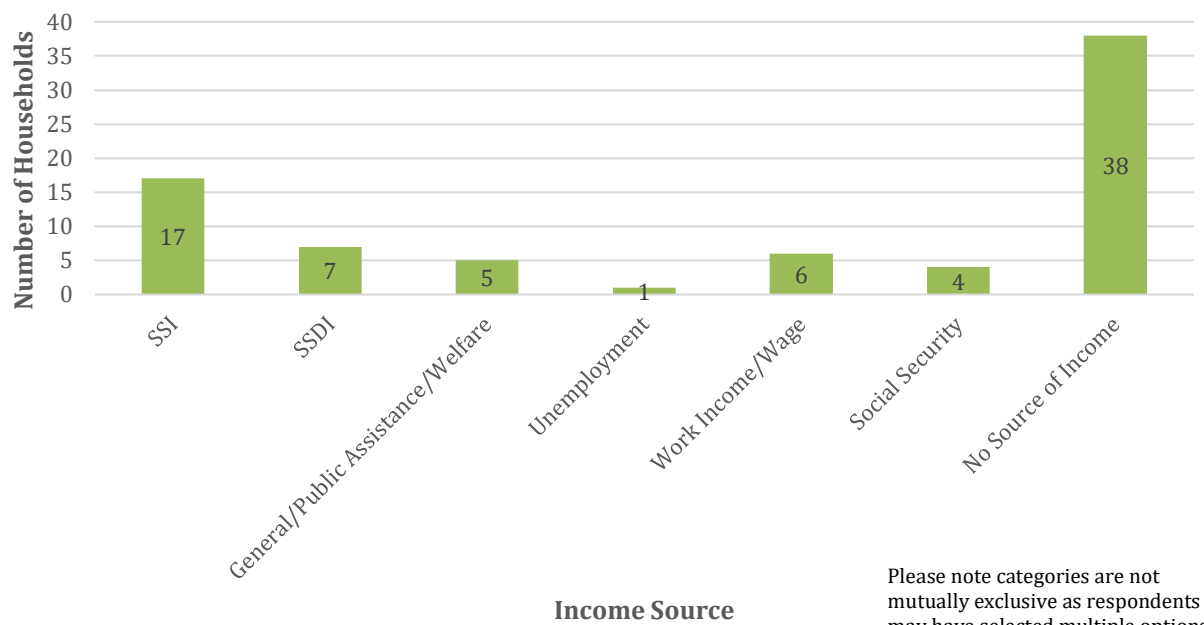
Fig. 21: Number of Unsheltered Persons by Disability Type



Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

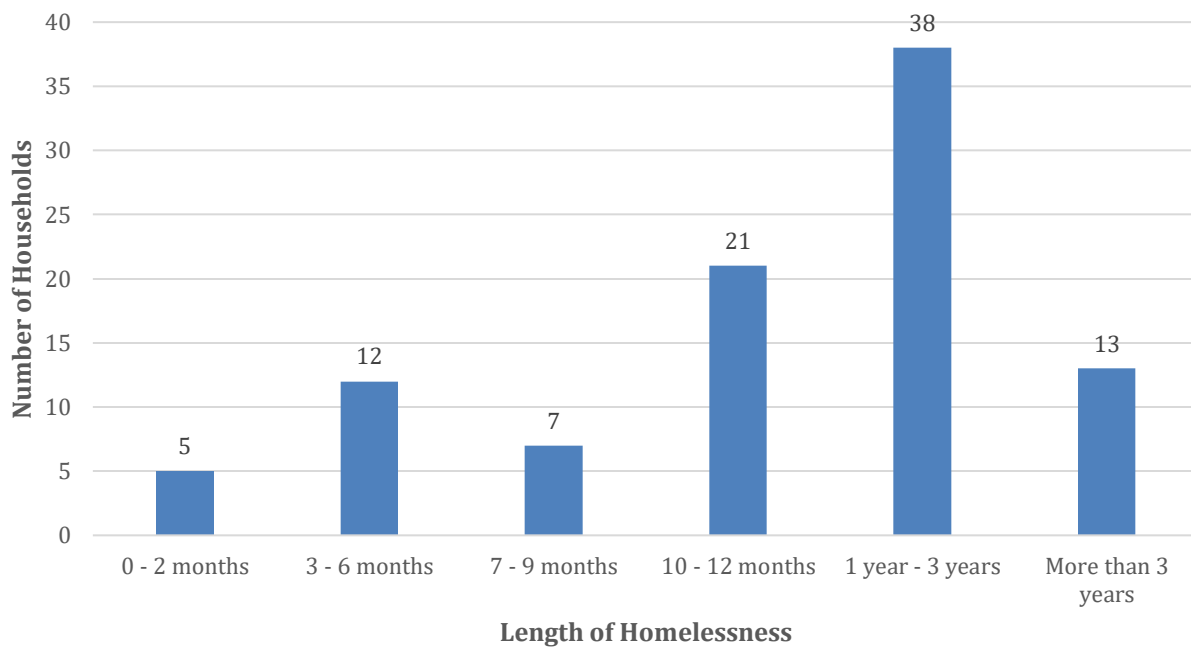
70.4% identified a disability

Fig. 22: Income Source of Unsheltered Households by Housing Situation



Average Monthly Income is \$1,030.65

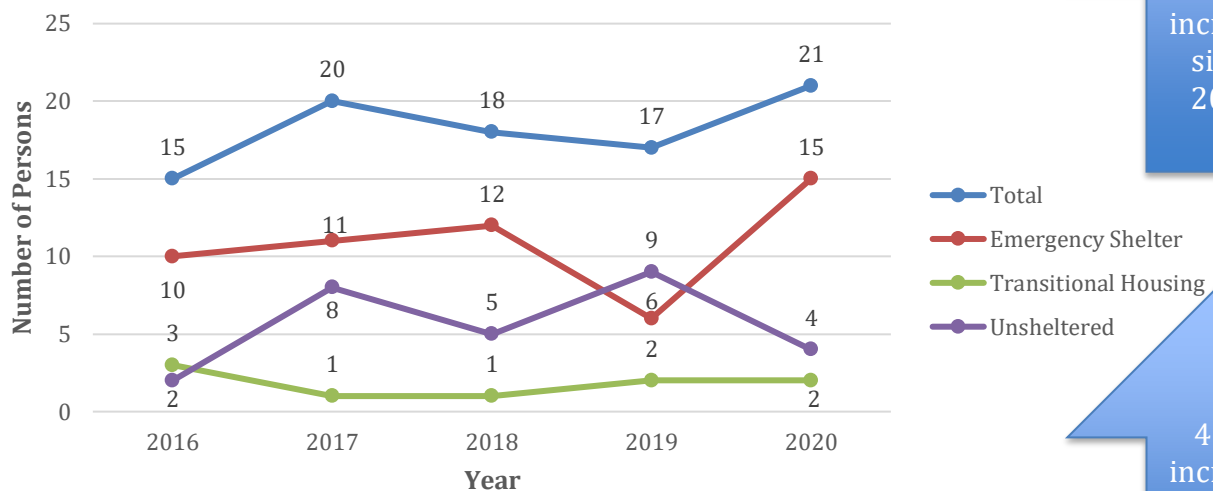
Fig. 23: Length of Homelessness Among Unsheltered Households



VI. Findings for Homeless Veterans

Veterans are defined as any person of the age of 18 who has served in any branch of the Armed Forces. For the purposes of the Point-in-Time Count, the veteran definition covers any person who has served including those who may not be eligible for veteran services through the U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs. 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. Many communities in New Jersey have also been working hard to end homelessness among our country's servicemen and women.

Fig. 24: 5-Year Comparison of Total Homeless Veteran Population by Housing Situation

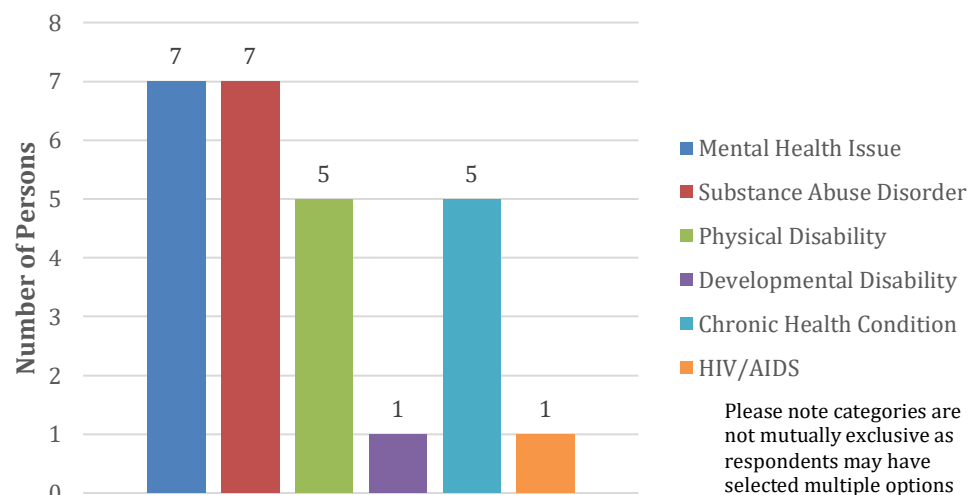


24% increase since 2019

40% increase since 2016

57.1% of homeless veterans identified a disability

Fig. 25: Number of Veteran Persons by Disability Type



Average
monthly
income is
\$775.33

Fig. 26: Income by Housing Situation for Veteran Households

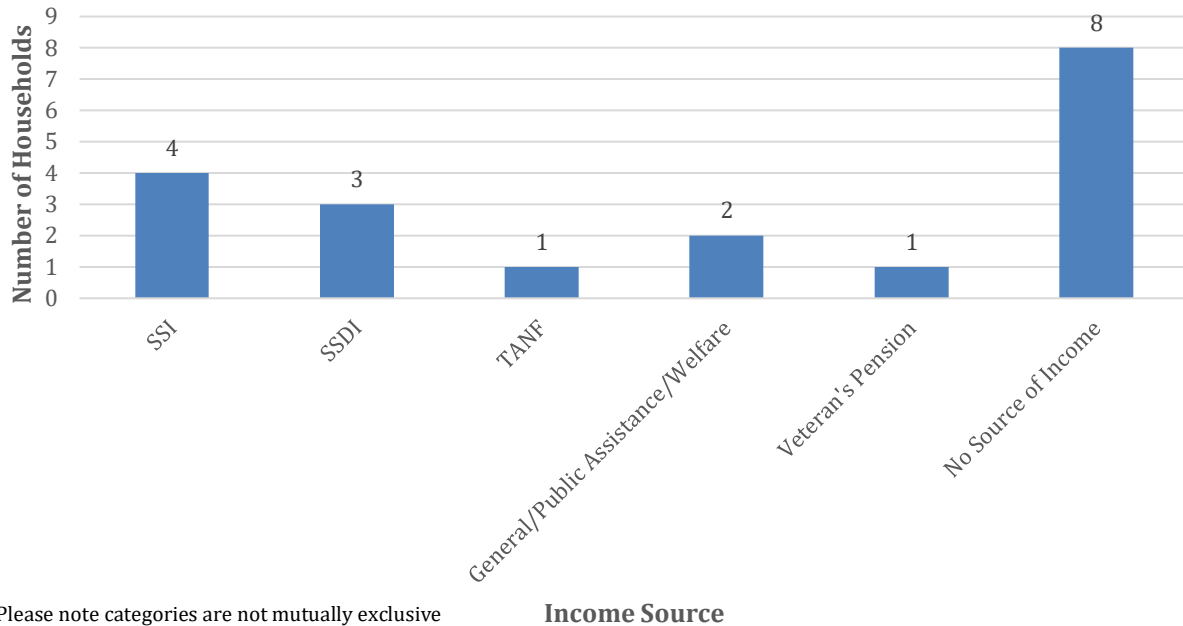


Fig. 27: Length of Homelessness Among Veteran Households

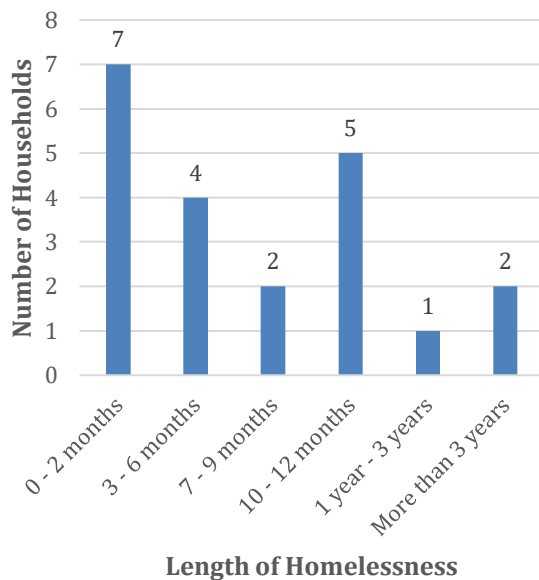
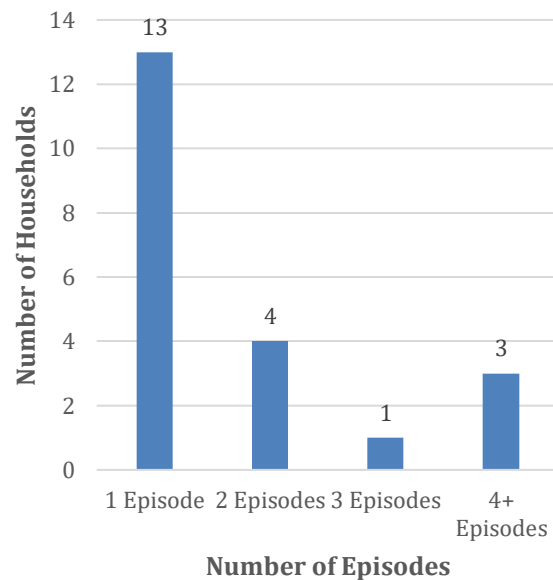


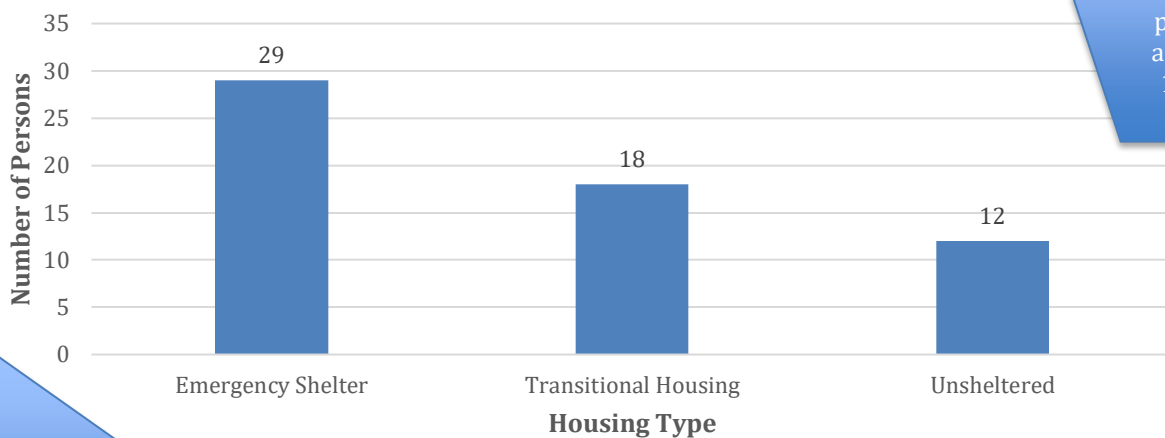
Fig. 28: Episodes of Homelessness Among Veteran Households



VII. Finding for Homeless Youth

Youth are defined as persons under the age of 25 who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian. This can include individual unaccompanied youth, youth only households of 2 or more youth presenting together as a household, and pregnant or parenting youth who are the legal guardians of one or more children. The United States Interagency Council has identified homeless youth as one of the priority population of focus in *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*. Many communities across Mercer are working to better understand the scope and needs of the Youth population experiencing homelessness and are working with community partners to end youth homelessness.

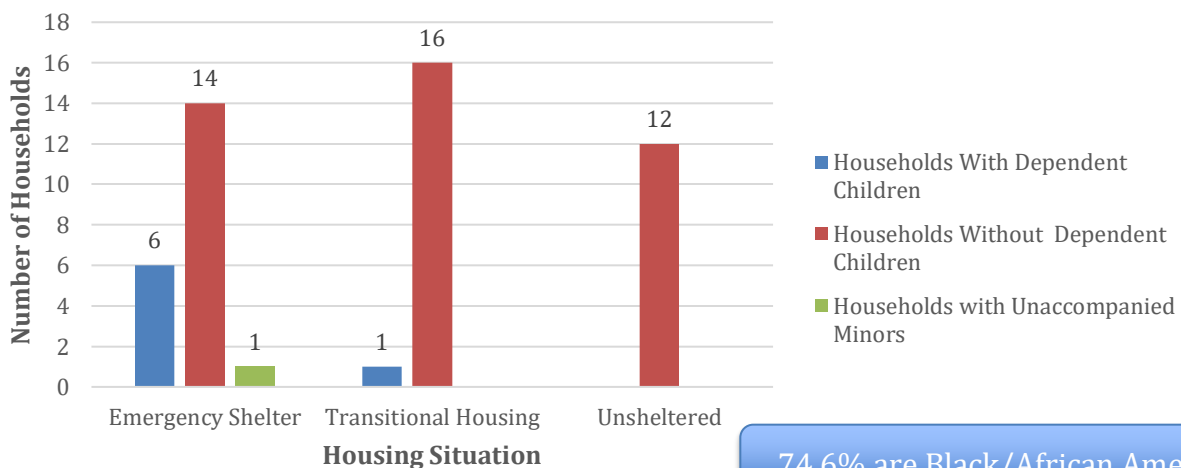
Fig. 29: Number of Homeless Youth by Housing Situation



83% of persons are over 18 yrs. old

54.2% are male

Fig. 30: Homeless Youth Households by Housing Situation



74.6% are Black/African American

52.5% of youth respondents identified a disability

Fig. 31: Number of Youth by Disability Type*

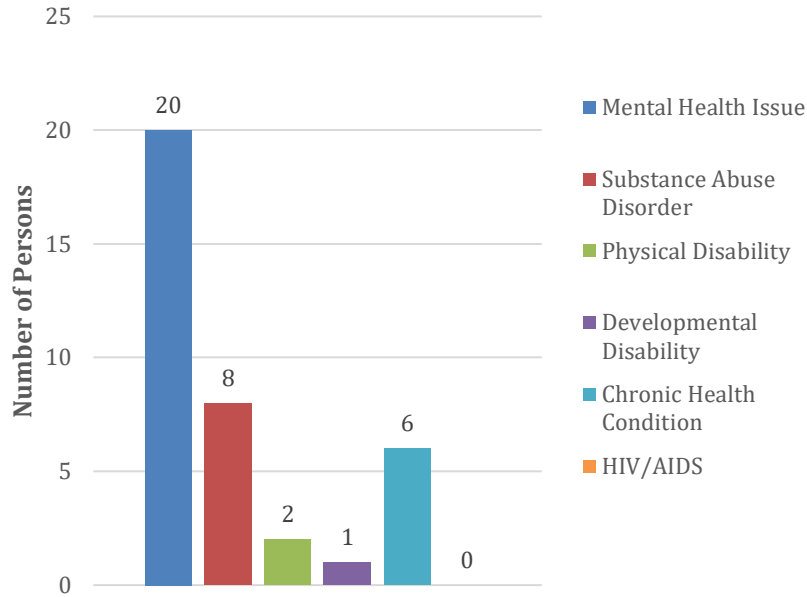


Fig. 33: Length of Homelessness Among Youth Households

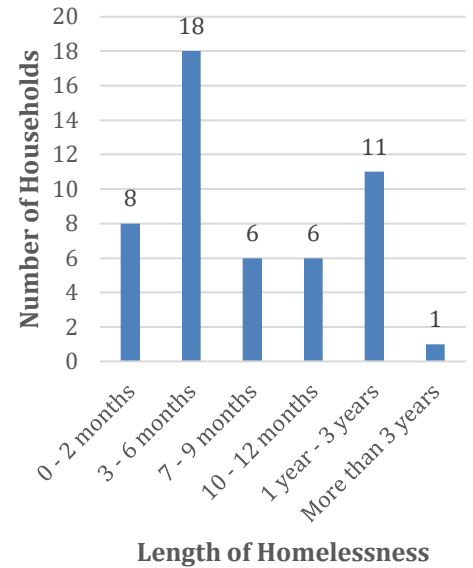
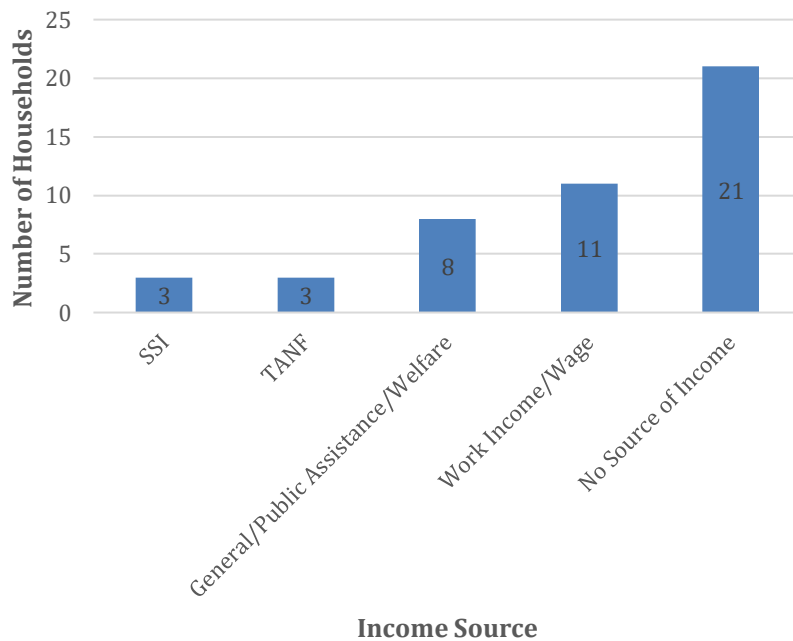
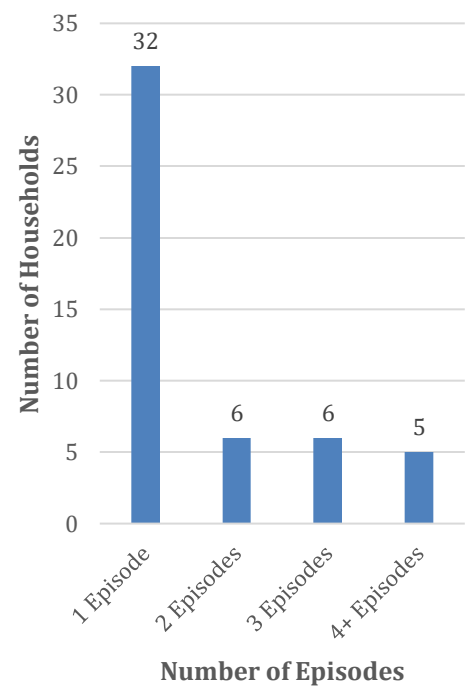


Fig. 32: Income Sources for Youth Households*



Average Monthly Income is \$535.48

Fig. 34: Episodes of Homelessness Among Youth Households



*Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

VIII. Findings for Victims of Domestic Violence

The 2020 Point in Time Count captured information for individuals and families “Fleeing” Domestic Violence. For the purposes of the Point-In-Time Count, Domestic Violence is defined as any household that is fleeing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has taken place in their home, or has created a situation in which the individual or family is afraid to return to their home.

Fig. 35: Number of Homeless DV Victims by Housing Situation

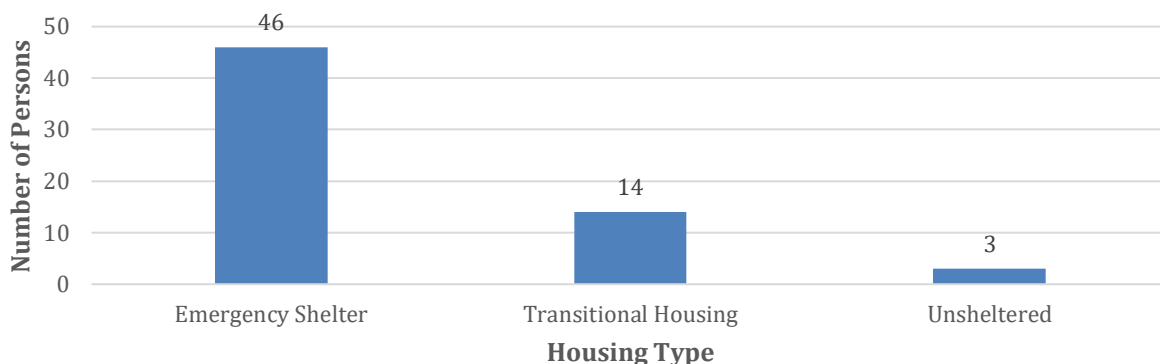
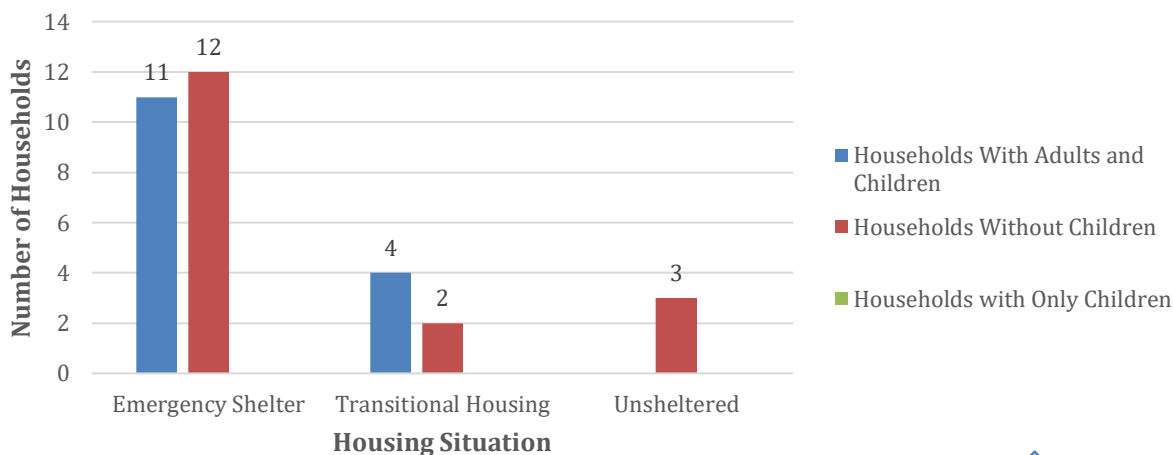


Fig. 36: Homeless DV Households by Housing Situation



47% are households with children

81% are females

54% are Black or African American

23.8%
were
disabled

Fig. 37: Number of DV Victims by Disability Type*

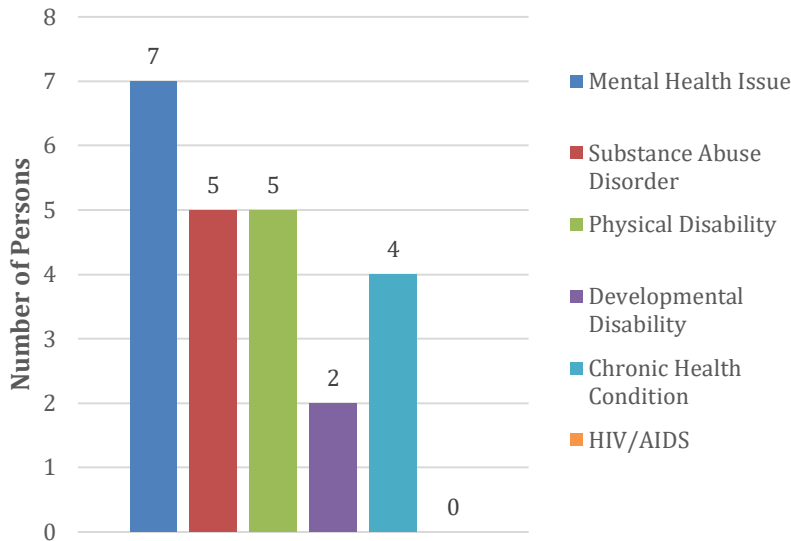


Fig. 39: Length of Homelessness Among DV Victim Households

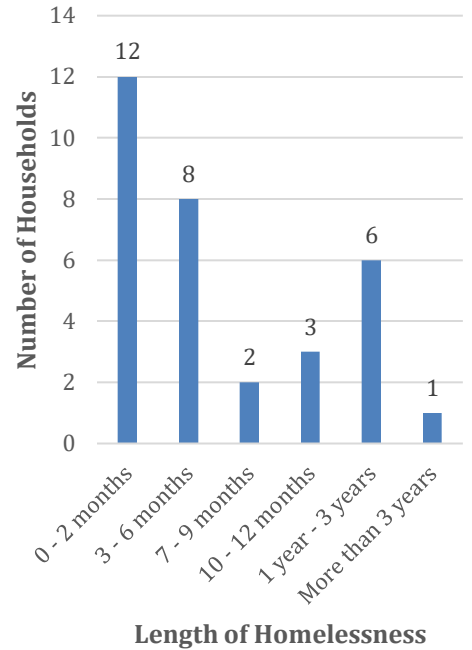
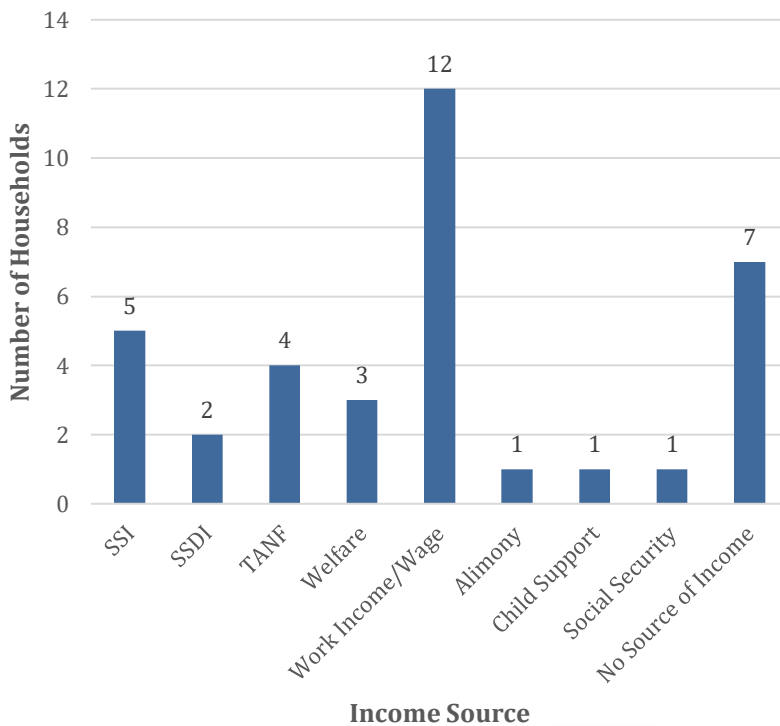
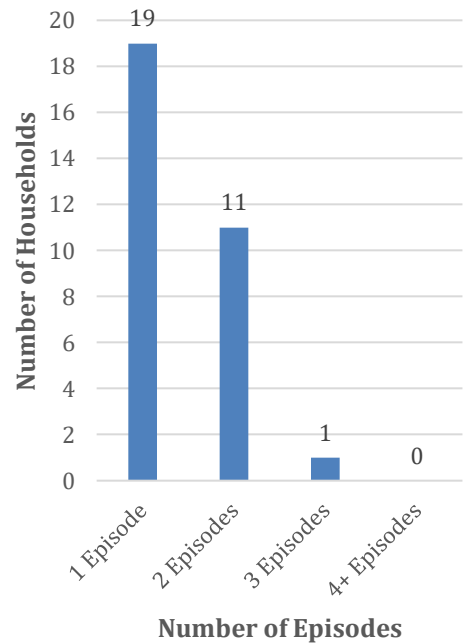


Fig. 38: Income Source for DV Victim Households*



Average Monthly Income is \$1,092.73

Fig. 40: Episodes of Homelessness Among DV Victim Households



*Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

IX. Appendix A: 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. Mercer'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 their 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 2020 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.

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 2020 PIT Survey tool closely mirrors information collected in HMIS so that the data was comparable for important factors such as duration and episodes of homelessness, household characteristics, income, services needed, and factors contributing to homelessness. Agencies updated all HMIS data to accurately reflect household information 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 2016 to 2020. 2016, 2018 and 2020 were not HUD required full reporting years while 2017, and 2019 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 are based on the responses received, while all percentages are 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.

4. The Point in Time Count represents an attempt by communities across the state of New Jersey to capture a complete census of all persons experiencing homelessness both in shelters and on the street during a single night. While the count is coordinated as a single statewide event, each county across the state develops locally appropriate methodologies for conducting the count of unsheltered persons in the community. As such, there is variation of the scope and depth of the unsheltered count from community to community. However, the sheltered count is conducted in a uniform manner across the state and each community maintains a consistent process for completing the sheltered and unsheltered count from year to year.
5. Given the nature of the Point in Time Count as a one day count of the population experiencing homelessness, data collected on the racial and ethnic breakdown from the PIT is not fully comparable to U.S. Census Bureau data on the racial and ethnic population for the state of New Jersey. While there are limitations on comparing the PIT data, for purposes of examining racial and ethnic disparities, as a result of the single day count, a review of the sheltered population in the State of New Jersey over the course of a full year demonstrates similar trends as seen in the PIT data in which persons identifying as African American or Black, Native American and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander are over represented in the population experiencing homelessness.

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.

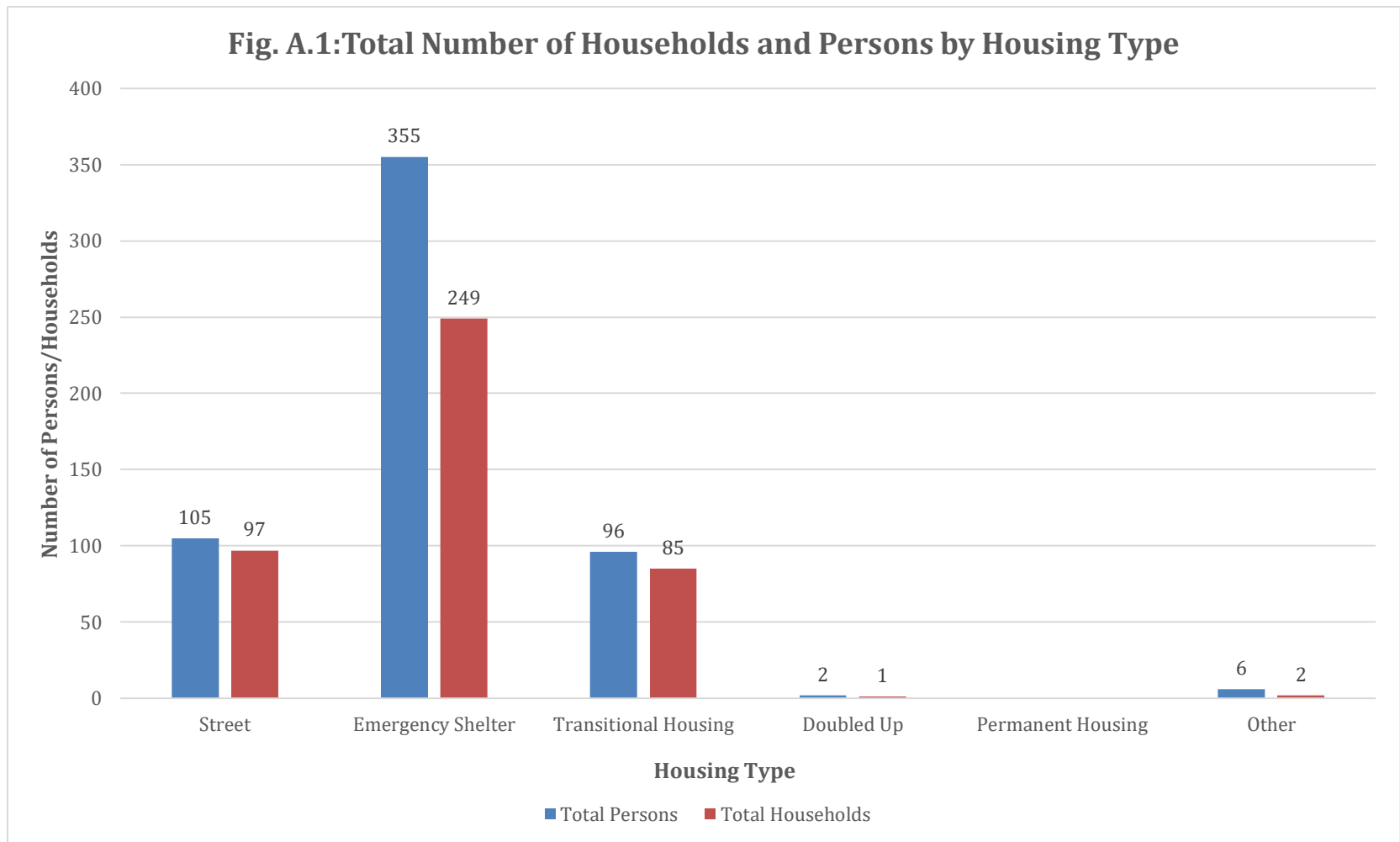
All duplicates detected through comparison of unique identifiers were then de-duplicated by the following process:

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.

X. Appendix B: Survey Responses

Where did you spend the night of January 28th, 2020?



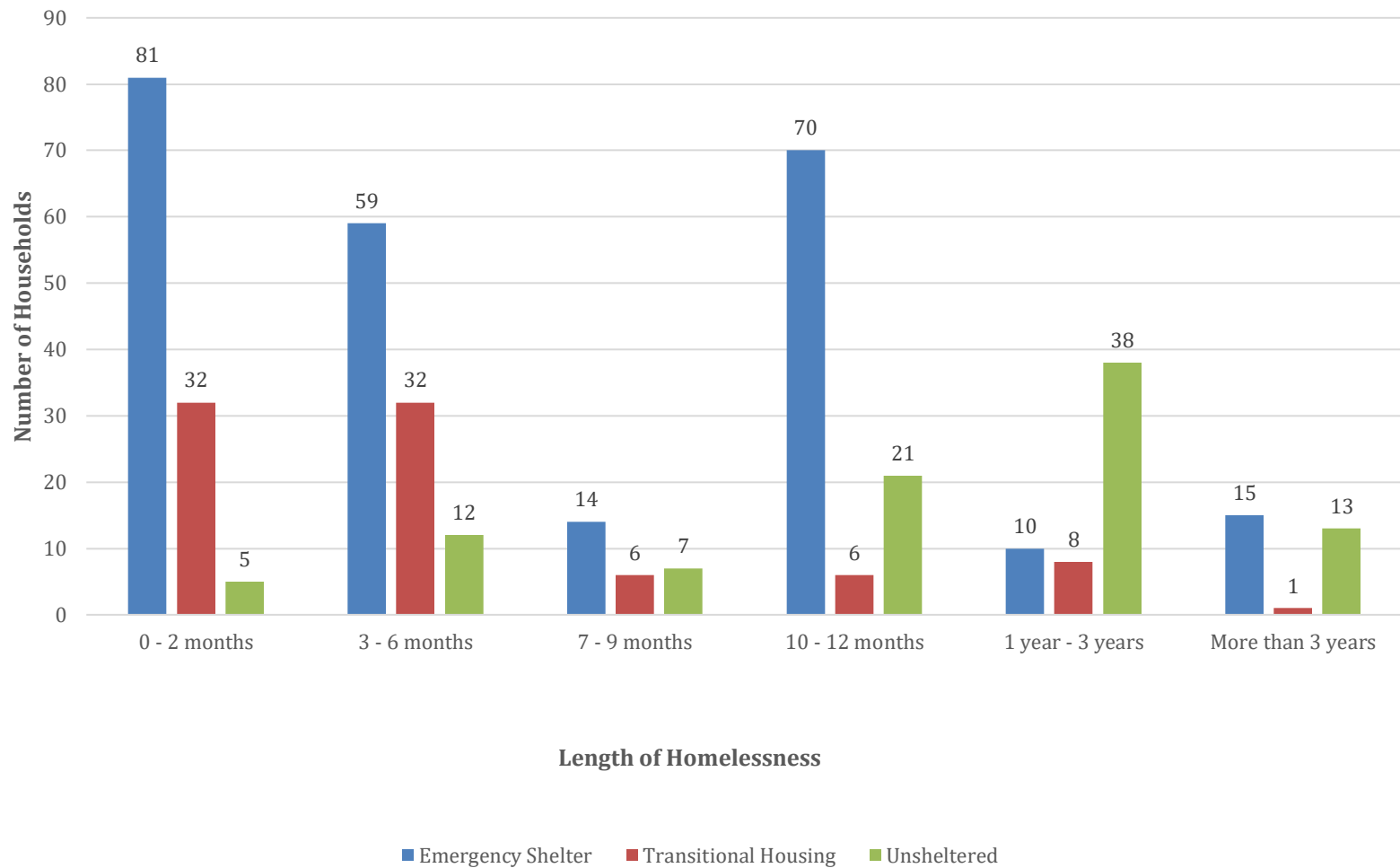
What was your location the night of the count?

Fig. A.2: Number of Homeless Persons by Municipality on the Night of the Count	
Location Night of Count – Municipality	Number of Persons
Ewing	96
Hamilton	15
Hightstown	1
Lawrence	2
Princeton	1
Trenton	347
Total	462*

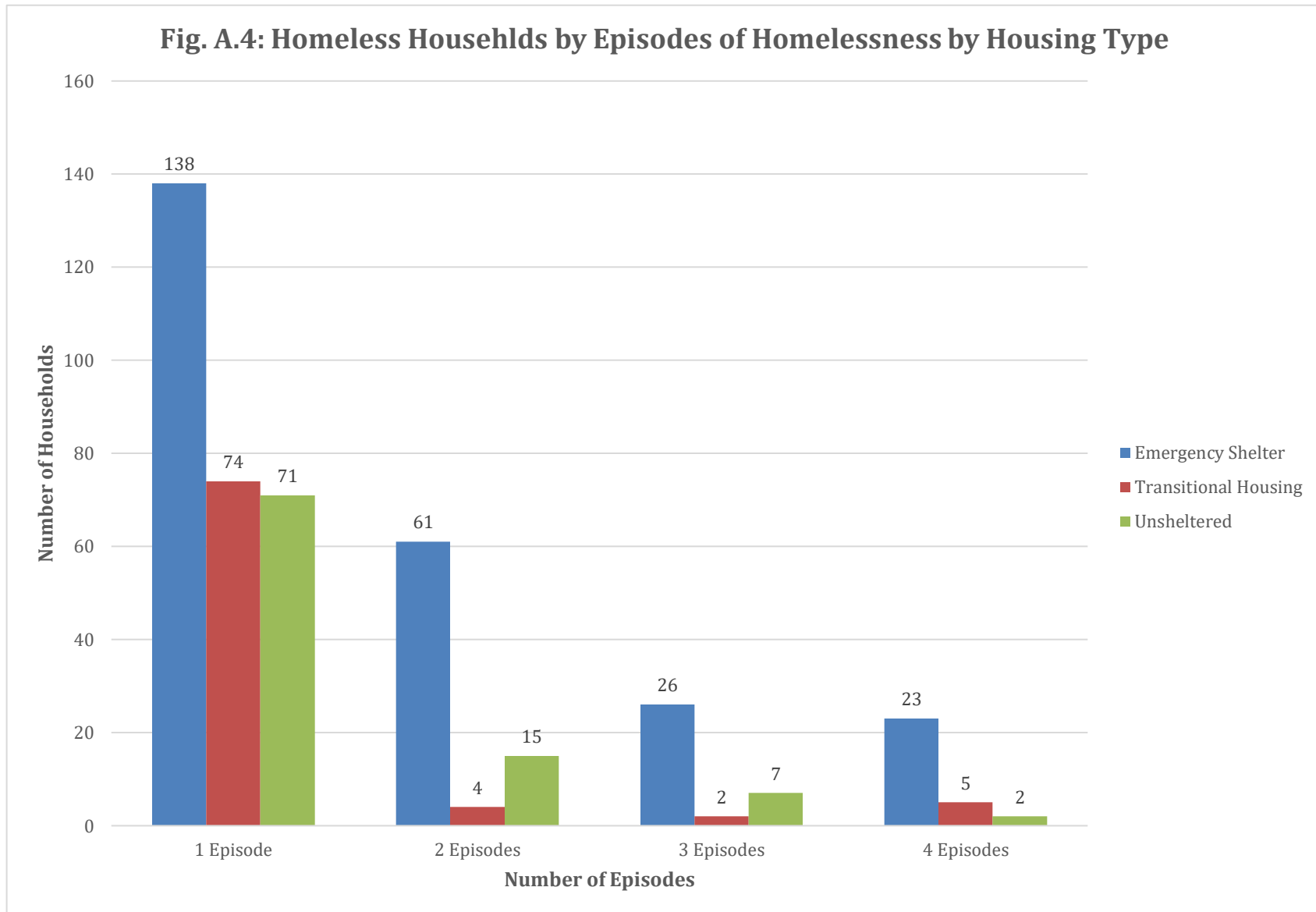
*Does not reflect total homeless persons counted as some survey responses may not have included municipality

What is your total length of homelessness?

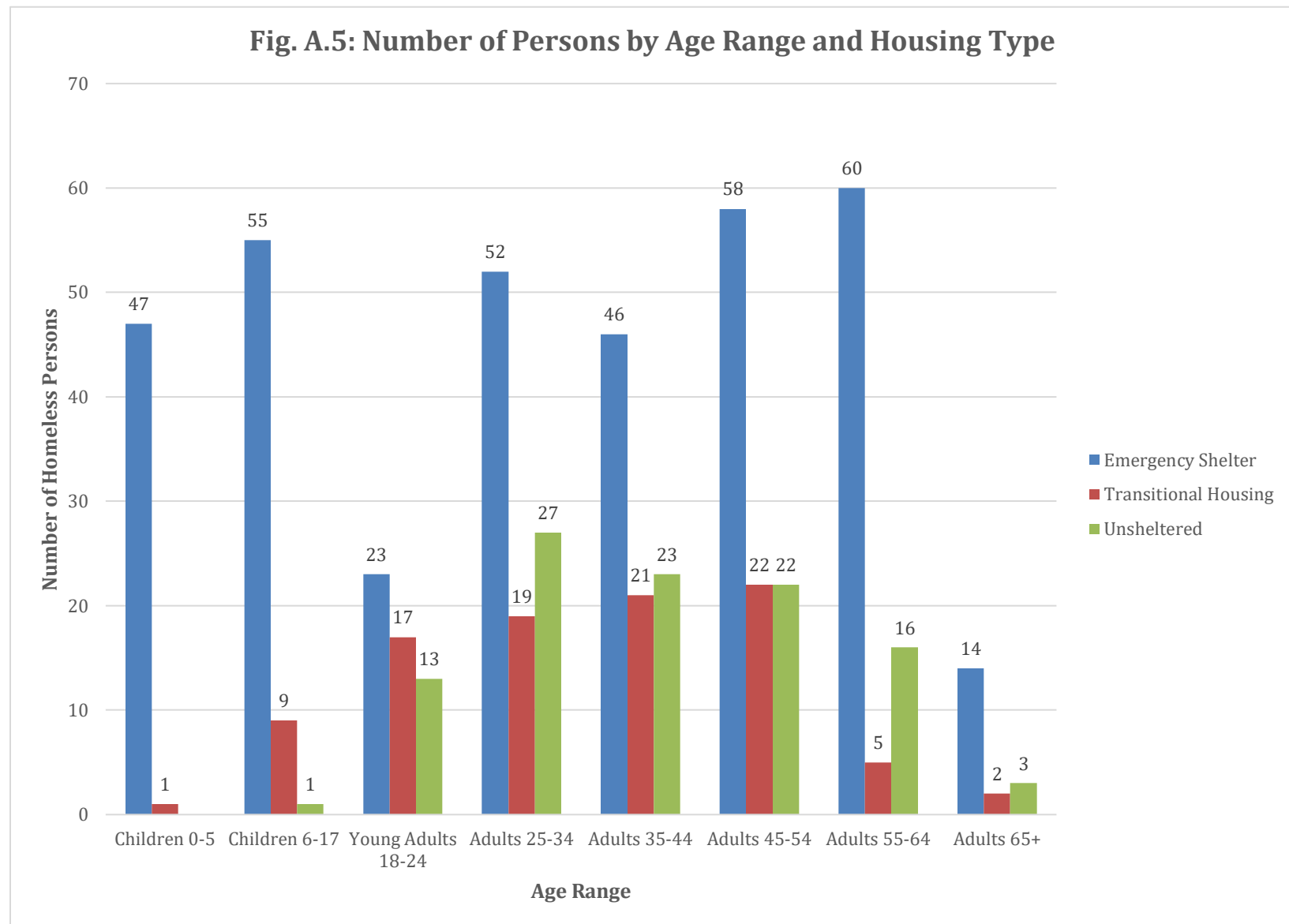
Fig. A.3: Homeless Households by Length of Homelessness and Housing Type



How many times have you been homeless in the past 3 years?



Who was homeless with you on the night of the Point in Time count?



Household Characteristics: Demographic Data – check all that apply to each person

Fig. A.6: Number of Persons by Gender and Housing Type

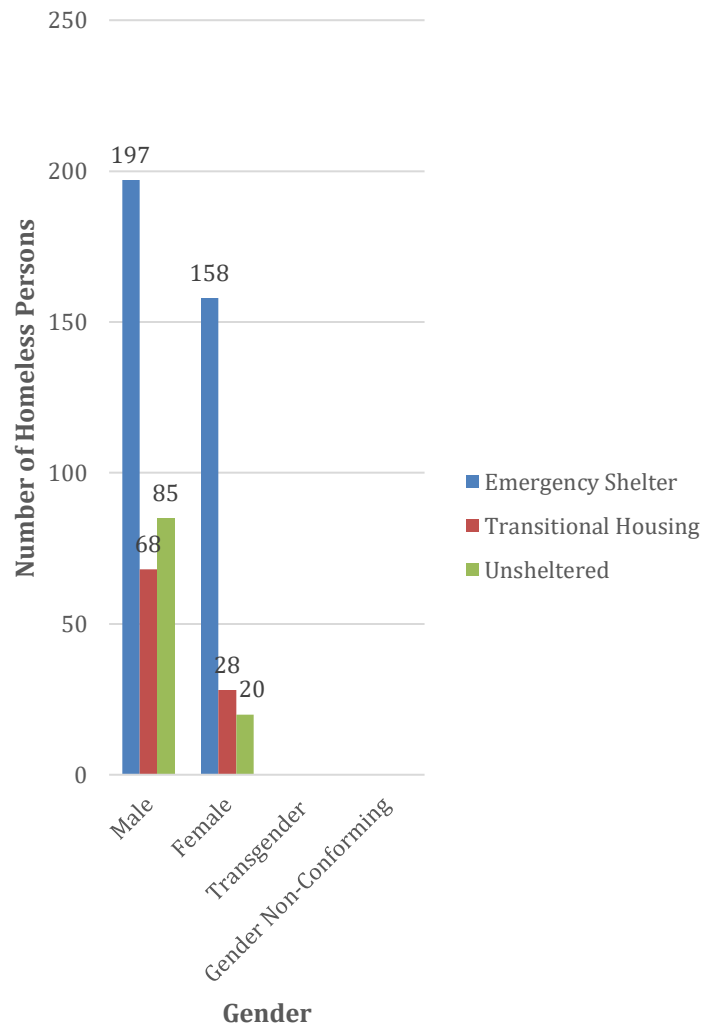
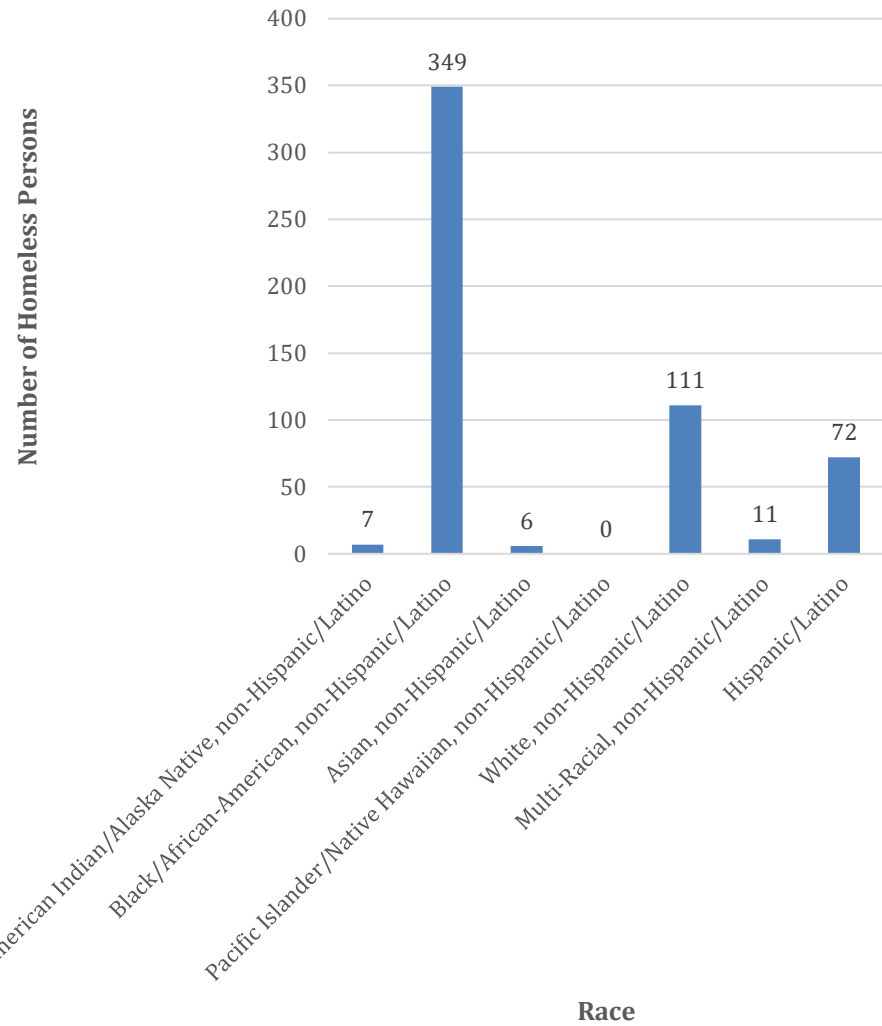
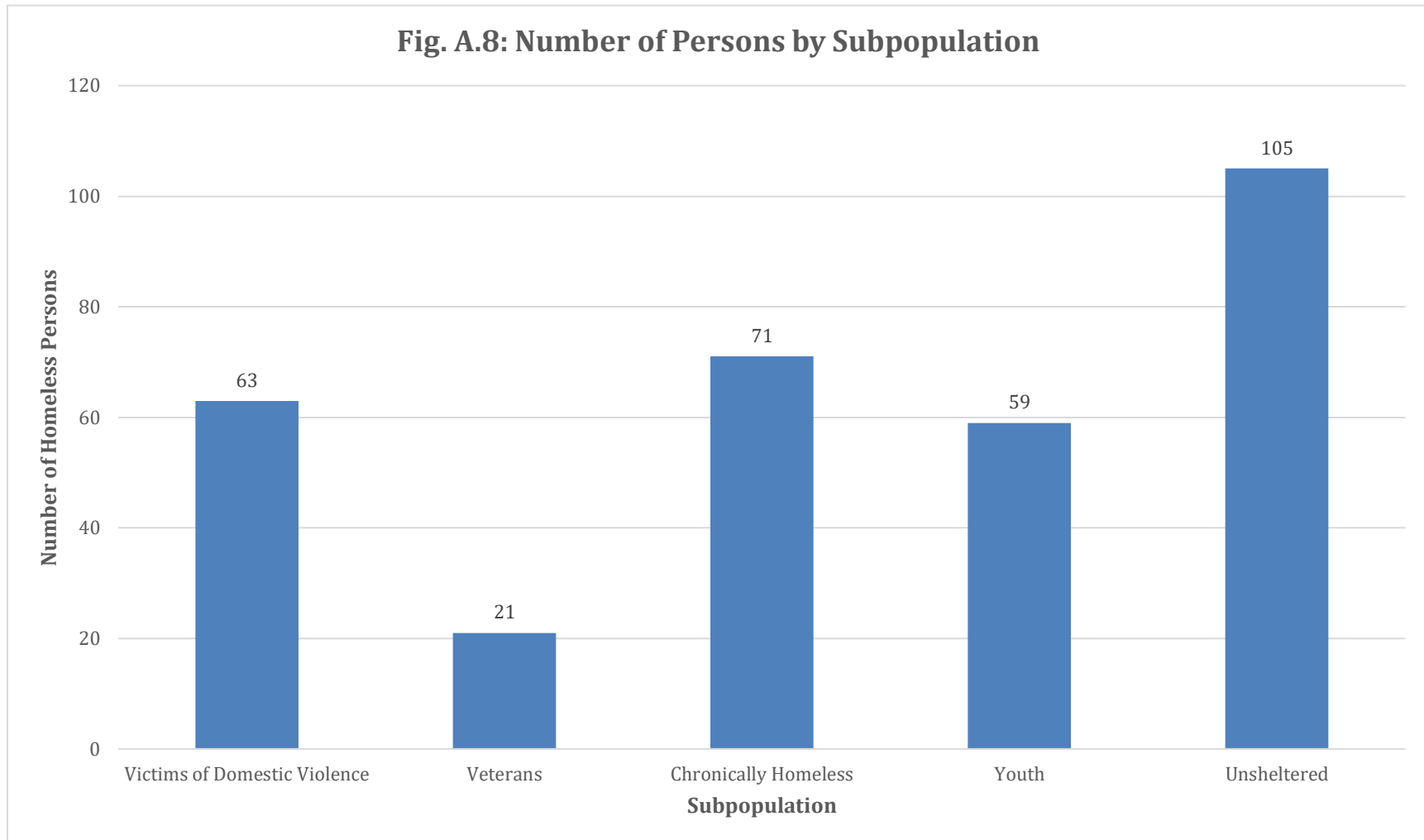


Fig. A.7: Number of Persons by Race and Housing Type

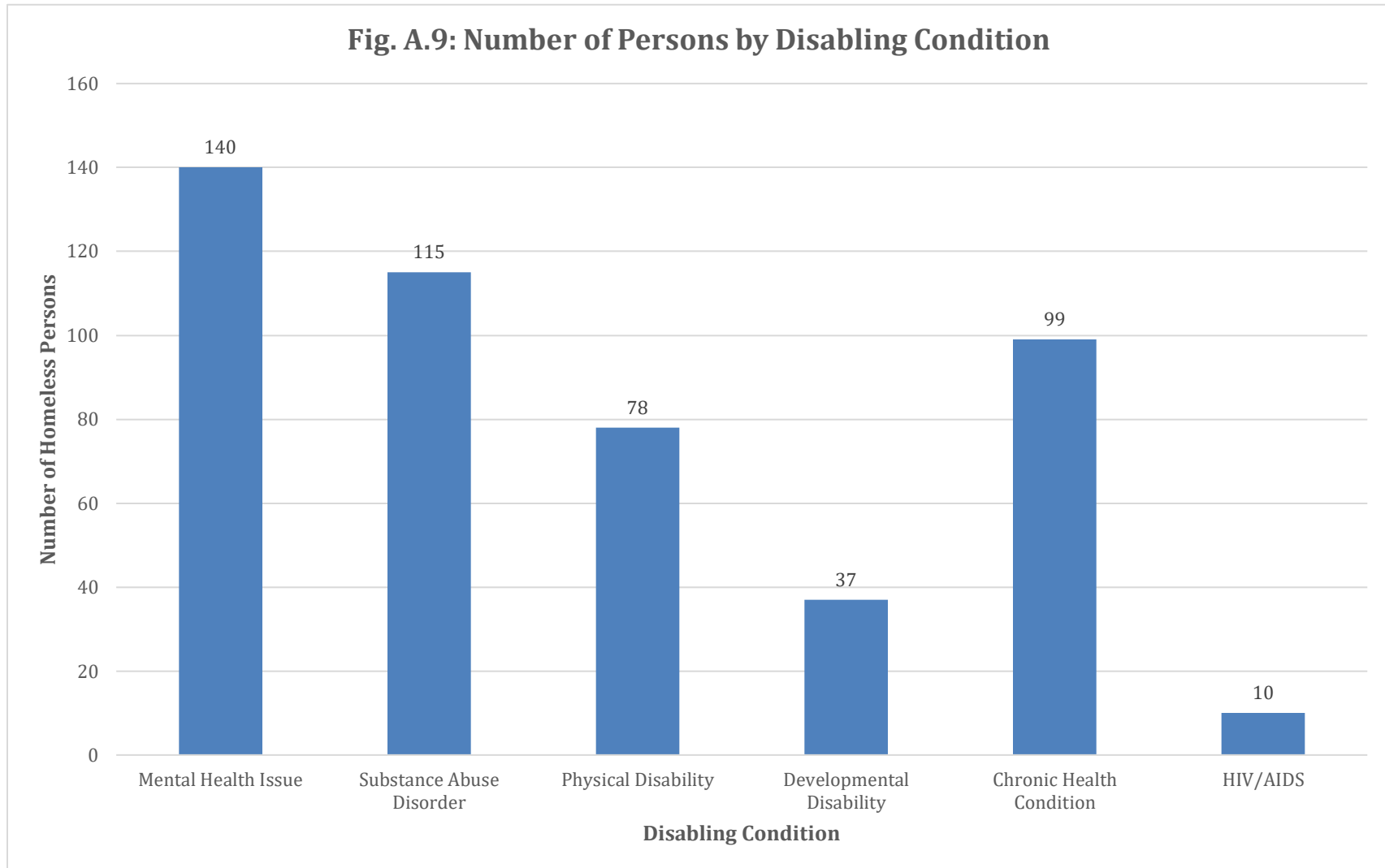


Household Characteristics: Subpopulations – check all that apply to each person



Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

Household Characteristics: Disabling Conditions – check all that apply to each person

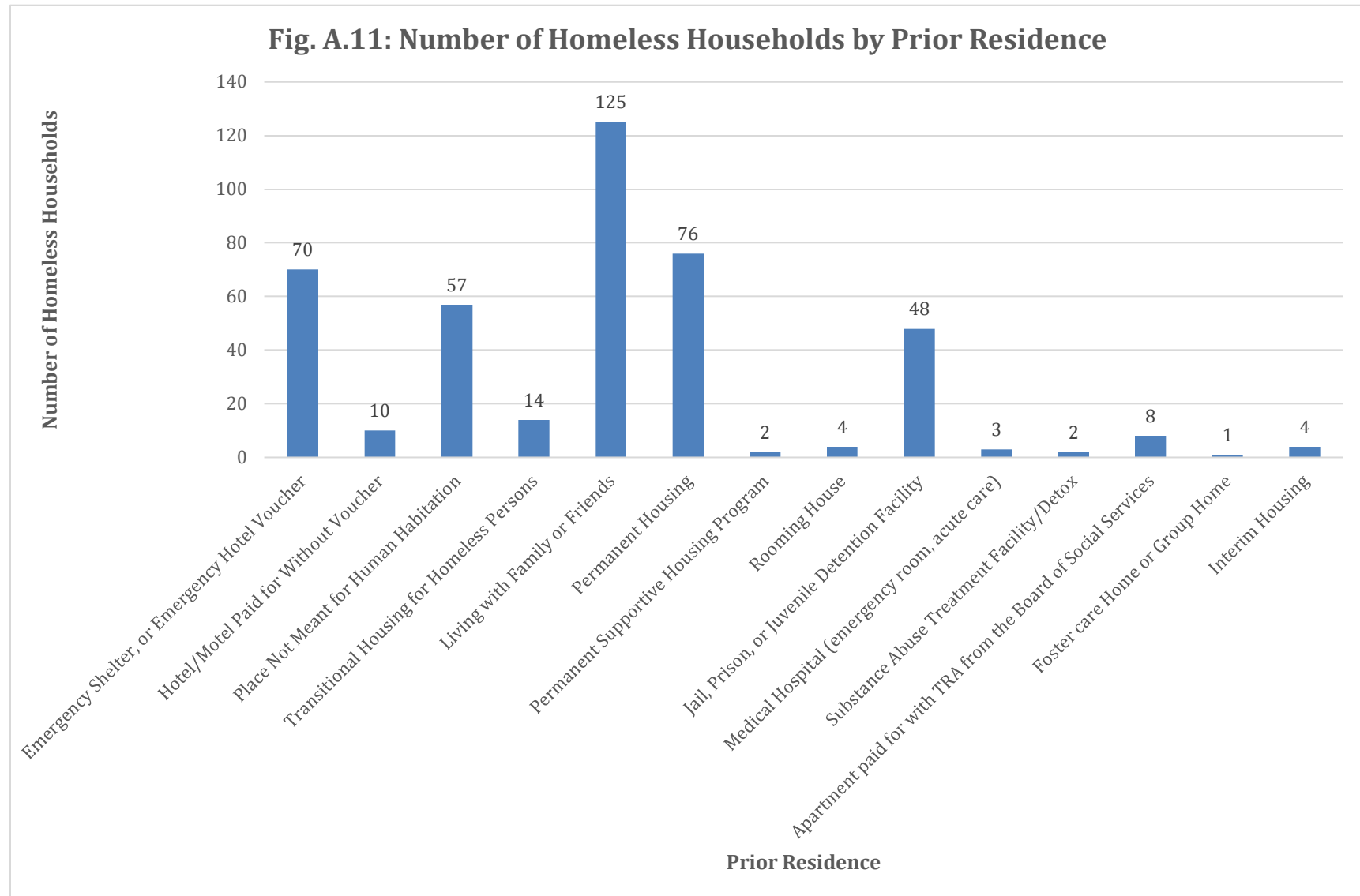


Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

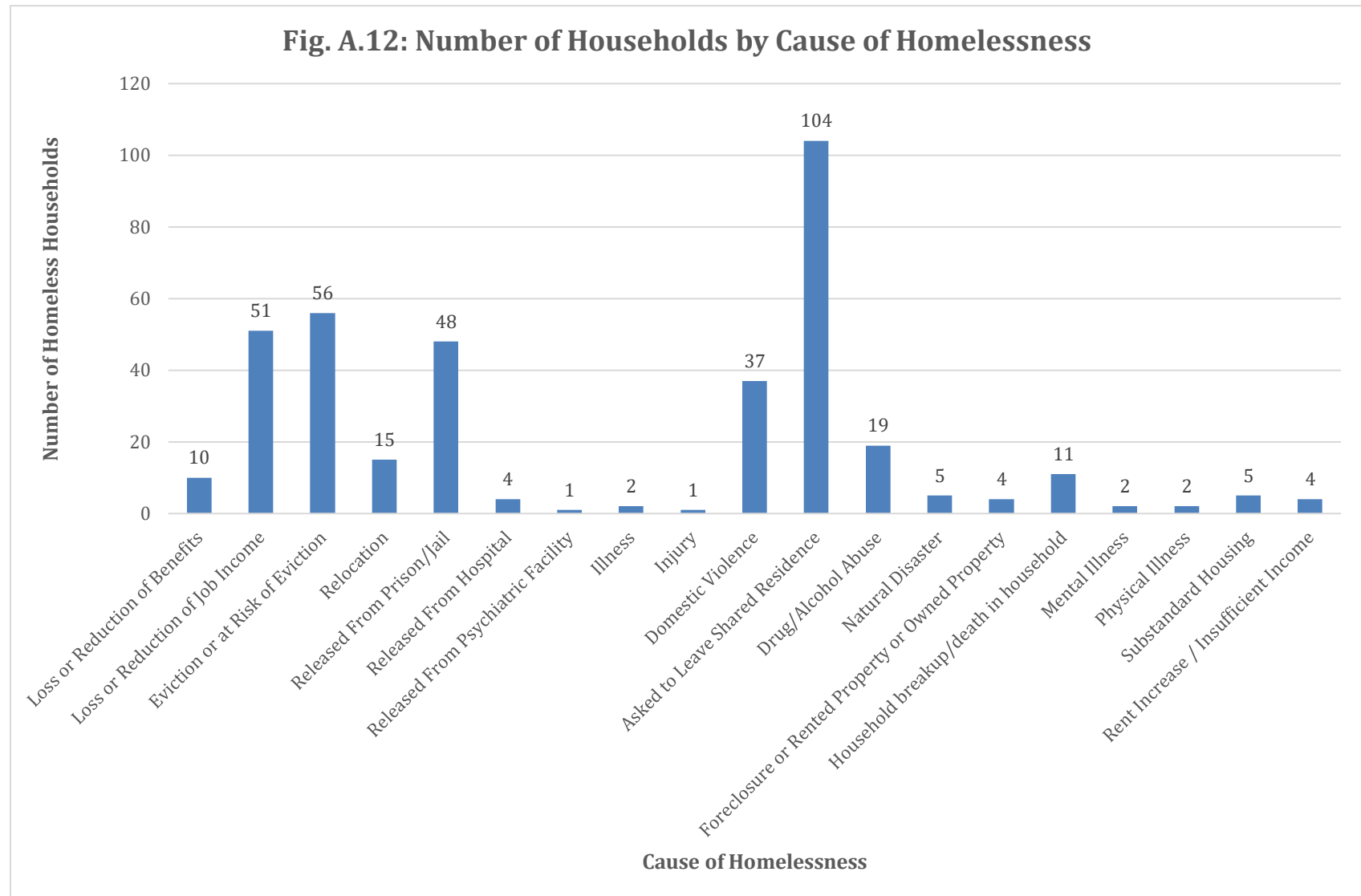
Where was your last permanent address before becoming homeless?

Fig. A.10. Number of Homeless Households by County or State of Last Permanent Address	
Last Permanent Address - County/State	Number of Households
Atlantic County	2
Burlington County	14
Camden County	6
Cape May County	2
Cumberland County	1
Essex County	4
Gloucester County	1
Mercer County	266
Middlesex County	6
Monmouth County	3
Ocean County	2
Georgia	3
Illinois	1
Indiana	1
Maine	1
New York	2
North Carolina	1
Pennsylvania	11
Texas	2

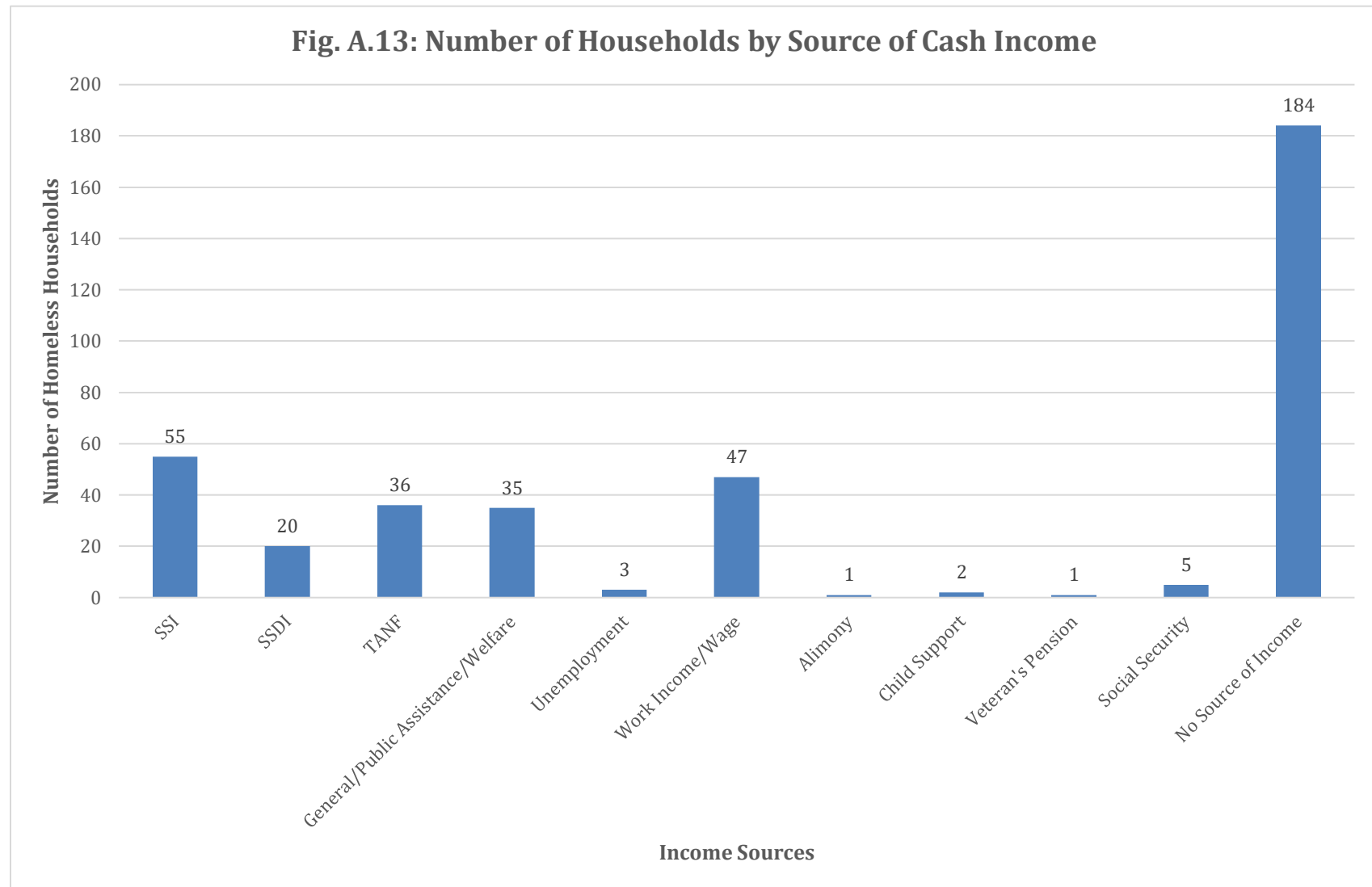
What was your residence prior to your current living situation?



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

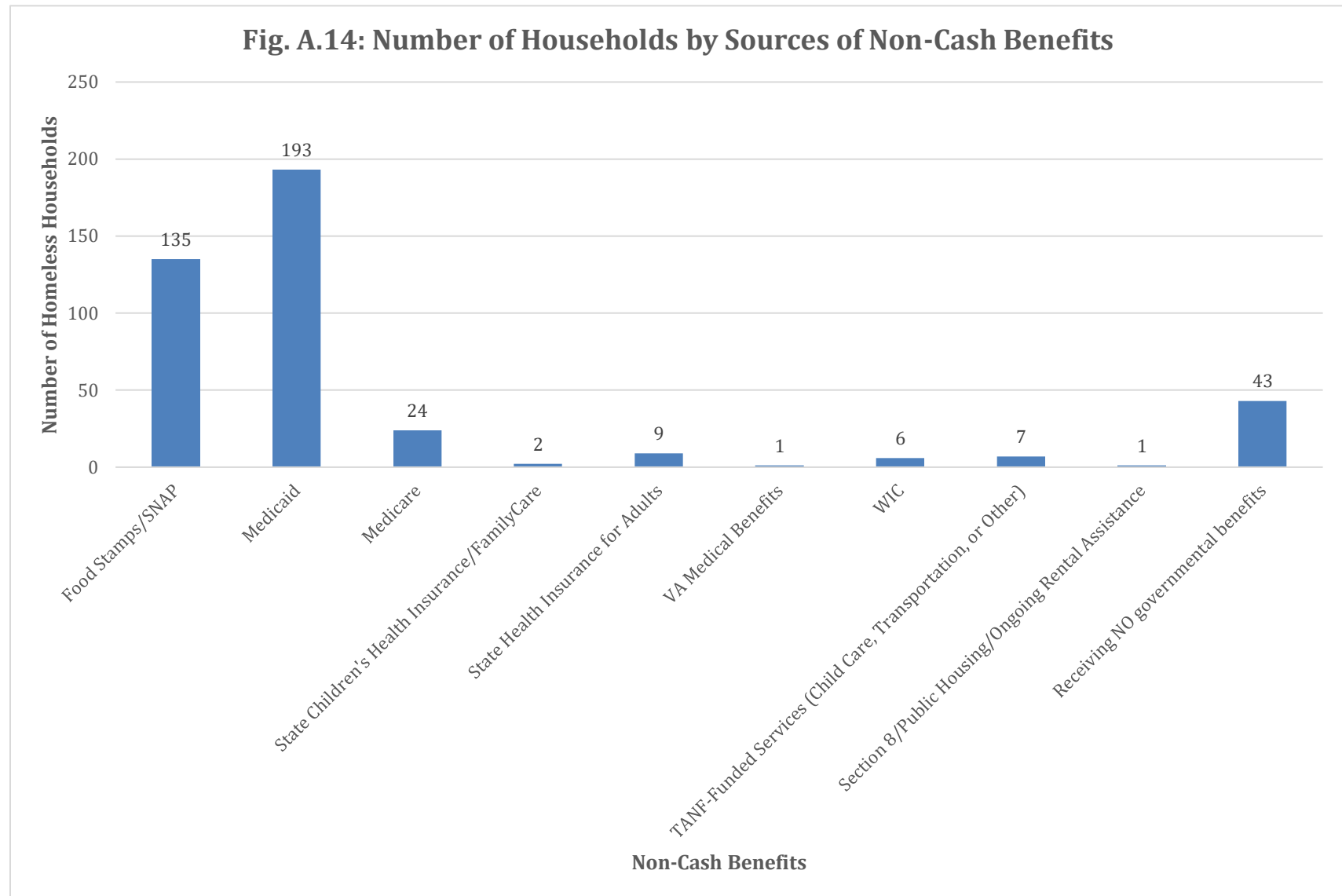


Which of the following sources of income do you, or anyone in your household, receive?



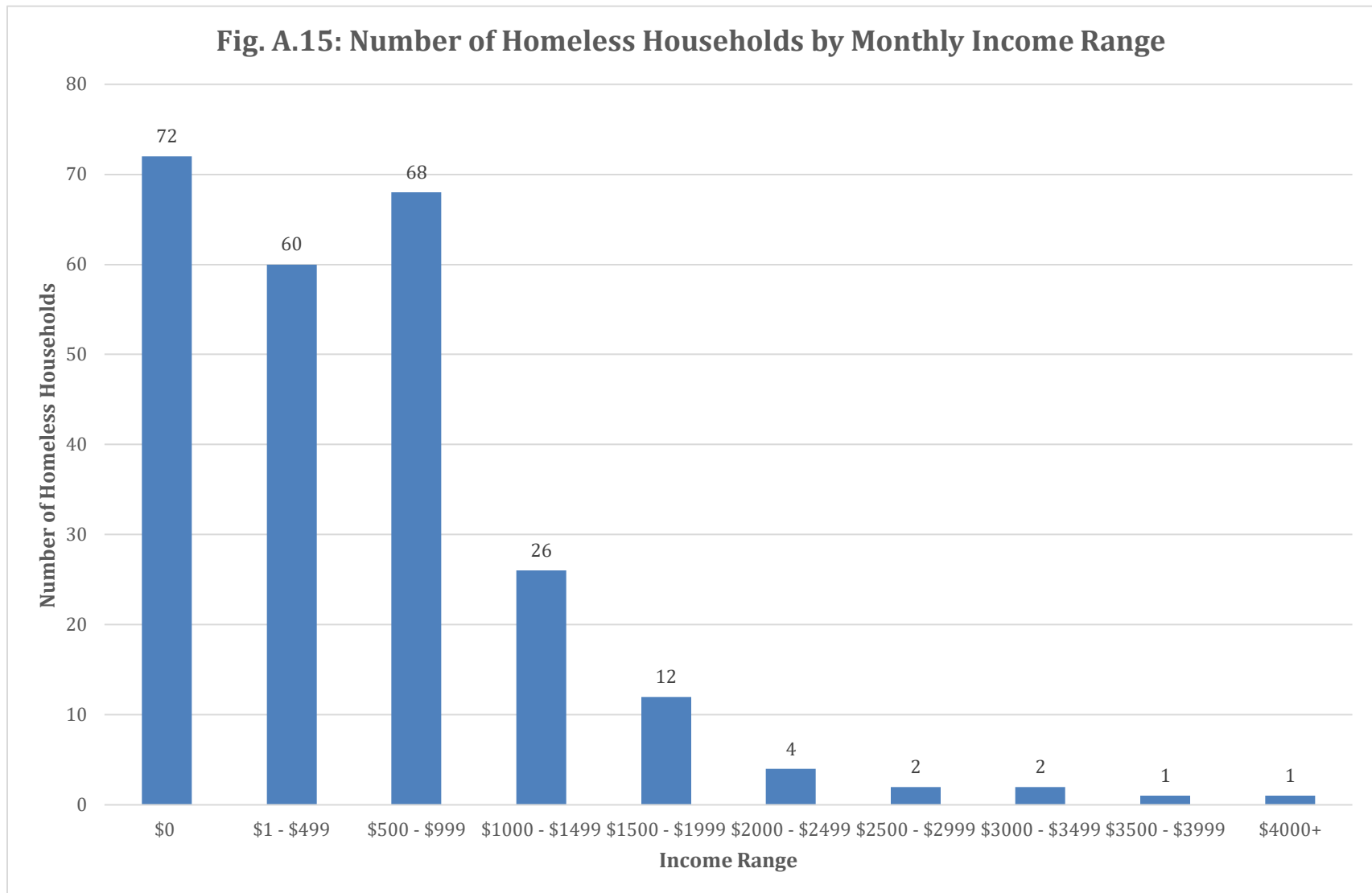
Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

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

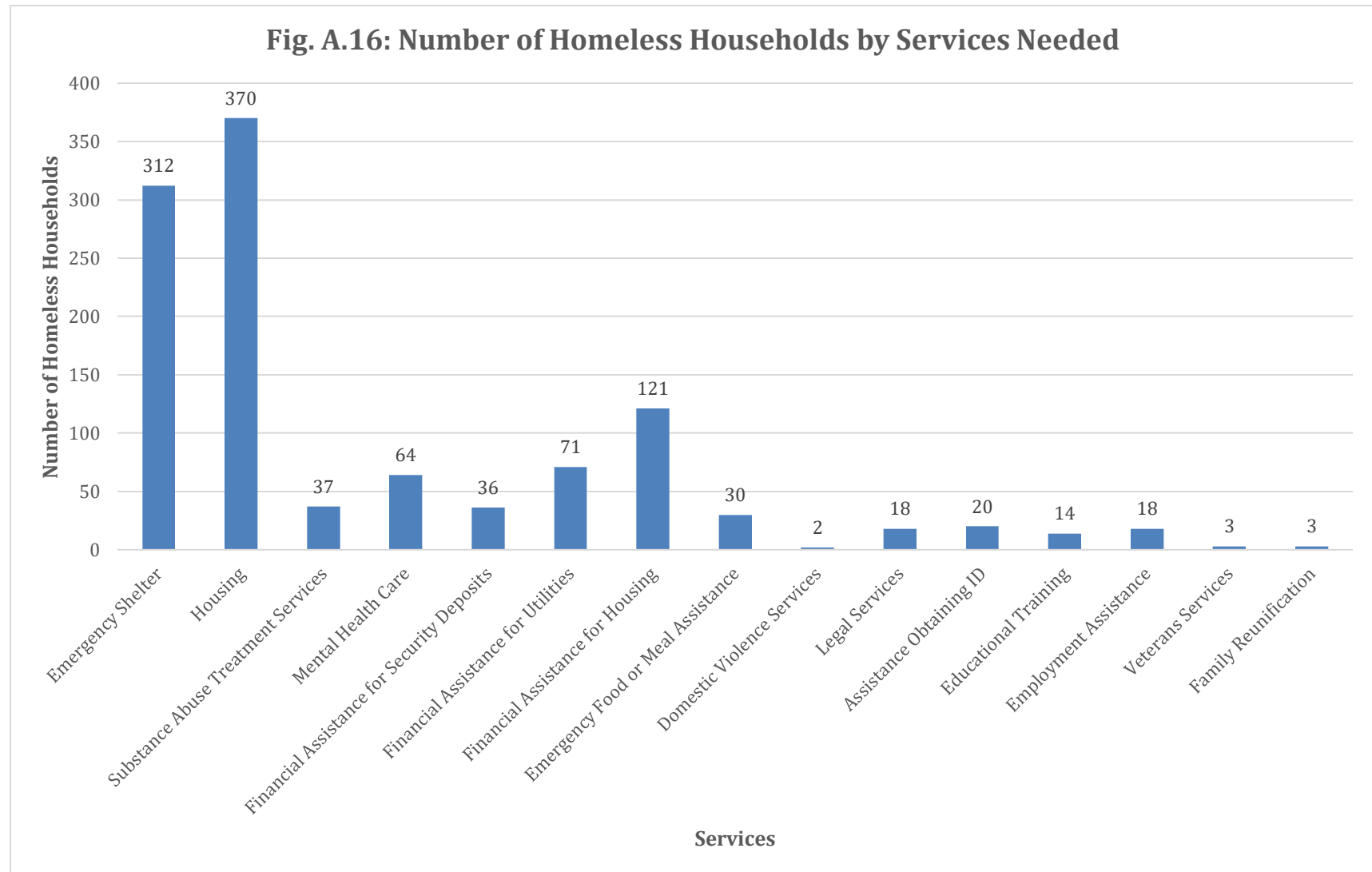


Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

What is your monthly household income?



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



Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options